Quality Assurance and the Contributions of Indirect Tax Revenues in Ghana: Tax Management Maturity Model as a Referent Approach

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Abstract
Tax Revenue is the most vital source of revenue for governments. Indirect taxation offers much more revenue than direct taxation in most economies in the West African Sub-region since approximately 75% of government revenue is provided from indirect taxes, and only just 25% is derived from other non-taxes and direct tax sources. The study, therefore, assessed the contributions of indirect taxes to total tax revenues in Ghana using the tax management maturity model as a referent approach. The study adopted the ex-post facto research design, which is considered quasi-experimental. This study further made use of both primary and secondary data. The primary data was gathered through questionnaires. The study sample comprised business taxpayers in Ghana. A total of 165 businesses were conveniently sampled to participate in the study. The study covered the fiscal periods from 2010 to 2020. The study discovered that indirect taxes have a significant positive impact on the total tax revenue of Ghana. Concerning tax operations, the study discovered that filing and submission, payment of tax liability, and tax recordkeeping all have a role in driving tax assurance. It was also established that the task risk management issue included detecting and mitigating business and operational risks, with such risks and their mitigating procedures reported to interested parties. Monitoring and testing quality entail discovering and communicating control shortcomings, developing follow-up procedures, and monitoring methods and policies. It was recommended that tax accountants and directors of businesses and institutions assigned to accounting or tax records be regularly trained by their management to ensure quality assurance on the tax obligations of the firms involved.
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1. Introduction

As inferred by Kefela and Ghirmai (2009), Tax Revenue is the most vital and most important source of revenue for governments of West Africa, including Ghana, as it generates and contributes the greatest of all revenues to the national coffers of these economies (Beach & van den Boogaard, 2022). Indeed, tax revenues have been used mainly to assist governments in administering their nations and preserving law and order, social amenities and other infrastructures like roads, schools, and hospitals (Egbunike et al., 2018; Moore, 2013; Fjeldstad & Rakner, 2003).

Mainly, for economic purposes, taxation has been used to control aspects of the country's economy in terms of savings, inflation, and balance of payments and for the redistribution of income to provide a cushion for the very poor and vulnerable on the economic ladder (Mansour et al., 2013) and to "balance the government budget instead of relying on borrowing or donor funds. Taxation for that matter tax has been used to raise enough revenues to meet government expenditure and investment" (Institute of Chartered Accountants-Ghana, 2011, p.2)

Tax is an obligatory payment to the government for which there is no direct service to the individual taxpayer (Gobachew et al., 2018). This mode of payment could be directly or indirectly channelled to the government for its intended purpose. Indirect taxation or taxes are levied on the sale and consumption of goods and services. Imperatively, tax incidence or payment burden is not entirely borne by the person who buys a good or service. Part of the whole of the tax burden may instead be borne by the final consumer depending on the elasticity of demand for the goods or items involved in the purchase or consumption.

Thus, both direct and indirect taxation have their own fiscal and regulatory functions. The core merits and demerits lie in fiscal efficiency, taxation equity, tax administration, the possibility of tax evasion, and the social-political effect. Thus, only a precise amalgamation of direct and indirect taxes can create a good system of taxation, which can offer adequate funds to a country to cover its requirements without imposing an undue burden on taxpayers, undermining the well-being of the populace and impeding the economic development of the country (Soloveva, 2018).

In Ghana, indirect taxes are taxes imposed on goods and services consumed in the economy irrespective of their place of origin. They are taxes on VAT on domestic goods and services, VAT on imports, excise duty and petroleum products. (ISSER, 2011). Feger (2014) infer that indirect taxation offers much more revenue than direct taxation to most economies in the West African Sub-region. For instance, Malik et al. (2021) assert that tax revenues in Ghana divide relatively between direct and indirect taxes and contributed 48% and 52% of the total in 2019.

