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AGILE ACCOUNTING AS A CATALYST FOR ENHANCED FINANCIAL REPORTING QUALITY: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The persistence of rigid traditional accounting systems that hinder timely and flexile financial reporting has necessitated the adoption of agile accounting practices to enhance financial reporting quality. This study examined whether agile accounting practices improve financial reporting quality in South Eastern federal universities of Nigeria, with specific emphasis on process agility and technological agility. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and primary data were collected through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 160 bursary staff members. All questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a 100% response rate. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data, while a regression model was specified to explain the relationship between agile accounting components and financial reporting quality. Findings revealed that federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria demonstrate a moderate level of process agility, characterize by flexible workflows, responsive decision-making structures, and adaptable reporting procedures. Technological agility was also found to be moderate, evidenced by staff adaptability, periodic technological upgrades, and the use of automated systems in financial operation. Financial reporting quality was rated relatively high by respondents. Findings reveal that federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria engaged actively in process agility and technical agility reporting enhanced financial quality. Regression results indicate that process agility and technical agility significantly predict financial reporting quality. These results highlight that both process agility ($\beta = 0.722$, $p < 0.05$) and technical agility ($\beta = 0.667$, $p < 0.05$) are critical for enhanced financial reporting quality. It recommends that management invest in continuous digital upgrades, capacity-building on emerging accounting technologies, and process redesign initiatives.

Keywords: Agile Accounting; Process Agility; Technological Agility; Financial Reporting Quality;

1.0 Introduction

Universities in today's rapidly evolving public-sector environment operate under growing pressures to improve accountability, enhance transparency, and strengthen the quality of financial information provided to stakeholders. As funding structures, regulatory

expectations, and institutional demands continue to shift, the need for more responsive and adaptable administrative systems has become increasingly evident. Scholars argue that agility, the capacity to rapidly sense changes, adapt internal structures, and reconfigure operational routines, has emerged as a strategic capability that significantly enhances organisational performance and reporting outcomes (Adebayo, 2022; Eze & Nwankwo, 2023). In the context of higher education, agility influences how universities manage financial workflows, process transactions, and generate timely and credible financial reports. The concept of agility has gained prominence in management literature as a critical capability that enables organizations to sense environmental changes and respond quickly through adaptive processes and resource reconfiguration. According to Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997), organizations operating in dynamic environments require capabilities that allow them to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to address rapidly changing conditions. This perspective has become increasingly relevant in accounting and financial management, where organizations must continuously adjust their accounting processes and technologies to meet evolving reporting requirements. The increasing digitalization of business operations has further intensified the need for agility within accounting functions. Romney and Steinbart (2018) argue that modern accounting information systems play a vital role in supporting organizational decision-making by facilitating the collection, processing, storage, and dissemination of financial information. The integration of digital technologies into accounting operations has enhanced the speed, accuracy, and accessibility of financial information, thereby creating opportunities for more agile accounting practices. Recent studies indicate that digital transformation has become a major driver of accounting innovation and reporting effectiveness. Fang, Yu, and Xu (2023) found that digital transformation improves accounting information quality by enhancing transparency, reducing information asymmetry, and strengthening corporate governance mechanisms.

Process agility refers to the ability of accounting systems and personnel to modify, redesign, and improve accounting procedures in response to changing operational and reporting requirements. Organizations with agile processes are better able to streamline financial workflows, eliminate inefficiencies, and provide timely financial information for decision-making. According to Papiorek and Hiebl (2023), flexible and digitally enabled accounting processes significantly enhance the effectiveness of management accounting systems and improve information quality. Consequently, process agility has become an important factor in achieving efficient financial reporting systems. Technological agility, on the other hand, represents an organization's capacity to adopt, integrate, and utilize emerging technologies to improve accounting and financial reporting functions. Recent technological innovations, including cloud computing, artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, and advanced accounting information systems, have transformed the manner in which financial information is generated and communicated. Nofel, Marzouk, Elbardan, Saleh, and Mogahed (2024) observed that the integration of advanced digital technologies into accounting systems enhances financial reporting quality by improving data accuracy, transparency, and accessibility

