

Effective Performance and Accountability Reporting Challenges in Nigeria Public Sector: The Accountants and Other Professionals Perception

Peter-Mario Efesiri Efenyumi; Dheseviano Emiaso; Emmanuel Ikechukwu Okoye Ph.D

Department of Accountancy, Faculty of Management Sciences, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

There has been perceived weakness deeply rooted in corruption in the accountability of government fund as experienced in all facets of Nigeria public sector and consequential waste of national resources, loss of human capital and decay of economic infrastructure within the economy. It is evident that the people (electorates) are in a bad position and suffering socio-economically because of the lack of integrity and accountability in governments around the world, Nigeria in particular. This study empirically analyse the effective performance and accountability reporting challenges in the public sector of the Nigerian economy. 138 questionnaires were administered to the respondents but only 125 were returned (comprising 24 Directors and 55 Accountants/Auditors of Finance and Account from Ministries/Ministerial departments (79) and 46 Accountants/Auditors from LGAs), thereby representing ninety percent (90.6%) of the population and the data generated for this study were analysed using simple percentages, Z-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 20.0) version. The result shows that accrual basis of accounting significantly promote more effective performance and accountability reporting in Nigeria Public Sector and that there is significant relationship between improved accountability and performance reporting in Nigeria Public Sector and professional accounting bodies. The study concluded that the basic fundamental way for economic development is financial discipline and elimination of wastages of national resources in the public sector which is the direct function of accountability that it is rather unfortunate that the level of accountability experienced in the country is unacceptable due to weak accounting infrastructure, ineffective oversight bodies and the clog in the wheel of legal framework. The study recommended that Government should ensure that they create enabling environment for the development of professional Accountants and employed them in the civil service; and that would be achieved by retaining the existing through motivation and attracting the new with good working conditions; a proactive legislature and regulatory framework that should not only exist on paper but must be operational should be in place, thus giving the FRCN the operational right through adequate funding; the provisions of 1999 constitution authorising review of audited report by PAC should be strictly adhered to with punishment spelled out for non-compliance and also provide for the qualification of members of PAC. More so, there should be re orientation of members to encourage them to work in the public sector and the professional accounting bodies should motivate accounting students aspiring to be professionals while the civil society and organized labour unions should help create a more vibrant civil society so that they can balance the effects of bureaucratic actions.

KEYWORDS: *Accountability, Performance reporting, integrity, Wastage, National resources, Fiscal discipline, Corruption*

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of government accounting and financial control, as well as the need to improve its

development, is widely acknowledged around the world. An effective and transparent public sector financial reporting system can help achieve the aforementioned goals by increasing the reliability of financial data, increasing populace trust in the governance process, and attracting foreign capital investment. The reason is simple: government is the largest single corporate organization in most, if not all, countries and, in many cases, the center of economic activity. As a result of changes and the nature of society, government responsibilities have automatically transformed to a business-like character in the current period. To accommodate the massive burden imposed by government activities, expanded government accounting is required (Adeyemi & Olarewaju, 2019)

In Nigeria, because government ministries are not managed for profit, the focus of accounting in government is determining how much money was received and from what sources, how much money was spent and for what reasons, and what remains after meeting financial responsibilities.

Government's annual financial statements are the key way it accounts to its citizens and legislative body for their money. These statements help inform them by setting the annual budget and expressing priorities that last year's taxes, loans, and expenditure were used on. The statements show assets and liabilities in a timely efficient manner.

What do accountants do? Does the government have an adequate budget to keep costs down?

In order to account for increased financial sustainability and prevent fiscal crises, more information is needed with fiscal tracking software. According to Javed and Zhuquan (2018), Adopting world-class practices for accounting will result in better transparency. Lack of transparency has led to citizen anger about the use of their tax payer money, for example in Arab Springs. Governments need to be more accountable and transparent by providing accurate information and verifiable data about government expenses and revenues in order to ensure greater trust. As a result, the government of Nigeria decided as of 2010 to adopt International Public Sector Accounting Standards. The three tiers of Nigerian government- federal, state and local governments- are now required to adopt IPSAS in all accounting procedures. This ensures citizens can participate and ask questions and create checks and balances in governance. IPSAS is a solid accounting

standard that is recognized all over the world as an indicator for evaluating and improving public sector accounting (Hussein & Atuilik, 2019)