Malik et al. (2021) specified that much of the growth in Ghana's tax revenues since 2000 has originated from increased corporate and personal income tax, VAT, and comparable taxes, though revenue growth from the last two has stagnated more lately. These taxes consist of over 70% of total collections in 2019 – up from 57% in 2000. However, indirect taxes recorded 45.72%, 43.67%, 43.96%, and 43.18%, respectively, as a percentage of total tax revenue from 2000 to 2003. (ISSER, 2004) and then from 45.19%, 44.2%, 45.83% and 42.79% from 2004 to 2007, respectively.

Direct taxes, on the other hand, as imposed on incomes and property of individuals and businesses, have shown positive outturns but not as compared to indirect taxes. From 2000 to 2002, direct taxes as a component of total tax revenues showed as 31.93%, 32.29% and 32.70%, respectively, and this like, as said earlier, cannot be matched with the indirect component (ISSER, 2003). Similarly, periods from 2004 to date indicate a similar trend, indicating indirect taxes as a significant proportion of tax revenues to the Ghanaian economy.

Furthermore, since the year 2000, the government of Ghana has aimed at significant economic, political and social policy programs directed toward the transformation of the Ghanaian economy. Policies tabled are estimated to turn the country into a real middle-income country. Nonetheless, Ghana still misses out on a lot of its macroeconomic status even as far back as the year 2000 up to date, and indeed, all of these slips are a result of the inadequacy of revenue and, for that matter, tax revenue for which indirect taxes are a significant part.

Ewusi (2012, p. 257) specified that there had been persistent shortfalls in government meeting most of its macroeconomic goals and, as he puts it, "that, over the past fifteen (15) years, the country has consistently recorded deficits on its fiscal balance, with the 2012 deficit of 12% of GDP being the highest so far''. Perceptively, indirect taxes contribute more to tax revenues to total tax than direct taxes contributions. Averagely, this has been about 6.9% of GDP more in total taxes. At 13% in 2019, Ghana's tax-to-GDP ratio remained far lower than the government's target of 20% by 2023. Even though this ratio is 5 percentage points higher than in 2000, it has remained at the same level since 2017 (Malik et al., 2021). Direct taxes are just 6.5% of GDP to total tax revenues contributed since 2000 to date.

As inferred by Dom & Miller (2018), because of the under-developed nature of the West African economy, including Ghana, it is challenging to gather sufficient revenue through direct taxes. This is due to low incomes, a high level of under-employment and unemployment, tax exemption for a few manufacturing industries and the absence of business records. Since the government cannot obtain much revenue from direct taxes, it must depend more on indirect taxes. However, the trend has not been favourable, and shortfalls in indirect taxes to total tax revenue has become a bane to the government in meeting its revenue targets.

Distressingly, the indirect taxes component as a percentage of total tax revenue is seeing no change and VAT on imported goods and services, a component of the total indirect taxes, also fell short of the target. Similarly, the contributions of indirect taxes to total taxes fell short of the estimate by GH¢ 946.9 billion and declined in percentage terms from 47.4% in 2004 to 46.7% of total tax revenue in 2005. Although indirect tax revenue excluding import duties has seen modest growth, increasing from just under 4% of GDP to just over 5% (Malik et al., 2021), there is room for improvement.

Thus, audaciously, if indirect tax contributes so significantly to the total tax revenues of the economy of Ghana and at specific periods, the targets fall short of expectations. It is imperative to determine how significantly its contributions are; and at what loss its shortfalls negatively impact the economy of Ghana. Consequently, to determine the quality of the tax function and tax control mechanisms as well as a framework to achieve desired results, a quality assurance analysis needs to be ascertained to determine the processes and management of indirect tax administration to meet the targets of tax revenue which is what the current study seeks to assess.

Ali and Nasaruddin (2020) infer that quality assurance is any methodical process of checking if a product or service is administered the required and specified standards. Using the tax management maturity model as a referent yardstick would reveal how indirect taxes become comparably significant to total tax revenue with all the assurance of the quality of tax controls put in place to optimise revenue for the Ghanaian economy. Ironically, the tax management maturity model is best suited for benchmarking and developing a tax control environment. Once this is ideal for benchmarking and agreeing on tailor-made supervision, it automatically becomes an exclusive tool for communicating with all those involved in maximising revenue for the state.

