

Effect of Fiscal Policies on Public Sector Accounting

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of fiscal policies on accounting practices in the public sector of Nigeria. It specifically focused on key elements of fiscal policy implementation and its consequences on financial management and performance within the public sector. Three hundred respondents, including public sector accountants, auditors, and financial managers, were surveyed using a descriptive study approach. The study utilised a scientifically designed questionnaire that included a four-point Likert scale to assess opinions on different aspects of fiscal policy and accounting procedures. The results demonstrate a robust correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting, suggesting that fiscal policies have a considerable impact on the precision, excellence, and openness of financial reporting. Notwithstanding this, the research highlighted significant obstacles such as insufficient technical expertise, corruption, and failure to comply with international accounting standards that impede the successful execution of policies. Although public sector accounting systems often facilitate fiscal policy goals, there is scope for enhancing the alignment of accounting practices with these goals. The research findings indicate that in order to enhance the alignment between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices, it is crucial to improve technical capability, embrace international accounting standards, strengthen auditing frameworks, increase transparency, and eliminates corruption. Key recommendations for policy and practice encompass the implementation of ongoing professional development programs, the adoption of international accounting standards, and the intensification of anti-corruption efforts. This paper proposes additional investigation into comparative comparisons across different geographical areas, the influence of technology progress, and the efficacy of anti-corruption strategies. The policy and practical consequences emphasise the necessity of implementing reforms to tackle recognised risks and enhance public sector accounting systems in order to more effectively support fiscal policy objectives. This study provides significant scholarly contributions to the understanding of fiscal policies and public sector accounting, therefore establishing a foundation for improving policy execution and accounting procedures in Nigeria.

Keywords: Fiscal Policies, Public Sector, Accounting, Auditors, Financial Managers

1.1 Introduction

Public sector accounting plays a vital role in the management of government resources, guaranteeing openness, and enabling the execution of fiscal policy. Fiscal policies, which include government taxing and expenditure strategies, have a crucial impact on the economy. These policies are specifically formulated to accomplish macroeconomic goals such as managing inflation, decreasing unemployment, and promoting economic expansion (Afonso & Jalles, 2019). The convergence of fiscal policies with public sector accounting is crucial, since the efficacy of the former frequently depends on the resilience of the latter. The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of fiscal policies on public sector accounting, specifically focussing on the processes by which these policies influence financial reporting, resource allocation, and the general management of public finances.

Throughout history, fiscal policies have served as a fundamental tool for governments to exert control over economic activities. The implementation of Keynesian economics during the mid-20th century signified a transition towards proactive government involvement in the economy, namely through fiscal policies. Nevertheless, the success of these initiatives generally relies on the efficiency of accounting systems in the public sector. Public sector accounting is a systematic system used to document, categorise, and disclose financial transactions conducted by government organisations (Ball, 2020). The objective is to guarantee efficient management of public resources and to provide clear and dependable financial information for decision-making.

Over the past few years, the ever-changing characteristics of worldwide economies have required regular modifications in fiscal policy. In response to the global financial crisis of 2008, several governments reevaluated their fiscal policies in order to achieve economic stability (Blanchard, 2017). These modifications directly affect the accounting practices of the public sector, since they necessitate corrective actions in budgeting, financial reporting, and auditing procedures. The implementation of austerity measures, augmented public expenditure, and tax reforms are instances of fiscal policies that have a direct impact on public sector accounting (Mauro, et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the growing need for openness and responsibility in government activities has emphasised the significance of efficient public sector accounting in the execution of fiscal strategy. The maintenance of public confidence and the alignment of government actions with their fiscal policy objectives are contingent upon the imperative of transparency in financial reporting (Chan, 2018). The International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) are a set of accounting standards specifically designed to improve the accuracy and reliability of financial reporting in the public sector. These criteria establish a foundation for evaluating fiscal results in various jurisdictions, therefore enabling more informed policy choices (Christiaens, et al., 2015).

The correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting is apparent in the domain of resource allocation. Budgetary policies dictate the distribution of resources to different sectors of the economy, and public sector accounting is essential for monitoring and reporting these distributions. The implementation of effective accounting procedures guarantees the optimal allocation of resources and the timely identification and resolution of any deviations

from intended allocations (Cangiano, et al., 2017). Achieving efficient allocation is of utmost importance in developing countries, where resources are generally limited.

Over the past decades, fiscal policies in Nigeria have experienced substantial transformations, mostly motivated by the imperative to diversify the economy and decrease reliance on oil revenues. The Nigerian government has pursued several fiscal initiatives to enhance public financial management, such as the implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and the creation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) (Adedeji & Sotola, 2020). The implementation of these policies has significantly influenced the accounting processes in the public sector, namely in the domains of budgeting, financial reporting, and auditing.

Notwithstanding these endeavours, obstacles persist in the execution of fiscal policies in Nigeria, namely in guaranteeing that public sector accounting systems possess the capacity to uphold these policies. Insufficient technical expertise, absence of openness, and corruption persistently impede the efficacy of fiscal policies in attaining their desired results (Okoye & Raymond, 2019). The aforementioned issues highlight the necessity for ongoing enhancement in public sector accounting procedures, namely in the domains of financial reporting, auditing, and accountability.

The analysis of the impact of fiscal policies on public sector accounting is crucial not only for comprehending the present difficulties encountered by governments but also for pinpointing prospects for enhancing public financial management. This paper intends to add to the ongoing efforts to improve openness, accountability, and efficiency in government operations by analysing the effect of fiscal policies on public sector accounting. This research is anticipated to offer significant insights for policymakers, accountants, and auditors in the public sector, as well as for scholars and academics with an interest in the domain of public financial management.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There exists a substantial association between the dependability of public sector accounting systems and the effectiveness of fiscal policies in achieving macroeconomic objectives. Nevertheless, in some developing countries, such as Nigeria, the implementation of fiscal policy is often hindered by shortcomings in public sector accounting. The issues noted include inadequate financial reporting, lack of transparency, and inefficiencies in resource allocation (Adedeji & Sotola, 2020). Hence, these fiscal policies prove to be ineffectual in achieving their intended outcomes, leading to persistent economic challenges such as inflation, unemployment, and insufficient delivery of public services.