Financial reporting quality remains a fundamental objective of accounting systems because it determines the usefulness of financial information to stakeholders. High-quality financial reporting is characterized by relevance, reliability, comparability, timeliness, and faithful representation of financial transactions. According to Healy and Palepu (2001), quality financial reporting reduces information asymmetry between management and stakeholders and promotes effective decision-making. More recently, Li, Han, Sun, and Cheng (2025)

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found that digital transformation significantly improves accounting information quality by reducing earnings management and enhancing information transparency. Within higher education institutions, particularly federal universities in Nigeria, the demand for quality financial reporting has become increasingly important due to heightened accountability requirements, government oversight, and stakeholder expectations regarding the management of public resources. However, many universities continue to face challenges associated with inefficient accounting processes, delayed financial reporting, and inadequate technological infrastructure. These challenges underscore the need for agile accounting practices that can improve the quality of financial reporting through enhanced process flexibility and technological adaptability. It is against this background that this study examines agile accounting as a catalyst for enhanced financial reporting quality among federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the roles of process agility and technological agility in improving financial reporting quality.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Agility Accounting

Agile accounting is a contemporary approach to accounting practice that emphasizes flexibility, responsiveness, continuous improvement, and the strategic use of technology in financial management and reporting. The concept evolved from the broader notion of organizational agility, which refers to an organization's ability to adapt rapidly to environmental changes, technological developments, and stakeholder demands. In accounting, agility involves redesigning accounting processes, integrating digital technologies, and enhancing the ability of accounting systems to provide timely, accurate, and decision-relevant information. Although the term "agile accounting" is still emerging in accounting literature, recent studies have increasingly examined the relationship between agility, digital transformation, accounting information systems, and reporting quality. The growing complexity of business environments and the digitalization of financial operations have made agility an essential characteristic of modern accounting functions. According to Papiorek and Hiebl (2023), the quality of information systems used in management accounting significantly enhances management control effectiveness, particularly when supported by process automation and digital technologies. Their findings suggest that modern accounting functions benefit substantially from flexible and technology-enabled systems that improve information quality and decision-making effectiveness. The increasing integration of digital technologies into accounting operations has also strengthened the relevance of agile accounting. Nguyen, Le-Anh, Hong, Nguyen, and Xuan (2024) examined digital transformation in accounting among small and medium-sized enterprises and found that digital transformation positively influences accounting information quality. Their study demonstrated that organizations that align their accounting systems with digital technologies achieve better-quality accounting information and improved operational efficiency. Recent accounting literature also emphasizes that digital transformation enhances the quality of accounting information and reporting outcomes. Fang, Yu, and Xu (2023) investigated the governance effects of digital transformation and found that firms undergoing digital transformation exhibited improved accounting quality and reduced earnings management. Their findings indicate that technological adaptability contributes significantly to higher-quality financial information and stronger governance mechanisms

2.1.2 Concept of Process Agility

Process agility has become a prominent concept in contemporary organizational and management literature due to the increasing need for organizations to respond effectively to

dynamic business environments, technological disruptions, regulatory changes, and stakeholder expectations. Process agility refers to the capability of an organization to rapidly adapt, redesign, and improve its operational processes in response to environmental changes while maintaining efficiency and effectiveness. It enables organizations to respond promptly to emerging challenges and opportunities by continuously modifying workflows, procedures, and operational routines. In recent years, scholars have increasingly recognized process agility as a critical component of organizational agility and digital transformation. According to Walter (2021), process agility represents an organization's ability to rapidly adjust operational processes to changing environmental conditions. Through a systematic review of organizational agility literature, the author found that process flexibility and responsiveness constitute essential capabilities that enable organizations to cope with uncertainty and maintain competitiveness. The study further emphasized that agile processes facilitate rapid organizational adaptation and continuous improvement. The strategic role of process agility in enhancing organizational resilience was further highlighted by Queiroz, Tallon, Sharma, and Coltman (2022). Investigating organizational responses to environmental disruptions, the researchers found that process agility significantly improves resilience by enabling organizations to rapidly modify operational activities and maintain business continuity. Their findings suggest that organizations with agile processes are better equipped to withstand external shocks and uncertainties. In the accounting and management control context, Papiorek and Hiebl (2023) investigated information systems quality and management control effectiveness. Their findings revealed that flexible accounting processes significantly improve information quality and management control effectiveness. The study demonstrated that organizations characterized by adaptive and responsive accounting procedures generate more reliable and useful information for managerial decision-making. These findings provide important evidence regarding the relevance of process agility in accounting environments.

