

Tax digitalisation and revenue generation system: The empirical approach

Olanrewaju Akinyosoye ^a
Adefulu Adesoga ^{b*}
Makinde Grace Olubisi ^c
Idowu Nwankwere ^d

^{a,b,c,d} Department of Business Administration & Marketing, Babcock University, Nigeria.

^a Email: olanrewaju.akinyosoye@firs.gov.ng

^{b*} Corresponding Email: adefulu@babcock.edu.ng, ORCID Id: 0000-0002-0762-9931

^c Email: makindeo@babcock.edu.ng, ORCID Id: 0000-0002-0023-9949

^d Email: nwankwerei@babcock.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Revenue and more revenue are the aspiration of government to ensure development is sustained. Nevertheless, the paper argued that despite the importance of revenue generation to country's economy, records has shown that based on systems in place, revenue generation especially in developing countries like Nigeria has remained relatively low. Consequently, the need to investigate if tax digitalisation dimensions could have an effect on revenue generation of Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, Nigeria is germane. The study applied the cross-sectional survey research design in obtaining primary data from 603 employees of the Federal Inland Revenue Service in Abuja, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was implemented while the reliable and validated tests were conducted on the adapted questionnaire before applying it for the study. Results from the multiple regression analysis revealed that tax digitalisation dimensions had a positive and significant effect on revenue generation (Adj. R² = 0.795, (F (4, 598) = 583.786, p<0.05) with online payment system as the best predictor on revenue generation. management of FIRS should ensure accuracy of account book, relevant tax authority approval, encourage use of apple pay for remittance, should create electronic reports for taxpayers to improve revenue generation system.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of efficient revenue tax generation mechanisms is underscored by the striking statistics revealed in Michigan, United States of America (IMF, 2022). The Tax Gap report published in 2022 for tax years 2012–2022 paints an alarming picture of revenue loss, with the tax gap encompassing late payments due to either voluntary action or enforcement efforts, averaging a staggering \$406 billion annually during this period (IMF, 2022). This figure accounts for approximately 16% of taxes that went unpaid, reflecting a significant revenue shortfall. The decline in government revenue generation system poses a significant challenge in numerous African countries. Key contributors to this decline include reduced taxpayer compliance due to the complexity of the tax system and challenges associated with revenue tax tracking. Additionally, a lack of revenue tax transparency in the government discourages some taxpayers from fulfilling their tax obligations, as highlighted in the OECD Revenue Statistics for 2022 (OECD, 2022). In Nigeria, official records from the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS, 2021) reveal a concerning revenue tax compliance scenario. Despite the existence of over 440,000 registered companies in the country, only approximately 120,000 are actively fulfilling their tax obligations to the FIRS. This means that a significant 320,000 companies remain non-compliant with their tax duties, representing a substantial loss in potential revenue (FIRS, 2021). The factors contributing to this tax non-compliance include evasion, avoidance, fraud, failure to deduct or remit taxes, obstruction, false declarations, document counterfeiting, and non-filing of tax returns, all of which signify a disregard for tax laws and regulations. Moreover, a comprehensive review of Nigeria's tax revenue data and other relevant statistics underscores the prevalent issue of low revenue tax compliance within the country (FIRS, 2021). Also, a data from the Budget office of the Federation (2021) showed that in 2016, FIRS contributed 54.6 per cent Tax-to-GDP ratio, 55.2 per cent in 2017, 58.3 per cent in 2018, and 59.0 per cent in 2019 before it tapered down to 50 per cent in 2020. Thus, revenue generation has remained low (Adeyemi & Adeduro, 2020; Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdele [KPMG], 2022).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Revenue generation system

Revenue generation system according to Enahoro (2012) it refers to the ways government raise funds for the purposes of meeting its capital and recurrent expenditure. Asnafi and Hamid (2018) added that it is referred to as the aggregate amount accrued to an entity from all sources of income

regardless of the size, age, and corporate status at any time. More recently, Adegbe and Akinyemi (2020) stated that revenue generation system can also be defined as tolls, taxes, import rates, fees royalties, refits and other receipts of government from whatever source. As such, the process of generating financial resources for a government is known as revenue generation system (Mabugu, 2022). Consequently, revenue generation system is the process of ensuring revenue tax compliance, tax collection, tax revenue tracking and tax revenue transparency.

