

Effect Of Forensic Accounting on Financial Fraud in Nigeria Government Agency A Case Study of Kogi Ministry of Finance

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Abstract

The study covers cases of financial fraud and the application of forensic accounting techniques in their detection and prevention focusing on Nigerian government agencies. This study adopts a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprises staff members of the Kogi State Ministry of Finance, including employees in departments such as auditing, finance, accounting, procurement, and internal control. A sample size of 100 respondents will be selected from the target population using the purposive sampling technique. The questionnaire was designed to obtain responses related to the objectives and hypotheses of the study. The main instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire consisting of close-ended questions. The questions will be framed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. This format allows for the quantification of opinions and facilitates easy analysis. The study found that forensic accounting has significant impact on the detection and prevention of financial fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance, forensic accounting improve financial transparency and accountability in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance and there are significant challenges associated with implementing forensic accounting in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance. The study further recommended that the Ministry should invest in training and certifying its financial staff in forensic accounting techniques to bridge the existing skills gap. And also adequate forensic tools and software should be procured to facilitate effective fraud detection and investigation.

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I. Introduction

Forensic accounting is a specialized area that combines accounting, auditing, and investigative skills to detect, prevent, and resolve financial crimes and disputes. It plays a vital role in combating fraud and corruption, particularly in countries like Nigeria where financial crimes have become systemic. Traditional accounting methods have proven inadequate in addressing the sophistication of modern fraudulent practices, which include embezzlement, bribery, diversion of funds, and manipulation of financial records (Abdulrahman, 2019; Okoye et al., 2019). Forensic accounting has thus emerged as a crucial tool in uncovering white-collar crimes and strengthening legal proceedings through credible financial evidence (Ehioghiren & Atu, 2016).

In Nigeria, particularly in the public sector, the frequency and magnitude of financial crimes have raised serious concerns. The Kogi State Ministry of Finance, responsible for budgeting and public expenditure, has faced allegations of fund mismanagement and embezzlement. These recurring financial irregularities highlight the need for forensic accounting to ensure transparency, accountability, and financial integrity. By evaluating the impact of forensic accounting on fraud detection and prevention in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance, this study aims to explore its effectiveness in addressing financial misconduct and restoring public confidence in financial governance.

Statement of Research Problem

Financial fraud has been a major contributor to the collapse of several reputable institutions globally, including Enron, WorldCom, Lehman Brothers, and HIH Insurance, among others (Gbegi & Adebisi, 2014). In Nigeria, similar incidents have occurred in Cadbury Nigeria Plc, Oceanic Bank, Afribank, and African Petroleum, largely due to massive fraud (Sule, Ibrahim, & Sani, 2019). Despite the presence of various legislations aimed at curbing fraud, it continues to escalate at an alarming rate, especially in public institutions. While developed countries have established strong anti-fraud mechanisms such as the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) in the U.S., Nigeria's traditional auditing practices have struggled to detect complex financial crimes, necessitating the use of forensic accounting as a more effective alternative.

In Nigerian government agencies, the persistence of financial fraud has led to significant losses, resource misallocation, and reduced public trust. In Kogi State, institutions like the Ministry of Finance, which handle public funds, have reported cases of embezzlement, inflated contracts, and ghost worker schemes. While forensic accounting is gaining recognition for its potential to detect and prevent fraud, its actual effectiveness in reducing fraudulent activities within government agencies remains underexplored. This study investigates the impact of forensic accounting on financial fraud reduction in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance and examines the challenges limiting its effective implementation.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of forensic accounting on financial fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Assess the impact of forensic accounting in detecting and preventing financial fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.
- ii. Investigate the role of forensic accounting techniques in enhancing financial transparency and accountability in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.
- iii. Identify the challenges associated with the implementation of forensic accounting in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance

II. Literature Review

Forensic Accounting

Forensic accounting is a specialized field that integrates accounting, auditing, and investigative techniques to detect, prevent, and address financial fraud. According to Bologna and Lindquist (1995), forensic accounting involves the application of financial expertise in legal contexts, helping organizations and law enforcement agencies uncover fraudulent activities. The discipline has gained prominence in recent years due to increasing financial crimes, particularly in government agencies where weak financial controls create opportunities for fraud (Sule, et al., 2019).