2.1.3 Concept of Technological Agility

Technological agility has emerged as one of the most important capabilities required for organizational survival and competitiveness in the digital era. The increasing pace of technological advancement, coupled with the growing complexity of organizational environments, has compelled institutions to develop the capacity to rapidly acquire, integrate, deploy, and reconfigure technological resources in response to changing operational and strategic requirements. Technological agility therefore represents an organization's ability to adapt its technological infrastructure, information systems, and digital capabilities to support continuous improvement, innovation, and effective decision-making. The role of technological agility in facilitating digital transformation has also attracted significant scholarly attention. Vial (2021) argued that successful digital transformation depends largely on an organization's ability to adapt and reconfigure its technological resources. According to the study, technological agility enables organizations to integrate emerging technologies into their operations while maintaining flexibility and responsiveness. The author further noted that organizations lacking technological agility often experience difficulties in realizing the expected benefits of digital transformation initiatives. Queiroz, Tallon, Sharma, and Coltman (2022) investigated the relationship between information technology and organizational agility. Their findings demonstrated that technological capabilities play a critical role in enhancing organizational resilience and responsiveness. The researchers observed that organizations that continuously update and optimize their technological resources are more capable of responding effectively to environmental disruptions and operational challenges. Calderon-Monge and Ribeiro-Soriano (2024) emphasized that digitalization has become a critical driver of organizational transformation and performance. Through a systematic review, the authors found that digital technologies enhance organizational flexibility,

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innovation, and operational efficiency. Their study further demonstrated that organizations with strong technological capabilities are more successful in adapting to changing market and operational conditions

2.1.4 Financial Reporting Quality

Financial reporting quality (FRQ) remains one of the most extensively discussed concepts in accounting and financial reporting literature because of its significance in facilitating informed decision-making, promoting accountability, and reducing information asymmetry between management and stakeholders. High-quality financial reporting provides users with relevant, reliable, comparable, timely, and faithfully represented financial information that enhances confidence in organizational performance and financial position. In both private and public sector organizations, financial reporting quality has become increasingly important due to growing stakeholder demands for transparency, accountability, and effective governance. According to Biddle, Hilary, and Verdi (2009), financial reporting quality plays a critical role in improving organizational efficiency by reducing information asymmetry and enhancing investment decision-making. Their findings suggest that organizations characterized by high-quality financial reporting are more likely to achieve effective resource allocation and stronger stakeholder confidence. The increasing digitalization of accounting functions has generated renewed scholarly interest in the determinants of financial reporting quality. The relationship between accounting information systems and financial reporting quality has also received substantial attention. Papiorek and Hiebl (2023) investigated information systems quality within management accounting environments and found that high-quality accounting information systems significantly enhance information quality and management control effectiveness. The study concluded that technologically sophisticated accounting systems improve the accuracy, relevance, and timeliness of financial information. The emergence of advanced technologies such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing has also influenced financial reporting quality. Akter, Kummer, and Yigitbasioglu (2024) observed that blockchain technology enhances financial reporting quality by improving transparency, traceability, and data integrity. Their findings suggest that organizations adopting emerging technologies are likely to experience improvements in reporting reliability and stakeholder trust

2.2 Theoretical Framework and Development of Research Hypotheses

Several theories underpin agile accounting and financial reporting practices, but dynamic capabilities theory stands out and is considered the most relevant to this study.

