



Influence of Treasury Single Account (TSA) Policy Implementation on Promoting Financial Transparency and Accountability on The Administration of Public Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of Treasury Single Account (TSA) policy implementation on promoting financial transparency and accountability on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. two specific objectives with corresponding research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a survey research design, and was carried out in North Eastern Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 547 Bursary staff of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The sample size for the study comprised 231 Bursary staff obtained from the use of Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach Alpha statistic and an overall reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. The data was analyzed using Means and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions. Chi-Square Statistic to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that Treasury Single Account stops public universities from remitting revenue at will to government treasuries and compels government agencies to spend within the approved budget provisions and this promotes transparency in the administration of public universities to a high extent. It further revealed that Treasury Single Account promotes efficient management of domestic borrowing at minimal and helps to establish an efficient disbursement mechanism for public funds and this promotes financial accountability in the administration of public universities to a high extent. Based on these findings, it was recommended that; Federal government should closely monitor the level of TSA implementation within her universities, as complete implementation of TSA would make all Federal government owned universities remit all revenue in its coffers to government treasuries and compels government agencies (universities) to spend within the approved budget provisions for enhanced financial transparency in the administration of public universities. Also, Federal government should ensure total compliance on the institutionalization of Treasury Single Account as it would reduce domestic borrowing to the barest minimal helping them to establish an efficient disbursement mechanism for public funds, thereby promoting financial accountability in the management of public universities.

Keywords: Treasury Single Account, Financial Transparency, and Accountability.

INTRODUCTION

Managing funds is one of the major functions of the university administrators. The university administrators control the spending plan. Implementation of the Treasury Single Account Policy according to Chijioke (2016) denotes that Federal Government Agencies including Federal Government owned universities will wait for approval from the Minister of Finance or such other authority in accordance with the budget provisions before money will be spent. Okonjo-Iwela (2015) explains that the introduction of TSA had helped to reduce how government account was being overdrawn. Okonjo argues that several MDAs had hooked on to the TSA platform with substantial reduction in government's overdrawn financial position.

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Philip (2015) also stresses that TSA is a step in the right direction to plug all financial leakages. Philip further explains that multiple accounts by government agencies made it possible for the MDAs to conceal some accounts for ulterior motives; hence, implementation of TSA will go a long way to checkmate corruption in the country (Solanke, 2018). It is expected to consolidate all cash resources of the government in all MDAs which were previously purposely located in various bank accounts, under one unified management and control (Danladi, 2015). The purpose is primarily to ensure accountability of government revenue, avoid misapplication of public funds and enhance transparency in all areas of financial management.

Transparency is however defined as an inclusive concept that requires loyalty, faithfulness, allegiance and dependability (Igbekoyi and Agbaje, 2017). According to Danladi (2015), TSA is deemed to checkmate accountability and transparency issues in public sector's financial management. First, organizational secrecy around the management of public finances will be removed and secondly, the agencies generating revenue have been deprived and short changed of the treasury due to them through multiple bank accounts under their arm's length and also not known to the authorities as a result of TSA's institutionalization. The implementation of TSA has introduced into the economy, financial efficiency at all level of government finances (Eme *et al.*, 2015). In this vein, operators in the private, public and financial institutions should be faithful, dependable and accountable. Hence, promoting financial accountability.

Accountability is a process which includes setting correct goals, evaluating their degree of achievement and at what price, presenting and interpreting the information to the public, and accepting responsibility for any results that are perceived as adequate (Tafida in Oche, 2009). Yusuf (2016) argues that the institutionalization of TSA has the capability of bunging financial loopholes, thus promoting accountability and transparency in the financial systems of public sector organisations. Beyond transparency and accountability, the Treasury Single Account introduces economy and efficiency into overall management of public finances (Stockbrokers, 2016). Apart from availing the government of effective control of cash resources, TSA will also guarantee timely information on its cash resources on real time and online and harmonizes government servicing of its obligations (Chukwu, 2015). The implementation of Treasury Single Account in federal universities is a critical step towards curbing corruption in the university system public financial sector. Inability to control and monitor income and expenditure in federal universities could lead to corrupt practices and misappropriation of funds thus affecting the administration of Federal Universities.