1.1 Quality Assurance in Taxation

As indicated earlier, a country's tax revenue is of utmost importance for guaranteeing a regular flow of revenue to meet public goods and services' social and public needs (Munongo et al., 2017; Luttmer & Singhal, 2014; Kenny & Winer, 2006). According to Addison and Levin (2012), the government would need the tax revenues to maintain the public and civil services, the armed forces, judicial systems, and security. In a lot poorer and developing economies, a low tax-revenue/GDP ratio thwarts the realisation of real economic growth and development as these nations never experience the objectives of practical revenue mobilisation programs.

Significantly, an appropriate increase in tax revenue and an equivalent increase in the provision of public goods and services is an urgent policy to embark on to realise national objectives (Chang et al., 2020; Langford & Ohlenburg, 2015). Nonetheless, quality assurance processes implemented in the optimum tax base processes have become imminent. This has become an increasingly demanding cause for governments and tax authorities to provide an efficient and excellent service to ensure that revenue targets are met. Ostensibly, quality assurance undertakings, according to Parker et al. (2012), are comprised of a planned system of review procedures conducted by an organisation to verify if quality objectives are met as well as to ensure that all policies and systematic activities implemented within a model through the auditioning of the process on quality can measure integrity, correctness, and the completeness of tasks assigned.

Quality assurance objectives are to classify and address errors and exclusions, offer routine and reliable checks, and ensure accuracy and the provision of approved and standardised goods and/or services (Balamatsias, 2018). Before implementing quality assurance activities, it is essential to ascertain which techniques should be used and when and where they will be applied. According to PWC (2015), in assessing effective tax risk management, an organisation needs to ponder which positions of defence are available to protect the organisation, the types of risk it is exposed to, and the methods available to analyse and mitigate monitor these risks. Hence, one needs to comprehend and appreciate the current and desired state of the Tax Control Framework and tax operating model. These philosophies apply to any other risk or opportunity as they align with good tax governance, just as many organisations have realised.

Thus, to ensure an organisation has a tax function suitable to meet standards, a combination of tax technical know-how with comprehensive principles of good governance ought to be applied. This consists of employing state-of-the-art developments in tax technology to guarantee compliance and opportunity maximisation (Daud et al., 2013). This ultimately meets quality assurance objectives and assures oneself that an end-to-end tax risk management methodology is the only sure way to satisfy all the goals of tax revenue targets for national development.

According to the IRS Nationwide Tax Forum (2011), tax quality assurance comprises organisational procedures, structures, and policies to ensure compliance with appropriate professional, statutory, and regulatory requirements. This is significant because it supports compliance with professional standards and minimises professional liability risk. Intuitively, the factors that depict a good quality assurance arrangement would include the degree of authority granted by the institution concerned in assessing the mechanisms put in place, the knowledge and experience of the personnel involved in the evaluations and the necessary capabilities and resources of the organisation concerned (Botezatu et al., 2019). There would also be the continuation of educational programs for the staff involved as well as the qualifications for advancement.

However, monitoring the quality assurance system to evolve into a quality tax practice system and documentation would be to establish an inspection program to evaluate compliance and performance of the tax staff's output (Rwamunono, 2020; Ligomeka, 2019). This will involve supervision and reviewing the quality control systems to determine if they comply with the standards. It would also involve manual contents of checking lists such as tax returns, tax compliance levels of taxpayers and the enforcement procedures to enforce tax compliance by taxpayers, tracking procedures for international trade and customs duties, tax audits of taxpayers' payments, and the overall processes of tax accounting to state coffers (Siglé et al., 2022; De Neve et al., 2021; Batrancea et al., 2019). Furthermore, procedures to resolve differences and deviations would have to be established to communicate results to the stakeholders. This is intended to promote quality products and services, build consistency, and streamline the administrative aspects of a proper tax authority.