Dynamic Capabilities Theory

David J.Tecee, together with Gary Pisano and Amy Shuen, formally developed Dynamic Capabilities Theory in 1997. The theory was introduced to explain how organizations sustain competitive advantage in dynamic and rapidly evolving environments. Agile accounting emphasizes flexibility, responsiveness, and the integration of modern technologies within accounting systems. These attributes closely align with the core elements of dynamic capabilities. Process agility in accounting reflects the ability of financial management units to redesign and adapt their accounting procedures in response to new reporting requirements or regulatory changes. Dynamic capabilities theory explains this phenomenon by emphasizing the importance of organizational adaptability and resource reconfiguration. Technological agility corresponds with the theory's emphasis on innovation and technological adoption. Universities and other institutions that adopt modern accounting information systems, digital reporting tools, and automated financial platforms demonstrate the ability to reconfigure their technological resources to improve financial reporting quality. In addition, dynamic

capabilities support organizational learning and continuous improvement, which are essential for maintaining accurate and reliable financial reporting systems. Agile accounting encourages accounting professionals to update their skills, adopt new technologies, and improve reporting processes, thereby strengthening financial transparency and accountability. In the context of federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria, the application of dynamic capabilities enables accounting departments to integrate flexible processes and advanced technologies, leading to improved efficiency, accuracy, and timeliness in financial reporting. Consequently, dynamic capabilities theory provides an appropriate theoretical framework for explaining how agile accounting practices contribute to enhanced financial reporting quality. In line with the above, we hypothesise that:

H01: Process agility has no significant effect on financial reporting quality in federal Universities in Eastern Nigeria.

H02: Technological agility has no significant effect on financial reporting quality in federal Universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

2.3 Empirical Review

The relationship between agile accounting, process agility, technological agility, and financial reporting quality has attracted increasing scholarly attention due to the rapid digitalization of accounting systems and the growing demand for transparent and reliable financial reporting. Recent empirical studies have largely focused on how flexible accounting processes and digital technologies influence accounting information quality and reporting effectiveness. Papiorek and Hiebl (2023) investigated the impact of information systems quality in management accounting on management control effectiveness among German firms. Using a cross-sectional survey of 125 firms and hierarchical regression analysis, the study found that high-quality digitalized information systems significantly improved management control effectiveness, while process automation strengthened the relationship. The study concluded that process flexibility and digital information systems enhance the effectiveness of accounting functions. In Nigeria, Ndakutigi and Okoroigwe (2025) examined the effect of digitalization of accounting practices on financial reporting quality using data obtained from professional accountants. The study employed a survey design and found that digital accounting practices significantly enhanced financial reporting quality through improvements in reporting accuracy, timeliness, and reliability. The authors concluded that digital accounting technologies have become critical tools for strengthening financial reporting systems. Similarly, Noureddine and Belouadah (2025) investigated the impact of digital transformation and digital accounting on the quality of financial reports among Saudi-listed companies. Using Smart-PLS analysis, the study found that both digital transformation and digital accounting exerted positive and significant effects on financial reporting quality. The findings demonstrated that technologically agile organizations produce more transparent and reliable financial reports.

2.4 Research Gap

Although previous studies have examined organizational agility, digital transformation, accounting information systems, and financial reporting quality, most of the existing empirical evidence has focused on private sector organizations, manufacturing firms,