2.2 Tax digitalisation

Bassongui and Hounbédji (2023) defined tax digitalisation as a process through which governments use information communication and technologies to obtain more accurate and timely information on taxpayer operations. In addition, this new tool of tax systems e-governance improves service delivery by reducing the time and cost of tax declarations to citizens (Bassongui & Hounbédji, 2023). The digitalisation of tax systems may have many features, such as the electronic filing of taxes that refers to the online submission of tax declarations (Juswanto & Simms, 2017). Digitization of tax administration entails five elements: technologies, people, managing of tax risks, financial resources, and communication (Lipniewicz, 2017). However, Besley and Persson (2014) indicated that tax systems in developing countries are characterised by high tax declarations' costs, which may discourage citizens from paying their taxes. Moreover, these manual tax systems promote corruption through the frequency of in-person interactions between taxpayers and tax collectors (Wadesango et al., 2020). Nevertheless, Bassongui and Hounbédji (2023) stressed that the digitalisation of the tax system means additional scrutiny of books, files and practices which is challenging for those businesses using legacy systems or even paper records. Interestingly, digitalisation of tax authorities is not a new phenomenon, but it is accelerating (Soteri, 2023). Consequently, this paper examined tax digitalisation through the dimension of electronic audit, electronic tax filing, online payment system and electronic reporting as discussed concisely. According to Nindyastuti and Kiswara (2014), Electronic Audit or E-Audit is a computer-assisted audit that uses electronic records to complete all or part of an audit. Hamshari et al. (2021) added that E-Audit is a method that aids examiners in achieving examination goals and gives auditors all the financial and management data necessary to combat fraud and financial wrongdoing. Electronic tax filing is the process of submitting your tax return to the government electronically, often over the internet (Abolade and Durosinmi 2019). E-filing is the process of electronically submitting tax return information to the government, usually the Internal

Revenue Service (Zubairu et al., 2020). Electronic tax filing, or e-filing, is the process of sending your completed tax return to the IRS or state tax agency over the internet (Alsyouf et al., 2023). Online payment system allows individuals and businesses to electronically exchange money and process financial transactions via the internet (Rukundo, 2020) and enables buyers and sellers transfer money between two parties, typically over the internet (Adegbite & Mustapha, 2019; Adeyeye & 2019; Sung-Bou & Dongwook, 2020). Klaus and Holger (2019) defined electronic reporting as an engine that simplifies the creation of electronic reports for information interchange with governments, banks, and other parties. Characteristically, electronic reporting includes data being automatically extracted, visualizations being automatically updated, and reports being automatically shared without anyone having to manually do this work every time (Adegbite & Akinyemi, 2020).

2.3 Empirical review

Studies conducted on tax digitalisation and revenue generation system has shown varied results. Ogbonna et al. (2022) looked into the impact of e-tax payment on revenue generation system in Nigeria and found a weakly positive association between revenue collected before and after the implementation of a capital gains tax. According to Efunboade (2014) digitalisation had a significant effect on revenue generation system. The findings reiterated that ICT is used to enhance performance in revenue administrations by reducing human error and processing times, providing readily accessible data for tax officers, promoting voluntary compliance thereby minimizing tax evasion and facilitating better decision making by tax authorities. Likewise, Eliana et al. (2018) revealed that the use of technology in the business sector have made payment by customers and revenue generation system easier for organisations. Likewise, Adegbite et al. (2019) showed that digitalisation has a positive significant and statistical impact on tax revenue generation system in Oyo State. Digitalisation is a highly effective tool which enhances taxation cash inflow in the state. In the same vein, Manu et al. (2020) reported that electronic reporting plays a positive role in boosting revenue and reducing cost sporadically. Also, Sian (2019) findings revealed that electronic reporting improves the efficiency, quality and coverage of service delivery and revenue generation system processes of an organisation. Furthermore, Obasan (2011) showed that a positive correlation exists between digitalisation and banks profitability and revenue in Nigeria. Additionally, Seema (2014) showed that technological innovations positively influence the revenue generation system in banking and financial sector. The study of Goh et al. (2016) showed that online payment system and banking automation have increased the banks revenue thereby having a positive effect. In the same vein, John-Akamelu and Iyidiobi (2019) found the study revealed that e-taxation had effect on tax revenue generation system in Anambra State. Also, Joana et al. (2013) revealed that information and communication technologies are an enabler for revenue generation system optimization for the organisation. Further, Morten (2019) reported that digitalisation and the use of IT automation increased revenue generation system, the reduction in lodgment, clearance time and costs and corruption, and ease of governance processes. In contrast, Yu et al. (2023) used time-series data and the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) estimation approach to demonstrate that ICT infrastructure has no substantial positive impact on overall tax revenue collection. Nevertheless, it is possible to uncover tax loopholes and administer a country's taxation system effectively in the context of good governance and efficient systems. Likewise, Mahboub (2018) showed that automation does not significantly affect revenue generation. Likewise, Rami et al. (2016) revealed that digitalisation has a negative impact on revenue.