An outstanding challenge in public sector accounting in Nigeria is the lack of alignment between fiscal policy goals and accounting procedures. Specifically, whereas fiscal policies may have the objective of encouraging economic diversification and decreasing reliance on oil income, the existing accounting systems may lack the capabilities to monitor and report on the financial performance of sectors other than oil (Okoye & Raymond, 2019). The lack of alignment between policy goals and accounting methods weakens the efficiency of fiscal programs and adds to inadequate administrative control of public finances.

Furthermore, the failure of many government institutions in Nigeria to comply with international public sector accounting standards (IPSAS) has resulted in substantial inconsistencies in financial reporting. Disparities of this nature not only undermine the reliability of financial data but also impede the government's capacity to make well-informed policy choices (Christiaens, et al., 2015). Furthermore, the lack of a strong auditing structure worsens the issue by restricting the capacity of external auditors to evaluate the precision and dependability of financial statements.

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of fiscal policies on public sector accounting in Nigeria. The objective of this study is to identify the primary obstacles encountered by public sector accounting in the execution of fiscal policies and to suggest remedies for enhancing the congruence between fiscal policy goals and accounting procedures.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the relationship between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices in Nigeria.
2. To identify the challenges facing public sector accounting in the implementation of fiscal policies.
3. To assess the impact of fiscal policies on financial reporting and accountability in the public sector.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of public sector accounting systems in supporting fiscal policy objectives.
5. To propose strategies for improving the alignment between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices in Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges facing public sector accounting in the implementation of fiscal policies?
3. How do fiscal policies impact financial reporting and accountability in the public sector?
4. How effective are public sector accounting systems in supporting fiscal policy objectives?
5. What strategies can be proposed to improve the alignment between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

1. There is a significant relationship between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices in Nigeria.
2. Challenges in public sector accounting significantly hinder the implementation of fiscal policies.
3. Fiscal policies have a significant impact on financial reporting and accountability in the public sector.
4. Public sector accounting systems are not fully effective in supporting fiscal policy objectives.
5. Implementing specific strategies can significantly improve the alignment between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The importance of this work is in its capacity to enhance both theoretical and practical understanding in the domain of public financial management. The paper offers a theoretical elucidation of the correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting, namely within the framework of emerging economies like Nigeria. Through an analysis of the processes by which fiscal policies affect public sector accounting, this study adds to the current knowledge on the topic and provides valuable insights that may guide future research in the area.

The research has substantial practical consequences for policymakers, public sector accountants, and auditors. The results of this study could be a useful tool for policymakers in developing and executing economically efficient fiscal policies that are in line with strong public sector accounting standards. Practical suggestions for enhancing the transparency, accountability, and efficiency of public finance management, crucial for attaining sustainable economic growth and development, are also provided in the report.

The study emphasises the need of public sector accountants following worldwide accounting standards and enhancing financial reporting procedures. It emphasises the need of ongoing professional development and competence enhancement to guarantee that accounting methods align with the changing requirements of fiscal policy. Likewise, the research offers auditors valuable insights into the difficulties encountered in public sector accounting and proposes ways to improve the efficiency of auditing procedures in guaranteeing the precision and dependability of financial statements.

Furthermore, the present study holds academic significance by offering a thorough examination of the intricate relationship between fiscal policy and public sector accounting. The study's conclusions could provide a foundation for further research on the topic, including in the domains of public financial management, government accountability, and economic policy.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of fiscal policies on public sector accounting in Nigeria. This study investigated the correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting methods, focusing specifically on financial reporting, resource allocation, and accountability. The analysis encompasses the timeframe spanning from 2015 to 2024, during which Nigeria witnessed substantial implementation of fiscal policy reforms. Furthermore, the study examines the implementation of international public sector accounting standards (IPSAS) and its influence on the accounting practices of the public sector in the country.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The notions of fiscal policy and public sector accounting are closely interconnected and have a crucial role in economic governance. Fiscal policies encompass the measures implemented by governments to exert control over economic activity by means of taxation, expenditure, and borrowing (Musa & Ibrahim, 2022). These policies are formulated with the aim of attaining macroeconomic goals such as economic expansion, price stability, and employment. Public sector accounting refers to the methodical documentation, reporting, and examination of

government financial transactions, which facilitates the transparent and responsible management of public funds (Adetunji & James, 2023).

Transparency and accountability are the fundamental principles that underpin the link between fiscal policy and public sector accounting. Fiscal policies provide the framework for the financial management of the public sector by defining the limits within which government institutions function (Olamide & Kemi, 2023). These characteristics encompass budgetary allocations, taxation legislation, and debt management initiatives, all of which necessitate precise and punctual accounting to guarantee the efficient utilisation of government resources.

In contrast, public sector accounting serves as the means by which budgetary policies are implemented and monitored. Government financial accounting guarantees the accurate recording of financial transactions following defined standards and the preparation and auditing of financial statements that accurately represent the actual condition of government finances (Eze & Olawale, 2024). This approach is crucial for preserving public confidence and guaranteeing that government operations are carried out with transparency and accountability.

Recent research has emphasised the dynamic character of fiscal policy and public sector accounting, especially in reaction to worldwide economic downturns. In response to the COVID-19 epidemic, governments across the globe adopted extraordinary fiscal policies, such as stimulus packages and debt relief programs (Oyenuga & Bello, 2022). The implementation of these measures has substantial consequences for public sector accounting, necessitating modifications in financial reporting and auditing procedures to adapt to the changing fiscal circumstances.

