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ACCOUNTING PRACTICES IN A DIGITALIZED WORLD: NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT: *This paper reviewed the digitalization of accounting practices with emphasis on Nigeria. The survival and competition to remain afloat in business exerted pressures on several businesses to adopt digitalization. The accounting industry is not different from other industries that lagged behind in digital innovation. This study examined the accounting practices in a digitalized world from a Nigerian perspective through a survey method; a questionnaire was administered to obtain respondents' opinion. The hypotheses were tested and established with the use of ANOVA through SPSS version 23.0. The findings revealed that digitalization had a direct effect on accounting practices in Nigeria in the areas of audit practice efficiency in Nigeria, tax services performance in Nigeria, financial advisory performance in Nigeria, and that accounting practices have significant relationship with digitalization in Nigeria. The study recommended that professional accountants should seek more training so as to enhance their performance*

KEYWORDS: Accounting firms, Accounting practices, Digitalization, Management consultants, Tax consultants.
JEL classification: M41

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INTRODUCTION

Accounting practices in a digitalized world is a transformative journey from the traditional period (manual system) to the current period of digitalization (automation). The modern accounting profession involves the use of ICT to improve its application in accounting practices and auditing processes (Nwakoby, Raymond & Okoye, 2015). As technology is evolving rapidly, accounting is also required to follow suit otherwise it will not be able to measure what is supposed to be measured. It will also not be able to meet up with current challenges posed by the technology. Accounting firms did not pay attention to digital innovation that came in the '80s and the response required by the profession to adapt for effectiveness. Digitalization is perceived as a new way of doing business that cuts away manual processing in organizations (Gustafsson, 2015).

Accounting practice is the medium of financial reporting that serves both internal and external interests. Management accounting is considered as internal because it is prepared by the management of the company for the use of management and other interested parties such as the Board to review the performance of the company (Boundless, 2015). External accounting report involves management accounting prepared by the management, audited by the statutory auditors, and approved by the Board of the company before it is released to the shareholders and public, such report is required to comply with some rules and provisions of auditing guidelines and corporate governance before they are considered appropriate (Boundless, 2015).

The current digitalization programme is the second large innovation shift for the accounting industry. This digital innovation includes online tools, webinars, software programs, cloud solutions, digital data storage, among others, subject to available opportunities in the accounting industry (Li & Vasarhelyi, 2018). Digital accounting is the recording, processing, storing and communicating financial records with the help of digital tools and systems. Today, manual accounting systems and processes have been replaced with digital innovation to improve business processes for effectiveness and efficiency in performance (Nwakoby, Raymond & Okoye, 2015).

Digitalization is the process of transforming manual information into a digital (i.e. computer-readable) format, which organizes the information into bits. The outcome is the sign of an object, image, sound, document or signal (usually an analog signal) by generating a series of numbers that describe a discrete set of points or samples (Nwakoby et al., 2015). The competition and acceptance of digital innovation in the market place has compelled the accounting industry to adopt and adapt digitalization to improve its business processes technologically (Li & Vasarhelyi, 2018). Digital innovation has added value to accounting practices in the areas of streamlining processes; access and comparison of data; and flexible working procedures (Bygren, 2016).

Digitalization has brought great improvement on the way accounting practices are carried out. It has brought relief to those areas where manual systems were earlier in place, such as generation of invoices, billing of clients, reconciliation of accounts, and communication with clients. Digitalization brings about accuracy, easy access, reliability of data, secured storage through cloud arrangement, efficiency in time and cost, and scalability of the company's growth in documentation process (Bygren, 2016; Li & Vasarhelyi, 2018).

