Cashless Policy and Local Government Revenue Collection in Selected Local Governments in Ebonyi State, Nigeria

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Abstract
This study examined Implementation of Cashless Policy and Local Government Revenue Collection in Ebonyi State of Nigeria: A Study of Selected Local Governments. The choice of the study is based in the fact that despite the increase of technologies in the society, the implementation of cashless policy has been faced with number of challenges particularly at the rural area in Ebonyi State. The study adopted a survey design method. A total sample of 260 was selected from the population of 20395 through purposive sampling technique. Primary and secondary data was utilised for the study. Theoretically, the study adopted the theory of monetary stages of development propounded by Bruno Hildebrand (1878). The study further revealed that the implementation of the policy has brought about enhanced transparency, and accountability in administration of the Council. The data generated from the study was analysed using inferential statistics and simple regression through SPSS statistical package. The study revealed that the implementation of cashless policy has improved the accountability in the collection of revenue. Also, the implementation of cashless policy has not contributed to facilitated the collection of revenue at the Rural Areas. More so, study revealed that the implementation of Cashless Policy has improved transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the Local Government level in Ebonyi State. However, the study observed that inadequate of facilities such as electricity, internet connectivity, poor network services and inadequate of enlightenment and orientation are the major challenges that have negatively affected the smooth implementation of cashless policy on revenue collection at the Local Government level in Ebonyi State of Nigeria
Keywords: Cashless Policy, Local Government, Revenue, Implementation

INTRODUCTION

Revenue collection has remained the only source for the survival of government; this is because, all projects and programmes initiated are based on the amount of revenue collected. Therefore, it is not an overstatement to say that no government can survive without revenue. This is because; every government depends on revenue for the retuning day today activities and for the execution of public policies and programmes that impact of the wellbeing of the citizens. Revenue includes personal income tax, value added tax, company income tax, which are usually collected by the government through her assigned agencies (Okafor, 2008). Revenue collection has always been in existence even before the amalgamation in 1914 of the North and South protectorates to form the territory now called Nigeria. These revenues were in forms of homage paid to Oba's household contribution for maintenance of peace and security guards, penalty paid for nonperformance of civil right and contribution to educational development (Okonya &Amaefule, 2018).

In Africa also, revenue (mostly through taxes) has significantly contributed to the economic growth of different countries. According (2017) the tax-to-GDP ratios in eight African countries namely: Tunisia, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Senegal, Mauritius, Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroon ranged from 16.1% to 31.3%, in 2015. Tunisia had the highest tax-to-GDP ratio in 2015 (31.3%), followed by Morocco (28.5%) due to their substandard levels of revenue collection and remittances to the coffers of the government. However, this figure is higher than tax-to-GDP ratio of some countries listed by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development as High-Income economies (Adu, 2016). In Nigeria, revenue generation has become a huge challenge considering the high level of corrupt practices prevalent in the revenue collection agencies. Revenue has always been in existence even before the amalgamation of the North and South protectorate to form the territory now called Nigeria in 1914 (Akeem,2017). These revenues were in forms of homage paid to Oba's household contribution for peace and maintenance of security guards, soldiers, penalty paid for non performance of civil right and contribution to educational development. However, revenue generated in Nigeria has witnessed lots of setbacks due to sabotage by the government officials and inability to track electronically the payment of revenues (Ofurum, Bossco & Okonya, 2018).

It is instructive to note that various strategies have been deployed for revenue collection in Nigeria. For instance, in the early times, revenue was paid and received without any form of receipt to confirm their payment (especially the tax revenue which is the surest form of revenue). Furthermore, in attempt to improve the collection of revenue, government introduced the strategy of the issuance of receipt for proper remittance Okonya & Amaefule (2018). Yet, this strategy failed due to forgery of documents. After series of reforms, it resolved that cash should be pay directly into bank which thus issues receipts. However, this therefore has helped to reduce forgery of receipt though there are still leakages in the system but much of the revenue accruing to the state are being embezzled by those that have access to the ICT (Owuor, 2016).