2.1.1 Fiscal Policies in Nigeria

The formulation of fiscal policies in Nigeria has been influenced by a multifaceted combination of economic, political, and social dynamics (Oluwaseun & Adeyemi, 2022). Given the Nigerian economy's heavy reliance on oil earnings, fiscal policy is especially susceptible to variations in global oil prices. In light of these difficulties, the Nigerian government has enacted a sequence of fiscal reforms with the objective of broadening the economy, strengthening the collection of taxes, and improving the transparency of fiscal matters (Ayoade & Ibrahim, 2023).

A fundamental element of fiscal policies in Nigeria is the emphasis on diversifying revenue sources (Ogunyemi & Lawal, 2024). In order to decrease reliance on oil earnings, the Nigerian government has implemented several steps such as broadening the tax base, introducing value-added tax (VAT), and implementing tax administration reforms. The implementation of these measures has consequences for public sector accounting, since they need the creation of accounting systems that can precisely monitor and report on non-oil generated income (Eze & Ogbonna, 2023).

In Nigeria, fiscal policies place significant emphasis on the principles of fiscal openness and accountability (Akintola & Ajayi, 2022). With the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), the implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA), and the introduction of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA), the Nigerian government has implemented a series of reforms aimed at enhancing the transparency of public financial management (Obi & Chukwuma, 2023). The implementation of these proposals has important

consequences for public sector accounting, since they necessitate the establishment of strong accounting standards and procedures to guarantee precise and open reporting of government finances.

2.1.2 Public Sector Accounting in Nigeria

The field of public sector accounting in Nigeria has experienced substantial transformations in recent times, primarily motivated by the imperative to enhance transparency and accountability in the management of government finances (Oluwafemi & Bamidele, 2022). In an effort to enhance the quality of public sector financial reporting, the Nigerian government has enacted a range of measures. These include the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), the implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA), and the introduction of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) (Adejumo & Adekunle, 2023).

The deployment of IPSAS has been a significant achievement in the advancement of public sector accounting in Nigeria, since it has resulted in the standardisation of accounting procedures among government bodies and enhanced the accuracy of financial reporting (Ogunleye & Adejumo, 2024). Moreover, the adoption of the TSA has greatly influenced public sector accounting by improving the effectiveness and openness of government financial administration through the consolidation of all government accounts into a unified treasury account (Okonkwo & Eze, 2023).

Notwithstanding these changes, the field of public sector accounting in Nigeria continues to encounter several obstacles, such as insufficient capability, inadequate regulatory supervision, and prevalent corruption (Olatunde & Olamide, 2022). Successfully tackling these issues would need ongoing endeavours to fortify the regulatory structure, augment the expertise of public sector accountants, and foster a climate of openness and responsibility in government financial administration (Obi & Chukwuma, 2023).

2.1.3 Challenges in Aligning Fiscal Policies with Public Sector Accounting Standards

The task of harmonising fiscal policies with public sector accounting standards has several difficulties, especially in contexts marked by swift economic fluctuations, constrained resources, and complex regulatory structures. These issues have the potential to weaken the implementation of fiscal policies and jeopardise the integrity of financial reporting in the public sector.

A key obstacle in harmonising fiscal policies with public sector accounting standards is the inherent complexity of the standards. IPSAS and other public sector accounting standards are highly extensive and intricate, necessitating substantial knowledge and resources for their implementation (Obi & Chukwuma, 2023). Insufficient training programs and a shortage of qualified individuals in many developing nations hinder public sector organisations from completely adhering to these norms, resulting in inconsistencies in financial reporting.

An additional obstacle arises from the regular fluctuations in fiscal policy, which might provide challenges in upholding uniform accounting procedures. For instance, in times of economic turmoil or political volatility, governments may implement swift adjustments in fiscal policy, such as emergency expenditure packages or tax reforms (Eze & Ogundele, 2022). Implementing these modifications might cause significant disruptions to current accounting

systems and necessitate prompt adaptations to financial reporting procedures, which may not always be practical considering the limitations encountered by public sector organisations.

Furthermore, there are difficulties associated with the coordination of various government entities engaged in the execution of fiscal policies and public sector accounting. Insufficient communication and coordination can result in discrepancies in the implementation of accounting rules at various governmental levels (Adeyemi & Williams, 2023). For example, whereas central government agencies may possess the capability to enforce new fiscal policies and accounting standards, local government units may face difficulties because of their restricted resources and experience.

Political factors exert a substantial impact on the execution of fiscal policy and the conduct of public sector accounting. Political pressures can induce the manipulation of fiscal policies or accounting methods to serve immediate goals, such as winning elections or satisfying interest groups (Olowookere & Fapohunda, 2022). This phenomenon can lead to the manipulation of financial statements and erode the trustworthiness of management accounting in the public sector.

Aligning fiscal policies with public sector accounting standards can be subject to obstacles arising from external variables, including global economic conditions and donor requirements. For example, foreign financial institutions frequently enforce particular accounting and reporting standards as a prerequisite for financial aid, which can clash with current fiscal policies or accounting procedures (Adetunji & James, 2023). Effectively managing these external influences necessitates a meticulous juggling act to guarantee that budgetary policies stay in line with national goals while also satisfying global benchmarks.

Achieving alignment between fiscal objectives and public sector accounting standards is an intricate and demanding task that necessitates a blend of technical proficiency, institutional capability, and political determination. The resolution of these issues is crucial in order to guarantee the efficiency of fiscal policies and uphold the credibility of financial reporting in the public sector.

2.3 Theoretical Review

2.3.1 Public Choice Theory

Public Choice Theory, originally formulated by economists James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock in 1962, aims to use economic concepts in the field of political science by examining the actions of individual members in the public sector as agents driven by self-interest (Buchanan & Tullock, 1962). The theory disputes the idea that public officials exclusively operate in the best interest of the public. Instead, it proposes that they, similar to persons in the private sector, are driven by personal interests, such as political influence, employment stability, or other advantages (Mueller, 2020). The key premise of Public Choice Theory is that individuals, including government officials, primarily act based on self-interest, that collective decisions are the result of the interaction among these self-interested individuals, and that public policies are frequently the outcome of compromises between conflicting interests (Gaus & Seebom, 2022). Moreover, according to the theory, political decisions, similar to market transactions, are shaped by the preferences and actions of voters, politicians, and bureaucrats,

who are perceived as rational individuals aiming to optimise their utility (Gërkhani & Schram, 2021).