1.2 The Tax Management Maturity Model Framework

Tax Management Maturity Model (T3M) is based on the internationally recognised COSO risk management framework. T3M delivers a common communication platform on tax controls for internal and external stakeholders and permits an organisation to appreciate and analyse the tax control framework and current tax risk and opportunity management level within a tax function (PwC, 2019). Thus, T3M is modelled to enable a current state review of tax management in a tax organisation and the documentation of the detailed desire state with a roadmap to bring change (Eberhartinger & Zieser, 2021; Colon & Swagerman, 2015; Jacobs et al., 2015). Strengthened by state-of-the-art online tooling, this approach is stirred by the long-recognised principles of good governance.

By choosing the online tool, one of five maturity levels for the existing and desired state of each domain of strategic, legal, or operational tax risk, one can gain insight into the maturity of tax management in a particular tax institution. Hence, the model uses five maturity levels to demonstrate how an organisation's workouts tax controls and the organisation's ambition level are or should be. It is a worldwide, transparent model that shows the compliance and status of the entire tax organisation in one breath. It is an exclusive tool for self-diagnosis and communication with supervisors and all internal and external stakeholders.

Clearly, the Tax Management Maturity Model features show how an organisation controls its tax function and becomes transparent, verifiable uniform, and comparable. The model features a universal and transparent dashboard that displays the compliance status in a particular dimension. The model comprises an ambition level and the growth path towards the designed maturity level. Nevertheless, according to PwC (2019), the fundamental constituents of T3M broadly operate to cover a tax authority's tax control framework, comprising six levels of main 'drivers' linked to five maturity stages of functions. These include:

1. The Business and Tax Environment includes strategy, the organization's structure, soft controls, and levels of tax awareness.
2. Business Operations deals with the state and the status control and documentation of tax influencing business processes.
3. Tax Operations (multi-tax) involve processes and controls to ensure tax compliance and reporting requirements are met.
4. Tax Risk Management. This is more of identifying tax risks, implementing controls to mitigate tax risks, and communicating with stakeholders.
5. Monitoring and Testing. This involves internal monitoring of activities to periodically assess existing tax controls' design and operating effectiveness and follow up on change management.

Tax Assurance. This is the final stage where the internal or external review of the tax control framework and the design and operating effectiveness of key tax controls are ascertained.

2. Methodology

The study adopted the ex-post facto research design. An ex-post-facto design is considered quasi-experimental. Subjects are not randomly assigned but are grouped based on a particular characteristic. The researcher can determine the actual outcome of events that had already occurred (Jarde et al., 2012; Giuffre, 1997; Lee, 1985). The ex-post facto research design was chosen because it allows the researcher to determine the cause-and-effect relationship between variables for which the causes already exist and cannot be manipulated. The time lag covered for this study was between the fiscal periods of 2010-2020. The cause-and-effect relationship was modelled and, hypothesized, tested using Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Regression technique. The hypothesis is given below:

H_0: There is no significant effect of indirect taxes on total tax revenues.

This study made use of both primary and secondary data. The primary data was gathered through questionnaires. The study sample comprised business taxpayers in Ghana. A total of 165 businesses were conveniently sampled to participate in the study.

2.1 Model Description

To test the hypothesis formulated that assesses the implications of indirect taxes on the total tax revenue in Ghana, the succeeding model (Regression Model) was estimated:

$Y=f(X)$…………………………....(1)

Where:

Y= Independent variable (Total Tax Revenues)
X=Independent variable (Indirect Tax Revenue)
F=Function of the equation

$Y=\alpha+\beta X+\varepsilon$………………………………(2)

Where:

Y = Dependent Variable
X = Independent Variable
a = Constant indicating the point of interception with Y
b = Slope or gradient
ε= Error Variable
Re-arranged as:

$TTR=f(IDT)+\varepsilon$……………………………(3)

Consequently, the under listed alphabets were carefully chosen to symbolise their respective variables in the model.