In Nigeria, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) introduced its Cash-less policy in 2011 and commenced a pilot of the policy in Lagos State in April 2012 CBN, (Website, 2011). The new bank policy aims to reduce physical cash circulation and encourage electronic transactions for payments, transfers, and services. Cashless policy aims to improving collection of government revenue, facilitate payment, monitoring of money laundering, financial crimes and to curb the corrupt tendencies and sharp practices which characterized the whole process of revenue collection especially at the local government level in Nigeria (Akeem,2017). The Policy had earlier stipulated penalty charges of 10% and 20% for cash transactions exceeding N150,000 daily for individual and N1,000,000 daily for corporate customers respectively. However, the policy was modified by the CBN shortly prior to the commencement of full implementation of the Policy, ushering in a new financial regime where emphasis shifts from cash based transactions to electronic means of conducting business(CBN 2012).In Ebonyi state as one of the thirty six (36) in Nigeria federation created on 1st October 1885 with (13) thirteen local government councils mostly relied on revenue collection for the execution of government projects especially at the local government level (Oketola, 2012)

Cashless policy is based on electronic payment system; the payment system is mostly done through electronically rather than physical payment. Many countries of the have adopted the policy in their economy today (Muyiwa, Tunmibi, & Afaha, 2013). The effective operation of cashless policy requires adequate infrastructure and facilities such as internet connectivity, network service, agent banks and effective security measure to guide against fraudulent acts in the system to win the public trust and confidence (Naiyeju, 2010). Both in the urban and rural area especially at the local government level where the government agents will be having direct contact with citizens especially in the area of revenue collection and payment. It is generally believed that the success and failure of the cashless policy can be largely on the availability of

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infrastructural facilities such as availability of network coverage for internet connectivity, agent's banks and full awareness of the people. With the commencement of the cashless policy in the country, some writers like Ikpefan, Enobong, Osuma, Evbuomwan, &Ndigwe, 2018; have pointed out some factors such as Internet fraud, inadequate availability of e-payment or e-transaction platform, high level of illiteracy among others that may likely undermine the operation of the policy. Thus; the study sought to examine the implementation of cashless policy of the CBN with regards to the collection revenue at the Rural Areas in Ebonyi State.

Statement of the Problem

Revenue collection have been identified as major problem in Nigeria, resulted in series of mismanagement of revenue, siphoning of funds, embezzlements, missing money from government coffers as well as non-remittance of funds due to poor fund-tracking ability of the revenue collection procedure in the economy. However, several strategies have been deployed for revenue collection in Nigeria particularly at the Rural Areas of the country. Right from the early times, revenue was paid and received without any form of receipt to confirm their payment which led to the diversion and embezzlement of the fund. Furthermore, in attempt to improve the collection of revenue, the issuance of receipt for proper remittance introduced but the strategy equally failed due to forgery of documents by the officials responsible for the collection of revenue. Also, in order to curtail high incidence of forgery, it resolved that revenue should be pay directly into bank which thus issues receipts. Though, there was an improvement to an extent but there are still some leakages resulting to tax aversion, embezzlement of fund by those that have access to the ICT (Owuor, 2016).

With the introduction of cashless policy in 2011 by Central Bank of Nigeria, it was expected that most of the challenges facing the collection of revenue would have completely eradicated so as to improve on revenue collection particularly at the rural area and minimized the leakages, tax aversion, diversions and facilitates the collection of revenue. Unfortunately, implementation appears to be facing serious challenges resulted from various issues that seem to be frustrating. For instance, there has been public outcry over the incidence of double charges, double debiting and debiting without payment and fraudulent tendencies associated with the use of electronic payment in Nigeria especially at the Rural Areas in Ebonyi State. In view of the above, the researcher is worry that the implementation of cashless policy may have been hindered with the factors such as inadequate of infrastructure such as reliable supply electricity, non availability of agents' bank, poor awareness and inadequate enlightenment especially at the grassroots. Thus; the study sought to examine the implementation of cashless policy of the CBN with regards to the revenue collection at the local government level in Ebonyi State.

Objective of the study

The broad objective of the study is to examine the Cashless Policy on Revenue Collection in Ebonyi State. While the specific objectives are:

(i) To examine whether the implementation of cashless policy has improved revenue collection at the Rural Area of Ebonyi State.

(ii) To investigate whether the implementation of cashless policy has facilitated the collection of revenue from members of the public at the Rural Area of Ebonyi State

(iii) To ascertain whether the implementation of Cashless Policy has improved transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the Rural Area of Ebonyi State.

Hypotheses

H0₁: The implementation of cashless policy has not improved revenue collection at the local government level.

H0₂: The implementation of cashless policy has not facilitated the collection of revenue from members of the public at the local government level

H0₃ The implementation of Cashless Policy has not improved transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the local government level.