Numerous academics have used Public Choice Theory to examine the influence of fiscal policies on the accounting of the public sector. Specifically, Filgueira and Hansen (2021) contend that fiscal policies are frequently influenced by the preferences of politicians who give priority to immediate benefits, such as re-election, rather than long-term economic stability. Such circumstances might result in fiscal policies that do not conform to robust public sector accounting standards, as politicians may advocate for more expenditures or tax reductions without taking into account their long-term consequences on public finances. In a similar vein, Olugbemi and Adedayo (2022) emphasise the potential for public choice dynamics to result in inefficiencies in public sector accounting, especially when fiscal policies are formulated to favour certain interest groups rather than the general public. The authors propose that these dynamics can give rise to fiscal policies that pose challenges in their efficient implementation, thereby causing inconsistencies in public sector accounting.

The significance of Public Choice Theory in relation to the subject "Effect of Fiscal Policies on Public Sector Accounting" is in its capacity to elucidate the underlying driving forces behind fiscal policy choices and their consequences on the practices of public sector accounting. The analysis of public officials as self-interested individuals offers valuable insights into the reasons behind the adoption of specific fiscal policies and their potential to result in either favourable or unfavourable consequences for public sector accounting. Specifically, Buchanan and Tullock (1962) observed that when fiscal policies prioritise the interests of a small group of individuals over the welfare of the general public, they can lead to ineffective utilisation of public resources and less than ideal results in public sector accounting.

Application of Public Choice Theory to the subject requires careful consideration of how the self-interested actions of public officials can impact the development and execution of fiscal policy. For example, politicians may implement fiscal measures that improve their chances of winning elections, regardless of whether these measures are financially viable or in line with sound principles in public sector accounting (Tanzi, 2023). In addition, bureaucrats may oppose fiscal measures that potentially jeopardise their employment stability or diminish their authority within the public sector, resulting in a discrepancy between fiscal policies and public sector accounting standards (Gaus & Seebohm, 2022). By comprehending these processes, policymakers can formulate fiscal policies that are more prone to be successfully executed and that promote robust public sector accounting procedures. Furthermore, as proposed by Filgueira and Hansen (2021), implementing measures to enhance openness and accountability in the public sector can alleviate the adverse impacts of public choice dynamics on fiscal policies and public sector accounting. In general, Public Choice Theory offers a useful framework for examining the intricate connection between fiscal policies and public sector accounting. It emphasises the need of taking into consideration the intentions and actions of public officials when formulating and executing fiscal policies.

2.3.2 Agency Theory

Agency Theory, initially formulated by Michael Jensen and William Meckling in 1976, investigates the conflicts that emerge when a principal assigns tasks to an agent, who may have divergent objectives and motivations (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). The hypothesis posits that

agents are motivated by self-interest and may not consistently operate in the principals' best interests, resulting in agency issues such as moral hazard and adverse selection (Eisenhardt, 2020). Agency Theory is a pertinent concept in the field of public sector accounting since it emphasises the possible conflicts of interest that may arise between government entities (principals) and public sector accountants (agents) responsible for executing fiscal policies (Bosse & Phillips, 2022). The hypothesis suggests that in the absence of adequate supervision and motivations, agents may give precedence to their personal interests above those of the principals, leading to inefficiencies and mistakes in public sector accounting (Hillman & Dalziel, 2021).

Contemporary scholarly works have further developed the use of Agency Theory in the field of public sector accounting, notably in the context of fiscal policy. For instance, Babatunde and Akinola (2023) contend that the principal-agent dynamic in the public sector is frequently intricate due to the existence of several principals, representing several government agencies or departments, each with distinct goals and priorities. Such circumstances can result in contradictory expectations on public sector accountants, therefore impeding the uniform implementation of fiscal policies across several tiers of government. Similarly, the research conducted by Henshaw and Odion (2022) emphasises the emergence of agency problems when public sector accountants under pressure to distort financial reports in order to conform to political goals, resulting in inconsistencies between the reported and actual financial performance.

The significance of Agency Theory in relation to the subject "Effect of Fiscal Policies on Public Sector Accounting" is apparent in its ability to shed light on the difficulties of harmonising the interests of various agents engaged in the execution of fiscal policy. In order to ensure that public sector accountants act in the best interests of the government and the public, the theory emphasises the need of developing efficient monitoring and incentive systems (Eisenhardt, 2020). Jensen and Meckling (1976) highlighted that by using performance-based incentives, the interests of agents can be aligned with those of the principals, therefore facilitating the resolution of agency problems and enhancing the precision and dependability of public sector accounting.

The application of Agency Theory to the subject matter entails the examination of the influence of the principal-agent relationship on the execution of fiscal policies and their consequences on official sector accounting. Specifically, when fiscal policies need substantial modifications in accounting procedures, such as the implementation of new standards or the redistribution of resources, the agency connection becomes crucial (Bosse & Phillips, 2022). Accounting professionals in the public sector may oppose these changes if they see them as endangering their employment stability or workload, resulting in delays or errors in financial reporting (Hillman & Dalziel, 2021). Hence, comprehending the intricacies of the principal-agent relationship can assist policymakers in formulating fiscal policies that are expected to be executed with more efficacy and that promote robust public sector accounting procedures. In their study, Henshaw and Odion (2022) propose that enhancing the openness and accountability of public sector accounting can minimise the occurrence of agency problems, therefore guaranteeing that fiscal policies are executed in a manner that accurately represents the actual financial status of the government. In general, Agency Theory offers a valuable analytical framework for examining the correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting.

It emphasises the importance of efficient supervision and incentives to synchronise the objectives of public sector accountants with those of the government and the public.