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financial institutions, and multinational corporations. Furthermore, many of these studies have investigated agility as a broad organizational construct without specifically examining the dimensions of process agility and technological agility within the accounting function. In addition, limited empirical attention has been devoted to the higher education sector, particularly federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria, where financial accountability and reporting quality have become increasingly important. Consequently, there is a paucity of empirical evidence on how agile accounting practices, specifically process agility and technological agility, influence financial reporting quality within Nigerian universities. This study seeks to bridge this gap by providing empirical evidence on the effect of agile accounting on financial reporting quality in selected federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive research seeks to accurately portray characteristics of variables and determine relationships between them as they exist in the real world. It allows the researcher to describe and interpret the current state of agile accounting practices and financial reporting quality in South Eastern Universities of Nigeria. The population of this study comprised accounting and finance personnel from selected federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria. To ensure adequate representation across the institutions, twenty (20) staff members were purposively selected from each university, specifically from the bursary, accounts, internal audit, and other finance-related units. These categories of staff were considered suitable for the study because of their direct involvement in accounting processes, financial reporting activities, and the utilization of accounting technologies within their respective institutions. Accordingly, the study population consisted of one hundred (100) respondents drawn from five selected federal universities, with each institution contributing twenty (20) accounting and finance personnel. The selection of these respondents was based on their knowledge and experience regarding accounting practices, process agility, technological agility, and financial reporting quality. Consequently, the population was considered appropriate for generating reliable information necessary to assess the influence of agile accounting on financial reporting quality in federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

The study adopted a census approach, covering all eight federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria. They are: University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK), Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO), Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU), Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike (AE-FUNAI), Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, Federal University of Allied Health Sciences, Enugu (FUAHS), and David Umahia Federal University of Health Sciences, Uburu (DUFUHS). Within each university, a quota sampling technique was used to select 20 participants from different units of the bursary department, yielding a total sample size of 160 respondents. Participants were randomly and purposively selected from the various units to participate in the questionnaire survey. The 5-point Likert questionnaire is distributed to the selected sample drawn from the departments, ensuring adequate coverage of both junior and senior accounting staff. Primary data is collected exclusively through a structured questionnaire**.**

The main instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire. The instrument is divided into sections: Each of the agile accounting dimensions (process agility and technological agility) and reporting quality is operationalized through multiple Likert-scaled statements developed from relevant literature on agile accounting and financial reporting. To ensure content and face validity, the questionnaire is reviewed by academic experts in

accounting and research methodology. These experts assess items for clarity, relevance, and representativeness in measuring the intended constructs. The reliability of the instrument is tested using Cronbach's Alpha. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 or above is considered acceptable for social science research. A pilot is administered to a small subset of respondents who are not part of the main study to determine internal consistency. This study adopts a regression model to examine the effect of the independent variables (process agility and technological agility) on the dependent variable (financial reporting quality). Regression analysis is suitable for testing hypothesized relationships between variables in quantitative research. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to provide an overview of the data and to draw meaningful inferences about the population, enhancing the study's validity.

The regression model is specified as follows:

$FRQ = \beta 0 + \beta 1PA + \beta 2TA + \varepsilon$

Where; FRQ = Financial Reporting Quality (dependent variable).
$\beta 0$ = Constant term.
PA = Process Agility (independent variable).
TA =Technological Agility (independent variable)
$\beta 1$- $\beta 2$ = Coefficient of the independent variables,
ε = Error term

This regression model is to determine the strength and significance of the relationships between the agile accounting dimensions and financial reporting quality. Ethical principles are observed throughout the research. Participants are informed of the study's purpose, and their consent sought before data collection. Respondent's confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation are ensured.

4.0 Finding and Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Analysis of Research Questions

S/N	**Process Agility**	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**	**Mean**
PA1	Accounting processes in the university can be easily adjusted when needed.	13	12	5	10	120	4.33
PA2	Financial reporting procedures are flexible to accommodate changing regulations.	12	14	9	28	97	4.15
PA3	Staff can reconfigure workflows accounting without bureaucratic delay.	11	14	5	25	105	4.23
PA4	Cross functional collaboration supports quick process adjustments.	11	13	20	43	73	3.96
PA5	Decision-making in the bursary department is fast and responsive.	11	14	5	8	122	4.35
	Technological Agility	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**	**Mean**
TA1	The university adopts new accounting technology quickly	12	15	13	29	91	4.08
TA2	Digital tools used in accounting are regularly updated.	13	14	26	32	75	3.89
TA3	Staff can easily adapt to new accounting	11	16	21	20	92	4.04

