

FORENSIC ACCOUNTING AS A TOOL AGAINST FINANCIAL CRIME IN NIGERIA PUBLIC SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The need for forensic accounting service has been widely recognized in most developed countries. However, in developing countries, forensic accounting service is still receiving the attention of regulators and professional accounting bodies. The study's broad goal is to investigate the effect of forensic accounting as a tool against financial crime in Nigeria public sector.. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data, the study processed the data obtained in the field using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) computer software and analyzed using inferential analysis that involved regression analysis. The population of concern in this study comprise of a sample of Seventy-Two (72) chief financial officers and audit managers of Eighteen (18) Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) in Ondo, Osun and Ekiti state, south/western region of Nigeria as a case study. Transparency, accountability, faithful representation, and relevance were all included in the questionnaire, which are all aspects of financial management. In terms of accountability. Based on the analysis of the study, the results revealed that internal control system ($P = 0.00 < 0.05$) has positive and significant effect on Financial crime in Nigeria public sector; Forensic accounting documentary evidence ($P = 0.00 < 0.05$) has positive and significant effect on Financial crime in Nigeria public sector. The study concluded that robust internal control and forensic accounting documentary evidence has positive and significant effect on financial crime in Nigeria public sector

Keywords: *Forensic Accounting, Investigation, Documentary evidence, Fraud, Nigeria.*

Introduction

In some high-class circles of international financial activities, Nigeria is being regarded as the coven of fraudulent activities in Africa. In order to control this unpleasant narrative, anti-fraud agencies like Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) were established to uncover fraudulent financial activities and similar crimes in the nation. The observation is that many anti-fraud agencies all over the world utilises forensic accounting mechanisms to perform their investigative duties. Forensic accounting is the application of the accounting and auditing techniques on legal issues for legal settlement inside or outside the court (Tuanakotta, 2010). More so, the breakdown of corporate governance of public organisations has motivated the accountancy profession to develop a positive disposition towards formulating and implementing a robust forensic accounting curriculum in tertiary institutions. Forensic accounting is a science that involves the application of accounting facts and concepts derived from investigative, accounting and auditing skills, techniques and procedures to resolve conflicting financial issues in a legal environment Arokiasamy and Cristal-Lee (2009). Jafaru (2011) posited that forensic

accounting is the application of financial skills and investigative intelligence to conduct financial crime investigation within the context of the rules of evidence to resolve unresolved monetary and contract issues. Forensic accounting is an integral fraud-detection method that identifies signs of fraudulent financial reporting and further assist in examination of financial reports (Savona & Berlusconi, 2015). Traditionally, accountants prepared financial records while auditors ascertain whether the records are presented in a true and fair view. However, the increase in financial misstatements has awoken accounting practitioners to pay serious attention to the quality of financial records in public sector. Implementing a systematic approach towards reducing the numerous schemes of fraudsters in the corporate world has given rise to the arrival of forensic accounting and forensic accountants.

In forensic accounting, fraud preventive measures stop fraud from occurring. However, fraud detective measures are enforced when fraud preventive measures failed to prevent fraud (Bolton & Hand, 2002). Fraud detection involves the use of fraud control policies, whistle-blowing and fraud risk registers to act upon the discovery of fraud elements in financial statements or financial transactions. Forensic detective measures are used to checkmate the intelligent criminal strategies of fraudsters. Fraud detection is gaining importance in the corporate world because of the increasing rates of white-collar crime committed across all levels of public sector in Nigeria;.

In this democratic era of Nigeria, the biggest corruption allegation is that of the former National Security Adviser, Colonel Sambo Dasuki (rtd), who was accused to have embezzled \$2.1 billion meant for arms procurement to fight against the Boko Haram insurgency in the North East region of the country. The presidential investigations committee reports suggested that part of the disbursed fund was diverted for sponsoring the re-election of former President Goodluck Jonathan. More so, Nigeria's ex-Chief of Defence Staff Alex Badeh faced ten count charges of alleged diversion of \$20 million meant for the purchase of arms (EFCC, 2016). The Fraudulent actions associated with the public sector includes; payroll schemes scam, padding of budgetary figures, money laundering, embezzlement of public funds and misappropriation of budgeted allocated funds meant for execution of capital and developmental projects.