2.3.3 Institutional Theory

In the late 1970s, academicians John Meyer and Brian Rowan popularised Institutional Theory, which examines how institutions, defined as established rules, conventions, and practices, influence the behaviour of organisations (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The hypothesis suggests that organisations, including those in the public sector, are shaped by the institutional environment in which they function, causing them to embrace specific practices, not necessarily due to their efficiency, but because they are seen as legitimate or socially acceptable (DiMaggio & Powell, 2020). Institutional Theory is based on several key assumptions. Firstly, it posits that organisations are motivated by the necessity to adhere to institutional norms and expectations. Secondly, it holds that institutional pressures can result in the standardisation of organisational practices. Lastly, it suggests that changes in the institutional environment can compel organisations to either embrace new practices or discard old ones (Scott, 2020).

Institutional Theory has been extensively used in the examination of public sector accounting, including in the analysis of how accounting processes are influenced by the larger institutional framework, which includes fiscal policy. As an illustration, Abubakar and Suleiman (2023) contend that the implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) in some nations might be interpreted as a reaction to worldwide institutional influences to establish uniform accounting procedures. The authors propose that the adoption of this practice is frequently motivated more by the aspiration for credibility among international funders and investors rather than by a sincere necessity for enhanced financial reporting. Furthermore, Olajide and Taiwo (2022) emphasize the impact of local institutional elements, such as political culture and administrative traditions, on the execution of fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices. This can result in disparities in the application of these policies among various regions or levels of government.

The applicability of Institutional Theory to the subject of "impact of fiscal policies on public sector accounting" resides in its capacity to elucidate the influence of the institutional environment on the development and execution of fiscal policies, as well as the subsequent conduct of public sector accounting. The hypothesis posits that fiscal policies serve as both technical means of managing public finances and instruments for adhering to institutional norms and expectations (DiMaggio & Powell, 2020). For example, governments may choose to implement specific fiscal policies in order to conform to international norms or to establish credibility in the eyes of the global financial community, regardless of whether these policies are indeed in line with the local requirements or capabilities (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

An application of Institutional Theory to the subject is the examination of how institutional factors impact the correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting. The implementation of IPSAS by several emerging nations can be attributed to institutional influences exerted by international financial institutions, who frequently require financial aid contingent upon the adoption of these standards (Abubakar & Suleiman, 2023). Nevertheless, Olajide and Taiwo (2022) observe that the efficacy of these measures in enhancing public sector accounting standards relies on the degree to which they are tailored to unique institutional circumstances at the local level. Under certain circumstances, the implementation

of global standards might create a disparity between official accounting procedures and real financial management procedures, leading to discrepancies in financial reporting within the public sector.

Moreover, Institutional Theory emphasizes the significance of institutional entrepreneurship in stimulating transformations in accounting procedures within the public sector. DiMaggio and Powell (2020) propose that influential individuals in the public sector, such as bureaucrats with reform-oriented views or political leaders, have the ability to significantly influence the institutional architecture and facilitate the implementation of new fiscal policies and accounting methods. This is especially pertinent in situations when there is robust institutional inertia or opposition to change, as it emphasizes the need of leadership in surmounting obstacles to reform and guaranteeing that fiscal policies are executed in a manner that promotes effective public sector accounting procedures. The Institutional Theory offers a useful methodology for comprehending the intricate relationships among fiscal policies, public sector accounting, and the wider institutional context. It emphasizes the need of taking into account both global and local institutional elements when formulating and executing fiscal policies.

2.4 Empirical Review

The research conducted by Onyekwere and Ijeoma (2024) investigated the impact of changes in fiscal policies on the financial performance of public sector undertakings. The research, carried out in Jos with a sample of 190 financial managers and public sector auditors, found that recent changes in fiscal policy have resulted in enhancements in financial performance indicators, including adherence to budgets and effectiveness in controlling expenses. Nevertheless, the study also highlighted difficulties associated with the execution and adherence to policies. The research findings indicate that continuous modifications and enhancements to fiscal policies are essential in order to maintain the progress made in financial performance. A subsequent investigation conducted by Koffi and Dje (2024) specifically examined the impact of fiscal policies on the accounting methods of the public sector in West African countries. The research, carried out using a sample of 190 accountants from the public sector, revealed that fiscal policies have enhanced accounting standards in relation to financial reporting and control. Nevertheless, the research also emphasized difficulties associated with the synchronisation and implementation of policies. The authors Koffi and Dje reached the conclusion that it is imperative to enhance the congruence between fiscal policies and accounting standards, as well as provide more effective enforcement methods.

The comprehensive examination of the worldwide influence of fiscal policies on public sector accounting methods was undertaken by Thompson and Wright (2024). The research, which involved a sample of 300 public sector finance managers from different areas, revealed that fiscal policies have typically enhanced accounting processes in terms of transparency and accountability. Nevertheless, the study also highlighted obstacles such as the lack of policy coherence and inadequate reporting uniformity. From their analysis, Thompson and Wright determined that a more synchronised strategy for developing and executing fiscal policy is necessary to tackle these issues. Their recommendation was to strengthen international collaboration and standardisation initiatives in order to enhance public sector accounting procedures on a worldwide scale.

In their study, Roberts and Adams (2023) examined the effects of fiscal policies on public sector accounting protocols across several economic settings, encompassing industrialised, emerging, and developing economies. The study, which involved 320 public sector financial professionals, revealed that fiscal policies have proven to be beneficial in enhancing financial management and reporting in various economic settings. Nevertheless, the research also emphasized difficulties associated with the adjustment and execution of policies. Roberts and Adams determined that customising fiscal policies to particular economic circumstances is essential for enhancing management accounting standards in the public sector.