Administration encompasses a number of processes such as: planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, controlling and evaluating the performance. The main functions of administration are the formation of plans, policies and procedures, setting up of goals and objectives, enforcing rules and regulation among others (Abdulrahman, 2016). With administration, the fundamental framework of an organization like that of the university is laid down. In the context of this work, administration refers to the act or process of administering or management of Federal Universities by creating and enforcing rules and regulations. With the place of Treasury Single Account, it becomes pertinent to study its influence on university administration. This is premised on the fact that any policy implementation that will tamper with free flow of funds in the university system may derail and delay administration and forestall achievement of educational goals in the country.

From the foregoing therefore, the maintenance of Treasury Single Account could help to ensure proper cash management in Federal Universities by eliminating unused funds usually kept with different commercial banks, as this could ensure effective administration of public universities. In the long run, Treasury Single Account could lead to effectiveness of spending in federal universities since the accounting system places Federal Government in a better position to control and monitor cash flow within the universities. According to Oguntodu *et al.* (2016), the establishment of TSA is a key element of an efficient and effective public

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financial management system and an essential tool for minimizing government borrowing costs. The maintenance of a single account for public universities will enable the Minister of Finance to monitor cash flow as no Federal university is allowed to maintain any operational account outside the over sight of the Federal Ministry of Finance in Nigeria. It therefore, seems that the Treasury Single Accounting system is positioned to monitor the expenditures in Federal universities in Nigeria for ease of administration as this may help in curbing financial corruption in the university system.

ASUU has alleged that the implementation of TSA across its universities has denied the institutions of their autonomy, specifically as it relates to the ability of various University Managements to access and manage foreign grants meant for research (Osagioduwa, 2019). According to them, this has badly rubbed off on the image of many Nigerians universities and adversely affected their ability to attract foreign grants. A good case in point is the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB) whose Vice Chancellor, Prof Olusola Oyewole, said the university has had over \$2 million grants for a project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation trapped in the TSA for almost one year (Ocheni, 2016). FUNAAB is said to only be one of the universities in the country allegedly suffering as a result of the TSA implementation. That, however, does not in any way take away from the benefits which TSA has brought to Nigeria, even to Nigerian universities (Osagioduwa, 2019). Now, TSA which is supposed to help the universities and other FG-owned institutions to attract international grants, seems not to be working in their favour. This situation urgently has to be fixed. However, the fix is not to exclude the universities from TSA as being advocated in some quarters. That would be a temporary solution and a call for return to the previous system that enthroned unaccountability in our universities.

In contemporary times, corruption and miss-appropriation of funds seem to be on the increase in the universities in Nigeria, North East inclusive. Poor budgeting is alleged to have accounted for the seeming neglect of personnel, students and school infrastructural facilities for over a decade (Oyike, 2017). In view of the above problem, the introduction of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) policy is intended to reduce the level of corruption and sharp practices in Nigerian institutions of learning and thus enhance administration (Oguntodu *et al.*, 2016). The Treasury Single Account Policy is hoped to ensure accountability of financial revenue, accountability of expenditures, enhance transparency and avoid misappropriation of public funds. Hence, the implementation of Treasury Single Account in federal universities could be a critical step towards enhancing the administration of the public universities. It is against this background that the study sought to find out the influence of the Treasury Single Account policy implementation on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

The researcher further observes that in spite of the laudable objectives of the TSA policy, public universities in Nigeria want to be in the active position in financial management of the universities. From this observation, the researcher learnt from Daily Trust Editorial (2015) that the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) despite the competitive advantages of adopting TSA, had criticized TSA policy. Speaking during the National Executive Council (NEC) Meeting of the union held in Owerri, on 14th October, 2015, the former ASUU National President, Dr. Nasir I. Fagge, pointed out that the Federal Government needed to ponder further on the TSA Policy and its implementation framework if it must be workable. Universities according to Fagge cannot function without the financial autonomy that the TSA takes away. It is against this background that this study investigated the influence of Treasury Single Account Policy Implementation on Transparency and Accountability on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

This study was to investigate the extent of influence of Treasury Single Account (TSA) Policy implementation on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

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Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1. determine the extent to which promoting financial transparency influence the administration of public universities
- 2. ascertain the extent to which promoting financial accountability influence the administration of public universities

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- 1. To what extent does promoting financial transparency influence the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria?
- 2. To what extent does promoting financial accountability influence the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria?