Forensic accounting definitions commonly refer to fraud, fraud prevention, and fraud investigations as the role of the forensic accountant. While those definitions are not inevitably wrong, they provide a meaning of forensic accounting only within the exact context of fraud. Different writers have written about forensic accounting that their focal point is on fraud schemes and preventing fraud as nicely as investigating fraud. According to Hopwood, Leiner, and Young as cited in Olaoye (2020) forensic accounting is the way of applying investigative and analytical skills for the intention to unravel financial problems in a manner that abides by the standard required by court regulations. Forensic accountants use uncommon competencies in accounting, auditing, finance, certain areas of the law, research, and investigative skills to collect, analyse and evaluate on the evidence at hand and to interpret and communicate results to their clients.

According to Merriam Webster's dictionary (2019) forensic accounting is relating to or dealing with the application of scientific knowledge to legal problems by forensic experts. Forensic expert here means the forensic accountants. Forensic accounting is the supplication of financial abilities and inspective mentality to unclear matter, carried out within the context of the regulation of evidence. Forensic accounting deals with the application of accounting and auditing, financial and investigative skills, to unsettled issues, carried out within the context of the rules of evidence (Peterson 2015). This means that any issue that is unclear, uncertain, or not settled on the financial position of a company investigative measure is going to be investigated by the forensic accountant of the company.

Practitioners of Forensic Accounting Profession

Forensic accounting is an offshoot of the general professional accounting and it is affiliated to professional accounting institutes. For the purpose of practice, individual firms of general accounting consultants departmentalize and train experts in investigative accounting within their general practice (Idowu, 2012). For example, The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) demonstrated the Alliance for excellence in investigative and forensic accounting (IFA Alliance) in 1998 to enforce a specialist certification program for chartered accountants practicing in investigative and forensic accounting. The IFA Alliance carry out their operations through a board of directors which is supported by several committees, including marketing and member services, education, certification, and standards (CPA 2006). Forensic accountants are basically certified public accountants which focus on using scientific method to detect fraud when the need for evidence arises. Forensic accountants also do arrangement of analysis for their investigation in order to get the fact which form an expert decision. There are about 380 and 500 forensic accountants in the firm of Coopers and Lybrand and Price Water House respectively (Idowu 2012).

Forensic Accounting and Accounting Profession

Forensic accounting has been pivotal in the corporate agenda after the financial reporting problems which took place in some companies around the world (Shanikat and Khan, 2013). Those companies involved in the accounting scandals such as Enron, WorldCom, Global Crossing have put accountants in the public spotlight as never before in their history. These accounting scandals seriously undermined public confidence in the accounting profession. However, the scandals have created business for forensic accountants and developed opportunities for forensic and investigative accounting. New laws and regulations resulting from these scandals make the role of forensic accountants more important than ever before in the business world (DiGabriele, 2009).

All of the larger accounting firms as well as many medium-sized firms have specialized forensic accounting departments. Within these groups, there may be some further sub-specializations: some forensic accountants may for example, just specialize in insurance claims or personal injury claims, fraud construction, or royalty audits (Crumbley, Heitger & Smith, 2005). Forensic accountants utilize an understanding of business information and financial reporting systems, accounting and auditing standards and procedures, evidence gathering and investigative techniques, litigation processes and procedures to perform their work. Forensic accountants are also increasingly playing more proactive risk reduction roles by designing and performing extended procedures as part of statutory audit, acting as advisers to audit committees, fraud deterrence engagements and assisting in investment analyst research (Bhusin. 2016).