In Nigeria, 23 years of democracy have seen a lot of progress in trying to limiting and control government expenditures, with no overspending by its ministries and departments. However, the reality proves otherwise and the entirety Nigerian populace, the electorates, is not satisfied with the infrastructure state and services compared with the amount of resources so far invested in the country as shown in the annual budget; it is pushing the country to ruin.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

When in the process of creating a new model for an organization, it is important to think about transparency and accountability to ensure the process is fair. Obazee (2011) argues that cash basis of accounting does not provide an accurate picture of the government when it comes to decision-making purposes and accountability functions. He gives three reasons as to why accrual accounting is more beneficial than cash basis of accounting: It has been found to be advantageous in reporting government activities, it forces governments to allocate resources properly, and it ensures accountability.

In the view of European countries like Scotland, Russia, Denmark and Britain, accountability is assured, information on assets and liabilities are readily available, comparability of financial information becomes effective, costs are adequately matched with revenue and compliance reporting becomes possible and effective with accrual accounting system. (Izueke et al., 2020) Others countries like United States have equally questioned the use of accrual accounting system in public sector entities on the grounds that it is not budget compliant, operating costs are higher, more difficult to understand and operate, it delays the review and assessment of cash position, and it involves a subjective adjustment of financial statements. Based on the above, there is a continuing debate over the use of cash accounting and accrual accounting in public sector entities.

There has been perceived weakness deeply rooted in corruption in the accountability of government fund as experienced in all facets of Nigeria public sector and consequential waste of national resources, loss of human capital and decay of economic infrastructure within the economy. What could have led to the gap between the state of public infrastructure and services provided compared with the amount of resources so far invested in the country as shown in the annual budget? Are there no established institutions to manage the accountability of the Nigeria Public

sector? Do directors and accounting officers use government funds judiciously? In light of the recent scandals in Nigerian Accounting, this study examines what accounting system should be adopted for improved accountability and performance reporting in the Nigerian Public sector. It also seeks to determine if the current accountability institutions fulfill their duties.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to empirically analyse the effective performance and accountability reporting challenges in the public sector of the Nigerian economy.

Thus, the researcher has earmarked these research questions to drive the specific objectives:

1. To what extent does the cash basis of accounting more effective and could improve accountability and performance reporting in Nigeria Public Sector
2. To what extent does the accrual basis of accounting more effective and could improve accountability and performance reporting in Nigeria Public Sector.
3. To what extent does improved accountability and performance reporting in Nigeria Public Sector a product of existing professional accounting bodies?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In order to provide tentative answer to the research questions, it was hypothesized that:

H₀₁: Cash accounting basis does not significantly promote more effective performance and accountability reporting in Nigeria Public Sector.

H₀₂: Accrual accounting basis does not significantly promote more effective performance and accountability reporting in Nigeria Public Sector.

H₀₃: There is no substantial relationship between improved accountability and performance reporting in Nigeria Public Sector and professional accounting bodies.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Certain conceptual and empirical reviews would be explored to fully comprehend this study:

Public Sector Accounting: Cash versus Accrual

There are two thinking trends in the field of public sector accounting, one based on cash accounting and the other on accrual accounting. Under the traditional model, cash accounting or budget accounting is prevalent. The emphasis is primarily on compliance with rules and regulations. One of the results of this system is a budget out-turn report that is an addition to regular financial statements in the public sector.

Akenbor and Oghoghomeh (2012) remarked that this government's reporting system (Cash basis) has been criticized for not showing public accountability. There is currently a lack of accountability about financial records and government liabilities and assets.

In the modern model, efficiency is emphasized. To increase the public sector's management efficiency, the government should adopt accrual accounting, which considers assets and liabilities. The accrual accounting can be used to motivate the public sector, which will lead to great cost savings for taxpayers. To do this we need to change how we process budgets as it should be based on achievements and foreseeable expenses. This new system can result in maximized efficiency in our society.

The international public sector expects governments to account for their finances on an accrual basis. It's one of the bases of accounting that differs from cash. It recognizes all transactions, regardless of whether they produce cash or not, and is more flexible in this sense (Omenka, 2008). The New Public Management justifies the switchover from cash to accrual accounting because it increases quality of government reports, is important for international finance institutions and has proved to be efficient in terms of achieving transparency (Ofoegbu, 2014).