2.4 Theoretical framework

This study was anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Wang et al. (2023) theorized that, TAM is a significant research model of information systems and information technology acceptance for predicting persons' desire to use and accept information systems and technology. The Technology Acceptance Model is more applicable to online environments due to a number of benefits. First, the Technology Acceptance Model is explicit to information system application of the notions of usability and utility. In addition, Technology Acceptance Model is more economical and robust across a variety of information system applications. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) predicts that when economic agents are presented with new technology, a variety of characteristics influence their decision on when and how they will use it and how useful it will be (Alsyouf et al., 2023). This usefulness refers to how the digital system will improve work efficiency and accessibility. The model suggests that an effective tax administration should be proportional to incomes, to pay, convenient, and less expensive for both taxpayers and administrators. In addition, digital technology can play a role in strengthening revenue management by aiding tax authorities in achieving

greater revenue tax compliance, detecting fraud, and removing corruption chances (Mascagni et al., 2021).

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper used survey research design. The study population was 10,342 employees of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) in Abuja, Nigeria. Abuja was selected because it is the headquarters of the Federal Inland Revenue Services where innovations are decided, approved, and authorised. This study applied the Cochran's sample size formula (1977) in determining the sample size. Thus, a sample size of seven hundred and thirty-seven (737) which included an additional 30% sample size to cater for attrition rate. This work adopted the simple random sampling technique using a well-structured questionnaire as the research instrument with items adapted. A pilot test using 10% of the sample size was conducted on the questionnaire along with validity and reliability test. The validated reliability result through Cronbach's alpha coefficients from the internal consistency test showed; Revenue Generation System (α) = 0.845 and Tax Digitalisation Dimensions ranged 0.802 - 0.907. Primary data sourced from the sampled Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) were used in this paper while the multiple regression analysis adopted for the inferential.

4. RESULTS

Table 1. Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for effect of Tax digitalisation dimensions on Revenue Generation System of Federal Inland Revenue Service, Abuja, Nigeria

N	Model	B	T	Sig.	ANOVA (Sig.)	R	Adjusted R ²	F (4, 598)
	(Constant)	14.538	8.630	0.000				
	Electronic Audit	0.462	4.223	0.000				
603	Electronic Tax Filing	0.565	4.946	0.000	0.001 ^b	0.892 ^a	0.795	583.786
	Online Payment System	1.218	9.628	0.000				
	Electronic Reporting	1.108	9.102	0.000				

a. Dependent Variable: Revenue Generation System

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2024 (see appendix one for spss output)

