

Treasury Single Account and Financial Accountability in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined the effect of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) on financial accountability in selected Federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the South–South region of Nigeria, with financial accountability proxied by budget execution efficiency. The study adopted a descriptive and explanatory survey research design and relied on primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to finance-related staff of five Federal MDAs. A total of 175 valid responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression techniques. The results revealed that TSA implementation has a significant positive effect on financial accountability in Nigerian MDAs. Specifically, TSA coverage exerted the strongest influence on budget execution efficiency, indicating that wider integration of MDAs into the TSA framework enhances adherence to approved budgets and strengthens fiscal discipline. TSA compliance level was also found to significantly improve budget execution efficiency, underscoring the importance of enforcement and institutional discipline in achieving accountability outcomes. Furthermore, cash consolidation efficiency and revenue remittance efficiency both exhibited positive and statistically significant effects on budget execution efficiency, suggesting that efficient pooling of government cash resources and timely remittance of revenues improve liquidity management and support effective budget implementation. The regression model demonstrated strong explanatory power, confirming that TSA-related variables jointly account for a substantial proportion of variations in budget execution efficiency across the selected MDAs. The study concludes that the Treasury Single Account is an effective public financial management reform for enhancing financial accountability in Nigerian MDAs when fully implemented and complied with. It recommends full TSA coverage, stricter enforcement of compliance, strengthened cash management systems, and continuous capacity building for public finance officers to sustain accountability gains.

Keywords: *Treasury Single Account; Financial Accountability; Budget Execution Efficiency; Public Financial Management; MDAs in Nigeria*

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Introduction

Financial accountability in the public sector embodies the responsible use of public funds, adherence to approved budgets, and transparent reporting of financial activities by public institutions (OECD, 2023; Schick, 2022). In the context of Nigerian Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), financial accountability is frequently proxied by budget execution efficiency, measured as the actual expenditure to approved budget ratio that is, the degree to which MDAs implement their budgets in line with legislative authorisations. This measure reflects fiscal discipline, planning accuracy, and compliance with public financial management rules (World Bank, 2022). A high execution ratio suggests that public resources are utilised effectively and consistently with approved fiscal priorities, while significant deviations indicate weaknesses in budget formulation, expenditure control, or institutional accountability mechanisms (Allen, Hemming, & Potter, 2021). Budget execution efficiency, therefore, goes beyond mere fiscal performance to serve as a practical indicator of institutional accountability and stewardship of public resources within the public sector (Pattanayak, 2021).

In Nigeria, persistent challenges in budget implementation, such as under-execution of capital expenditure and recurrent

budget overruns, have undermined the capacity of MDAs to deliver public services and meet development objectives. Fiscal reforms aimed at strengthening accountability have consequently become central to public financial management discourse. One of the cornerstone reforms adopted by the Federal Government of Nigeria is the Treasury Single Account (TSA) a unified banking arrangement that consolidates all government revenues and cash resources into a single account maintained at the Central Bank of Nigeria. The TSA was introduced in 2012 with the explicit goal of eliminating fragmented government bank accounts, reducing idle balances, preventing revenue leakages, and enhancing transparency and control over public funds. By centralizing cash management and requiring all receipts to be remitted into one account, the TSA system theoretically increases visibility over government transactions and strengthens mechanisms for monitoring compliance with budgetary provisions (Otusajo-Ahmad, et al 2024).

A growing body of contemporary research suggests that the implementation of TSA contributes to improved public financial management outcomes. Recent empirical findings indicate that TSA has played a significant role in optimizing public sector



funds, promoting transparency, and reducing leakage in government revenue streams (Otusajo-Ahmad et al 2024). These studies further argue that consolidated cash management under TSA enhances accountability by enabling tighter control of fiscal operations and reducing opportunities for unauthorized expenditures across MDAs. Moreover, public sector financial reforms including the adoption of TSA have been found to exert positive and significant impacts on accountability and transparency within Nigerian government institutions (Ike & Enowoghwenma, 2024).

However, despite the theoretical and empirical support for TSA's role in enhancing accountability, several challenges persist. Studies highlight that while TSA helps in blocking financial loopholes and improving cash control, its effectiveness in translating these cash-management benefits into stronger financial accountability especially in terms of consistent budget execution, timely reporting, and compliance with financial regulations remains variable across MDAs. Issues such as partial compliance, administrative bottlenecks, and weak enforcement of accountability frameworks have been documented as constraints to fully realizing the accountability potential of TSA reforms. This study situates its investigation at the intersection of these reform outcomes and accountability measures. By focusing on budget execution efficiency alongside other financial accountability indicators such as regulatory compliance, audit infractions, and transparency of fund utilization it seeks to determine whether TSA implementation has substantially improved the responsible use of public funds by MDAs in Nigeria, or whether its impact has been confined largely to cash management optimization without corresponding accountability gains.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the adoption of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) as a central pillar of public financial management reform in Nigeria, persistent and multifaceted accountability challenges continue to undermine the effective stewardship of public funds across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). The TSA policy was introduced to consolidate government bank accounts into a unified structure, eliminate fragmented accounts, block financial leakages, and promote transparency and accountability in public cash management. Empirical evidence suggests that the implementation of TSA has improved the consolidation of government revenues and reduced opportunities for financial mismanagement at the macro level (Patience, 2024; Bashir, 2025). However, while these gains are evident at the level of aggregate fiscal control, concerns remain regarding the extent to which such improvements translate into enhanced accountability within MDAs. Recent fiscal data further illustrate the scale and complexity of financial flows under the TSA framework. Reports from the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation and the Central Bank of Nigeria indicate that federation account inflows increased significantly to over ₦35 trillion in 2025, up from ₦27 trillion in 2024. Similarly, major revenue-generating agencies such as the Federal Inland Revenue Service, Nigeria Customs Service, and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company recorded substantial revenues, amounting to ₦28.6 trillion, ₦7.2 trillion, and ₦60.14 trillion respectively. While these figures reflect improved revenue consolidation and centralized control, they also intensify the demand for robust accountability systems capable of monitoring and reporting such large volumes of public funds efficiently.