Accountability and Transparency Perspective in the Public Sector

Transparency and accountability, which are the core values of IPSAS constitute instruments for governments or officials to show how they're serving; rendering of credible stewardship account with integrity. According to IFAC (2018), there is a need for high-quality and timely financial reporting in the public sector. Accrual reporting provides transparency and accountability to decision making for good decisions. In different parts of the world, there are significant amounts of accrual adoption occurring with data accumulated from around the globe and to ensure that those who are responsible for writing and enforcing policies are accountable, these policymakers should be required to explain their actions to the people, the electorates, they represent. By legitimizing public accountability, constituents - who may include taxpayers, press, clients, customers and employees will be able to evaluate the correctness of these decisions. It is evident that the people (electorates) are in a bad position because of the lack of integrity and accountability in governments around the world. Poor implementation of law and standards has caused lack of transparency in the public sector (Madumere & Okegbe, 2014)

Implications of Accountability and Transparency on Financial Reporting

In the words of Adegite in 2010, Integrity is a quality that completes two popular notions- accountability and transparency. It is characterized as incorruptibility, an unimpaired condition, or soundness. In other words, it's being honest to yourself, having integrity. For public servants in the public sector, integrity requires they not be financially and otherwise obligated to outside individuals or organizations that can influence them to act in an unjustly manner.

The impact of accountability and transparency on a company's finances and its reporting is as follows: By enforcing Financial Reporting Practices, the need for transparency of financial statements is increased. There are many things that can be done to increase transparency at a public sector level. These include improved accounting and auditing standards, as well as engaging Chartered Accountants at all levels of governments. Using Accrual Accounting instead of Cash Accounting also increases accountability and transparency, which in turn improves the quality of financial reporting. According to Efenyumi (2020), transparency begets accountability and both are a direct product of fiscal discipline and control. This was buttressed by Mulu as cited by Olaoye, Ogbebor and Elelu (2021) "Financial control practices promote government ability to reach its objectives, safeguard assets and records, enhances operational efficiency through budget and encourage adherence to prescribed policies and regulations.

Accounting Professional Bodies in Nigeria

The need for qualified accountants in government is extremely important in developing countries. The lack of qualified personnel results in accountability blindness, which gives no one the ability to account for what they do. In Nigeria today, four different accounting bodies exist: the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants of Nigeria (CIMAN) is newer than the other three and focuses more on management accounting. The oldest being the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) which deals on financial accounting, auditing and taxation followed by the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) which concerns itself with Accounting Education while the Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria (CITN) is taking over mainly taxation. ICAN has about 50,000 members with about 30% serving in the public Sector, ANAN has approximately 30,000 with about 99% in the public sector while CIMA and CITN with approximate value of 15,000 and 10,000 has only about 10% in the public sector (Efenyumi, 2020).

According to CIA World fact book the population of Nigeria is 225,082,083 (2022 est) with over 3,098,193 companies (registered) excluding government agencies (<https://concise.ng/cac-reveals-number-of-registered-companies-in-nigeria/>). This impliedly means that only about 47,200 accountants serving 225 million Nigerians; a ratio of one accountant to six thousand, seven hundred and thirty six persons (1:4,766). The consequence of not having a qualified accountant is that it hinders accountability in the public sector. Nigerian public service accountants either do not have accounting education or certification and as such there are very few qualified accountants to take charge of important accounting positions in government (Olowo-Okere, 2005). In the present situation, this problem has been exacerbated.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Onuorah and Appah (2012) investigated the accountability and the financial management of Nigeria public sector with data from Federal and State Governments revenue and expenditure between 1961 and 2008 and it was found that because the attributes of accessible, comprehensive, relevant, quality, and timely disclosure of facts about government officials were unavailable or unavailable in a reliable manner, citizens were unable to assess how well they are meeting these requirements.

Akenbor and Oghoghomeh (2012) examined the cash and accrual accounting system to determine which to be adopted in Nigeria with a population of 56 persons using structured questionnaires. The outcome showed that accrual basis is significant in promoting government activities reporting in Nigeria.