Forensic Accounting as a Profession in Nigeria

In view of the importance of the concept, it is surprising that there is no agreed definition of profession in the extensive literature found in both social and management sciences. The UK Inter-professional Group (2012) defines a profession as an occupation in which an individual uses an intellectual skill based on an established body of knowledge and practice to provide a specialized service in a defined area, exercising independent judgment in accordance with a code of ethics and in the public interest. Akinduyo (2014) posits profession as an occupation which renders services useful for the survival of individuals and the society, of which these valuable services are vital to survival and it is knowledge based, problem-solving, rare, managerial and full of expertise. Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] (2011) also describes a profession as a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to high ethical standards and uphold themselves to, and are accepted by, the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised, organized body of learning derived from education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to exercise this knowledge and these skills in the interest of others. Inherent in this definition is the concept that the responsibility for the welfare, health and safety of the community shall take precedence over other considerations. The foregoing definitions reveal that there are many attributes which can be used for judging profession and they vary based on the perceptions of different scholars.

Engagement/Presence of Forensic Accountants in Nigeria

The high increase in cases of fraud and fraudulent activities in Nigeria is alarming and requires the visible presence of forensic accountants (Ozuomba, Ofor & Okoye, 2016). Currently, a thread of studies confirm the need for presence (engagement) of forensic accountants and the fact that demand for, and supply of forensic accountants is very poor in Nigeria, which is expected to increase in the future (Dhar & Sarkar, 2010; Umar, Samsudin & Mohamed, 2016; Jugurnath, Bissessur, Ramjattan, Soondrum & Seedoyal, 2017). In a bid to expound on how presence of forensic accountants is impactful on the economic growth, Ocansey (2017) posits that economic and financial crimes have plagued every corner of the economies of the world. These crimes according to him, affect all firms and the economies of nations (developed, developing and under developed). However, there is no doubt that previous and continuous research studies evident a strong demand for the imperative of forensic accountants by all sectors of any economy. For instance, (The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) (2010) indicated that fraud accounting professionals would be in high demand in few years to come and developed Certified Financial Forensics (CFF) to increase the expertise of Certified Public Accountants.

Forensic Litigation Support Skill Acquired by Qualified Accountants

In spite of proliferation of professional bodies in Nigeria providing training in modern skills of forensic accounting procedures, the number of qualified ANAN and ICAN members with this investigative expertise is relatively low. As at 2016, ANAN commenced training for only 135 members as forensic trainees while ICAN produced

401 forensic accountants. Among other specialized knowledge areas, forensic accounting skills represent an exceptional skill sets and techniques developed for the purpose of detecting the evidence of fraud (Di Gabriele, 2008; Davis, Farrell & Ogilby, 2009).

Oyedokun (2012) defines litigation support as a process of providing consultation and support services

to attorneys in regard to current and pending cases. He clarifies that the type of support services offered will depend on the needs of the attorney and may range from research and documentation of facts and precedents before a case comes to trial, or assisting in the determination of damages once a case has been tried. Owajori and Asaolu (2009) also define forensic litigation support as the provision of assistance of an accounting nature in a manner involving existing or pending litigations in the areas of quantification of economic damages, calculating economic loss resulting from a breach of contract.

Forensic Investigative Skills Acquired by Non-Qualified Accountants

Chen and Akkeren (2012) assert that the core role of a forensic accountant in fraud investigation concentrates on the identification, explanation and communication of the clues hiding behind economic and reporting events. For any successful conduct of fraud investigation, a forensic accountant needs to be highly meticulous, have focus on the investigation objectives to be achieved and plan his work in that direction. Adamu (2015) identifies the objectives of fraud investigation to include: identifying the type of fraud that has been operating, how long it has been operating for, how the fraud has been concealed, identifying the fraudster involved, quantifying the financial loss suffered by the client and gathering evidence to be used in court proceeding.

In Nigeria, in spite of the banking regulation and bank examination by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the supervisory role of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), and The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), there is still a growing concern about fraud and other unethical practices in the banking industry (Chiezey & Onu, 2013). Fraud has a rich variety and can be categorized in different ways. The type that has the greatest relevance to forensic accounting in banking industry upon which this study rests is the employee fraud, although according to Gottschalk (2011), the most common categories of crime requiring investigation by forensic accountants globally include money laundering, manipulating balance sheets and bribing public officials to achieve their purpose.