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The digital transformation in the global economy has impacted on a wide range of disciplines in which the practice of accounting is not left out. The audit, tax, advisory, asset management and assurance engagement practices in Nigeria have all experienced turn around as a result of digitization. Digitalization has also taken hold of the processes and systems in accounting at a rapid pace (AL-Refaee, 2012). The new wave challenges of taxing a digitized economy drive towards paperless accounting, management of data quality, real-time reporting, data analyses, tools for visualization, cloud computing applications to cloud solutions, and the usage of artificial intelligence. All these pose milestones that are well attained in developed climes but the same success rate is yet to be replicated in Nigeria owing to many factors (Li & Vasarhelyi, 2018). The focus of this paper is to evaluate the effect of digitalization on accounting practices in Nigeria (Shagari, Abdullah & Saat, 2017). In pursuit of this objective, this paper sought to:

1. Assess effect of digitalization on audit practice efficiency in Nigeria;
2. Examine the impact of digitalization on tax services performance in Nigeria; and to
3. Determine if digitalization is a significant tool in driving Financial advisory performance in Nigeria.

LITERATURE/THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Review of Concepts

Accounting Practices

Before the advent of digital innovation, accounting practices were predominantly manual in keeping, recording, processing and reporting financial records (Oladejo, 2014). Manual system of accounting was the pure form adopted to store, process, and manage data. Manual accounting system involved physical customer meetings and generation of billing manually. In the present time, the manual system slows down the process and remains uncompetitive as no customer wants to wait to be served by a manual system when he can be served within a twinkle of an eye in another digitized company. The manual system makes the process of data collection, analysis and storage more complex and time consuming. There have not been many digitalization shifts in the accounting profession, looking at its age from evolution. Manual systems had been in existence before the 12 computers invented in the 1980's (Oladejo & Yinus, 2020). Mini computers software and small accounting machines tools were available to manage accounting practices more efficiently. Till date, manual systems and tools are still adopted in some accounting firms' daily operations.

Digitalization of Accounting System

Digital accounting system is a growing one as technology evolves. Digital accounting refers to the recording, transmission, processing, and output of financial data in an electronic format. The financial industry has been rejuvenated by computers and accounting software. Digitalization includes introduction of e-Business, cloud computing, enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and digital technology advancements. Technology advancement has enhanced the accountant's ability to interpret and report data faster, more efficiently and more effectively than ever before (Huang & Vasarhelyi, 2019; Rozario & Vasarhelyi, 2018; Zhang

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et al., 2017). Irrespective of the discipline, whether audit, accounting, tax or advisory, all will be affected by these innovations (Smith, Petkov & Lahijani, 2019; Bonyuet, 2020).

Digitized accounting is based on the changing technology at a time. The technology of 1970s determined the accounting system being operated at the time. Accounting system in Nigeria was majorly manual in the early days up until early 1990s. Oladejo and Yinus (2020) posited that the manual system is inundated with slow speed, backlog of assignments, quite slower internal control report system, repetitive work, and backup challenges. Amidu, Effah and Abor (2011) posited that the digitized accounting process depends on a computer system to capture and process business data to present meaningful information to the management. E-accounting is considerably influenced and controlled by computer to achieve quality business reporting that enhances performance (Oladejo & Yinus, 2020; Tijani & Mohammed, 2013). Murtala and Ogundeji (2014) described e-Accounting as a system that uses computers and other quasi-computer to record, process financial records, and generate reports to show business performance.

Artificial intelligence has been accepted to bring improvement to the business environment in several ways (Tapscott & Tapsoctt, 2016; Dai & Vasarhelyi, 2017; Rozario & Thomas, 2017). It is important for an accounting practice to plan for digital innovation considering business requirements and industry standards (Oladejo & Yinus, 2020). The operations of audit clients compel audit firms to adopt digitalization to improve their service to clients. With the adoption of digitalization, audit firms get their job done faster than in a manual system (Appelbaum & Smith, 2018; Raphael, 2017; Deloitte, 2018; Forrester Research, 2018).

Nigeria, like any other country, is affected by the digital innovation hence audit firms and companies adopt digitalization to conduct auditing and accounting practices hence this paper hypothesized that:

H_o1: Digitalization does not significantly influence audit practices in Nigeria.

H_o2: Digitalization does not significantly influence tax practices in Nigeria.