Owolabi, Ocansey and Dada (2013) explored the accounting system of Ghana and Nigeria as they were in process of adopting IPSAS through modified cash basis and fund accounting. It was not revealed that performance evaluation is difficult because there are no standards for gauging the performance.

Olaoye and Olaniyan (2018) evaluated IPSAS adoption and public sector financial management in Ekiti State-Nigeria with 50 staff in the office of the Accountant General using close ended questionnaires and it was found that IPSAS has significant influence on financial management of Nigeria Public Sector.

Efuntade (2019) analysed how IPSAS implementation impacts on the management of public finance in Nigeria. Generated data from respondents were analysed through simple regression and the findings showed that IPSAS implementation significantly impact on Nigeria Public Sector financial management.

Izueke, Onah, Ugwuibe, Okueze, Agu, Ugwu and Ezeibe (2020) analysed how to achieve transparency and accountability in the public sector through IPSAS with a qualitative survey of agencies in the South-East region of Nigeria and concluded that political-will, applying accrual bases of accounting and internet facilities are underlying factors for IPSAS full implementation are lacking.

Olaoye, Ogbebor and Elelu (2021) evaluated financial control effects on Nigeria public sector accountability with 337 respondents. Gathered data was analysed with SPSS 20.0 version and concluded that there exist a significant positive relationship between financial control practices and accountability.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In order to generate the necessary data for this study, a survey method of research design was adopted. According to Nworgu (2006), in a survey research method, data is collected from a few people or items and analyzed to represent the entire group (Population).

Population and Sample Sizes

The population of this study consists of Directors of finance and Accountants/Auditors in both finance and Audit departments in Ministries/Extra-ministerial departments and some Local Government Areas Delta State of Nigeria. The following Ministries/Extra-Ministerial departments and Local Government Areas were used as sample for the population:

Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Depts	No of Directors/Accounting officers/Auditors (Finance/Audit Dept)
Ministry of Finance, Delta State	15
Ministry of Works, Delta State	7
Ministry of Environment, Delta State	8
Ministry of Education, Delta State	9
DELSOPADEC	5
NDDC	7
NNPC	6
Federal Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs	8
Federal Ministry of Information & Communications	6
Bureau of Statistics	8
Federal Inland Revenue Service	9
Total	88

Table 1: No of Directors/Accounting officers/Auditors in Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Depts.

Source: Field

Local Government Areas	No of Accountants/Auditors (Finance/Audit Dept)
Uvwie	8
Okpe	9
Ethiope East	8
Warri South	7
Warri South East	9
Udu	7
Total	50

Table 2: No of Accounting officers/Auditors in Local Government Areas.

Source: Field

Since the population is not too large, the whole population will be used in the investigation.

Research Instrument

In order to generate the necessary data for this study, a well structured questionnaire designed in five-point Likert Scale will be used to elicit responses from the respondents. The instrument was a questionnaire with 5 point response options: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3) Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire was validated by the Experts (Supervisors and Professor of Accountancy) and hence reliable.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

138 copies of questionnaires were administered. The responses were analysed using percentage analysis and frequency count. Data generated for this study was analysed using mean scores; statistically using the Z- test (Z-

ratio); and if (Z -calculated $>$ Z -critical), reject the null hypothesis and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for data analysis to determine the relationship existing between variables via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 20.0) version. Therefore, whenever the r -calculated is less than the α -value, accept the null hypothesis otherwise, accept the alternate hypothesis. All the formulated hypotheses will be tested at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The 138 questionnaires were administered to the respondents but only 125 were returned (comprising 24 Directors and 55 Accountants/Auditors of Finance and Account from Ministries/Ministerial departments (79) and 46 Accountants/Auditors from LGAs), thereby representing ninety percent (90.6%) of the population. The data generated for this study were analysed using simple percentages, Z-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 20.0) version.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data obtained in this study are presented on the basis of socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and response to the research questions.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 3: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	92	73.6%
Female	33	26.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 3 above showed the gender of the respondents. From the above, it is clear that 92(73.6%) of the respondents were male while 33(26.4%) of the respondents were female. This implies that majority of the respondents used in the study were male.