Forensic Accounting Expert Consultation

Forensic accountants are expected to be experts in accounting and financial systems. Lakshmi and Ganesh (2016) aver that as companies continue to grow in size and complexity, uncovering fraud requires a forensic accountant to become proficient in an ever-increasing number of professional skills and competencies. They outlined some of the broad areas of useful expertise for a forensic accountant, which are also of a great relevance to fraud detection in banking sector to include: an in-depth knowledge of financial statements and the ability to critically analyze them. These skills help forensic accountants to uncover abnormal patterns in accounting information and recognize their source; a thorough understanding of fraud schemes, including but not limited to asset misappropriations, money laundering, bribery, and corruption; ability to comprehend the internal control systems of corporations, and to set up a control system that assesses risks, achieves management objectives, informs employees of their control responsibilities, and monitors the quality of the programme so that corrections and changes can be made; proficiency in computer and knowledge of network systems.

Concept of Fraud

According to Martins, and Ventura Júnior, (2020)., fraud is defined as all the multifarious means which human ingenuity can devise and are resorted to by one individual to get any advantage over another. It includes all surprise, trick, cunning, dissembling and unfair ways by which another is deceived. Fraud covers a plethora of corporate crimes like embezzlement, larceny, theft, misappropriation of assets, among others. Fraud is not peculiar to manufacturing companies; it is a general phenomenon.

The terms “fraud” has received attention and different definitions from different scholars, researchers and authors. What is very peculiar to the definitions is that the concept has been associated with embezzlement, financial misstatement and misappropriation, extortion, illegal amassing of wealth through dubious means, act of deception, bribery, false representation, theft, concealment of material fact etc. According to Rehman, & Hashim, (2021), fraud is defined as “any illegal act characterized by deceit, concealment or violation of trust. These acts are not dependent on the application of threat or violence or of physical force.

Financial Fraud

Financial fraud in government agencies refers to the deliberate manipulation of financial records, misappropriation of funds, and other unethical practices that result in the loss of public resources. In Nigeria, financial fraud remains a significant issue, with cases of embezzlement, ghost workers, procurement fraud, and revenue diversion reported in several ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs). These fraudulent activities contribute to poor public service delivery, budget deficits, and reduced trust in government institutions (Samuel, 2019).

Forensic accounting employs various investigative techniques to detect fraud. These include forensic

auditing, where financial records are meticulously examined for inconsistencies; data mining, which utilizes software tools to analyze patterns in financial transactions; and Benford's Law analysis, which identifies fraudulent numerical patterns (Orsa & Ezekiel, 2017). These techniques allow forensic accountants to uncover fraudulent activities that may not be detected through traditional auditing methods.

Empirical Review

Jacob (2021) examined the effect of forensic accounting on financial fraud management in Nigeria's public sector. The study employed primary data and was collected using a wellstructured questionnaire administered to two hundred and fifty respondents from EFFC, ICPC, Office of the Accountant General, Office of the Auditor General and other practicing accountants in the country. The data gathered through the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that forensic accounting practices have a positive effect on fraud management. Also, the study found that forensic accounting has a significant influence on fraud detection and prevention and that forensic litigation has a significant positive effect on the recovery of funds lost to fraud.

Gupta and Vij (2021) examined the effect of forensic accounting on the detection and prevention of financial fraud in the Indian Corporate Sector. The study utilizes diverse techniques viz. Benford's Law, Theory of Relative Size Factor, and data mining in the detection and prevention of financial frauds. Responses from 100 accounting professionals were collected through snowball and judgment sampling. The study found that forensic accounting practices have a positive and significant effect on fraud detection and prevention in the Indian Corporate sector.