H_o3: Digitalization does not significantly influence financial advisory services in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Disruptive Innovation

It was first used by Clayton Christensen in 1995 in his article in Harvard Business Review. According to him, it is the process by which a smaller company, usually with scarce resources, is able to challenge a reputable business from the bottom of the market and gradually move up the market. The theory postulates that certain technologies are disruptive, that is, instead of sustaining existing product categories through incremental or radical improvements, they interrupt the normal trajectory of an industry, thus causing disorder in the marketplace. According to this theory, some technological innovations can cause distortion in established economic structure while creating new ones, rendering extant businesses and professions obsolete while making place for novel alternatives (Schumpeter, 1942). The theory is relevant

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to this study looking at the changes introduced to business processes as a result of technological advancement around the world.

Refined Technology Acceptance Model (RTAM) and Information Theory (IS).

Venkatesh (1996) modified Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). In his review, he recognized the potential benefits derivable from adoption of technology in business. The adoption of technology by a business entity goes beyond the entity as it may be forced out of business by competition from other players who have adopted the technology to improve their business to win customers to their side. Digital innovation is seen as a value addition that improves the quality of accounting practices and performance to both service providers and users of accounting practices.

Empirical Studies

Oladejo and Yinus (2020) carried out a study on effective means for financial reporting quality in Nigerian Deposit Money Banks through electronic accounting practices. The study's findings revealed that adoption of e-accounting was influenced by bank size, cost of ICT deployment, perceived ease of use, and perceived benefit hence e-accounting practice improved the accounting procedure and timeliness of financial report generation and quality of financial report delivered to banks.

Boylan and Boylan (2020) in their study on technology in accounting: social media as an effective platform for financial disclosures, revealed that it was useful for organizations to send their financial statements to stakeholders through social networks. They are able to reach their stakeholders faster than in the pre-social media era. The study revealed that the stock price of organizations that employed social media to disseminate information outperformed their counterparts that did not use social media by a margin of ten percent. The CAR's stock value for organizations that used social media increased by 27.84% while those without social media increased by 17.9%.

Bonyuet (2020) in his study on overview and impact of blockchain on auditing revealed what impact blockchain would have on auditing in the nearest future and the advantage it would bring to the increasingly complex business world. It was stated that blockchain appears to be the tools for the auditors to provide the assurance that is required by the clients. Matthies (2020), in his study on assessing the automation potentials of management reporting processes, revealed that the cost saving potentials on the one hand and the amortization of implementation costs on the other hand help the assessment of cost-based evaluation of automation projects. Consideration must be given to the implementation of new technology whether it is profitable to the company both in the short term and long term.

Ogundajo, Akintoye and Olayinka (2019), in their study on taxing informal sector and revenue generation, revealed a significant contribution of revenue by the informal sector through tax assessment, collection technique, tax compliance level, informal sector financial acquisition, and economic activities of the informal sector. This was achieved through digitalization of tax offices across Nigeria to have records of all taxpayers and their location.

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Smith, Petkov and Lahijani (2019), in their study on blockchain and cryptocurrencies – considerations for treatment and reporting for financial services professionals, revealed that there is no clear cut treatment of these assets currently despite regulations issued from the tax authority. It was stated that there are challenges and opportunities for accounting professionals associated with cryptocurrencies, cryptoassets and the reporting uncertainty. The response of the professionals will determine the success of these items.

Sun and Vasarhelyi (2018) carried out a study on embracing textual data analytics in auditing and deep learning. The findings revealed that deep learning is an effective and efficient approach to automatically extracting topics, keywords, entities, sentiments, emotions, events, and other important meta-data from semi structured text data (contracts, earnings announcements, emails, posts on social media, news articles, press releases, and analyst reviews). The finding also confirmed that deep learning improves audit decision-making in all audit phases such as planning, internal control evaluation, substantive test, and completion.