Table 4: Academic Qualification of Respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
OND/B.Sc.	46	36.8%
HND/B.Sc./Professional	18	14.4%
HND/B.Sc./M.Sc.	12	9.6%
HND/B.Sc./M.Sc./Professional	23	18.4%
HND/B.Sc./M.Sc./Ph.D	6	4.8%
HND/B.Sc/M.Sc./Ph.D & Professional	20	16.0%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4 above showed the academic qualification of the respondents. From the above, it is clear that 46(36.8%) of the respondents had OND/B.Sc. Degree, 18(14.4%) HND/B.Sc./Professional degrees, 12(9.6%) HND/B.Sc./M.Sc. degrees, 23(18.4%) HND/B.Sc./M.Sc./Professional degrees, 6(4.8%) HND/B.Sc./M.Sc./Ph.D while 20(16%) HND/B.Sc./M.Sc./Ph.D and professional degrees. This implies that majority of the respondents used are those with HND/B.Sc and professional degrees.

Table 5: Working Experience of Respondents

Year of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5years	39	31.2%
6-10years	27	21.6%
11-15years	21	16.8%
16-20years	20	16.0%
Over 20years	18	14.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 5 above is based on the working experience of the respondents. From the above, it is vivid that 39(31.2%) of the respondents have worked in the ministry for less than 5years, 27(21.6%) and 21(16.8%) 6-10years and 11-15years respectively while 20(16%) and 18(14.4%) have worked for 16-20years and over 20years respectively. This implies that majority of the respondents used in the study have worked for the organization for less than 5years.

Table 6: Current Position of Respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Director	24	19.2%
Accountant	83	66.4%
Auditor	18	14.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 6 above showed that 24(19.2%) of the respondents were directors, 83(66.4%) were accountants while 18(14.4%) of the respondents were auditors. This implies that majority of the respondents used in the study were accountants.

Research Question 1

Response on Research Question I: Key issues relating to Cash Basis of Accounting that best promote effective performance and accountability reporting in the Nigeria Public Sector

Table 7: Cash basis accounting and effective performance and accountability reporting

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	3.2%
Agree	14	11.2%
Undecided	12	9.6%
Disagree	37	29.6%
Strongly Disagree	58	46.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 7 above showed that 4(3.2%) and 14(11.2%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree that cash basis accounting promotes effective financial reporting while 37(29.6%) and 58(46.4%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Only 12(9.6%) of the respondents were undecided. This implies that cash basis accounting does not promote effective performance and accountability reporting.

Table 8: Public Sector Entities move from cash to accrual basis and meaningful financial statements

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	58	46.4%
Agree	40	32.0%
Undecided	3	2.4%
Disagree	16	12.8%
Strongly Disagree	8	6.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 8 above showed that 58(46.4%) and 40(32.0%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that public sector entities move from cash to accrual basis amount to meaningful financial statements while 16(12.8%) and 8(6.4%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Only 3(2.4%) of the respondents were undecided. This suggests that public sector entities move from cash to accrual basis amounts to meaningful financial statements.

Table 9: Accrual basis accounting and effective performance and accountability reporting

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	59	47.2%
Agree	49	39.2%
Undecided	6	4.8%
Disagree	6	4.8%
Strongly Disagree	5	4.0%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 9 above showed that 59(47.2%) and 49(39.2%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that accrual basis accounting promotes effective financial reporting of public sector entities while 6(4.8%) and 6(4.8%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Only 5(4.0%) of the respondents were

undecided. This suggests that accrual basis accounting promotes effective performance and accountability reporting of public sector entities.

Table 10: Cash basis of accounting ensures accurate and fair view of governments' fiscal position, financial performance and cash flows

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	6	4.8%
Agree	18	14.4%
Undecided	7	5.6%
Disagree	45	36.0%
Strongly Disagree	49	39.2%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 10 above showed that 6(4.8%) and 18(14.4%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that cash basis of accounting ensures accurate and fair view of government's fiscal position, financial performance and cash flows while 45(36%) and 49(39.2%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Only 7(5.6%) of the respondents were undecided. This suggests that cash basis of accounting do not ensure accurate and fair view of government's fiscal position, financial performance and cash flows.