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1. Promoting financial transparency has no significant influence on the administration of public universities.
- 2. Promoting financial accountability has no significant influence on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted survey research design. The area of study is North Eastern Nigeria. The population of the study is 547 Bursary staff of the six Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The sample size for the study comprised 231 Bursary staff as respondents. This size was determined using Taro Yamane Sample size formulae. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample at different stages. Firstly, purposive sampling was used to select all Federal Universities from all the six States that constitute North-Eastern Nigeria which are; Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe States. Secondly, Proportionate Stratified random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the number of Bursary staff from each Federal University. At the last stage, simple random sampling was used to select the 231 Bursary staff from the universities under study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled "Treasury Single Account Policy Implementation on Transparency and Accountability and Administration of Public Universities Questionnaire (TSAPITAAPUQ)". The questionnaire consists of 10 items in 2 Clusters, with each cluster having 5 items. The response to the questionnaire items is modeled based on the four-point rating scale with response modes of Very High Extent= (4), High Extent= (3), Low Extent= (2) and Very Low Extent= (1), respectively. Data were collated and analyzed for reliability using Cronbach Alpha Statistic. The overall co-efficient of each component of "Treasury Single Account Policy Implementation on Transparency and Accountability and Administration of Public Universities Questionnaire (TSAPITAAPUQ)", yielded 0.84. The quantitative data was analyzed using the descriptive statistic of Mean and Standard Deviations to answer the research questions. The boundary limit for decision making was 1.00-1.49=Very Low Extent, 1.50-2.49=Low Extent, 2.50-3.49=High Extent, 3.50-4.00=Very High Extent. The mean scores were ranked in ascending order in all the research question tables. Chi-square test of independence (?2) was used to test the seven hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision was that, if the calculated (?²) value is greater than the critical table value, the null hypotheses would be rejected. The choice for the use of Chi-square test of independence (?²) is because it establishes the statistical relationship between the observed and expected cases in each category based on a given hypothesis.

Chi-square (?2) Coefficient of Contingency was further used to measure the strength of relationship or

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association between the observed and expected cases in each category based on a given hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents results of the data analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings. The presentation and interpretation follow the sequence of the research questions answered and the corresponding hypotheses tested.

Results

The data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions

Research Question 1: To what extent does promoting financial transparency influence the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria?

To answer this research question, responses on the extent to which promoting financial transparency influence the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria were collected and analyzed as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of Respondents on the Extent to which Promoting Financial Transparency Influence the Administration of Public Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	SD	Decision	Rank
1	TSA stops public universities from remitting revenue at will to government treasuries for effective administration of public universities	113	53	44	21	3.12	.98	High Extent	1 st
2	TSA controls financial recklessness of government agencies and this influences the administration of public universities	90	70	45	26	2.97	1.04	High Extent	3rd
3	TSA compels government agencies to spend within the approved budget provisions and this affects administration of public universities	99	62	40	30	3.00	1.05	High Extent	2 nd
4	TSA removes that organizational secrecy around the management of public finance and this influences the administration of public universities	65	89	46	31	2.81	1.10	High Extent	4 th
5	TSA helps to minimize the discretionary aspect of accounting officers negotiating high interest rates with banks for private gains and this affects the administration of public universities	79	72	38	42	2.81	1.01	High Extent	4 th
	Cluster Mean and SD					2.92	1.04	High Extent	

Source: Researcher (2021).