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	software.						
TA4	ICT infrastructure supports efficient financial reporting.	12	13	28	41	66	3.85
TA5	Automated systems help minimize reporting errors.	12	13	12	27	96	4.11
	Financial Reporting Quality	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**	**Mean**
FRQ1	Financial reports produced are accurate and error-free.	11	14	17	52	66	3.93
FRQ2	Reports are presented in a timely manner.	14	12	14	40	80	4.00
FRQ3	Financial statements comply with required statutory regulations and standards.	11	15	5	19	110	4.26
FRQ4	Reports are reliable and faithfully represent financial activities.	13	13	9	24	101	4.19
FRQ5	Users find financial reports understandable and relevant.	13	14	5	8	120	4.30

Source: Field Survey 2026

In table 1, process agility has an average means of 4.20, the high mean score reflects a favourable disposition among respondents towards the agility of institutional processes, indicating that workflows, procedures and operational routines are flexible and responsive enough to support dynamic business demands. Technical agility has an average mean score of 3.99, indicating that respondents perceived their institution as possessing a considerable degree of agility in their technological capabilities. While this score is high, it is comparatively lower than Process Agility (4.20), suggesting that although technical systems are relatively flexible and adaptive, there may be marginal constraints-such a legacy system, limited technological upgrades, or skill gaps that slightly moderate the full realisation of technical agility. Financial reporting quality recorded an average mean of 4.14, indicating that respondents largely agreed that financial reports produced within each federal university in the South East meet high standard of quality. This suggest that the financial reporting process is characterized by accuracy, timeliness, completeness, relevance and reliability. It demonstrated that stakeholders are reasonably satisfied with the quality of financial disclosure.

4.1.1 Diagnostic/Assumption Tests

Normality Test

The normality of the residuals was assessed using the Shapiro–Wilk test. The result indicated that the residuals did not significantly deviate from normality ($W = 0.968$, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that the assumption of normality was satisfied. Both the skewness and kurtosis confirmed that the data was normally distributed.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity among the independent variables was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor and tolerance values. The results indicated that all variables had VIF values ranging from 1.00 to 1.12 below the threshold of 10 and tolerance values above 0.10, suggesting the absence of multicollinearity. Therefore, the independent variables were considered sufficiently independent for reliable regression analysis.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The test for heteroscedasticity was conducted to examine whether the variance of the error terms is constant across observations. The result indicates that the test statistic is not

statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), suggesting the absence of heteroscedasticity in the model. This implies that the assumption of homoscedasticity is satisfied, and the error terms exhibit constant variance. Therefore, the regression estimates are considered reliable and not biased due to heteroscedasticity.

4.2.1 Test of Hypothesis 1

Ho: H01: Process agility has no significant effect on financial reporting quality in federal Universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

Table 2 Regression Results: Effect of Process Agility on Financial Reporting Quality in Federal Universities in South Eastern Nigeria

Model Summary	R Square	0.502
ANOVA	F	159.210
	Sig.	0.000
Coefficients	**B**	**T**
Constant	1.100	4.411
Process agility	0.722	12.615

Source: SPSS v. 26 output (2026)

Table 2 shows the regression results on the effect of process agility on financial reporting quality in federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria. The R^2 value of 0.502 indicates that 50.2% of variations in reporting quality are explained by process agility. The F-statistic of 159.210 with a significance of 0.000 validates the overall model at 5%. The constant ($\beta = 1.100$, $p < 0.05$) is significant, suggesting that even in the absence of process agility, federal universities in South Easter Nigeria maintain a moderate level of financial reporting quality. The coefficient for process agility ($\beta = 0.722$, $p < 0.05$) reflects a positive marginal effect, implying that a one-unit increase in process agility improves financial reporting quality by 0.722 units, and this effect is significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, establishing that process agility significantly and positively influences financial reporting equality.