Response on Research Question II: Key issues relating to Accountability Institution and Accountability in Public Sector

Table 11: Accountability in the public sector and ineffectiveness of oversight bodies and poor accounting infrastructure

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	63	50.4%
Agree	40	32.0%
Undecided	13	10.4%
Disagree	6	4.8%
Strongly Disagree	3	2.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 11 above showed that 63(50.4%) and 40(32.0%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree that lack of accountability in the public sector leads to ineffectiveness of oversight bodies and poor accounting infrastructure while 6(4.8%) and 3(2.4%) of the respondent were disagree and strongly disagree respectively. 13(10.4%) of the respondents were undecided. This implies that lack of accountability in the public sector leads to ineffectiveness of oversight bodies and poor accounting infrastructure.

Table 12: Professional Accountants quantity and quality supports management of public expenditure

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	81	64.8%
Agree	39	31.2%
Undecided	3	2.4%
Disagree	2	1.6%
Strongly Disagree	-	-
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 12 above showed that 81(64.8%) and 39(31.2%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree that professional base of accountants in terms of number and quality support management of public expenditure while 3(2.4%) and 2(1.6%) of the respondent were undecided and disagree respectively. None of the respondents strongly disagree. This means that there is no professional base of accountants in terms of quantity and quality that support management of public expenditure.

Table 13: Accountability level and existing Accounting infrastructure

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	60	48.0%
Agree	48	38.4%
Undecided	3	2.4%
Disagree	8	6.4%
Strongly Disagree	6	4.8%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 13 revealed that 60(48.0%) and 48(38.4%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively that accountability level in the Nigeria public sector correlates directly with existing accounting infrastructure while 8(6.4%) and 6(4.8%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Only 3(2.4%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue. This implies that accountability level in the Nigeria public sector correlate directly with existing accounting infrastructure.

Table 14: No Need for accountability and healthy financial sector

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	-	-
Agree	-	-
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	40	32.0%
Strongly Disagree	85	68.0%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 14 revealed that 40(32%) and 85(68%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree that there is the need for accountability in Nigerian Public Sector because all things are working well financially. None of the respondents strongly agree, agree and undecided on the issue. This implies that there is still the need for more accountability measures in spite of that fact the public sector is working well financially.

Response on Research Question III: Key issues relating to the Development of the Nigerian economy due to indiscipline and wastages in the system as a result of lack of accountability

Table 15: Effective accountability of public funds and capital projects

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	1	0.8%
Agree	15	12.0%
Undecided	5	4.0%
Disagree	16	12.8%
Strongly Disagree	88	70.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 15 suggests that 1(0.8%) and 15(12.0%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree that there is effective accountability of public funds in the Nigerian public sector as evident in capital projects across the country while 16(12.8%) and 88(70.4%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Only 5(4.0%) were undecided on the issue. This implies that there is no effective accountability of public funds in the Nigerian public sector as evident in capital projects across the country.

Table 16: Electorate and satisfaction with the state of public infrastructure and services compared with the amount of resources investment in the country

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	8	6.4%
Agree	19	15.2%
Undecided	2	1.6%
Disagree	14	11.2%
Strongly Disagree	82	65.6%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 16 above showed that 8(6.4%) and 19(15.2%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree that the electorate is satisfied with the state of public infrastructure and services compared with the amount of resources investment in the country while 14(11.2%) and 82(65.5%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Only 2(1.6%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue. This suggests that the electorates are not satisfied with the state of public infrastructure and services compared with the amount of resources investment in the country.

Table 17: Accountability and effective checks and balances

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	68	54.4%
Agree	44	35.2%
Undecided	6	4.8%
Disagree	4	3.2%
Strongly Disagree	3	2.4%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 17 revealed that 68(54.4%) and 44(35.2%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree that accountability in the Nigerian public sector is poor because there are no effective checks and balances while 4(3.2%) and 3(2.4%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree. Only 6(4.8%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue. This implies that accountability in the Nigerian public sector is poor because there are no effective checks and balances.

Table 18: Nigeria Economy and wastage of resources and public fund

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	61	48.8%
Agree	55	44.0%
Undecided	4	3.2%
Disagree	3	2.4%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.6%
TOTAL	125	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 18 revealed that 61(48.8%) and 55(44%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree that the Nigeria economy is underdeveloped due to wastage of resources and public fund while 3(2.4%) and 2(1.6%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree. Only 4(3.2%) were undecided on the issue. This implies that the Nigeria economy is underdeveloped due to wastage of resources and public fund.