Bello (2020) examines the effect of forensic accounting technology on fraud detection in Nigeria. The study used a qualitative approach by administering questionnaires with both structured and semi-structured questions. A total of 38 Investigators from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) were used as a sample for the study. The study revealed a significant relationship between forensic accounting technological tools and fraud detection in Nigeria. The study established that forensic accounting is solving fraud issues and using technology to aid fraud detection in Nigeria

Modugu and Anyaduba (2013) conducted a seminal study to assess stakeholders' perceptions of forensic accounting's efficacy in Nigeria. Utilizing a survey design with a sample of 143 participants including accountants, management staff, practicing auditors, and shareholders the researchers employed binomial test analysis. Findings revealed a significant consensus among stakeholders that forensic accounting substantially enhances fraud control, improves financial reporting, and strengthens internal control systems. The study advocates for the formalization and specialization of forensic accounting within professional bodies and academic curricula to bolster anti-fraud measures.

Chepnengo and Fred (2020) analyses the effects of litigation support services on fraud mitigation in firms listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE). The study population comprised all firms listed at the NSE. The study employed a non- probability sampling (purposive sampling) technique to select the sample frame. Primary data were collected from purposively selected staff working with the aforesaid firms. The data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 and Statistics data (STATA) version 13 analytical tools. The results of the study revealed that litigation support services have significant correlations with fraud mitigation.

Similarly, a study by Gbegi and Adebisi (2014) examined the impact of forensic accounting services on fraud detection and prevention in Nigeria. The research highlighted that the integration of forensic accounting techniques in financial investigations led to a notable reduction in fraudulent activities. The authors recommended that organizations, particularly in the financial sector, adopt forensic accounting practices to enhance their fraud management strategies.

Agency Theory

Agency theory, introduced by Jensen and Meckling (1976), explains the conflict between principals (the public) and agents (government officials), who may act in self-interest rather than serving the public good. This misalignment often leads to corruption, fraud, and mismanagement of public funds due to information asymmetry. In Nigeria's public sector, weak oversight mechanisms allow government employees to engage in unethical activities like embezzlement and procurement fraud without detection. Agency costs, including the expenses of audits and monitoring systems, emerge when efforts are made to ensure agents act in line with principals' interests.

Forensic accounting addresses these agency problems by using investigative techniques to detect and prevent fraud, thereby reducing agency costs and improving financial transparency. In institutions such as the Kogi State Ministry of Finance, forensic auditing can expose irregularities, support legal action, and reinforce accountability. Through strong internal controls and transparent practices, forensic accounting helps align the interests of public officials with those of the public, deterring fraud and restoring trust in government institutions. Agency theory thus supports the implementation of forensic accounting as a tool for promoting ethical financial

management in the public sector.

White-Collar Crime Theory

The White-Collar Crime Theory, proposed by Edwin Sutherland in 1949, describes financial fraud as non-violent crime committed by individuals in positions of trust and authority, typically involving deception and misuse of professional power for personal gain. In contrast to street crimes, white-collar crimes like embezzlement, money laundering, and asset misappropriation are prevalent in government agencies and often go undetected due to their complexity. In Nigeria's public sector, common manifestations include budget padding, ghost workers, and inflated contracts, all of which undermine governance and erode public trust. These crimes are often committed by educated professionals who exploit their understanding of financial systems and legal structures.

Forensic accounting plays a critical role in uncovering and preventing white-collar crimes through techniques such as data analysis, financial statement review, and fraud risk assessment. Within institutions like the Kogi State Ministry of Finance, forensic audits can expose financial irregularities and improve transparency in public fund management. A key concern raised by the theory is the leniency in punishing white-collar offenders, which weakens deterrence. Forensic accounting not only reveals fraudulent activities but also strengthens legal actions by providing credible, court-admissible evidence to hold perpetrators accountable and ensure justice.

III. Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for collecting opinions and perceptions regarding the impact of forensic accounting on financial fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance. The population includes staff members from relevant departments such as auditing, finance, accounting, procurement, and internal control—individuals directly involved in managing public financial records. A purposive sampling technique will be used to select 100 respondents, comprising mainly senior and mid-level finance and audit officers with practical experience in financial transactions and control systems. Primary data will be obtained through structured questionnaires tailored to the study's objectives.

The questionnaire will cover sections including demographic data, awareness of forensic accounting, its role in fraud detection, its effect on transparency, and challenges to its implementation. The collected data will be analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts and percentages) will summarize respondent characteristics and responses, while the Chi-square (χ^2) test will evaluate the hypotheses and identify significant relationships between variables. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used for all data analysis.