2 Review of the Related Literature

This subsection focuses on the conceptual, theoretical and empirical review as well as the justification of the study

Concept of Revenue

The Longman dictionary of contemporary English (1995) defined revenue as money that a business or an organization receives over a period of time especially from selling goods or services. It also described revenue as money that government received from tax. Similarly, An advance learning dictionary of current English (1992) defined revenue as the total annual income of the state collected for public use. Hepworth (2016) described revenue as an income or funds rose to meet the expenditure. He added further that revenue is a rising resources needed to provide government services. Fayemi (2021) defined revenue as all tools of income to government such as taxes, rates, fees, fines, duties, penalties, rents, dues, proceeds and other receipt of government to which the legislature has the power of appropriation.

Cashless Policy
A cashless society possesses the following characteristics. All the money used through financial institutions (banks, and possibly other firms). It is conceivable that the central bank continues to operate like other banks, issuing its own deposits that could be used as money in the same way as other bank deposits are. However, in that case the central bank has no monopoly in the issue of Money. Costa and De Grauwe, (2001) buttressing the above definition, they posited that cashless economy is a society in which there is a high level of none existence of notes and coins issued by central banks for servicing business transaction. The cashless policy applies to all accounts, including collection accounts and the cash limits apply to an account irrespective of channel. As far as cash is involved, any withdrawal or deposit that exceeds the limits attracts a service charge (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2011).

Cashless Policy in Nigeria
The cashless policy began in Lagos from January 2012, while the policy took effect in Rivers, Anambra, Abia, Kano, Ogun and the Federal Capital on the 1st of July 2013. The policy was implemented nationwide in July 2014 (Oladutire, 2015). The service charge commenced from March 2012, which was aimed to enable the people to migrate to electronic channels and experience the infrastructure that has been put in place. Banks were to use this period as grace to encourage their customers to migrate to available electronic channels and where possible, demonstrate the cost that will accrue to those that continue to transact high volumes of cash from March 2012 in Lagos. The purpose of the system was to promote electronic payments, not to discourage holding cash. The policy aims to encourage people to keep money in the banking system instead of making large cash withdrawals to pay for goods and services. With this system, users are given electronic cards that can be inserted into special electronic machines to make

payments, similar to using a credit card. The Point of Sales (POS) terminals are the center of this payment system (Azeez, 2011).

Objectives of the Cashless Policy

The major objectives of Cashless policy in Nigeria include:

(i) To Reduce the movement and use of physical cash in both local and international financial markets, intermediation and commercial settlements for business activities.

(ii) Systemic adoption of a gradual process of moving the payment system of an economy from the use of physical cash for all levels of personal, corporate, government including local and international commercial settlement activities to a systemic adoption of other non-physical cash mode of payment in settlement of all types of transactions both in public and private sectors of the economy. Other motives behind the establishment of the cashless policy include among others:-

- ❖ To drive development of the financial system in line with best standard practices in all emerging financial markets and the economy as a whole.
- ❖ To initiate and commence a radical modernization and alignment of our monetary management and payment system in line with international best practices worldwide and to realise the dreams of vision 202020 aiming to list Nigeria amongst the top 20 economies by year 2020; as an efficient and modern payment system is positively correlated with economic development and a key requirement for economic growth.
- ❖ To facilitate and drive financial inclusions by providing more transaction efficient options, greater and wider banking services reach to Nigerian society.
- ❖ To improve the effectiveness of monetary policy in managing macro-economic indicators particularly, inflation, exchange rates, the market pricing mechanisms while driving economic growth simultaneously
- ❖ Stem high cost of cash handling.
- ❖ Reduce high risk of cash handling.
- ❖ Reduce high subsidy in cash management.
- ❖ The need to attract and capture the large proportion of funds remaining outside the formal banking system (65%) and recycle same back into the formal banking system.
- ❖ Curbing inefficiencies, corrupt practices, money laundering, armed robberies, theft of government resources, systemic leakages and other related fraudulent and criminal practices facilitated by the use of cash.

Collection of Revenue on Cashless System

Several methods of collection or payment exist in cashless policy economic system through electronic payment channels. Some of them include: Automated Teller Machines (ATM), points of sale terminals, mobile voice, web, inter -bank branch and kiosks.