TTR = Total Tax Revenue
IDT= Indirect Tax

Expression for Ho second hypothesis, which states that there is no significant effect of indirect taxes on total tax revenues, we have:

$Y=\alpha+\beta_1 IDT+\varepsilon$…………………………..(4)

or rewritten as:

$TTR=\alpha+\beta_1 IDT+\varepsilon$…………………………..(5)

This will reflect the actual variables in the equation.

Regression analysis was used to analyses the secondary data sourced from the Institute of Statistics, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), Bank of Ghana (BoG), and Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP) for the 2010 – 2020 fiscal years. The stated hypotheses were tested at a 5% significance level in its null form.

3. Findings

3.1 Quality Assurance Measures in Tax Administration

The overview of taxpayers' responses to the tax and business environment is presented in table 1.

Table 1 Taxpayers' tax and business environments

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	±SD
Indirect tax strategies	165	1	5	3.56	1.12
Indirect tax compliance	165	1	5	3.56	1.20
Use of software	165	1	5	3.76	1.15
Training of financial controllers	165	1	5	3.32	1.25
Indirect tax compliance policies	165	1	5	3.52	1.28

The results gave a mean score of 3.76 for software use. The existence of indirect tax compliance policies received moderate mean scores (M=3.52, ±SD=1.28), which can be considered a crucial element in driving quality within the Tax Management Maturity Model. Training of financial controllers received a mean and standard deviation score of (M=3.32, ±SD=1.25). The state and the status control and documentation of tax influencing business processes are dealt with by business operations. Table 2 shows the results of taxpayers' business operations.

Table 2 Taxpayers' business operations

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	±SD
Subjection to indirect tax	165	1	5	3.57	1.12
Compliance of business activities	165	1	5	3.83	1.00
Control of business activities	165	1	5	3.51	1.35
Documentation of activities	165	1	5	3.70	1.18
Simplified business process	165	1	5	3.97	0.85

The results showed that organizations' procedures are simplified to make compliance less challenging, earning the highest mean score of (M=3.97, ±SD=.85). Businesses acknowledged that they had profiled their business activities to comply with indirect taxes (M=3.83, ±SD=1.00) and to document their actions to account for indirect taxes on them (M=3.70, ±SD=1.18). The businesses agreed (M=3.57, ±SD1.12) that they allow their business operations to be subjected to indirect taxes, with the least mean score obtained by the businesses ensuring their activities are well controlled to be in line with indirect taxes. As shown in the Tax Management Maturity Model of quality assurance, to some extent, indirect taxpayers subject their activities to indirect taxes.

Processes and controls are used in tax operations to ensure that tax compliance and reporting obligations are met (see Table 3). A mean value of 3.72 was found among taxpayers when it came to filing tax forms. Similarly, the mean numbers for filing returns, paying tax liabilities, and retaining tax records were 3.56, 3.57, and 3.74, respectively. The mean scores show that these tax operating actions are, to a large extent, part of the taxpayers' assurance mechanisms for indirect taxes.

Table 3 Taxpayers' tax operations

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	±SD
Filing of returns	165	1	5	3.72	1.09
Submission of filed returns	165	1	5	3.56	1.10
Payment of liability	165	1	5	3.57	1.10
Keeping of records	165	1	5	3.74	1.13

Tax risk management entails recognizing tax risks, putting procedures in place to mitigate those risks, and communicating with stakeholders.

Table 4 displays the responses to the question of tax risk management.