Li and Vasarhelyi (2018) in their study on developing a cognitive assistant for the audit plan brainstorming session revealed that big audit firms have adopted the use of AI-related projects to improve some of their services such as preparation for audit engagement. It was reported that KPMG signed an agreement with IBM to apply IBM Watson to a series of audit processes (Greenman, 2017; Lee, 2016). Other big audit firms, Deloitte, EY, and PWC have also adopted AI to improve their audit processes (Raphael, 2017; Kokina & Davenport, 2017). This is in tandem with the study of Ogaluzor (2019) and an assignment report of the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA) issued in November 2018 which showed a positive impact of digitization on accounting practice.

Rozario and Vasarhelyi (2018) in their study on auditing with smart contracts revealed that blockchain-based smart contracts have the potential to improve audit quality and service delivery to meet information demands of various stakeholders for timely and transparent audit reporting. The study also stated that auditors are making efforts to proactively respond to technological evolution to improve their service to the market.

Sekyere and Frimpong (2017), in their study on determinants of computerized accounting systems on an accurate financial report in listed banks on the Ghana stock exchange, revealed that accurate financial reporting was made possible by a computerized accounting system introduced by the bank. The study showed a strong positive correlation (84%) between computerized accounting systems and financial reporting.

Dai and Varsalhelyi (2017), in their study towards blockchain based accounting and assurance, revealed that a new audit paradigm is being formed which consists of the physical and virtual model. The physical model is said to include the company, its product, business processes, machine and systems, and stakeholders. The virtual model includes blockchain, smart control, and payment. The connection of both the physical world and the virtual model will bring about seamless transaction processing from initiation to completion.

Shagari, Abdullah, and Saat (2017), in their study on effectiveness of accounting information systems with evidence from the Nigerian banking sector, revealed significant improvement of the accounting information system through information quality and system quality. It was also revealed that system quality encompasses easy usage, efficiency and effectiveness and security while the information quality involves accuracy, timeliness, and completeness.

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Bygren (2016), in their study on the digitalization impact on accounting firms business models, indicated that digitalization had a direct impact on the strategic organization of companies' business. Some of the results include that digitalization will give automated accounting tools, shared knowledge and communication channels to accounting companies. It affords employees different knowledge and more expertise skills than analogue businesses. Digital innovation of the accounting practices poses to improve the business from being a supplier-driven to demand driven and entrant into the industry with less accounting knowledge can enter the market.

Nwakoby et al. (2015) in their study on Information Communication Technology: A panacea for accounting practice in Nigeria found that ICT application had an effect on efficiency of accounting practices in Nigeria and that ICT application was responsible for timely, efficient, and effective service delivery of accounting practices in Nigeria. This was in tandem with the findings of Al-Refaee (2012) which showed a positive relationship between e-commerce and the design of accounting information systems.

Try and Evita (2015) carried out a study on financial reporting quality before and after the adoption of International Financial Reporting Quality (IFRS). The findings showed that post IFRS adoption was higher than pre-adoption on IFRS financial reporting quality. The accounting information characteristics which are relevance, understandability, timeliness, and comparability level increased during post IFRS adoption but it was less during pre IFRS adoption of financial reporting.

Onaolapo and Odetayo (2015) carried out a study on the relationship between accounting information system and organizational effectiveness with consideration for selected construction companies in Ibadan, Nigeria. The findings revealed that there was an organizational effectiveness in the company as a result of digital innovation introduced into the accounting information system.

Conceptual Model

The independent variable of this study is Digitalization and the dependent variable is Accounting Practices which is measured by they are Audit practice efficiency (APE), Tax services performance (TSP), Financial advisory performance (FAP)