- **(a) Mobile Banking:** The use of mobile phone for settlement of financial transactions has seen as one of the easiest means of payment and collection of money. This is more or less fund transfer process between customers with immediate availability of funds for the beneficiary. It uses card infrastructure for movement of payment instructions as well as secure SMS messaging for confirmation of receipts to the beneficiary. Services covered by this product include account enquiry; funds transfer; recharge phones; changing password and bill payments (Ochei, 2013).
- **(b) Internet Banking:** This is a process whereby banking transactions is being conducting on the worldwide web, using electronic tools such as the computer without visiting the banking hall. E-commerce is greatly facilitated by internet banking and is mostly used to effect payment. Internet banking, like mobile banking, also uses the electronic card infrastructure for executing payment instructions and final settlement of goods and services over the internet between the merchants and the customers. Commonly used

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internet banking transactions in Nigeria are settlement of commercial bills and purchase of air tickets through the websites of the merchants.

(c) Electronic Card: This is a physical plastic card that uniquely identifies the holder used in transacting business on the internet, automated teller machine (ATM) and Point of Sales (POS) terminals Carow and Staten, (2000). This includes debit and credit cards, debit cards are linked to local bank accounts and offer immediate confirmation of payment while credit card can be used for assessing local and international networks. As credit cards are widely accepted in most countries, the underlying infrastructures and operational rules are often provided by global trust scheme (such as visa and master card) in addition to local lines. Debit cards are the dominant cards in Nigeria, they are also known as ATM cards and their usage is wider than POS transactions given the current limited deployment of POS terminals.

(d) Point of Sale (POS)/Point of Purchase (POP) terminals: POS or POP is the location where a transaction occurs. A terminal or POS or POP is generally referred to the hardware and software used for check out, the equivalent of an electronic cash register. A POS manages the selling process by a salesperson accessible interface. The system allows the creation and printing of receipts.

(e) Automated Teller Machines: This is a computerized device that provides the customers of a financial institution with access to financial transactions in a public place without a need for assistance from bank teller or any official. It is commonest form of electronic banking which has gain popularity among the people including unlettered customers.

Local Government System in Nigeria

There are various definitions of local government by scholars and practitioner or administrators alike observed Ezeani (2006). Appadorai (1975) defined it as a government y the popular elected bodies charged with administrative and executive duties in matters concerning the inhabitants of a particular district or place. Local government refers to a political subdivision of a nation or state in a federal system, as defined by the United Nations Office for Public Administration in 1976. It is established by law and has substantial control over local affairs. This means that it can impose taxes and exert labor for a prescribed purpose. The governing body of this entity is either elected or locally selected. The guidelines for the reform of local government in Nigeria define it as a government at the local level that is exercised through a representative council established by law. This council has specific powers within defined areas, and these powers should give it substantial control over local affairs. The council should have staff, institutional, and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services. It should also determine and implement projects to complement the activities of the state and federal government in their areas. Through active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, the council should ensure that local initiatives and responses to local needs are maximized.

Historically, Nwabueze (1982) upheld that regardless of nomenclature, local government is a creation of British colonial rule in Nigeria. it has overtime experienced change in name, structure and composition. Between 1930s and 1940s, for instance, local government was known as chief-in-council and chief-and-council, where traditional rulers were given pride of place in the scheme of things. In the 1950s, election was introduced according to the British model in the western and eastern parts of the country with some measure of autonomy in personnel, finance and general administration. It was on this premise that the rising tide of progress, growth and development experienced in the local governments in these areas was based. The pace of this development was more noticeable in the south than in the north. The introduction of 1976 reforms brought about uniformity in the administrative structure of the system. The reforms also introduced population criterion under which a local government could

be created. Consequently, a population of within 150,000 was considered feasible for a local government.

Ajayi (2000) further upheld that in 1991, a major landmark reform was introduced as the system had legislative arm. In addition, the Babangida administration increased the number of local government from 301 in 1976 to 453 in 1989 and 589 in 1991. The Abacha regime also increased the number to 774 local councils that we have today and the administrative structure also underwent some changes. It is obvious that no public institution in Nigeria has been so subjected to frequent reforms than local government.