Table 4 Taxpayers' tax risk management

Statement	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	±SD
Identification of tax risk	165	1	5	3.79	1.04
Risk of each operation	165	1	5	3.85	1.09
Risk mitigation	165	1	5	3.82	1.03
Mitigation of each operation risk	165	1	5	3.92	0.86
Communication to stakeholders	165	1	5	3.68	0.98

In terms of taxpayers' tax risk management, the results show that most respondents (M=3.92, ±SD=.86) agreed that task risk and mitigating controls are communicated to stakeholders and that each relevant business operation identifies its tax risks (M=3.85, ±SD=1.09), and that businesses use control systems to mitigate tax risks (M=3.82, ±SD=1.03). Based on the findings, it is possible to conclude that business enterprises have developed firm-wide systems for identifying tax risks, ensuring that each relevant business operation identifies its tax risks, implementing control systems to mitigate tax risks, and communicating the mitigating controls to stakeholders.

3.2 Monitoring and testing of quality

Monitoring and testing of quality have to do with internal monitoring of operations to regularly analyse the design and operational efficacy of existing tax controls and follow up on change management.

Table 5: Taxpayers' monitoring and testing of quality

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	±SD
Identification of control deficiencies	165	1.00	5.00	3.62	1.09
Communication of deficiencies	165	1.00	5.00	3.82	1.01
Follow-up procedures	165	1.00	5.00	3.67	1.05
Monitoring policy applications	165	1.00	5.00	3.56	1.11
Effective monitoring procedures	165	1.00	5.00	3.75	1.11

From table 5, most of the respondents agreed (M=3.82, ±SD1.01) that the identified internal control deficiencies are communicated promptly to parties responsible for taking corrective actions. Also, the majority agreed to the effect that the monitoring procedures implemented by the businesses are effective in preventing tax fraud and other taxation irregularities from ensuring the quality of output (M=3.75, ±SD=1.11) when there are effective follow-up procedures to ensure that appropriate changes or actions are made in response to changes in tax risks that confront the organisation (M=3.67, ±SD=1.05) and also agreed that internal control deficiencies are identified on timely bases (M=3.62, ±SD=1.09).

3.3 Regression Analysis

The results from the regression output are shown in tables 6 and 7.

Table 6 Summary of regression output

Output	
Multiple R	0.9296
R Square	0.8641
Adjusted R Square	0.8537
Standard Error	1,688,662,723
Observations	15

Table 7 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of regression model

	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*Sig.*
Regression	1	2.3581E+20	2.36E+20	82.6950	.000
Residual	13	3.7071E+19	2.85E+18		
Total	14	2.7288E+20			

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t*	*P-value*
Intercept	774858162.6	648051862.8	1.195	0.2533
Indirect Taxes	2.5786	0.2836	9.0937	5.3546E-07

From the regression analysis, the coefficient of determination has a value of 0.8641, which indicates that changes in indirect taxes explain 86.41% of the variations in total tax revenue. Also, the ANOVA table indicates an F-value of 82.69 (F=0.001), which shows that the data is a fit for the model. The regression coefficient table shows that the impact of indirect tax revenue on total tax revenue is significantly positive. From the regression coefficient, a GH¢1 increase in indirect taxes would increase total tax revenue by GH¢2.58. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not supported. Consequently, it is stated that indirect taxes have a significant positive impact on total tax revenue.

4. Discussion of results

4.1 Quality assurance practices in tax administration

Individuals and organisations are expected to comply with numerous tax code regulations, which require a high compliance level. The Tax Management Maturity Model specifies that compliance with indirect taxes is of high quality. Control of business activities refers to procedures put in place to guarantee that overall corporate objectives are met. The findings also revealed a relatively acceptable level of business activity control to assure indirect tax assurance among business entities. Tsindeliani et al. (2019) discovered that there is a guarantee of reasonable taxation at the cantonal and municipal levels and a pleasant attitude from the tax officials, which supports this finding of this study.

Businesses' operations must be documented to ensure the quality of indirect taxes. The documentation activity may essentially record business activities and tax transactions, suggesting that taxpayers record business activities. The responses do not differ greatly from one taxpayer to the next. As a result, consistent with the Tax Management Maturity Model, it has been discovered that business operations in Ghana are documented for the purpose of indirect tax assurance among taxpayers.