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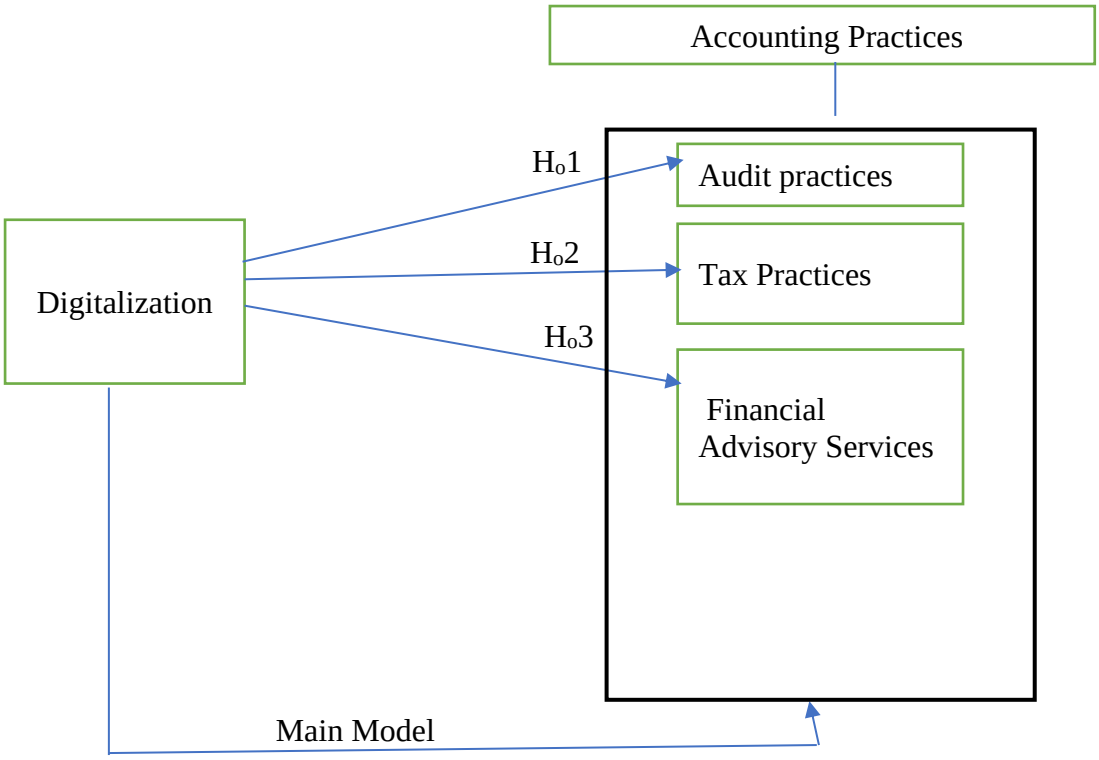

Figure1: Conceptual Model

Source: Author's Design (2023)

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study is the survey design. A questionnaire consisting of 18 questions covering the independent and the 3 dependent variables was constructed. The questionnaire was administered to professional preparers and users of accounting information using the Google Form. Simple linear regression was used to analyze the data. The design was used to examine the effect of Digitalization on Accounting Practices. ANOVA was adopted to test the relationship among the variables with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0.

Model Specification

The model description below shows the relationship between Digitalization and Accounting Practices.:

$Y = f(X)$

Where Y = Accounting Practices

X = Digitalization

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Audit practice efficiency (APE), Tax services performance (TSP), Financial advisory performance (FAP)

$APE = \alpha_1 + \beta_1 DIG_i + \mu_i$.....eqn 1

$TSP = \alpha_2 + \beta_2 DIG_i + \mu_i$.....eqn 2

$FAP = \alpha_3 + \beta_3 DIG_i + \mu_i$.....eqn 3

Where DIG = Digitalization

APE= Audit practice efficiency

TSP= Tax Services Performance

FAP= Financial advisory Performance

$\alpha_{1\text{-}3}$= Constants

$\beta_{1\text{-}3}$ =Model Coefficients

μ_i= Error term

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Digitalization

Table 1 below presents the result of the questionnaire after analysis on the general aspect of digitalization. Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that digitalization has improved the work of an accountant. This is because 46.5% agreed to the fact that audit firms do more paperless documentation in Nigeria. 10% were undecided. Also, an overwhelming 82.7% agreed to the fact that audit/accounting and tax firms are now exposed to usage of artificial intelligence. Moreover, audit, taxation and assurance have adopted the use of cloud accounting, continuous training in which each of them was scored 70% and 78.2% respectively by the respondents.