Interpretation: Table 1. showed the multiple regression analysis results for the effect of tax digitalisation on revenue generation system of FIRs, Abuja, Nigeria. The results showed that electronic audit ($\beta = 0.462$, $t = 4.223$, $p < 0.05$), electronic tax filing ($\beta = 0.565$, $t = 4.946$, $p < 0.05$), online payment system ($\beta = 1.218$, $t = 9.628$, $p < 0.05$), and electronic reporting ($\beta = 1.108$, $t = 9.102$, $p < 0.05$) all have positive and significant effects on revenue generation system of FIRs in Abuja Nigeria. These results revealed that the entire dimensions of tax digitalisation (electronic reporting, electronic audit, electronic tax filing and online payment system) are core predictors of revenue generation system of Federal Inland Revenue Service in Abuja Nigeria. It also shows that out of the dimensions, online payment system was the best predictor on revenue generation system. The correlation R value of 0.892^a supports this result and it indicated that tax digitalisation has a strong and positive effect on revenue generation system of FIRs in Abuja Nigeria. The coefficient of multiple determination *Adj. R*² = 0.795 shows that about 79.5% variance in revenue generation system of FIRs in Abuja Nigeria can be accounted for by the proxies of tax digitalisation while the remaining 20.5% changes that occurs is accounted for by other variables not captured in the model. The predictive and prescriptive multiple regression models are thus expressed:

$$RGS = 14.538 + 0.462EA + 0.565ETF + 1.218OPS + 1.108ER + U_i \text{-----Eqn 1 (Predictive Model)}$$

$$RGS = 14.538 + 0.462EA + 0.565ETF + 1.218OPS + 1.108ER + U_i \text{----Eqn 1 (Prescriptive Model)}$$

Where:

RGS = Revenue Generation System

EA = Electronic Audit

ETF = Electronic Tax Filing

OPS = Online Payment system

ER = Electronic Reporting

The regression model indicated that if tax digitalization dimensions were held constant at zero, revenue generation system of FIRs in Abuja Nigeria would be 14.538 indicating a positive trend. From the predictive model, all the four dimensions of the tax digitalisation (electronic audit, electronic tax filing, online payment system and electronic reporting) have significant effect on revenue generation system and contributed significantly to the prediction. From the prescriptive model, it is observed

that statistically when tax digitalisation dimensions characterized by electronic audit, electronic tax filing, online payment system, and electronic reporting are improved by one unit, revenue generation system would also increase by 0.462, 0.565, 1.218, and 1.108 units respectively. The results suggested that tax digitalisation dimensions play a significant role in determining revenue generation system. Therefore, decision-makers in FIRS should prioritize applying electronic audit, online payment system, electronic reporting, and electronic tax filing of their tax system to enhance their revenue generation system.

Additionally, the F -statistics ($df = 4, 598$) = 583.786 at $p < 0.05$ indicated that the overall model is statistically significant for predicting the effect of tax digitalisation on revenue generation system. This implies that the regression model is a good fit for forecasting the effect of tax digitalisation (FIRS) on revenue generation system of (FIRS) in Abuja Nigeria. This means that the variables included in the model (electronic audit, electronic tax filing, online payment system, and electronic reporting) are all significant in elucidating the variability in revenue generation system with online payment system as the best predictor on revenue generation system. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) which states that Tax digitalisation dimensions have no significant effect on revenue generation system is rejected.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results of hypothesis showed that tax digitalisation dimensions have a positive and significant effect on revenue generation system of Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) in Abuja Nigeria. Empirically, the results from this study corroborate the work of Efunboade (2014) that digitalisation had a significant effect on revenue generation system. Likewise, Eliana et al. (2018) found that the use of technology in the business sector have made payment by customers and revenue generation system significantly easier for organisations. Building on previous findings, Adegbite et al. (2019) found that digitalisation has a positive significant and statistical impact on tax revenue generation system. That digitalisation is a highly effective tool which enhances taxation cash inflow. Also, Sian (2019) findings revealed that electronic reporting positively and significantly improves the efficiency, quality and coverage of service delivery and revenue generation system processes of an organisation. In the same vein, Manu et al. (2020) reported that electronic reporting plays a positive role in boosting revenue and reducing cost sporadically. Further, Ershaid (2021) found that there is a strong relationship between computerized taxes registers and VAT compliance. Adegboye et al. (2022) that specific ICT thresholds, industrialization and ICT play significant role for tax revenue mobilization. Supporting these findings, Ogbonna et al. (2022) while investigating the impact of e-tax payment on revenue generation system in Nigeria, found a weakly positive association between revenue collected before and after the implementation of a capital gains tax. In consonance with the previous findings, earlier works have also found that electronic taxation has a significant contribution to revenue generation system (Afuero & Okoye, 2014); that electronic reporting enhances the revenue generation system capacity (Sani, 2013); and that information communication technology have positive impact on organisational revenue growth (Alfonso & Noelia, 2017). Similarly, electronic payment channels have impact on the revenue generation system (Seema, 2014; Tijani & Ilugbemi, 2015). In contrast, Yu et al. (2023) used time-series data and the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) estimation approach to demonstrate that ICT infrastructure has no substantial positive impact on overall tax revenue collection. Likewise, Mahboub (2018) showed that automation does not significantly affect revenue generation. While Rami et al. (2016) found that digitalisation has a negative impact on revenue. The divergent results could be attributed to methodological approach and industry specific.