Notwithstanding these advancements, a growing body of empirical and institutional evidence indicates that accountability gaps persist within the TSA framework. Reports by the Auditor-General for the Federation reveal financial infractions totaling approximately ₦3.403 trillion across several MDAs, highlighting ongoing weaknesses in financial discipline and compliance. In addition, irregular contract payments exceeding ₦197.72 billion and instances of ₦167.59 billion in unexecuted contracts point to systemic issues in procurement and budget execution processes. Furthermore, delays in financial reporting remain a critical concern, as evidenced by the inability of the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation to submit consolidated financial statements within statutory timelines, prompting legislative intervention. At the institutional level, the identification of thousands of gaps in TSA fiscal reporting by international development partners reflects deficiencies in regulatory frameworks, coordination mechanisms, and enforcement structures. Moreover, while the TSA was designed to reduce corruption and financial leakages, its effectiveness in achieving these objectives at the operational level appears uneven. Cases of non-compliance and financial irregularities persist among MDAs, including contract award violations and failures to remit statutory deductions. These issues are compounded by institutional bottlenecks such as administrative inefficiencies, capacity constraints, and technological limitations. For instance, despite substantial investment in financial management systems such as the Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS), challenges related to real-time reconciliation and system effectiveness remain unresolved.

These developments suggest that while the TSA has achieved significant success in enhancing cash management and revenue consolidation at the macro level, its impact on strengthening institutional accountability within MDAs is less conclusive. This raises a critical research problem regarding whether the TSA has effectively improved accountability mechanisms across government institutions or whether its benefits are largely confined to centralized financial control, leaving underlying issues of compliance, transparency, and financial discipline insufficiently addressed.

Research Objectives

To examine the effect of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) on financial accountability in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Nigeria, with specific emphasis on budget execution efficiency. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. examine the effect of TSA coverage on budget execution efficiency in Nigerian MDAs;
- ii. assess the impact of TSA compliance level on budget execution efficiency of MDAs in Nigeria;
- iii. determine the influence of cash consolidation efficiency under TSA on budget execution efficiency in MDAs;
- iv. evaluate the effect of revenue remittance efficiency on budget execution efficiency of MDAs in Nigeria.

Research Questions

In line with the stated objectives, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- i. To what extent does TSA coverage influence budget execution efficiency in Nigerian MDAs?

- ii. What is the effect of TSA compliance level on the budget execution efficiency of MDAs in Nigeria?
- iii. How does cash consolidation efficiency under the TSA affect budget execution efficiency in Nigerian MDAs?
- iv. Does revenue remittance efficiency significantly influence budget execution efficiency in MDAs in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses are stated in the null form (H_0) to allow for empirical testing:

- **H₀₁:** TSA coverage has no significant effect on budget execution efficiency in Nigerian MDAs.
- **H₀₂:** TSA compliance level does not significantly influence budget execution efficiency of MDAs in Nigeria.
- **H₀₃:** Cash consolidation efficiency under TSA has no significant effect on budget execution efficiency in Nigerian MDAs.
- **H₀₄:** Revenue remittance efficiency does not significantly affect budget execution efficiency in MDAs in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarifications

Financial Accountability

Financial accountability in the public sector refers to the obligation of public institutions to manage financial resources prudently, comply with approved budgets and financial regulations, and provide transparent, accurate, and timely reports on the use of public funds (OECD, 2023). It embodies answerability, compliance, and enforceability in the stewardship of public resources and is central to public trust and effective governance (Schick, 2021). In the context of Nigerian MDAs, financial accountability is particularly critical due to historical challenges associated with budget indiscipline, weak expenditure controls, and limited transparency in public fund utilisation. As argued by the World Bank (2022), accountability failures in MDAs often manifest through deviations between approved budgets and actual expenditures, unauthorized spending, and delays in financial reporting. Consequently, empirical public finance literature increasingly measures financial accountability using operational indicators that capture actual fiscal behaviour rather than abstract institutional claims.

Budget Execution Efficiency (BEE)

Budget execution efficiency, proxied by the actual expenditure to approved budget ratio, reflects the extent to which MDAs implement their budgets as authorized by the legislature. It measures how closely actual spending aligns with approved fiscal plans and is widely recognized as a core indicator of financial accountability and budget credibility (Allen, Hemming, & Potter, 2021). A high budget execution efficiency ratio suggests strong expenditure control, fiscal discipline, and compliance with budgetary rules, whereas persistent under-execution or over-execution indicates weaknesses in planning accuracy, cash management, or accountability mechanisms (IMF, 2023). In developing economies such as Nigeria, budget execution efficiency is especially relevant because it links accountability directly to

service delivery outcomes and public sector performance (World Bank, 2022).