Hypotheses Testing

HYPOTHESIS I

H₁: Cash accounting basis does not significantly promote more effective performance and accountability reporting in Nigeria Public Sector.

Table 19: Summary of Z-Test

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Test Value ^a	16.3520	15.5280	3.6400	13.3840	14.9360
Cases < Test Value	62	93	59	77	63
Cases >= Test Value	63	32	66	48	62
Total Cases	125	125	125	125	125
Number of Runs	70	39	56	56	70
Z	1.168	1.273	1.316	1.785	1.168
Asymp. Sig.(2-tailed)	.243	.023	.188	.432	.243

Source: SPSS Output

Table 19 is based on the summary of the z-test on cash basis accounting and effective performance and accountability reporting of public sector entities in Nigeria. From the result above, it is vivid that the z-values are all lesser than the critical value (1.96) for 2-tailed test at 0.05% level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that cash basis of accounting does not significantly promote more effective performance and accountability reporting in Nigeria Public Sector.

HYPOTHESIS II

H₂: Accrual basis of accounting does not significantly promote more effective performance and accountability reporting in Nigeria Public Sector

Table 20: Summary of Z-Test

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Test Value ^a	19.00	10.00	4.00	10.00	8.00
Cases < Test Value	62	60	59	62	62
Cases >= Test Value	63	65	66	63	63
Total Cases	125	125	125	125	125
Number of Runs	70	69	56	70	70
Z	3.168	3.007	2.759	2.129	2.165
Asymp. Sig.(2-tailed)	.243	.314	.188	.243	.243

Source: SPSS Output

Table 20 is based on the summary of the z-test on accrual basis accounting and effective performance and accountability reporting of public sector entities in Nigeria. From the result above, it is vivid that the z-values are all greater than the critical value (1.96) for 2-tailed test at 0.05% level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that accrual basis of accounting significantly promote more effective performance and accountability reporting in Nigeria Public Sector.

HYPOTHESIS III

H₃: There is no substantial relationship between improved accountability and performance reporting in Nigeria Public Sector and professional accounting bodies.

Table 21: Summary of Pearson Correlation

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Pearson Corr.	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Mean	16.3520	15.5280	3.6400	13.3840	14.9360
Std Deviation	15.70507	11.00995	2.37731	11.36618	13.17790
N	125	125	125	125	125

Source: SPSS Output, df = 10

Table 21 is based on the summary of the Pearson correlation on the relationship between the quality and quantity of professional accountants and effective performance and accountability reporting in Public Sector organizations in Nigeria. From the result above, it is vivid that the Pearson r (1.000) is larger than the r-critical (.576) at 0.05% level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is significant relationship between improved accountability and performance reporting in Nigeria Public Sector and professional accounting bodies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The basic fundamental way for economic development is financial discipline and elimination of wastages of national resources in the public sector which is the direct function of accountability. It is rather unfortunate that the level of accountability experienced in the country is unacceptable due to weak accounting infrastructure, ineffective oversight bodies and the clog in the wheel of legal framework.

In meeting the above objective and in view of the findings generated from this study, it is my humble submission to recommend the following:

Government:

1. Should ensure that they create enabling environment for the development of professional Accountants and employed them in the civil

service. This will be achieved by retaining the existing through motivation and attracting the new with good working conditions.

2. The problem of ethical and accountability failure in the public sector should be tackled by strengthening the capacity for control institutions, the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN) through re-orientation programmes.
3. A proactive legislature and regulatory framework that should not only exist on paper but must be operational should be in place, thus giving the FRCN the operational right through adequate funding.
4. The provisions of 1999 constitution authorising review of audited report by PAC should be

strictly adhered to with punishment spelled out for non-compliance.

5. The constitution should be amended to provide for the qualification of members of PAC.

Professional Accounting Bodies:

1. There should be re orientation of members to encourage them to work in the public sector.
2. The professional accounting bodies should motivate accounting students aspiring to be professionals.

Citizenry:

In order for the citizenships to be motivated, the civil society and organized labour unions should help create a more vibrant civil society so that they can balance the effects of bureaucratic actions.

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