Sources of Revenue to the local Government in Nigeria

There are two major sources of revenue to the local government administration in Nigeria. These are external and internal. The external source iclude direct grant to the local government used to be 10% of the federation account according to 1982 Revenue Allocation Act. It was later increased to 15% and in the 1992 budget. It was further increased to 20%.while the second sources include:

(a) **Community Tax:** Community tax is usually imposed across on every eligible citizen by a government authority. Until 1974, it was imposed on every self employed adult whose annual income was below N600 later increased to N800.00. Since 1974, the composition of community tax has been left to the decision of state government who act within the guidelines provided by the federal government. It is argued that community or poll tax is uniformly imposed on an able bodied people who are self employed.
(b) **Market Fees:** Local governments are constitutional and exclusively responsible for the establishment, construction and management of markets. To this end has been empowered to, collect fees from traders occupying council built stalls and even from hawkers displaying their wares in open space in the market.
(c) **Motor Park Fees:** Like for the markets, local governments provide and maintain motor parks and collect fees from commercial vehicles using the park for carrying and discharging of their passengers. The collection of motor park fees is however, not without its problems. Most of the problems revolve around the inability of local government councils to provide necessary facilities such as POS or other electronic payment system to improving the collection of gate fees.

The Problems of Implementation of Cashless Policy in Nigeria
Since the inception of the cashless Nigeria policy, the central bank has failed virtually in all the stages of implementation. It is worthy of note at this point to identify that none of the stakeholders in the implementation agenda of the Nigeria cashless policy is sincere enough to confess to Nigerians that the nation has not ripe enough for a successful implementation of the cashless policy. A number of challenges have been identified and some of them have been discussed below

(a) **Poor Infrastructural Facility:** The CBN seems to have failed to consider the level of literacy among the populace before the implementation of a cashless society in Nigeria and the level of infrastructure for a successful electronic transaction. The electronic system of transacting has been seen to be of great impact on the cashless policy as it will help the actualization of the vision of the Central Bank of Nigeria (Ikpefan, Enobong, &Ndigwe, 2018). Electronic banking is a means of transferring funds with the use of the Internet and computer as iterated earlier, so there is a need for the CBN to work in collaboration with the Deposit money banks and Telecommunication companies (Wali, Wright, & Reynolds, 2014).

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(b) **Inadequate of Agents Bank**: The financial infrastructure in Nigeria is not adequate to carry the load of a cashless society. ATMs, POS systems and other mediums have to be expanded to touch at least 40% of the whole economy before any meaningful effect can be achieved. Erratic power supply has been a major challenge facing every industry in Nigeria.

(c) **Inadequate of Network Coverage**: Power supply must be improved drastically to stimulate smooth operations of financial activities (Omotunde, Sunday, & John-Dewole, 2013). High level of fraudulent activities through e-banking is a challenge which the entire banking industry must resolve before cashless policy can be effective. Literacy rate in the country is very low in some part of the country especially in the North. Business men in this region prefer to keep their money in their private fault rather than patronizing the bank.

(d) **Internet Fraud:** Cashless policy implementation in Nigeria may have affected with the existence of Internet fraud, inadequate availability of e-payment or e-transaction platform, high level of illiteracy among others. They further revealed that the privacy of digital transactions is not 100% guaranteed since transactions are tied to a particular identity which might end up in malicious hands, unlike the cash-based society where cash can be received anonymously (Pritchard, 2020).

(e) **Poor Enlightenment and Orientation:** The CBN seems to have failed to consider the level of literacy among the populace before the implementation of a cashless society in Nigeria. It is common that Nigeria today is still being count as an agrarian society. Most of the people are farmers who lived in the rural area. It is instructive to note that most of the people are illiterates with little enlightenment and low orientation towards electronic payment system.

(f) **Double Debiting**
The issue of double debiting and hanging of financial transactions of customers is one of the major challenges faced by the members of the public in Nigeria. It is common to see large number of customers besieging the banks venues for various forms of complain by the customers. Most of the customers are either frustrated or dup through this electronic payment

Review of Empirical Studies
Series of empirical studies have been written in line with the relationship between electron and revenue collections. Therefore, this subsection focuses on electronic payment system (Cashless policy) and collection of revenue.

Okifi and Ogbunu (2015) conducted survey research on Electronic Payment System and its Economic Benefits and Challenges. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study is 200 randomly selected from small business operators. Chi-square statistical tool was used for the analysis of data generated from the secondary source. The results indicate that the advantages of e-payment are immeasurable as it would encourage Nigeria to become a cashless society and eliminate the fear of the unknown. Despite the challenges faced by e-payment, such as public acceptance, lack of a uniform platform operated by banks, inadequate infrastructure, and security issues, the proper adoption of e-payment systems will help to address the issue of corruption, which is a cancer in the government sector, in a comprehensive manner.