Theoretically, the results support the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989) as theorized by Wang et al. (2023) that TAM is a significant research model of information systems and information technology acceptance for predicting persons' desire to use and accept information systems and technology. As such, taxpayers could be motivated if the digital tax procedure is useful and credible. Thus, according to Mishra et al. (2023) and Karimi et al. (2017), taxpayers perceived usefulness and perceived ease of utilizing a specific information system or information technology would favorably have influence on attitudes about an information system, as well as on individuals' intents to use and acceptance of the system. Consequently, Nawawi and Salin (2018) and Khaddafi et al. (2018) indicated that voluntary revenue tax compliance will be achieved if Taxpayers possess positive behavior to the tax refund reporting and payment of tax payable. Hence, the behavior of Taxpayer to self-assessment should be promoted to achieve the improved level of revenue tax compliance for enhanced revenue generation. Therefore, on the bases of the overall multiple regression results, the the null hypothesis

(H_0) which states that tax digitalisation dimensions has no significant effect on revenue generation system of FIRS in Abuja Nigeria is rejected

5.1 Managerial implication

The study's outcome is significant to tax managers and management in a number of ways. The study's outcome can help them understand the impact of digital technologies on the tax landscape and how these technologies are changing the way that taxes are collected and managed. This understanding is essential for tax managers and management to be able to develop effective tax strategies and comply with tax laws. The findings of this study offers insights to help tax managers and management identify and implement new technologies and processes to improve their own tax operations with the thought that though knowledge power and employee acceptability are core but may not yield the required results due to the user's perception and ease of implementation as perceived by individuals. For example, tax managers can use the study to learn about new technologies for electronic tax filing, revenue tax compliance, and tax auditing. The findings of the present study provide information which will help tax managers and management develop and implement strategies to address the challenges of digitalizing taxation. For instance, tax managers and management need to develop strategies to protect taxpayer data and ensure that their tax systems are secured. This study's outcome on the tax digitalisation and revenue generation system is a valuable resource for tax managers and management.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on empirical findings of this study, the researcher concluded that tax digitalisation dimensions (electronic audit, electronic tax filing, online payment systems, and electronic reporting) had a positive and significant effect on revenue generation system of Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, Nigeria. Achieving effective tax revenue system could be tailored towards electronic audit, electronic tax filing, online payment systems, and electronic reporting with online payment systems as the most efficient. Therefore, this study recommends that management of FIRS should ensure accuracy of account book, relevant tax authority approval, encourage use of apple pay for remittance, should create electronic reports for taxpayers to improve revenue generation system.

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Appendix I

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.892 ^a	.796	.795	6.49098

a. Predictors: (Constant), Electronic Reporting, Electronic Audit, Electronic Tax Filing, Online Payment System

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	98386.206	4	24596.551	583.786	.000 ^b
	Residual	25195.430	598	42.133		
	Total	123581.635	602			

a. Dependent Variable: Revenue generation system

b. Predictors: (Constant), Electronic Reporting, Electronic Audit, Electronic Tax Filing, Online Payment System

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	14.538	1.685		8.630	.000
	Electronic Audit	.462	.109	.119	4.223	.000
	Electronic Tax Filing	.565	.114	.178	4.946	.000
	Online Payment System	1.218	.126	.360	9.628	.000
	Electronic Reporting	1.108	.122	.316	9.102	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Revenue generation system