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Analysis of data as presented in Table 1 shows the extent to which promoting financial transparency influences the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria with corresponding Standard Deviation values. Data presented in Table 1 revealed that, the respondents rated high extent on all the items (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) with mean scores ranging from 2.81 – 3.12 which are above the benchmark of 2.50. The table also revealed close Standard Deviation values ranging from .98 – 1.10 which showed that the respondents were homogeneous in their responses. The cluster mean of all the items as revealed was 2.92 and SD= 1.04. With this cluster mean, it can be deduced from this finding that Treasury Single Account stops public universities from remitting revenue at will to government treasuries and compels government agencies (universities) to spend within the approved budget provisions and this enhances effective administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. This implies TSA promotes financial transparency by compelling university management to spend within approved budgetary provisions.

Research Question 2: To what extent does promoting financial accountability influence the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria?

To answer this research question, responses on the extent to which promoting financial accountability influence the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria were collected and analyzed as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of Respondents on the Extent to which Promoting Financial Accountability Influence the Administration of Public Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	SD	Decision	Rank
6	TSA promotes efficient management of domestic borrowing at minimal and this influences the administration of public universities	81	96	39	15	3.05	.97	High Extent	1 st
7	TSA allows optimal investment of idle cash and this influences the administration of public universities	45	46	74	66	2.30	1.08	Low Extent	5 th
8	TSA implementation helps to establish an efficient disbursement mechanism for public funds and this influences the administration of public universities	93	68	42	28	2.98	.99	High Extent	2 nd
9	TSA implementation helps to establish an efficient collection mechanism for public funds and this influences the administration of public universities	70	89	40	32	2.85	1.01	High Extent	3rd
10	TSA eliminate operational inefficiency across a plethora of financial institutions and this influences the administration of public universities	79	62	48	42	2.77	1.10	High Extent	4 th
	Cluster Mean and SD					2.79	1.03	High Extent	

Source: Researcher (2021).

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Analysis of data as presented in Table 2 shows the extent to which promoting financial accountability influences the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria with corresponding Standard Deviation values. Data presented on Table 2 revealed that all, except item 7 with a mean of 2.30, which is slightly below the bench mark shows Treasury Single Account policy allows optimal investment of idle cash and this influences the administration of public universities to a low extent, the respondents rated high extent on the other items (6, 8, 9 and 10) with mean scores ranging from 2.77 – 3.05 which are above the benchmark of 2.50. The table also revealed close Standard Deviation values ranging from .97 – 1.10 which showed that the respondents were homogeneous in their responses. The cluster mean of all the items as revealed was 2.79 and SD= 1.03. With this cluster mean, it can be deduced from this finding that Treasury Single Account promotes efficient management of domestic borrowing at minimal and helps to establish an efficient disbursement mechanism for public funds and this influences the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. This implies that Treasury Single Account promotes efficient management of domestic borrowing at minimal in the administration of public universities in the study area.

Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses of the study were tested using Chi-Square (?2) at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1: Promoting financial transparency has no significant influence on the administration of public universities.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test of Significance of the Influence of Promoting Transparency on the Administration of Public Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

Variables	N	Df	?2	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
Promoting Transparency						
	231	12	369.745	.000	.05	Significant
Administration						

Df = Degree of Freedom; ?2 = Chi-Square Calculated Value; Sig = P-Value

Source: Researcher (2021).

Table 3 shows the Chi-square calculated value (?2) of 369.745, degree of freedom df =12 and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value (?=.05). Since P<.05, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that, promoting transparency has significant influence on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. With a Chi-Square (?2) Coefficient of Contingency value of 0.78 implied that promoting transparency to a high extent positively influences the administration of public universities in the study area.

Hypothesis 2: Promoting financial accountability has no significant influence on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Table 4: Chi-Square Test of Significance of the Influence of Promoting Accountability on the Administration of Public Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

Variables	N	Df	χ2	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
Promoting Accountability						
	231	12	338.109	.000	.05	Significant
Administration						

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Df = Degree of Freedom; χ 2 = Chi-Square Calculated Value; Sig = P-Value

Source: Researcher (2021).

Table 4 shows the Chi-square calculated value (χ 2) of 338.109, degree of freedom df =12 and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value (α =.05). Since P<.05, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that, promoting accountability has significant influence on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. With a Chi-Square (χ 2) Coefficient of Contingency value of 0.77 implied that promoting accountability to a high extent positively influences the administration of public universities in the study area.