Treasury Single Account (TSA)

The Treasury Single Account (TSA) is a public financial management system that consolidates all government cash balances into a unified account structure, usually maintained at the central bank. According to the International Monetary Fund (2022), TSA is designed to enhance cash management efficiency, strengthen expenditure control, reduce idle balances, and improve fiscal transparency by providing government with a comprehensive view of its cash position. In Nigeria, TSA was introduced as part of broader public financial management reforms to address long-standing problems of fragmented bank accounts, revenue leakages, and weak oversight of MDAs' financial operations. TSA is therefore conceptually linked to financial accountability through its role in enforcing cash discipline, improving visibility of transactions, and limiting discretionary control over public funds (Pattanayak & Fainboim, 2021).

TSA Coverage

TSA coverage refers to the extent to which MDAs and government-controlled entities are integrated into the TSA framework, measured by the proportion of MDA accounts consolidated under TSA. Broad TSA coverage ensures that government revenues and expenditures are captured within a single treasury system, thereby reducing opportunities for off-budget spending and financial opacity (IMF, 2022). Limited TSA coverage weakens accountability by allowing MDAs to operate parallel accounts outside treasury oversight, undermining budget execution discipline and expenditure control (OECD, 2023). Hence, TSA coverage is a critical determinant of how effectively TSA can support financial accountability in MDAs.

TSA Compliance Level

TSA compliance level captures the degree to which MDAs adhere to TSA operational guidelines, including mandatory remittance of revenues, use of approved payment channels, and avoidance of unauthorized bank accounts. Compliance reflects institutional discipline and the effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms within the public financial management system (World Bank, 2021). High compliance levels indicate that MDAs operate within treasury controls, strengthening accountability and reducing discretionary misuse of funds. Conversely, weak compliance undermines TSA objectives and perpetuates accountability gaps, even where TSA structures formally exist (Pattanayak, 2021).

Cash Consolidation Efficiency

Cash consolidation efficiency refers to how effectively government cash balances are pooled and managed within the TSA framework. It is commonly measured by the ratio of consolidated balances to total government cash holdings. Efficient cash consolidation improves liquidity forecasting, reduces borrowing costs, and strengthens expenditure control by ensuring that spending is aligned with available resources (IMF, 2023). From an accountability perspective, cash consolidation efficiency limits MDAs' ability to retain idle balances or divert funds, thereby reinforcing budget execution discipline and financial transparency (Allen et al., 2021).

Revenue Remittance Efficiency

Revenue remittance efficiency measures the timeliness and completeness of revenue transfers by MDAs into the TSA, often proxied by the proportion of internally generated revenue remitted within prescribed timelines. Efficient remittance enhances accountability by ensuring that public revenues are fully captured and available for budgetary allocation and oversight (World Bank, 2022). Delayed or partial remittance weakens fiscal transparency and undermines budget execution efficiency by creating uncertainty in cash availability and encouraging off-budget practices (OECD, 2023). Revenue remittance efficiency is therefore a key channel through which TSA influences financial accountability in MDAs.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two complementary theoretical perspectives: Stewardship Theory as the theory of financial accountability, and the Treasury Single Account (TSA) Theory within the Public Financial Management (PFM) Framework as the theory underpinning treasury consolidation and cash management reforms. Together, these theories provide the analytical foundation for examining how TSA implementation influences financial accountability proxied by budget execution efficiency in Nigerian Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

Stewardship Theory of Financial Accountability

Stewardship Theory posits that public officials and managers are entrusted with the responsibility of managing public resources in the best interest of citizens, acting as stewards rather than opportunistic agents. Unlike Agency Theory, which assumes self-interest and the need for strict monitoring, Stewardship Theory emphasises trust, responsibility, and goal alignment between principals (citizens and the state) and stewards (public officials) (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997; Van Slyke, 2021). In the public sector context, Stewardship Theory provides a normative foundation for financial accountability by asserting that public officials have an inherent obligation to utilise public funds efficiently, comply with approved budgets, and provide transparent financial reports. Financial accountability, therefore, is realised when MDAs demonstrate responsible budget execution, prudent expenditure control, and faithful adherence to fiscal rules (Schillemans & Busuic, 2022).

Within this study, budget execution efficiency (actual expenditure to approved budget ratio) is conceptualised as a practical manifestation of stewardship behaviour. High budget execution efficiency reflects disciplined spending, effective planning, and compliance with legislative authorisations, consistent with the expectations of stewardship. Conversely, persistent budget deviations signal stewardship failure, weak accountability, and erosion of public trust (OECD, 2023). Thus, Stewardship Theory underpins the dependent variable by explaining why responsible budget implementation is a valid indicator of financial accountability in MDAs.

Public Financial Management Theory

The Treasury Single Account is grounded in the broader Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory, which emphasises the integration of budgeting, cash management, accounting, and reporting systems to enhance fiscal discipline, transparency, and accountability (Allen, Hemming, & Potter, 2021). TSA theory

posits that effective consolidation of government cash resources into a unified treasury structure strengthens central oversight, reduces information asymmetry, and constrains discretionary misuse of public funds (Pattanayak & Fainboim, 2021). According to TSA theory, fragmented government bank accounts weaken accountability by allowing MDAs to retain idle balances, delay revenue remittances, and engage in off-budget spending. By contrast, a well-implemented TSA system enhances cash visibility, improves liquidity management, and enforces compliance with budgetary and treasury rules, thereby reinforcing financial accountability (IMF, 2023).