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Table 1 – Digitalization

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Total	
Digitalization								
1	Audit firms in Nigeria do more of paperless documentation	16 18.6	24 27.9	9 10.5	29 33.7	8 9.3	86 100	
2	Audit/Accounting/Tax/Assurance management practice is becoming exposed to the agility and intelligent application of artificial intelligence, data analytics, and optical character recognition	25 28.7	47 54.0	8 9.2	7 8.1	0 0	87 100	
3	Many of Audit/Accounting/Tax/Assurance practicing firms in Nigeria are becoming more conversant with cloud based platforms	20 22.9	41 47.1	12 13.8	13 14.9	1 1.2	87 100	
4	As required by the following Standards; IFRS 9 (Financial instruments); IFRS 15 (Revenue from contracts with customers); IFRS 16 (Leases), and IFRS 17 (Insurance) that companies should work with appropriate data and align their finance, risk, and business data through implementation of well -defined digital processes. Audit & Advisory practice in Nigeria is up to speed in ensuring compliance,	21 24.1	40 45.9	13 14.9	12 13.8	1 1.2	87 100	
5	Financial/Audit/Tax service firms are increasingly under pressure to build trust. Digital audit is one way to provide them with greater insights and perspective on what to do	29 33.7	52 60.5	4 4.7	1 1.2	0 0	86 100	
6	Accounting, Tax, and Advisory firms in Nigeria carry out continuous training of its employees in digital acquisition skills	24 27.6	44 50.6	8 9.2	10 11.5	1 1.2	87 100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 2 below presents respondents' response on the effect of digitalization on tax consulting. It shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that digitalization positively affects tax consulting as they agreed that digitalization resolves clients' incomplete records, helps in service delivery of state internal revenue and increases tax net revenue by 75.8%, 87.2% and 81.6% respectively. This agrees with Ogunbajo, Akintoye, and Olayinka (2019) in their study on taxing the informal sector and revenue generation. However, the majority believed that tax consulting still has challenges coping with technology.

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Table 2: Tax consulting.

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Total	
1	Tax consulting firms in Nigeria have challenges in coping with digital technology which has been a major catalyst for growth of business sources, such as payment solutions, financial intermediation, e-commerce, media and advertising	25 28.7	45 51.7	5 5.8	12 13.8	0 0	87 100	
2	Digitalization has helped in resolving client's incomplete records and rendition of returns to Internal and Inland revenue services.	29 33.3	37 42.5	11 12.6	9 10.3	1 1.2	87 100	
3	Digitalization has impacted positively on service delivery of Internal Revenue Service & Federal Inland Revenue Service.	30 34.9	45 52.3	5 5.8	6 6.98	0 0	86 100	
4	Digitalization has helped to increase the tax net being able to cover more tax payers.	27 31.0	44 50.6	8 9.2	8 9.2	0 0	87 100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Effect of digitalization on audit services is as shown in Table 3 below. Respondents agreed that digitalization has made audit services to be more effective with remote audit procedure and shift focus from true and fair view to risk based approach. 56.3% and 74.7% respectively of the respondents agreed to the above. This is in agreement with the study of Bonyuet (2020) on overview and impact of blockchain on auditing which was described as an assurance required from clients.

Table 3: Audit Services

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Total	
1	Audit services are more effective with remote audit procedures.	17 19.5	32 36.8	17 19.5	19 21.8	2 2.3	87 100	
2	Digitalization has shift the focus of auditing from true and fair view to risk based approach	27 31.0	38 43.7	13 14.9	8 9.2	1 1.2	87 100	
3	Audit firms have control implementation challenge during conversion from manual to automation	27 31.0	41 47.1	13 14.9	6 6.9	0 0	87 100	