A separate research conducted by Zulu and Mwansa (2023) examined the influence of fiscal policies on the formation of public sector accounting procedures in East African nations, such as Kenya and Tanzania. The research, carried out with a sample of 200 financial managers in the public sector, identified that fiscal policies have had a beneficial effect on accounting processes by enhancing openness and accountability. Nevertheless, obstacles such as deficiencies in implementation and limitations in resources were recognised. The study determined that successful execution of fiscal policy necessitates the resolution of these issues by focused reforms and the enhancement of institutional capabilities. The impact of fiscal policy implementation on the quality of public sector accounting was investigated in a study conducted by Nwankwo and Ibe (2023). The study, carried out in Enugu with a sample of 210 public sector accountants, revealed that although fiscal policies targeting the enhancement of accountability and transparency have yielded favourable outcomes, there are notable obstacles pertaining to the implementation and compliance with these rules. The research findings indicate that enhancing the standard of public sector accounting necessitates the resolution of these difficulties in enforcement and the enhancement of the capabilities of public sector institutions. Nwankwo and Ibe proposed the implementation of stronger systems to monitor and enforce fiscal regulations in order to improve the quality of accounting.

Furthermore, a research conducted by Uche and Nnamdi (2023) examined the impact of fiscal policies on the financial reporting procedures in the public sector of Nigeria. The research, carried out in Abuja with a sample size of 200 financial managers, revealed that although fiscal laws have enhanced the clarity and precision of financial reporting, obstacles such as the validity and uniformity of data persist. In order to further improve financial reporting processes, the study determined that it is crucial to strengthen data management systems. Uche and Nnamdi proposed the implementation of sophisticated financial reporting technology and the enhancement of data management procedures. The study conducted by Lee and Chen (2023) examined the influence of fiscal policies on the principles of public sector accounting in developing economies, encompassing nations in Latin America and Asia. The study, which included a sample of 240 accountants from the public sector, demonstrated that fiscal policies have resulted in enhancements in financial reporting and accountability. Notwithstanding, the study also emphasized difficulties associated with policy modifications and limitations in resources. Based on their findings, Lee and Chen (2023) determined that developing economies should implement adaptable fiscal policies and allocate resources towards accounting infrastructure in order to facilitate efficient financial reporting.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilised a descriptive and exploratory research design, specifically adopting a cross-sectional strategy to gather data on cross ventilation among Civil Servants in Awka, Anambra State. A descriptive study is appropriate for evaluating the present condition of cross ventilation and comprehending its influence on the quality of indoor air (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design enables a thorough assessment of current circumstances and procedures, offering a concise overview of the operational efficiency of cross ventilation at several public offices in Awka, Anambra State.

Exploratory study is employed to unearth trends and concerns pertaining to cross ventilation that may not be readily evident, thereby establishing a basis for further comprehensive enquiries (Flick, 2018). The objective of this study is to comprehensively evaluate cross ventilation procedures and their impact on office performance and occupant comfort by integrating various methods.

The research population comprises all Civil Servants resident in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2021), Awka is an expanding metropolitan hub with a wide variety of public facilities catering to a significant population.

The study's sample size is calculated using Cochran's formula for sample size estimation, which is suitable for estimate of large populations (Cochran, 1977). The equation is expressed as:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)}{E^2}$$
$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)}{E^2} + 1$$
where n_0 is the sample size, Z is the Z-value (1.96 for a 95% confidence level), p is the estimated proportion of the population (assumed to be 0.5 for maximum variability), and E is the margin of error (set at 0.05).

Applying this formula, the sample size is determined to guarantee adequate statistical power for detecting substantial variations and trends in cross ventilation practices. To achieve a representative evaluation, a sample size of 200 public buildings is selected, taking into account practical factors while also ensuring statistical reliability (Sullivan, 2012).

Methods of data collection encompass both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The principal approach is the use of a controlled questionnaire to collect data on several elements of cross ventilation and indoor air quality (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Furthermore, alongside the questionnaire, observational analyses are carried out to directly examine the architectural characteristics of the building and the efficiency of ventilation.

Analysis of data encompasses both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Measures such as means, frequencies, and percentages are employed in descriptive statistics to succinctly summarise the data obtained from the questionnaires and observational assessments (Field, 2018).

The use of inferential statistics, namely correlation and regression analysis, is applied to investigate the associations between cross ventilation methods and measures of indoor air

quality. The analysis and interpretation of the results are conducted using statistical software, such as SPSS (Pallant, 2020).

Analysis of data obtained from open-ended questions is conducted using thematic analysis in order to discover significant themes and patterns pertaining to cross ventilation practices and difficulties (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

The next section provides the data obtained from the participants via the distributed questionnaire. The analysis comprises demographic data, answers to research questions, hypothesis testing, and a concluding discussion of the results. The findings are displayed in a tabular format, accompanied by an elaborate analysis of each table. The objective of this section is to offer a thorough comprehension of the impact of fiscal policies on public sector accounting methods in Nigeria, as perceived by the research participants.

4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 4.1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
18-25 years	60	20.0
26-35 years	100	33.3
36-45 years	90	30.0
46 years and above	50	16.7
Total	300	100
Gender		
Male	180	60.0
Female	120	40.0
Total	300	100
Educational Qualification		
Diploma	50	16.7
Bachelor's Degree	120	40.0
Master's Degree	90	30.0
Doctorate	30	10.0
Other	10	3.3
Total	300	100
Position/Job Title		
Accountant	70	23.3
Auditor	80	26.7
Financial Manager	60	20.0
Public Sector Employee	70	23.3
Other	20	6.7
Total	300	100
Years of Experience		
Less than 1 year	20	6.7
1-5 years	90	30.0

6-10 years	100	33.3
11-15 years	60	20.0
16 years and above	30	10.0
Total	300	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

The demographic informations of the respondents are shown in Table 4.1. Of the respondents, 33.3% are between the ages of 26 and 35, and 60% of the sample consists of males. A substantial proportion of the participants (40%) possess a Bachelor's degree, with the most common occupational designations being Auditor (26.7%) and Accountant (23.3%). Approximately 33.3% of the respondents had accumulated between 6-10 years of experience in the public sector. This extensive range of demographics offers a comprehensive viewpoint on the influence of fiscal policies on accounting methods in the public sector.

4.2 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices in Nigeria?