In this study, TSA is operationalized through TSA coverage, TSA compliance level, cash consolidation efficiency, and revenue remittance efficiency. These variables capture the core theoretical mechanisms of TSA theory: integration, enforcement, consolidation, and revenue discipline. TSA theory predicts that higher coverage and compliance, efficient cash consolidation, and timely revenue remittance will limit discretionary financial behaviour by MDAs and improve budget execution efficiency. Hence, TSA theory provides the explanatory logic for how treasury consolidation reforms translate into measurable accountability outcomes in public institutions.

Empirical Review

Eme and Chukwurah (2015) provided one of the earliest empirical discussions on the Treasury Single Account in Nigeria, analysing its perceived advantages and drawbacks. Their study showed that TSA adoption was largely driven by the need to curb leakages, improve accountability, and strengthen public finance management, although concerns were raised about liquidity constraints in MDAs. Bashir (2016) empirically examined the effect of TSA on public finance management using data from MDAs in Bauchi State. The findings indicated that TSA significantly blocks financial leakages and enhances transparency and accountability in government financial operations. Oti, Igbeng, and Obim (2016) appraised the policy impact of TSA in Nigeria and found that the policy positively influenced transparency and accountability in the public sector, though implementation challenges persisted across MDAs. Igbokwe-Ibeto, et al (2016) assessed TSA as a transparency and accountability mechanism in public finance management. Their evidence suggested that TSA improved cash management and oversight of public funds, contributing to better fiscal discipline. Ofor, et al (2017) investigated the effect of TSA on the performance of MDAs and reported a significant positive relationship between TSA adoption and improved financial performance, transparency, and accountability. Mboto, et al (2017) examined public perception of TSA and found broad support for the policy, with respondents acknowledging its role in improving visibility of government revenue inflows and outflows. Augustine and Abumchukwu (2017) focused on TSA and public sector accountability, concluding that TSA enhanced accountability by centralising government revenues and limiting discretionary control by MDAs.

Adeagbo and Oladeji (2019) analysed TSA as a tool for preventing leakages and enhancing accountability. Their findings confirmed that TSA reduced revenue leakages and strengthened control over public funds. Amahalu, Ezenwaka, and Obi (2022) empirically examined TSA and accountability in Nigeria's public sector, showing that TSA adoption significantly improved accountability and transparency across federal MDAs. Ikeagwu

and Ibanichuka (2025) examined the relationship between the Treasury Single Account and government accountability in Nigeria's public sector. Using evidence from MDAs, the study found that TSA significantly strengthens accountability by improving oversight of public funds and reducing discretionary financial practices within government institutions. Anikeze and Onyekwena (2025) focused on federal universities in South East Nigeria and assessed the role of TSA in fostering financial accountability and discipline. Their findings showed that TSA adoption enhanced financial discipline, reduced fund diversion, and improved accountability in university financial management, despite challenges related to delayed fund releases. Anaweokhai and Emhenya (2025) investigated TSA within the broader framework of public sector reforms in Nigeria. The study revealed that TSA adoption improved accountability and transparency in public finance management by eliminating multiple bank accounts operated by MDAs and strengthening centralized cash management.

Chika (2025) assessed the impact of TSA implementation on financial discipline in government ministries. The results indicated that TSA positively influenced financial discipline and accountability in MDAs, particularly through improved monitoring of revenue inflows and expenditure controls. Nsiegebe and Uchechi (2025) analyzed TSA, accountability, and transparency in public finance management in Nigeria. Their empirical evidence showed that TSA enhanced transparency and accountability by consolidating government revenues into a single account with the Central Bank of Nigeria, thereby reducing leakages. Ifeanyi (2025) examined TSA and the accountability of public funds in Nigeria. The study found that TSA had a significant positive effect on transparency and accountability in public fund management, although operational bottlenecks persisted in some MDAs.

Chukwudum (2025) investigated the effect of TSA on financial control in the Nigerian public sector. The findings demonstrated that TSA improved financial control mechanisms, enhanced transparency, and strengthened accountability across MDAs. Bello and Bello (2025) examined TSA as a tool for improving budget implementation and tracking in federal tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The study concluded that TSA improved budget monitoring and financial accountability, though institutional capacity constraints limited its effectiveness. Abbas, Bala, and Bello (2025) analyzed the effect of TSA on the Nigerian economy using evidence from the Federal Inland Revenue Service, Yola Office. The study showed that TSA contributed to blocking financial leakages and entrenched transparency and accountability in public financial management. Abdulrahman and Mubaraq (2025) examined digitalized accounting practices and financial accountability in Nigerian MDAs, with TSA as a key component. Their findings indicated that TSA, alongside digital accounting systems, enhanced centralized, transparent, and accountable revenue management in the public sector.

Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive and explanatory survey research design to examine the effect of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) on financial accountability in selected Federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the South-South

geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The survey design is appropriate because it enables the collection of quantitative data from respondents who are directly involved in financial management activities and allows for empirical testing of relationships among the study variables. The study area is the South-South region of Nigeria, and the focus is on five (5) Federal MDAs that operate zonal or institutional offices within the region. The selected MDAs include the Federal Ministry of Works, Federal Ministry of Education, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Federal Medical Centre (FMC), and Federal Housing Authority (FHA). These MDAs were purposively selected due to their direct involvement in budget implementation, revenue remittance, treasury operations, and compliance with TSA guidelines.