Data Presentation, Analysis And Interpretation

Demography of Respondents

The descriptive statistics shows the frequency of the respondents, classification and categories. The result was discussed based on the responses received from the respondents in the copies of questionnaire administered.

Table 4.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents

Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender of the Respondent:		
Male	49	49.0
Female	51	51.0
Age Group of the Respondent:		
18- 25 years	26	26.0
26 - 35 years	32	32.0
36 - 45 years	42	42.0
46 and above	0	0
Highest Academic Qualification:		
OND/NCE	33	33.0
HND/B.Sc	37	37.0

M.Sc/MBA	30	30.0
Years of Using Mobie Banking		
Less than 5 years	29	29.0
5-10 years	30	30.0
11-15 years	41	41.0
More than 15 years	44	26.7
Current Department		
Accounts	24	24.0
Budget & Planning	17	17.0
Internal Audit	27	27.0
Administration	32	32.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 4.1, which includes gender, age group, academic qualifications, years of using mobile banking, and departmental affiliation. The gender distribution among respondents is relatively balanced, with 51% female and 49% male. This suggests an almost equal representation of both genders in the study, providing a gender-inclusive perspective on the use of mobile banking services. The age distribution indicates that the majority of respondents fall within the 36–45 years age group (42%), followed by 26–35 years (32%) and 18–25 years (26%). Notably, there were no respondents aged 46 and above, implying that mobile banking usage in this study is more prevalent among younger to middle-aged adults.

In terms of educational background, 37% of respondents hold HND/B.Sc degrees, 33% have OND/NCE, and 30% possess postgraduate qualifications (M.Sc/MBA). This shows a fairly high level of education among the respondents, which may influence their awareness, accessibility, and use of digital banking platforms. Respondents' experience with mobile banking shows varied durations. The highest proportion of users (41%) have been using mobile banking for 11–15 years, followed by 30% with 5–10 years of experience, and 29% with less than 5 years. There appears to be an inconsistency in the data, as the entry for "More than 15 years" is 44 respondents but marked as 26.7%, which is mathematically inconsistent (44 out of 100 respondents should equal 44%). This discrepancy suggests a possible data entry or calculation error that should be reviewed and corrected. The distribution across departments shows that the majority of respondents are from the Administration department (32%), followed by Internal Audit (27%), Accounts (24%), and Budget & Planning (17%). This departmental spread provides insights into how mobile banking is perceived and used across various functional units.

Test of Hypotheses

For chi square analysis, in order to decide whether to reject or accept the null hypothesis at 0.05 (5%) level of significant, the rejection point is use which states that.

(1) If the p value is equal to or less than 5%, the null hypotheses is rejected and the alternate hypotheses is accepted; (2) If the p value is more than 5%, the null hypotheses is accepted and the alternate hypotheses is rejected.

Hypothesis One

Forensic accounting has no significant impact on the detection and prevention of financial fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.

Table 4.5 Result of Hypothesis One

	Null Hypotheses	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of H1 is normal with mean 9.35 and standard deviation of 3.671	One sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	0.001	Reject the null hypotheses

Source: computed by the researcher using SPSS 25

Table 4.5 shows the test result of hypothesis one calculated from the responses in the questionnaires. The p value is 0.001 which is less than 0.05, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected which states that, Forensic accounting has no significant impact on the detection and prevention of financial fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.

Hypothesis Two

Forensic accounting does not improve financial transparency and accountability in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance

Table 4.6 Result of Hypothesis Two

	Null Hypotheses	Test	Sig.	Decision
2	The distribution of H2 is normal with mean 9.40 and standard deviation of 3.878	One sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	0.01	Reject the null hypotheses

Source: computed by the researcher using SPSS 25

Table 4.6 shows the test result of hypothesis two calculated from the responses in the questionnaires. The p value is 0.001 which is less than 0.05, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected which states that, Forensic accounting does not improve financial transparency and accountability in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant positive impact of mobile payment system on financial performance of listed banks in Nigeria.