Otieno, Oginda, Obura, Atila, Ojera, and Siringi, (2016) carried out a study on information system and collection of Personal Income Tax and used the Chi-square methodology. The study's findings indicate that there is a significant correlation between Information Systems (IS) and both efficiency and effectiveness in revenue collection, particularly in the case of PIT. Furthermore, Internal Control Systems have a strong positive relationship with revenue collection. However,

the council staff's resistance to change is hindering the full implementation of IS. The study is beneficial to the current research as it can aid in the complete integration of IS, specifically the e-payment system, in revenue collection.

Kayaga (2016) carried out a study in South Africa and made use of Simple regression/ ANOVA/ Descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. The study showed that new technology alone is not sufficient if the government does not recognize the need for skilled tax officials especially in the collection of taxes from income of personal individuals. The scholar further avers that, effective tax administration requires qualified tax personnel with requisite skills to maintain these systems and operate them to their fullest potential.

Similarly, Olurankinse and Oladeji (2018) examined self-assessment, e-taxation payment systems and revenue generation in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey design while the population of the study comprises 30 tax executives from 30 companies in Rivers State of Nigeria. Both Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient statistical tool and the regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses in the study. Results indicate a positive and significant relationship between self-assessment and e-taxation payment systems and venue generation. The paper concludes that e-taxation is an online tax payment and administration system that is used for the generation of tax from all competent taxpayers based on statutory guidelines for the purpose of assessing tax returns in the economy.

Theoretical Framework
This work adopted the theory of monetary stages of development as it framework of analysis. The theory is associated with the German economist; Bruno Hildebrand (1812-1878). Claudia and Grauwe (2001) advanced the theory of monetary stages of development by propounding the theory of payment system efficiency and Central Bank monopoly. Collaborating with the above, Okereke and Sanni (2005) posits that money supply is the total sum of money in circulation that facilitates the exchange process in an economy at any given time. They added that money supply would be viewed from either a narrow perspective or from a broader horizon. The relevance of the theory to the study is base in the fact that the increased usage of cashless banking instruments strengthens monetary policy effectiveness, that e-money usage does not pose a threat to the stability of financial system. Thus, to maintain the central bank cardinal role on issuance of currency, regulation and control of cash volume in the economy, its monopolistic position must be enhanced and close that gaps which the cash-based system created in the Nigerian economy.

3.Methodology
The study adopted a survey design to investigate the implementation of cashless policy on revenue collection at local government level in Ebonyi State. The choice of this survey design is based on the fact that it enables the researcher to have face to face interaction with the respondents that provides the indebt information on the implementation of the cashless policy on revenue collection in Ebonyi state particularly at the local government level. A total of 260 were selected through purposive sampling technique. 60 persons were the staff of Board of Internal Revenue Service while 200 were carefully selected from the members who operate business and traders that eligible to pay tax to the government in Ebonyi State. Both Primary and secondary data were utilised. The reliability test was carried out using the results of the pilot study carried out and the Cranach's Alpha coefficient of the variables 0.754 ranged between 0.754 and 0,934 which justified the reliability of the instrument of the study while the data gathered was analyzed using the simple percentage and Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS version 23.) was used to test the hypothesis formulated in the study.

4.RESULTS

Table 1 whether the implementation of cashless policy has improved revenue collection at the local government level in Ebonyi State

s/n	ITEMS	N	SA	A	D	SD
1	Cashless policy has improved the collection of revenue at the L G level	250	80	70	65	35
2	Poor facilities hinder the revenue collection at the LG level	250	120	70	40	20
3	Poor internet connectivity pose challenge in the payment at the L G level	250	150	80	15	5
4	Most people do not want to pay through electronic at the local government level	250	105	85	35	25
5	Inadequate of agent's bank hinders the operation of e-payment at the local government level	250	110	80	30	30
6	Lack of awareness pose challenge to the operation of the cashless policy at the local government level	250	120	90	30	10
7	The rate of illiteracy constitutes problem to the cashless policy at the local government level	250	85	75	50	40

On table 1, it was observed in the first option that 80 strongly agreed, 70 respondents agreed, 65 respondents disagreed while 35 respondents strongly disagreed. In the second option, the responses indicated that 120 respondents strongly agreed, 70 respondents agreed, 40 respondents disagreed while 20 respondents strongly disagreed. Also, the response from the third option revealed that 150 strongly agreed, 80 agreed, 15 strongly disagreed while 5 strongly disagreed. More so, in the fourth option, 105 strongly agreed, 85 agreed, 35 disagreed and 25 strongly disagreed. In the fifth option, it shows that 110 strongly agreed, 80 respondents agreed, 30 respondents disagreed while 30 strongly disagreed. The sixth option revealed that 120 respondents strongly agreed, 90 respondents agreed, 30 respondents disagreed while 10 strongly disagreed. On the seventh option, it was indicated that 85 respondents strongly agreed, 75 respondents agreed, 50 respondents disagreed and 40 respondents strongly disagreed.