The population of the study consists of all finance-related staff in the selected MDAs, including accountants, budget officers, treasury officers, and internal auditors. Based on records obtained from the personnel units of the selected MDAs, the total population is 312 staff, distributed as follows: Federal Ministry of Works (68), Federal Ministry of Education (61), Federal Inland Revenue Service (74), Federal Medical Centre (56), and Federal Housing Authority (53). This population is considered adequate and representative for examining TSA practices and financial accountability within federal public institutions in the region. Using the Yamane (1967) sample size determination formula at a 5% level of significance, a sample size of 175 respondents was derived. To ensure adequate representation, the sample was proportionately allocated across the five MDAs, and respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique, focusing strictly on officers with direct responsibilities for budgeting, accounting, revenue management, and treasury operations. This approach ensures that respondents possess sufficient knowledge and experience to provide reliable information on TSA implementation and financial accountability practices.

Primary data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire designed specifically for the research. The questionnaire was structured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) and contained items measuring the dependent variable financial accountability proxied by budget execution efficiency, as well as the independent variables: TSA coverage, TSA compliance level, cash consolidation efficiency, and revenue remittance efficiency. The instrument also captured basic demographic information such as respondents' designation, years of experience, and educational qualification. The validity of the questionnaire was ensured through expert review by specialists in public sector accounting and public financial management, while reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. All constructs recorded reliability coefficients above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency. Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize respondents' characteristics and key variables. Inferential analysis was conducted using multiple regression analysis to examine the effect of TSA variables on financial accountability, measured by budget execution efficiency. Hypotheses were tested at the 5% level of significance.

Analysis and Discussion

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Designation

Designation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Accountants	52	29.7
Budget Officers	38	21.7
Treasury Officers	41	23.4
Internal Auditors	44	25.2
Total	175	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1 shows that respondents were drawn from core finance-related units of the selected MDAs. This distribution confirms that the study relied on officers directly involved in budgeting, treasury operations, auditing, and accounting, thereby enhancing the reliability of responses on TSA and financial accountability.

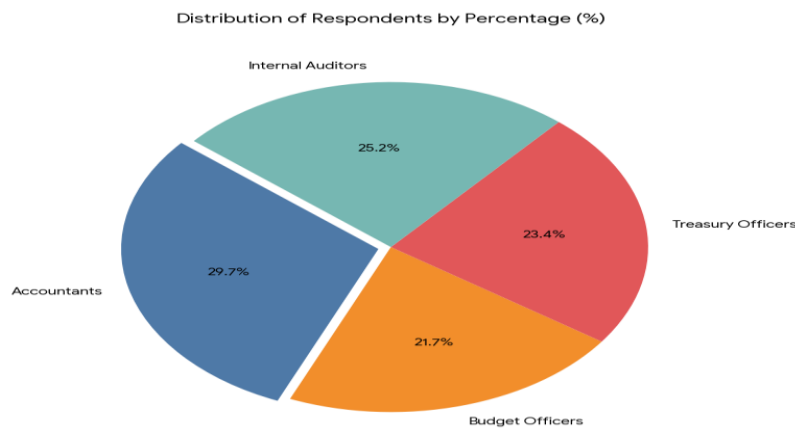
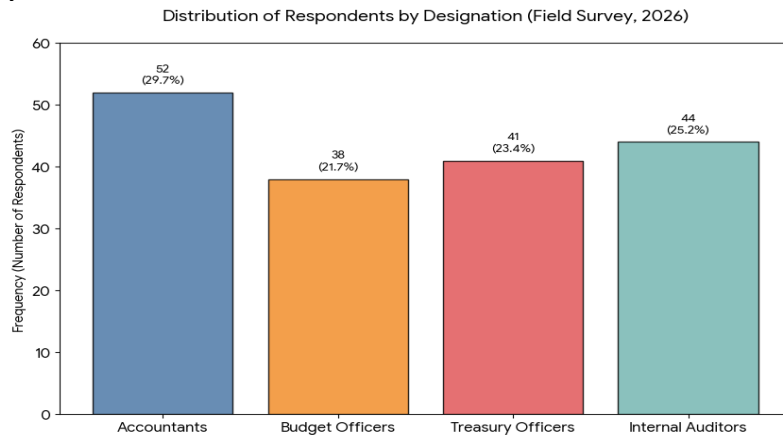
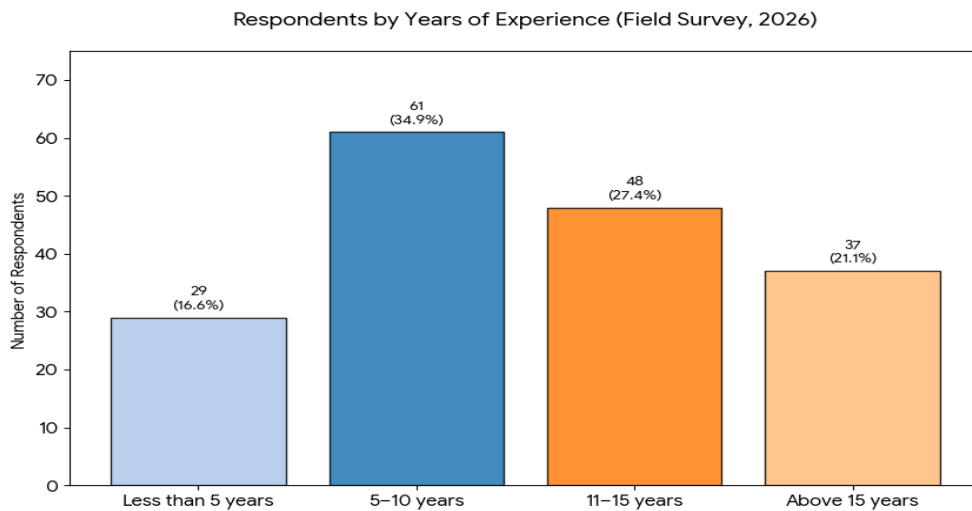


Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	29	16.6
5–10 years	61	34.9
11–15 years	48	27.4
Above 15 years	37	21.1
Total	175	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 2 indicates that a majority of respondents (83.4%) have over five years of work experience. This suggests that respondents possess sufficient institutional knowledge and practical exposure to TSA implementation and budget execution processes within their MDAs.



Percentage Distribution by Years of Experience

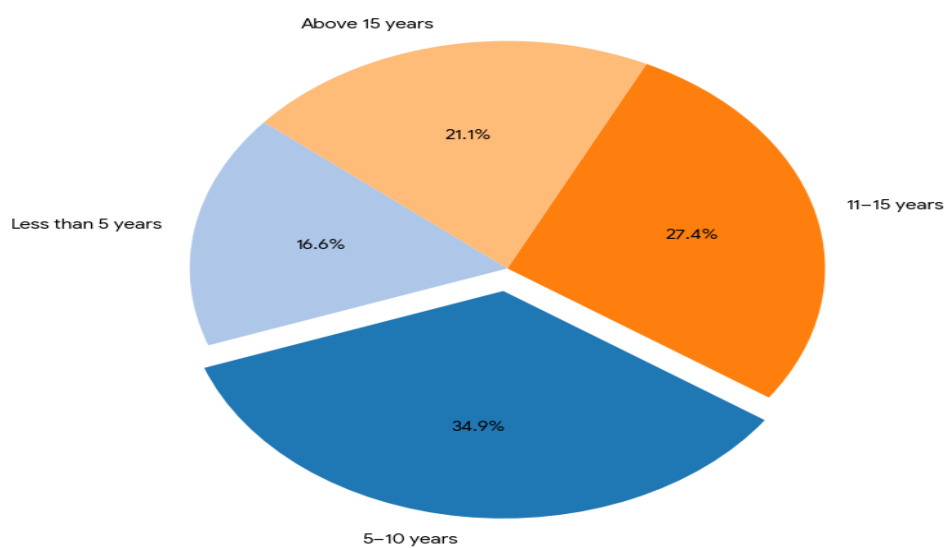
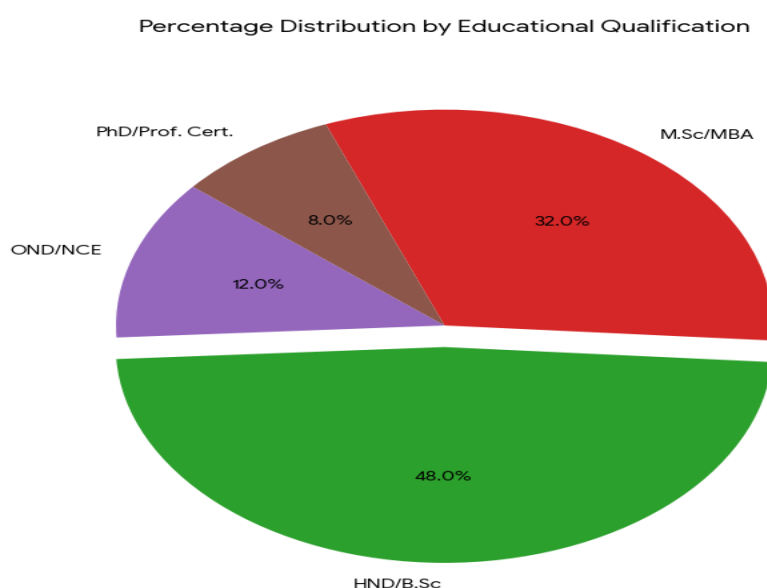
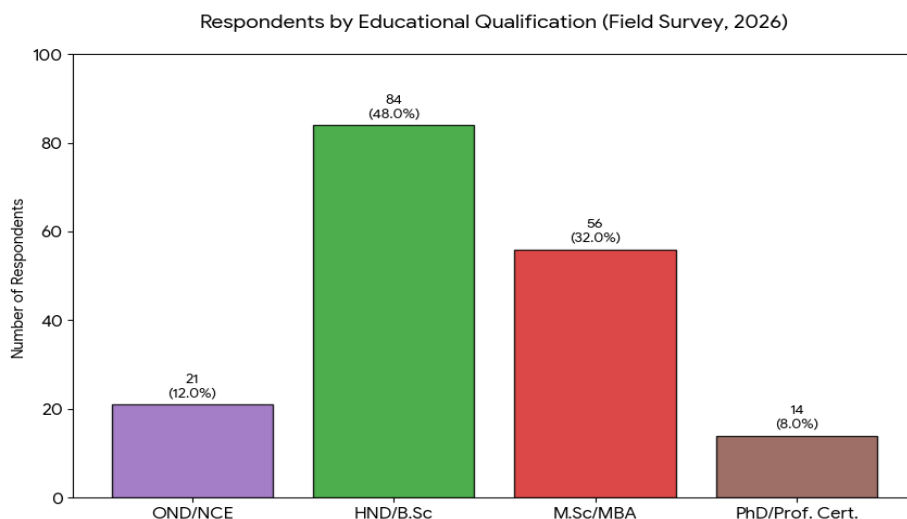


Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
OND/NCE	21	12.0
HND/B.Sc	84	48.0
M.Sc/MBA	56	32.0
PhD/Professional Cert.	14	8.0
Total	175	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 3 reveals that the majority of respondents (88.0%) possess at least a first degree or higher qualification. This educational background enhances respondents' capacity to understand TSA operations, financial accountability frameworks, and budget execution procedures.



Descriptive Statistics

Following the demographic analysis, descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize respondents’ perceptions on the key study variables; budget execution efficiency, TSA coverage, TSA compliance level, cash consolidation efficiency, and revenue remittance efficiency. The use of mean and standard deviation enabled the study to assess the central tendency and dispersion of responses, thereby providing insight into the consistency of respondents’ views regarding TSA implementation and financial accountability in the selected MDAs.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Budget Execution Efficiency (BEE)	175	3.61	1.14
TSA Coverage	175	3.71	1.08
TSA Compliance Level	175	3.47	1.19
Cash Consolidation Efficiency	175	3.53	1.12
Revenue Remittance Efficiency	175	3.48	1.21

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The results show that all variables have mean values above the benchmark of 3.00, indicating a general agreement among respondents that TSA implementation has positively influenced financial accountability in the selected MDAs. TSA Coverage recorded the highest mean score (3.71), suggesting broad integration of MDAs into the TSA framework. Budget Execution Efficiency also recorded a relatively high mean (3.61), reflecting improved adherence to approved budgets. The standard deviation values indicate moderate dispersion, suggesting some variations in perceptions across MDAs, particularly with respect to TSA compliance and revenue remittance efficiency.

Regression Analysis

Table 5: Multiple Regression Results on TSA and Financial Accountability

Variable / Statistic	Coefficient (β)	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Probability
Constant	0.8426	0.3184	2.6469	0.0089
TSA Coverage	0.2863	0.0712	4.0191	0.0001
TSA Compliance Level	0.2147	0.0689	3.1165	0.0022
Cash Consolidation Efficiency	0.1984	0.0647	3.0662	0.0026
Revenue Remittance Efficiency	0.1729	0.0615	2.8124	0.0056
Model Summary Statistics				
R	0.7814			
R ²	0.6106			
Adjusted R ²	0.5989			
F-Statistic	52.4837			
Prob(F-Statistic)	0.0000			
Durbin-Watson	1.9832			

Source: Author's computation using SPSS

The regression results presented in Table 5 examine the effect of Treasury Single Account (TSA) implementation on financial accountability in MDAs, proxied by budget execution efficiency. The model demonstrates strong explanatory power, with an R² value of 0.6106, indicating that approximately 61.1% of the variations in budget execution efficiency are jointly explained by TSA coverage, TSA compliance level, cash consolidation efficiency, and revenue remittance efficiency. The adjusted R² of 0.5989 further confirms the robustness of the model after adjusting for degrees of freedom. The F-statistic of 52.4837, significant at the 1% level ($p < 0.01$), indicates that the model is statistically significant overall and that the explanatory variables jointly exert a significant effect on financial accountability in the selected MDAs. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.9832 suggests the absence of serious autocorrelation, implying that the regression estimates are reliable.

TSA coverage has a positive and statistically significant effect on budget execution efficiency, with a coefficient of 0.2863 and a p-value of 0.0001. This implies that, holding other factors constant, a one-unit increase in TSA coverage leads to an approximate 28.6% improvement in budget execution efficiency. This finding suggests that wider integration of MDA accounts into the TSA framework significantly enhances adherence to approved budgets. The result underscores the importance of comprehensive TSA coverage in eliminating fragmented accounts and strengthening central oversight of public funds, thereby promoting fiscal discipline and accountability. The coefficient of TSA compliance level is 0.2147, statistically significant at the 1% level ($p = 0.0022$). This indicates that higher compliance with TSA operational guidelines such as mandatory remittance of revenues and use of authorized payment channels significantly improves budget execution efficiency. The result implies that beyond formal TSA adoption, effective enforcement and institutional compliance are critical in translating TSA reforms into tangible accountability outcomes. Variations in compliance across MDAs partly explain differences in budget execution performance.