Table 4.7 Result of Hypothesis three

	Null Hypotheses	Test	Sig.	Decision
2	The distribution of H2 is normal with mean 9.70 and standard deviation of 3.721	One sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	0.01	Reject the null hypotheses

Source: computed by the researcher using SPSS 25

Table 4.8 shows the test result of hypothesis two calculated from the responses in the questionnaires. The p value is 0.100 which is less than 0.05, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected which states that, There are no significant challenges associated with implementing forensic accounting in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.

IV. Conclusion And Recommendations

Conclusion

Based on the findings, this study concludes that forensic accounting is a vital tool in combating financial fraud in public sector institutions such as the Kogi State Ministry of Finance. Its techniques are instrumental in detecting fraud, enhancing financial reporting accuracy, and promoting accountability and transparency in financial management. Despite these benefits, the Ministry faces notable implementation challenges that must be addressed for forensic accounting to be fully effective. The study further concluded that

- i. Forensic accounting has significant impact on the detection and prevention of financial fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.
- ii. Forensic accounting improve financial transparency and accountability in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.
- iii. There are significant challenges associated with implementing forensic accounting in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance.

Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Capacity Building and Training:** The Ministry should invest in training and certifying its financial staff in forensic accounting techniques to bridge the existing skills gap.
2. **Technological Support:** Adequate forensic tools and software should be procured to facilitate effective fraud detection and investigation.
3. **Change Management Programs:** Awareness and orientation programs should be organized to reduce resistance to new forensic practices and encourage staff buy-in.
4. **Sufficient Budget Allocation:** The government should allocate specific funds to support forensic accounting practices, including training, recruitment, and tool acquisition.
5. **Strengthen Legal Frameworks:** Legal provisions guiding the use of forensic accounting should be improved to ensure accountability, enforceability, and the admissibility of forensic evidence in legal proceedings.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire on the Effect of Forensic Accounting on Financial Fraud in the Kogi State Ministry of Finance

SECTION A: Demographic Information

(Please tick [✓] the appropriate option)

1. Gender:
☐ Male
☐ Female
2. Age:
☐ 18–25
☐ 26–35
☐ 36–45
☐ 46 and above
3. Highest Educational Qualification:
☐ OND/NCE
☐ HND/B.Sc
☐ M.Sc/MBA

- ☐ PhD
4. Years of Experience in the Ministry:
- ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ 5–10 years
- ☐ 11–15 years
- ☐ Above 15 years
5. Current Department:
- ☐ Accounts
- ☐ Budget & Planning
- ☐ Internal Audit
- ☐ Administration
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

SECTION B: Impact of Forensic Accounting on Detection and Prevention of Financial Fraud

(Please indicate your level of agreement using the scale: Strongly Agree [SA], Agree [A], Neutral [N], Disagree [D], Strongly Disagree [SD])

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
6	Forensic accounting plays a critical role in detecting financial fraud in the Ministry.					
7	Forensic audits help in uncovering complex financial irregularities.					
8	The implementation of forensic accounting has reduced the occurrence of financial fraud.					
9	Traditional auditing techniques are not sufficient to detect fraud.					
10	Forensic accounting serves as a deterrent to fraudulent activities.					

SECTION C: Forensic Accounting, Transparency, and Accountability

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
11	Forensic accounting has improved financial reporting accuracy in the Ministry.					
12	Forensic investigations promote accountability among staff handling finances.					
13	The use of forensic accounting techniques enhances transparency in public expenditure.					
14	There is a noticeable improvement in internal control due to forensic auditing.					
15	Forensic accounting contributes to better compliance					

SECTION D: Challenges in Implementing Forensic Accounting

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
16	There is a lack of trained forensic accountants in the Ministry.					
17	Resistance to change affects the adoption of forensic accounting.					
18	Limited access to forensic technology tools hinders investigations.					
19	Budgetary constraints affect the deployment of forensic accounting practices.					
20	Inadequate legal support reduces the effectiveness of forensic accounting outcomes.					