The ease of the business process plays an important part in indirect tax certainty. The findings indicate that the business process documented indicates that simplifying the business process is highly integrated into company operations for quality assurance. As a result, it can be stated that business operations are simplified as a means of indirect tax certainty among Ghanaian taxpayers, which is consistent with the Tax Management Maturity Model. Furthermore, tax operations exist and are well integrated into the indirect taxpayers' tax assurance system, as predicted by the Tax Management Maturity Model.

To guarantee that all tax risks are detected, tax risks should be identified for an organisation and each company's function (Nocco & Stulz, 2022). In response to the amount to which tax risks are identified for each business operation, taxpayers engage in activities to identify tax risks connected with each of their operations, with little variance among respondents. As a result, Ghanaian taxpayers ensure their indirect taxes by assessing tax risk for each business operation using the Tax Management Maturity Model. Identifying and mitigating business-wide tax risks is insufficient if no efforts are made to mitigate the identified risks (Bakker & Kloosterhof, 2010). As a result, adhering to the Tax Management Maturity Model implies that tax risk mitigation efforts are carried out at the business level. According to the study, taxpayers in Ghana engage in business tax risk reduction strategies as a tax assurance method compatible with the Tax Management Maturity Model.

This suggests that the respondents effectively implement activities to mitigate various tax risks for each business operation. The study discovered that tax risk mitigation of corporate operations in Ghana is conducted as a means of tax assurance using the Tax Management Maturity Model. This finding is supported by the works of Power (2004), who stated that tax risk mitigation is necessary for business and critical for each business operation. Identifying and reducing corporate tax risks and operational tax risks are critical components of tax risk management, but tax risk management is incomplete unless these are communicated to interested parties. As part of the task risk management process, communication provides critical input in identifying and managing tax risks. The findings imply that conveying tax risks to interested stakeholders is done effectively among Ghanaian corporate taxpayers.

The monitoring methods entail discovering control flaws in the business and tax environments and activities. Martens and Carvalho (2017) and Montenegro (2021) reached similar findings in their respective studies. These inadequacies could be related to business and tax operations, or they could be related to tax management concerns. Control problems can be regarded to have been well identified as part of the monitoring efforts, based on this mean value. Control flaws are found as a process in indirect tax assurance among Ghanaian taxpayers, in accordance with the Tax Management Maturity Model. Because identifying control shortcomings is not enough, respondents were asked to specify how the discovered control deficiencies are communicated. This finding is supported by Armstrong et al. (2015). This suggests that control shortcomings are notified to a large extent, which implies they are communicated as part of the monitoring process, which is consistent with the Tax Management Maturity Model.

Identifying and reducing corporate tax risks and operational tax risks are critical components of tax risk management, but tax risk management is incomplete without communicating these to interested stakeholders. As part of the task risk management process, communication provides critical feedback for identifying and minimising tax risks. The findings imply that corporate taxpayers in Ghana effectively communicate tax risks to interested stakeholders. The monitoring methods entail finding control inadequacies in the business and tax environments and operations. These flaws could be related to company and tax operations, or they could be related to tax management concerns. Given this, control problems can be regarded to have been well identified as part of the monitoring efforts. This is corroborated by the works of (Doyle et al., 2007). Control flaws are found as a process in indirect tax assurance among taxpayers in Ghana, in accordance with the Tax Management Maturity Model. Because identifying control shortcomings is insufficient, respondents were asked to specify how the detected control deficiencies are communicated. As a result, control inadequacies are conveyed largely, indicating that control deficiencies are communicated as part of the monitoring process, consistent with the Tax Management Maturity Model.