Summary of Major Findings

From the data analysis, the following major findings were made:

- 1. Treasury Single Account stops public universities from remitting revenue at will to government treasuries and compels government agencies to spend within the approved budget provisions and this promotes transparency in the administration of public universities to a high extent.
- 2. Treasury Single Account promotes efficient management of domestic borrowing at minimal and helps to establish an efficient disbursement mechanism for public funds and this promotes financial accountability in the administration of public universities to a high extent.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings arrived at in this study are discussed in line with the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

The first finding of the study revealed that promoting transparency to a high extent positively influences the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. It was evident from this finding that TSA stops public universities from remitting revenue at will to government treasuries for effective administration of public universities and TSA compels government agencies to spend within the approved budget provisions and this affects administration of public universities. A test of related hypothesis revealed that promoting transparency has significant positive influence on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. This finding corroborates that by Ofor, Leonard and Francis (2017) who found that TSA has positively affected and improved the performance of Federal Government MDAs and that it is capable of promoting transparency. The finding also corroborates that by Yusuf (2016) who found that adoption of a Treasury Single Account (TSA) is capable of promoting transparency. Also, the finding corroborates that by Nwaorgu, Ezenwaka and Onuorah (2017), who found that adaptation of a treasury single account and accountability (TSA) in the Nigeria public sector is capable of promoting transparency in Federal Health Tertiary Institutions. Furthermore, the finding is in tandem with that by Ajibade, Oyedekun and Doumu (2018) who found that Treasury Single Account has significant influence on public fund management in the area of transparency. Similarly, Igbekoyi and Agbaje (2017) found that TSA significantly had positive impact on transparency in public sectors like the universities. The finding of this study implies that by promoting transparency with the TSA within the university, resources can be best managed thus enhancing administration. Since transparency enhances trust, adequate transparency through TSA is crucial to ensuring effective administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

The second findings of this study further revealed that promoting accountability to a high extent influence the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. This finding showed that TSA promotes efficient management of domestic borrowing at minimal and this influences positively on the administration of public universities and TSA implementation helps to establish an efficient disbursement mechanism for

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public funds and this influences the administration of public universities. In confirmation of this finding, a test of hypothesis revealed that promoting accountability has significant positive influence on the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. This finding is in tandem with the findings by Ofor, Leonard and Francis (2017) who found that TSA has significantly affected and improved the performance of Federal Government MDAs and that it is capable of promoting accountability. The finding corroborates that by Akinleye, Fajuyagbe and Owoniya (2018) who found that the adoption of treasury single account provoked effective management of cash and aided improved level of accountability in the Nigerian public sector. The finding also corroborates that by Yusuf (2016) who found that adoption of a Treasury Single Account (TSA) is capable of promoting accountability for better administration in public sectors. Furthermore, the finding is in tandem with that by Ajibade, Oyedekun and Doumu (2018) who found that Treasury Single Account has significant positive influence on public fund management in the area of accountability. Also, the finding corroborates that by Nwaorgu, Ezenwaka and Onuorah (2017) who found that adaptation of a treasury single account and accountability (TSA) in the Nigeria public sector is capable of promoting accountability in Federal Health Tertiary Institutions. This finding as observed by the present study could be that by promoting accountability, much premium can be placed on effective utilization of funds for enhanced administration in public universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that full implementation of the Single Treasury Account (TSA) Policy as a valuable instrument for regulating the treasuries through effective cash procedure and controlling has significant influence on promoting financial transparency and accountability in the administration of public universities in North Eastern Nigeria. As the Treasury Single Account promotes financial transparency and accountability. It significantly has positively influenced the administration of public universities in the study area.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made

- 1. Federal government should closely monitor the level of TSA implementation within her universities, as complete implementation of TSA would make all Federal government owned universities remit all revenue in its coffers to government treasuries and compels government agencies (universities) to spend within the approved budget provisions for enhanced financial transparency in the administration of public universities.
- 2. Federal government should ensure total compliance on the institutionalization of Treasury Single Account as it would reduce domestic borrowing to the barest minimal helping them to establish an efficient disbursement mechanism for public funds, thereby promoting financial accountability in the management of public universities.

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