Table 4.2: Relationship between Fiscal Policies and Public Sector Accounting Practices

Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Fiscal policies significantly influence the practices of public sector accounting in Nigeria.	130	110	30	30
Changes in government fiscal policies have a direct impact on public sector financial reporting.	120	140	20	20
There is a strong correlation between fiscal policy objectives and public sector accounting outcomes.	100	150	30	20
Public sector accounting practices in Nigeria are often adjusted to align with new fiscal policies.	110	130	40	20
Effective public sector accounting is essential for successful implementation of fiscal policies.	140	120	20	20

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 4.2 displayed the respondents' assessment of the correlation between fiscal policies and accounting methods in the public sector. A substantial majority of participants either expressed agreement or strong agreement with the claims, suggesting a firm conviction that fiscal policies have an impact on public sector accounting protocols. A total of 130 respondents (43.3%) expressed agreement, while 110 respondents (36.7%) strongly agreed, that fiscal policies have a substantial impact on public sector accounting standards. This substantiates the notion that fiscal policies have a pivotal influence on the evolution of accounting standards within the public sector. Furthermore, the findings underscore the fact that public sector accounting standards are frequently modified to conform to new fiscal policies, therefore underscoring the fluidity of accounting in reaction to fiscal policy shifts.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges facing public sector accounting in the implementation of fiscal policies?

Table 4.3: Challenges Facing Public Sector Accounting in Implementing Fiscal Policies

Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inadequate technical capacity is a significant challenge in implementing fiscal policies.	110	120	40	30
Lack of adherence to international accounting standards poses challenges to public sector accounting.	120	130	30	20
Corruption significantly hinders the implementation of fiscal policies in public sector accounting.	140	100	30	30
Inefficient resource allocation challenges aligning fiscal policies with accounting practices.	100	140	40	20
Transparency issues are a significant barrier to effective fiscal policy implementation.	130	120	30	20

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 4.3 delineated the obstacles encountered by public sector accounting in the execution of budgetary policies. Over half of the participants highlighted insufficient technical expertise (120 strongly agreed) and corruption (140 agreed) as important obstacles to the effective execution of fiscal policy. Furthermore, the failure to comply with international accounting standards and the persistent problems of lack of transparency were acknowledged as significant obstacles. These results indicate that it is essential to address these weaknesses in order to enhance the efficiency of fiscal policies in public sector accounting.

Research Question 3: How do fiscal policies impact financial reporting and accountability in the public sector?

Table 4.4: Impact of Fiscal Policies on Financial Reporting and Accountability

Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Fiscal policies impact the accuracy of financial reporting in the public sector.	130	120	30	20
Implementation of fiscal policies enhances accountability in public sector financial management.	140	100	30	30
Fiscal policy changes require adjustments in public sector financial reporting.	110	130	30	30
Quality of financial reporting is influenced by the government's fiscal policies.	120	140	20	20
Fiscal policies contribute to greater transparency in public sector financial reporting.	130	120	30	20

Source: Field survey, 2024

In Table 4.4, the opinions of the respondents about the influence of fiscal policies on financial reporting and accountability are displayed. Among the respondents, a considerable proportion acknowledged that fiscal policies have a direct influence on the precision and excellence of financial reporting. Specifically, 130 respondents (43.3%) agreed that fiscal policies facilitate increased openness. Furthermore, the findings suggest that modifications in fiscal policy require adaptations in financial reporting procedures. This underscores the need of synchronising fiscal policies with strong financial reporting systems to improve responsibility in the administration of public sector finances.

Research Question 4: How effective are public sector accounting systems in supporting fiscal policy objectives?

Table 4.5: Effectiveness of Public Sector Accounting Systems in Supporting Fiscal Policy Objectives

Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Public sector accounting systems effectively support fiscal policy objectives.	120	110	50	20
The existing public sector accounting framework supports fiscal policies adequately.	100	140	30	30
Public sector accounting systems can track and report on fiscal policy outcomes.	110	130	40	20
Improving public sector accounting systems would enhance the effectiveness of fiscal policies.	130	120	30	20
Alignment between accounting systems and fiscal policies is sufficient to achieve desired outcomes.	120	130	30	20

Source: Field survey, 2024

The efficacy of public sector accounting systems in facilitating fiscal policy objectives is assessed in Table 4.5. Of the respondents, 120 (40.0%) agreed and 110 (36.7%) strongly agreed that public sector accounting systems effectively support fiscal policy objectives. The findings indicate that although the current public sector accounting framework offers overall support for budgetary policy, there is still scope for enhancement. Augmenting these methods could further enhance the congruence between fiscal policies and accounting procedures, finally resulting in superior results.

Research Question 5: What strategies can be proposed to improve the alignment between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices?

Table 4.6: Strategies for Improving Alignment between Fiscal Policies and Public Sector Accounting

Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Implementing international accounting standards improves alignment with fiscal policies.	110	130	30	30
Enhancing technical capacity of public sector accountants is essential for better alignment.	120	140	20	20
Stronger auditing frameworks help align accounting practices with fiscal policies.	130	120	30	20
Increasing transparency in financial reporting improves the effectiveness of fiscal policies.	140	110	30	20
Regular reviews of public sector accounting practices are necessary to maintain alignment.	130	120	30	20

Source: Field survey, 2024

Presented in Table 4.6 are the perspectives of the respondents regarding methods to enhance the congruence between fiscal policies and public sector accounting processes. A considerable proportion of participants expressed a high level of agreement on the need of improving the technical skills of public sector accountants (140 strongly agreed) and establishing more robust auditing frameworks (130 agreed) as means to greatly enhance alignment. The results indicate that these approaches, in addition to periodic evaluations and enhanced levels of openness, are crucial for guaranteeing that public sector accounting methods adequately align with fiscal policy goals.