Identifying and reducing corporate tax risks and operational tax risks are critical components of tax risk management; nevertheless, tax risk management is incomplete unless these are communicated to the relevant stakeholders. Communication is essential in detecting and minimising tax risks as part of the task risk management process. According to the findings, corporate taxpayers in Ghana successfully communicate tax risks to interested stakeholders. Monitoring processes entail finding control flaws in the business and tax environments and operations. These flaws may be related to company and tax operations, or they may be related to tax management concerns (Balakrishnan et al., 2019). Control flaws can be regarded to have been well identified as part of the monitoring efforts based on this mean value. Control flaws are found as a procedure in indirect tax assurance among Ghanaian taxpayers in accordance with the Tax Management Maturity Model. As a result, control inadequacies are communicated to a large extent, implying that control shortcomings are communicated as part of the monitoring process, in accordance with the Tax Management Maturity Model.

According to the findings, the link between indirect taxes and overall tax revenue is highly positive. The result is consistent with the findings of Ilaboya and Mgbame (2012), who discovered a positive link between indirect tax and overall tax revenue. However, Emran and Stiglitz (2005), Greenidge and Drakes (2009), and Musanga (2007) all showed no significance or a negative and negligible link between indirect tax and total tax mobilised.

5. Conclusion

It has been observed that concerns of indirect tax compliance, policy and strategy, training, and the usage of software in the tax and business environment are used to drive indirect tax assurance for taxpayers. It is also argued that company operations are susceptible to indirect tax and its compliance methods, with control, documentation, and simplification of business activities and processes.

Concerning tax operations, the study discovered that filing and submission, payment of tax liability, and tax recordkeeping all have a role in driving tax assurance. It is also established that the task risk management issue included detecting and mitigating business and operational risks, with such risks and their mitigating procedures reported to interested parties. Monitoring and testing quality, it has been shown, entails discovering and communicating control shortcomings, developing follow-up procedures, and monitoring methods and policies.

The survey also discovered that tax assurance issues are addressed regarding the control system's effectiveness, the external review process, operational instructions and quality control mechanisms, tax official training, and resource sufficiency. The survey also noted that the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) uses indirect tax assurance techniques to ensure tax compliance. The study discovered that training of financial controllers of businesses is rarely practised among indirect taxpayers in Ghana. This is quite contrary to the Tax Management Maturity Model of tax assurance. Indeed, this finding suggests that training of financial controllers in indirect taxes is low in developing countries like Ghana.

6. Recommendations

To begin, management at the Ghana Revenue Authority must give resources to tax professionals to successfully ensure indirect tax assurance. The allocation of resources to tax officers would ensure that issues that cause indirect tax revenue leakage are addressed.

Second, tax education should be implemented on a large scale by the Ghana Revenue Authority for its client base, including individuals, organisations, and enterprises. Knowledge gives taxpayers a sense of control over their tax situations, increasing their chances of filing accurate and timely returns. As a result, knowledge can reduce emotions of irritation and the amount of time a taxpayer must spend on tax matters. Education can also help to boost taxpayer morale by improving reciprocity, fairness, and procedural justice.

Furthermore, education can ensure that tax professionals behave fairly, critical for tax morale. It is vital to educate the taxpayer. If taxpayers believe the tax rate is too high, they will look for ways to avoid paying it. Likewise, education improves tax compliance in a variety of ways. Individuals make fewer inadvertent mistakes when they know the difficulties that need to be addressed. Tax education knowledge should reduce a taxpayer's time spent on indirect tax compliance procedures and dissatisfaction while increasing compliance. However, one education program may not be appropriate for all taxpayers. Different audiences necessitate different material. As a result, tax education campaigns in the media should be varied.

Tax accountants and directors of enterprises and institutions allocated to accounting or tax records must be trained regularly by their management to ensure quality assurance on the firms' tax requirements. Tax officials must be motivated by Tax Authority management to ensure improved tax certainty. Employees who have displayed good traits (such as diligence, integrity, honesty, openness, and transparency) at work are motivated by providing monetary or non-monetary rewards. Because the work of officials necessitates a high level of honesty, motivation is essential. Furthermore, such a level of honesty can only be accomplished if motivating elements for deserving employees are in place. Staff motivation can take the form of prizes for great employees based on metrics such as integrity, honesty, transparency and diligence.

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