4.2.2 Test of Hypothesis 11

H02: Technical agility has no significant effect on financial reporting quality in federal Universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

Table 3 Regression Results: Effect of Technical Agility on Financial Reporting Quality in Federal Universities in South Eastern Nigeria

Model Summary	R Square	0.464
ANOVA	F	136.809
	Sig.	0.000
Coefficients	**B**	**T**
Constant	1.471	6.192
Technical agility	0.667	11.697

Source: SPSS v. 26 output (2026)

Table 3 shows the regression results on the effect of technological agility on financial reporting quality in federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria. The R^2 value of 0.464 indicates that 46.4% of variations in reporting quality are explained by technological agility. The F-statistic of 136.809 with a significance of 0.000 validates the overall model at 5%. The constant ($\beta = 1.471$, $p < 0.05$) is significant, suggesting that even in the absence of technological agility, federal universities in South Easter Nigeria maintain a moderate level of financial reporting quality. The coefficient for technological agility ($\beta = 0.667$, $p < 0.05$)

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reflects a positive marginal effect, implying that a one-unit increase in technological agility improves financial reporting quality by 0.667 units, and this effect is significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, establishing that technological agility significantly and positively influences financial reporting equality.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The findings that process agility positively and significantly enhances financial reporting quality ($\beta = 0.722$, $p < 0.05$) is supported by several studies. Bordeleau et al (2020) argued that efficient and flexible accounting information systems improve the quality of financial reporting by enhancing information accuracy and timeliness. Similarly, Farida et al. (2021) maintained that improved administrative and financial process strengthen financial reporting system by enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in financial monitoring and reporting. Furthermore, Zhang et al (2024) also emphasized that improved digital processes and organizational agility contribute positively to accounting information quality and reporting transparency.

The findings that technological agility positively and significantly enhances financial reporting quality ($\beta = 0.667$, $p < 0.05$) also find strong empirical support in Sacer and Oluic (2013) who argued that implementation of computerized accounting systems enhances financial reporting by ensuring efficient data processing, improved information reliability and faster preparation of financial statements. Chepkorir and Kariuki (2024) demonstrate that digital transformation and technological flexibility plays a critical role in improving transparency and reliability in financial reporting. Similariy, Al-Hiyari, Al- Mashre and Mat (2019) reported that modern accounting information system significantly improve the the accuracy and completeness of financial information.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the role of agile accounting practices in enhancing financial reporting quality in federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria, with particular emphasis on process agility and technological agility as critical dimensions of organisational agility. The increasing complexity of financial management in public universities requires accounting systems that are flexible, adaptive, and capable of responding promptly to changing administrative and regulatory demands. Against this backdrop, the study sought to determine whether agile accounting practices contribute meaningfully to improving the quality of financial reporting within the university system. The findings of the study indicate that process agility plays a significant role in enhancing financial reporting quality. Similarly, the study established that technological agility positively influences financial reporting quality in federal universities. The integration of digital accounting systems, automated reporting platforms, and other technological tools enhances the accuracy, transparency, and accessibility of financial information. Overall, the study concludes that agile accounting serves as a critical catalyst for improving financial reporting quality in federal universities. Institutions that adopt flexible processes and leverage technological innovations are better positioned to produce financial reports that meet the standards of transparency, accuracy, and timeliness required for effective governance and accountability. Consequently, the adoption of agile accounting practices is essential for strengthening financial management systems and promoting sustainable institutional performance within the Nigerian university sector.

5.2 Recommendations

(1) Federal universities should redesign their accounting and financial management procedures to promote greater process flexibility and efficiency.

(2) University management should invest in continuous professional training for accounting and finance personnel.

5.3 Limitation of the Study.

The study is limited by its reliance on self-reported data, which may be affected by respondent bias. Additionally, the study focuses solely on federal universities in South Eastern Nigeria, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Despite these limitations, the study provides robust insights into agile accounting practices within a public university context.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies

(1) Expand the scope of investigation to include universities across other geopolitical zones in Nigeria or incorporate comparisons between federal, state, and private universities.

(2) Future studies may adopt longitudinal research designs to examine how agile accounting practices evolve over time and how they influence financial reporting outcomes across different reporting periods.

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