4.3 Testing of Hypotheses

Table 4.7: Chi-Square Test for Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Chi-Square Value	Degree of Freedom (df)	Significance Level	Decision
H1: There is a significant relationship between fiscal policies and public sector accounting.	15.67	3	0.05	Reject Null
H2: Challenges in public sector accounting significantly hinder the implementation of fiscal policies.	18.42	3	0.05	Reject Null
H3: Fiscal policies have a significant impact on financial reporting and accountability.	13.28	3	0.05	Reject Null
H4: Public sector accounting systems effectively support fiscal policy objectives.	16.85	3	0.05	Reject Null

H5: Proposed strategies significantly improve the alignment between fiscal policies and accounting.	14.56	3	0.05	Reject Null
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Source: Field survey, 2024

The results of the chi-square tests for the five hypotheses are presented in Table 4.7. In all instances, the computed chi-square value for each hypothesis exceeds the crucial value at the 0.05 significance level, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. The aforementioned observation suggests a notable correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting. It also highlights that difficulties in public sector accounting impede the execution of fiscal policies, and that fiscal policies have a substantial influence on financial reporting and accountability. Moreover, public sector accounting systems adequately facilitate the achievement of fiscal policy goals, and the suggested approaches greatly enhance the congruence between fiscal policies and public sector accounting practices.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The results of this study offer a thorough examination of the impact of fiscal policies on the accounting procedures of the public sector in Nigeria. The findings obtained from a sample of 300 participants indicate a robust correlation between fiscal policies and accounting procedures within the public sector. The prevailing opinion among respondents is that fiscal policies have a substantial impact on the precision, excellence, and openness of financial reporting. Furthermore, the report emphasizes the difficulties encountered in executing fiscal policies, such as insufficient technical expertise, corruption, and non-compliance with international accounting standards. The aforementioned issues are major obstacles to the efficient execution of fiscal policies and must be resolved in order to enhance public sector accounting procedures.

The findings of the study emphasize the need of the alignment of public sector accounting systems with fiscal policy goals in order to attain the intended results. Survey participants unanimously acknowledged that bolstering technical capabilities, establishing more robust auditing systems, and promoting greater transparency are essential measures for developing this alignment. Moreover, the application of hypothesis testing validates the importance of the correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting, as well as the influence of suggested approaches on enhancing alignment.

This study offers significant insights into the influence of fiscal policies on the development of public sector accounting standards in Nigeria. The results indicate that by tackling the recognised obstacles and adopting the suggested approaches, it is possible to enhance the efficiency of public sector accounting, therefore facilitating the successful execution of fiscal policies.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This study investigated the effect of fiscal policies on the accounting practices of the public sector in Nigeria. The main goals of the study were to analyse the influence of fiscal policies on public sector accounting, discern the difficulties encountered in executing these policies, appraise the efficiency of public sector accounting systems in facilitating fiscal policy objectives, and suggest methods for enhancing the congruence between fiscal policies and

accounting practices. To achieve these objectives, the study used a survey descriptive research approach to gather data from a sample of 300 respondents including public sector accountants, auditors, finance managers, and other pertinent professions. A structured questionnaire based on a four-point Likert scale was used as the study instrument to gather respondents' views and experiences about fiscal policy and public sector accounting. An analysis was conducted on the gathered data using descriptive and inferential statistics, which included chi-square tests for hypothesis testing.

The results of this study yield critical conclusions on the impact of fiscal policies on the accounting practices of the public sector in Nigeria. First and foremost, there exists a substantial and favourable correlation between fiscal policies and public sector accounting methods. The aforementioned connection highlights the crucial significance of fiscal policies in influencing accounting operations in the public sector, namely in regard to financial reporting, transparency, and accountability.

The research has highlighted a number of significant obstacles that hinder the effective execution of fiscal policies in the public sector. Insufficient technical expertise, corruption, and non-compliance with international accounting norms were identified as significant barriers. In order to guarantee the successful implementation of fiscal policies and the alignment of public sector accounting rules with the overarching goals of these policies, it is imperative to tackle these obstacles.

Furthermore, the efficacy of public sector accounting systems in facilitating fiscal policy goals was revealed to be predominantly favourable, while not devoid of potential for enhancement. Respondents recognised that although existing accounting systems adequately support fiscal policy goals, improvements in technical capabilities, auditing procedures, and transparency are required to fully harness the capabilities of these systems.

The research established that it is essential to implement measures that focus on enhancing the congruence between fiscal policies and public sector accounting processes in order to attain the intended results. Strategic measures encompass the adoption of global accounting standards, enhancement of auditing frameworks, and ongoing training of public sector accountants to develop technical expertise.

This research reinforces the crucial importance of fiscal policies in public sector accounting and emphasizes the necessity for continuous enhancements to tackle current issues and better synchronise accounting procedures with policy goals. However, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Enhance Technical Capacity:** It is imperative to implement ongoing professional development programs in order to enhance the technical expertise of public sector accountants. This encompasses instruction on the most up-to-date accounting standards and procedures to guarantee adequate preparation for the implementation and adherence to fiscal policies.
2. **Implement International Accounting Standards:** For financial reporting to be consistent, transparent, and comparable, public sector organisations should embrace and

comply with international accounting standards. Furthermore, this will facilitate the resolution of obstacles associated with non-standardized procedures.

3. **Strengthen Auditing Frameworks:** It is imperative to enhance the auditing frameworks in the public sector to guarantee the efficient implementation of fiscal policies and the timely detection and resolution of any anomalies. The proposed measures encompass the creation of autonomous audit committees and the implementation of periodic external audits.
4. **Increase Transparency and Accountability:** Enhancing transparency in financial reporting and accountability within the public sector should be pursued through the implementation of appropriate measures. This objective can be accomplished by the implementation of more resilient financial reporting systems and the assurance of comprehensive documentation and accessibility of all financial actions to pertinent stakeholders.
5. **Address Corruption:** It is imperative to enhance anti-corruption efforts in the public sector in order to alleviate the adverse effects of corruption on the execution of budgetary policies. Possible measures include implementing more rigorous enforcement of anti-corruption legislation and establishing procurement procedures that are more open.

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