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4	Auditors have challenges of data interrogation to enhance audit quality and delivery in a highly digitalized business environment of clients.	24 27.6	46 52.9	7 8.1	10 11.5	0 0	87 100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 4 below presents respondents' responses on the effect of digitalization on financial advisory services. From the Table below, it shows that digitalization has positively impacted financial and advisory services. This is because the majority of the respondents agreed that digitalization has improved service delivery, reduced risk, reduced clients' complaints and disaster recovery. This agrees with findings in the study of Oladejo and Yinus (2020) which revealed that digital accounting practice helped accounting systems and that timeliness of report generation and financial reporting quality were improved. The study of Matthies (2020) also supported respondents' view which revealed that the cost saving potentials on the one hand and the amortization of implementation costs on the other hand help the assessment of cost-based evaluation of automation projects

Table 4: Financial and Adversary Services

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Total	
1	Digitalization has improved service delivery to clients in Financial service sector in Nigeria	42 48.3	41 47.1	3 3.5	1 1.2	0 0	87	
2	Digitalization positively impacts the control and risk management (reduction in fraud) in the Financial and Advisory service sector in Nigeria.	29 33.3	42 48.3	9 10.4	6 6.9	1 1.2	87	
3	Digitalization has reduced client's complaints compared to the analogue period	31 35.6	47 54.0	5 5.8	3 3.5	1 1.2	87	
4	Digitalization has helped in setting up business continuity and disaster recovery system through e-cloud and back up system	39 44.8	40 45.9	4 4.6	4 4.6	0 0	87	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Having analyzed the data collected using SPSS version 23, the following are the results of regression and ANOVA having separated the effect of digitalization on various aspects of accounting functions:

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Audit Performance Efficiency and Digitalization

It was discovered that 38.3% of variance in Audit Practice efficiency was explained by the model. ($R^{2.} = 0.38$, $p < 0.05$) (See Table 5a below). By implication, 38.3% of changes in audit practice efficiency were caused by digitalization while 61.7% were outside digitalization. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the significance level of 0.05; we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. It is concluded that the effect of digitalization on audit practice efficiency is statistically significant. This also attests to the fact that the independent variable reliably predicts the dependent variable. Details of the above are shown in Tables 5a, 5b and 5c.

Table 5a : Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.625[a]	.390	.383	.54291

Source: SPSS Computation.
a. Predictors: (Constant), Independent var DIGITALIZATION

Table 5b : ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.052	1	16.052	54.458	.000[b]
	Residual	25.054	85	.295		
	Total	41.106	86			

Source: SPSS Computation.
b. Predictors: (Constant), Independent var DIGITALIZATION

Table 5c : Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.479	.331		4.471	.000
	Independentvar2	.621	.084	.625	7.380	.000

Source: SPSS Computation

Tax Service Performance & Digitalization

As shown in the model summary in Table 6a, it was discovered that 36.9% of variance in tax service performance was explained by the model ($R^{2.} = 0.37$, $p < 0.05$). By implication, 36.9% of changes in tax service performance were caused by digitalization while 63.1% were outside digitalization. The p-value of 0.000 was less than the significance level of 0.05; null hypothesis was rejected while alternate hypothesis was accepted. It is concluded that the effect of digitalization on tax service performance is statistically significant. This also attests to the fact that the independent variable reliably predicts the dependent variable.

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Table 6a :Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.614[a]	.376	.369	.549

a.Predictors:(Constant),Independent var DIGITALIZATION
Source: SPSS Computation.

Table 6b: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.474	1	15.474	51.316	.000[b]
	Residual	25.632	85	.302		
	Total	41.106	86			

a. Dependent Variable: Dependent verTEX SERVICES PERFORMANCE

b. Predictors: (Constant), IndependentvarDIGITALIZATION

Table 6c: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.260	.371		3.400	.001
	Independentvar	.651	.091	.614	7.164	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DependentvarTAXSERVICESPERFORMANCE

Financial Advisory Performance and Digitalization

Results of findings and computation showed that 45.8% of variance in financial advisory performance was explained by the model ($R^{2.} = 0.458$, $p < 0.05$) as in Table 7a. By implication, one unit change in digitalization brings about 45.8% of changes in financial advisory performance were explained by digitalization while 54.2% were outside digitalization. The p-value of 0.000 is less than significance level, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis was accepted. It was concluded that the effect of digitalization on financial advisory performance is statistically significant. This agrees to the fact that the independent variable reliably predicts the dependent variable.