Table 2: Whether the implementation of cashless policy has facilitated the collection of revenue from members of the public at the local government level in Ebonyi State

s/n	ITEMS	N	SA	A	D	SD
8	Double debiting hinders the operation of cashless policy at the local government level	250	90	80	50	30
9	Lack of trust on the electronic payment pose challenge to the operation at the local government	250	100	60	50	40
10	Cashless policy has improved collection of revenue at the local government level	250	120	80	30	20
11	Electronic payment has improved transparency in the collection of revenue	250	95	85	45	25
12	Cashless policy has reduced corrupt tendencies among the agents	250	100	80	40	30
13	Cashless policy encouraged prompt payment of revenue at the local government level	250	120	90	30	10
14	Inadequate of facilities constitutes challenge to the payment of revenue at the local government level	250	95	85	50	20

In the table 2, it was observed in the eight options that 90 strongly agreed, 80 respondents agreed, 50 respondents disagreed while 30 respondents strongly disagreed. In the ninth option, the responses indicated that 100 respondents strongly agreed, 60 respondents agreed, 50 respondents disagreed while 40 respondents strongly disagreed. Also, the response from the tenth option

revealed that 120 strongly agreed, 80 agreed, 30 strongly disagreed while 20 strongly disagreed. More so, in the eleven options, 95 strongly agreed, 85 agreed, 45 disagreed and 25 strongly disagreed. In the twelve options, it shows that 110 strongly agreed, 80 respondents agreed, 30 respondents disagreed while 30 strongly disagreed. The thirteen options revealed that 120 respondents strongly agreed, 90 respondents agreed, 30 respondents disagreed while 10 strongly disagreed. On the fourteen options, it was indicated that 85 respondents strongly agreed, 75 respondents agreed, 50 respondents disagreed and 40 respondents strongly disagreed.

Table 3: To ascertain whether the implementation of Cashless Policy has improved transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the local government level.

s/n	ITEMS	N	SA	A	D	SD
15	Tax aversion has been reduced through cashless policy at the LG Level	250	100	70	50	30
16	Diversion of revenue by the agents has reduced through cashless policy at LG level	250	80	70	60	40
17	Corrupt tendencies among the revenue agents has been reduced	250	80	70	50	50
18	Cashless policy has brought sanity in the collection of revenue at the LG level	250	95	85	45	25
19	Cashless policy has reduced corrupt tendencies among the agents	250	100	80	40	30
20	Cashless policy encouraged prompt payment of revenue at the local government level	250	80	70	60	40
21	Cashless policy has instilled discipline on the collection of revenue at the local government level	250	95	85	50	20

On the table 3, it was observed in options fifteen; it was revealed that 100 strongly agreed, 70 respondents agreed, 60 respondents disagreed while 30 respondents strongly agreed. In the option sixteen, the responses indicated that 80 respondents strongly agreed, 70 respondents agreed, 60 respondents disagreed while 40 respondents strongly disagreed. Also, the response from the option seventh, it was revealed that 80 strongly agreed, 50 agreed, 50 strongly disagreed while 20 strongly disagreed. More so, in option eighteen, 95 strongly agreed, 85 agreed, 45 disagreed and 25 strongly disagreed. In options nineteen, it shows that 100 strongly agreed, 80 respondents agreed, 40 respondents disagreed while 30 strongly disagreed. The option twenty revealed that 80 respondents strongly agreed, 70 respondents agreed, 60 respondents disagreed while 40 strongly disagreed. On the options twenty one, it was indicated that 95 respondents strongly agreed, 85 respondents agreed, 50 respondents disagreed and 20 respondents strongly disagreed.

Test of the Hypotheses
Test of Hypothesis (1)

$H0_1$:The implementation of cashless policy has not improved revenue collection at the local government level in Ebonyi State.

$H1_1$:The implementation of cashless policy has not improved revenue collection at the local government level in Ebonyi State.