Cash consolidation efficiency exhibits a positive and significant coefficient of 0.1984 ($p = 0.0026$). This suggests that efficient pooling and control of government cash balances under the TSA framework enhance budget execution by ensuring timely availability of funds and reducing liquidity constraints during budget implementation. Improved cash consolidation limits

discretionary spending and idle balances, thereby reinforcing expenditure control and accountability within MDAs. Revenue remittance efficiency also shows a positive and statistically significant relationship with budget execution efficiency, with a coefficient of 0.1729 and a p-value of 0.0056. This indicates that timely and complete remittance of internally generated revenue into the TSA improves cash predictability and supports effective budget implementation. Weak remittance practices undermine budget credibility and disrupt expenditure planning, while efficient remittance strengthens fiscal transparency and accountability.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal that the Treasury Single Account (TSA) has a positive and statistically significant effect on financial accountability in Nigerian MDAs, proxied by budget execution efficiency. This result aligns with the core objective of TSA as a public financial management reform aimed at strengthening fiscal discipline, enhancing transparency, and improving control over public funds. The explanatory power of the model suggests that TSA-related mechanisms play a substantial role in explaining variations in how effectively MDAs implement approved budgets. The positive and significant effect of TSA coverage on budget execution efficiency indicates that broader integration of MDAs into the TSA framework enhances accountability outcomes. This finding is consistent with empirical evidence by Pattanayak and Fainboim (2021) and IMF (2023), who argue that fragmented government bank accounts weaken expenditure control and budget credibility. Studies conducted in Nigeria by Otusajo-Ahmad et al. (2024) and Bashir (2023) similarly report that TSA coverage reduces idle balances and off-budget spending, thereby improving budget implementation performance. The present study extends these findings by providing micro-level evidence from MDAs in the South-South region.

The significant relationship between TSA compliance level and budget execution efficiency underscores the importance of enforcement and institutional discipline in realising the accountability benefits of TSA. This result supports the findings of World Bank (2022), which emphasises that compliance with treasury rules is more critical than mere adoption of reforms. Empirical studies by Ike and Enowoghwenma (2024) also show that weak compliance limits the effectiveness of TSA in improving accountability across MDAs. The present study confirms that

higher compliance levels are associated with more responsible budget execution. The positive effect of cash consolidation efficiency on budget execution efficiency aligns with prior empirical evidence that efficient pooling of government cash improves liquidity forecasting and expenditure control. Allen, Hemming, and Potter (2021) and IMF (2023) argue that effective cash consolidation reduces borrowing costs and ensures timely fund availability for budgeted expenditures. In Nigeria, Onyekachi and Eze (2023) similarly find that TSA-driven cash consolidation strengthens fiscal discipline, a result corroborated by the present study. Finally, the finding that revenue remittance efficiency significantly improves budget execution efficiency is consistent with empirical studies by OECD (2023) and World Bank (2022), which link timely revenue remittance to improved budget credibility and accountability. Nigerian studies, including Otusajo-Ahmad et al. (2024), also report that delayed or partial remittance undermines expenditure planning and accountability. This study confirms that efficient revenue remittance under TSA enhances financial accountability by improving cash predictability and reducing opportunities for financial irregularities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the effect of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) on financial accountability in selected Federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the South–South region of Nigeria, with financial accountability proxied by budget execution efficiency (actual expenditure to approved budget ratio). Using primary data obtained through structured questionnaires administered to finance-related staff of five Federal MDAs, the study analysed how TSA coverage, TSA compliance level, cash consolidation efficiency, and revenue remittance efficiency influence budget execution efficiency. The empirical results revealed that TSA implementation has a statistically significant and positive effect on financial accountability in the selected MDAs. Specifically, TSA coverage was found to be the most influential determinant of budget execution efficiency, indicating that broader integration of MDAs into the TSA framework enhances adherence to approved budgets and strengthens fiscal discipline. TSA compliance level also exhibited a significant positive effect, underscoring the importance of enforcement and institutional discipline in realising the accountability benefits of TSA reforms. Cash consolidation efficiency significantly improved budget execution efficiency by enhancing liquidity management and reducing discretionary control over public funds. Similarly, revenue remittance efficiency positively influenced budget execution efficiency, suggesting that timely and complete remittance of internally generated revenue improves cash predictability and supports effective budget implementation. Overall, the findings demonstrate that TSA-related mechanisms jointly explain a substantial proportion of variations in budget execution efficiency across MDAs.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the Treasury Single Account is an effective public financial management instrument for enhancing financial accountability in Nigerian MDAs when properly implemented and complied with. The results confirm that TSA goes beyond a mere cash management reform and functions as an accountability-enhancing mechanism by strengthening expenditure control, improving budget credibility, and limiting opportunities for financial indiscipline. The positive relationship between TSA variables and

budget execution efficiency validates the relevance of Stewardship Theory and Public Financial Management theory in explaining how institutional controls reinforce responsible management of public funds. However, variations in compliance and remittance efficiency across MDAs indicate that the accountability gains of TSA are not automatic and depend significantly on enforcement, institutional capacity, and complementary reforms. In light of the findings and conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations.

- i. the Federal Government should ensure full TSA coverage by eliminating remaining parallel accounts operated by MDAs and extending TSA integration to all revenue-generating and spending units.
- ii. stronger enforcement mechanisms and sanctions should be implemented to improve TSA compliance, particularly in relation to revenue remittance and adherence to approved payment channels.
- iii. government should continue to strengthen cash management and consolidation systems, including the integration of TSA with digital platforms such as GIFMIS, to improve liquidity forecasting and expenditure control.
- iv. capacity-building programmes should be intensified for finance, budget, and treasury officers in MDAs to enhance understanding of TSA operations and accountability requirements.
- v. periodic monitoring and evaluation of TSA implementation should be institutionalized to ensure that accountability outcomes especially improved budget execution efficiency are sustained over time.

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