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Table 7a : Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.682[a]	.465	.458	.50888

a. Predictors: (Constant), Independent variable .DIGITALIZATION
Source: SPSS computation

Table 7b: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.094	1	19.094	73.735	.000[b]
	Residual	22.012	85	.259		
	Total	41.106	86			

a. Dependent Variable: DependentvarFINANCIALADVISORYPERFORMANCE
b. Predictors: (Constant), IndependentvarDIGITILIZATION
Source: SPSS computation

Table 7c: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.623	.383		1.624	.108
	Independentvar3	.767	.089	.682	8.587	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DependentvarFINANCIALADVISORYPERFORMANCE

Aggregate Accounting Practice and Digitalization

Aggregate results show that 50.8% of variance in accounting practice was explained by introduction of digitalization (table 8a) ($R^{2.} = 0.58$, $p < 0.05$). By implication, 42% of changes in accounting practice were caused outside digitalization. The p-value of 0.000 is less than significance level of 0.05, hence null hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis was accepted. It was concluded that the effect of digitalization on accounting practice is statistically significant. This also agrees to the fact that the independent variable reliably predicts the dependent variable.

Table 8a: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.717[a]	.514	.508	.48472

a. Predictors: (Constant), IndependentvarDIGITILIZATION
Source: SPSS computation

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Table 8b: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.135	1	21.135	89.953	.000[b]
	Residual	19.971	85	.235		
	Total	41.106	86			

a. Dependent Variable: DependentvarAGGREGATEACCOUNTINGPRACTICE
b. Predictors: (Constant), IndependentvarDIGITILIZATION
Source: SPSS Computation

Table 8c: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.437	.367		1.191	.237
	aggIndependent	.851	.090	.717	9.484	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DependentvarAGGREGATEACCOUNTINGPRACTICE
Source: SPSS computation

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results from findings showed that accounting practices vis a vis digitalization in Nigeria are still coming up. The majority of audit practices in Nigeria still rely heavily on manual processes while undertaking audit procedures. A low 46.5% of respondents attested to the slow emergence of paperless documentation processes within audit firms. Respondents also showed good knowledge of areas of interest like artificial intelligence, cloud computing, data analytical skills.

The study concluded as follows:

i. That there is a significant relationship between digitalization and Audit practice efficiency in Nigeria.

ii. That there is a significant relationship between digitalization and tax services performance in Nigeria.

iii. That financial advisory performance has a significant relationship with digitalization in Nigeria.

iv. That accounting practices have a significant relationship with digitalization in Nigeria.

The study recommends as follows:

i. More training and sensitization should be conducted for accounting practitioners to keep them abreast of current technological advancement. This can be driven by the various professional bodies as practiced in other countries.

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ii. Accounting practices are driven by ICT development hence professional organizations should develop interest in ICT and invest more in it to take advantage of new technology across the world to improve their services to clients.

iii. The professional association, such as ICAN and others, should take the lead in providing an enabling environment and policy that will drive service digitalization by professional firms. It should be made mandatory that certain benefits may not accrue to non-digitized firms or members.

iv. There must be a Nigerian professional body that monitors current technology in accounting practices to keep professional firms abreast of current development in accounting practices and technology.

v. Government can also provide some incentives to professional firms to encourage them to adopt digitalization. Small firms can be encouraged to merge to afford the cost of digitalization; this will reduce cost of operation and increase professional competence among professional firms.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to existing literature in the area of research in this area of accounting practices in Nigeria. It will be of immense value to professional firms in Nigeria to appreciate the contribution of digitalization to their service delivery. Government ministries, departments and agencies in Nigeria will benefit from the study as it helps them to understand the benefits of digitalization to revenue collection and service improvement.

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