Table 4		Summary of Analysis				
Computed r.	**r. Square**	**Adjusted r.**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig**
.6870.	739	766	.092	.666	7.49	000

The result of data analysis summarized on table 4 indicated that the P.> value of 7.49 at 0.05 alpha is greater than the sig. value of .000, Since the P> value 7.49 at 0.05 alpha variable which

is greater than P< value of.000. This shows that there is significant relationship between the two variables. The P. value at .7.49 at 0.05 alpha is less than the sig. of t at 000, therefore, the alternative hypothesis (Hi) was accepted while the null hypothesis H0 was rejected. The result indicated that the implementation of cashless policy has improved revenue collection at the local government in Ebonyi State

Test of Hypothesis (2)

H0₂: The implementation of cashless policy has not reduced the tax evasion of payments among members of the public at the local government level

H1₂: The implementation of cashless policy has not reduced the tax evasion of payments among members of the public at the local government level

Table 5   **Summary of Analysis**

Computed r.	r. Square	Adjusted R.	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
.404	617	617	.034	704	5.207	000

Result of data analysis summarized on Table 5 indicated that the P.> value of 5.207 at 0.05 alpha is greater than the sig. value of .000, Since the P> value 5.207 at 0.05 alpha variable which is greater than P< value of.000. Since the P.> value of 5.207 at 0.05 is greater than the sig. value of .000, we therefore rejected the null hypothesis(H0) and retained the alternative hypothesis (HI). The result shows that the implementation of cashless policy has reduced the evasion of revenue payments among members of the public at the local government level

Test of Hypothesis (3)

H0₃:
The implementation of cashless policy has not improved transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the local government level.

H1₃: The implementation of cashless policy has improved transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the local government level.

Table 6   **Summary of Analysis**

Computed r.	r. Square	Adjusted R.	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
.885	784	783	.067	.718	.47	.635

Result of data analysis summarized on Table 34 indicated that the P.> value of .047 at 0.05 alpha is less than the sig. value of .635, Since the P> value is .47 at 0.05 alpha variable which is less than P< value of.635. We therefore rejected the null hypothesis (H0) and retained the alternative hypothesis (HI).The result revealed that implementation of Cashless Policy has improve transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the local government level

Findings
Hypothesis 1: Result of data analysis summarized shows that there is no significant relationship between the two variables. The P. value at .7.49 at 0.05 alpha is less than the sig. of t at 000, therefore, the alternative hypothesis (Hi) was rejected while the null hypothesis H0 was accepted. The result indicated that the implementation of cashless policy has improved revenue collection in Ebonyi State.

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Hypothesis 2: Result of data analysis summarized on indicated that the P.> value of 5.207 at 0.05 alpha is greater than the sig. value of .000, Since the P> value is 5.207 at 0.05 alpha variable which is greater than P< value of.000. We therefore rejected the null hypothesis (H0) and retained the alternative hypothesis (HI). The result shows that the implementation of cashless policy has not reduced the tax evasion among members of the public at the local government level in Ebonyi State.

Hypothesis 3: Result of data analysis summarized indicated that the P.> value of .47 at 0.05 alpha is greater than the sig. value of .635, Since the P> value is 4.027 at 0.05 alpha variable which is greater than P< value of.635. We therefore rejected the null hypothesis (H0) and retained the alternative hypothesis (HI). The result revealed that implementation of Cashless Policy has improve transparency and accountability in revenue collection at the local government level in Ebonyi State.

Conclusion
The study observed that cashless policy remains a panacea to revenue collection to bring about the service delivery to the people at the local government level. However, the paper indicated that a number of factors have continue to pose challenges such as inadequate of electricity supply, non availabilities of adequate agents bank, poor enlightenment coupled with the unnecessary internet charges and double debiting and charges has contributed to undermined the realization of the policy goal especially at the local government level in the state. To this end, the paper maintains that the success and the failure of the cashless policy on revenue collection at the local government level can largely determine by the availabilities of the infrastructural facilities such as suitable power supply, awareness and enlightenments campaign, adequate provision of agents bank and all the unnecessary internet charges, double charges must be ratified if the cashless policy is to achieve its goal and objectives.

Recommendations
Arising from the findings, the paper put up the following recommendation below which include:
i. That adequate infrastructural facilities such as electricity, internet services, should be provided to improve the implementation of cashless policy especially at the rural areas of Ebonyi State

ii. That the revenue staff should be adequately trained including the POS operators so as to enhance the collection of revenue at the rural area of Ebonyi State.

iii. .That the issue of double charges, delaying of payment and all the criminal tendencies associated with electronic payment should addressed so as to gain the public confidence

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