In western climes, the liquidation of ENRON and WorldCom scandals has drawn the world to the field of forensic accounting (Ozuomba, Ofor & Okoye, 2016). The public sector in Nigeria is feeding fat on the receipts of corruption and financial crimes on daily basis. In the light of the incessant fraudulent activities in Nigeria, Okoye and Gbegi (2013) posited that government organisations need to develop interest in forensic accounting for efficient investigation and prosecution of suspected and confirmed financial fraudsters. Against this backdrop, the study will find out the effect of forensic accounting as a tool against financial crime in Nigeria public sector.

Statement of the problem

The frequent reports of financial crimes is estimated that over \$3.5 trillion worldwide were lost due to fraudulent financial statements, asset misappropriation, and corruption in 2011. (Enofe, Okpako, and Atube, 2013). Fraudulent practices in Nigeria justify the application of forensic accounting in the public sector. The establishment of Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) saddled with the responsibilities of fighting and curbing the threat of exploitation, frauds and fraudulent practices have not really performed their duties to the expectation of Nigerians as observers in the international communities. More recently, Suleiman, Dalhat and Sule (2018) in their study revealed that fraud obstructs sustainable development in Nigeria and threatens good corporate governance and compatible business practice. Civil servants and political leaders are busy misappropriating public funds while management staff are laundering and engaging in sharp corrupt practices without fears of being caught. The organised nature of fraud in the public sectors in Nigeria is systematic and multi-dimensional. This requires systematic integration of forensic accounting skills and knowledge due to the inability of external and internal auditors to detect fraud and other economic crime carried out by public servants in Nigeria. This glaring problem requires that there be active involvement of forensic accountants in all stages of risk assessment and developments of audit plans, and not just involve them as merely consultants (Boritz, Kotchetova, & Robinson, 2008). The later lead to success in early detection and therefore mitigation of these crimes thereby reducing any greater losses in the Nigeria economy. Without constant involvement of the public and improvement in forensic accounting, fraud cases will be hard to detect and thus lead to greater success in financial fraud, which also translates into the failure to meet the expectations of the public, shareholders or even other stakeholders (Enofe, Okpako, & Atube, 2013). Although, many research studies have investigated the role of forensic accounting on fraud detection in Nigeria. Amake and Ikhatua (2016), Ogiriki & Appah (2018), Abuh & Yanusi (2018), Edheku & Akpoveta (2015). Etc. However, there seems to be paucity of experimental studies on the effect of forensic accounting on fraud detection in Nigeria public sectors. In order to fill this gap in literature, the researcher observed that theeffect of forensic accounting as a tool against financial crime in Nigeria public sector.

Research Objectives

The broad objective of the study is to establish the effect of forensic accounting as a tool against financial crime in Nigeria public sector. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Establish the effect of internal controls on financial crime in Nigeria public sector.
- ii. Examine the extent to which forensic documentary evidence affect financial crime in Nigeria public sector.

Research Questions

The study has the following research questions;

- i. To what extent does internal controls affect financial crime in Nigeria public sector?
- ii. To What extent does forensic accounting documentary evidence affect financial crime in Nigeria public sector?

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁ - Internal control system does not have effect on financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors.

Ho₂ - Forensic accounting documentary evidence does not affect financial crime mitigation in Nigeria Public sectors.

Scope of the Study

This study is limited to the analysis of the effect of forensic accounting as a tool against financial crime in Nigeria public sector. The study would equally be limited to public sectors in Ekiti and Ondo State, Nigeria

Conceptual Literature

Forensic Accounting

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 rule of evidence. Forensic accounting refers to the application of analytical and investigative skills for resolving financial issues in a manner that meets standards required by court of law. Forensic accounting is also defined, as the application of accounting concepts and techniques to legal problems (Abdulrahman, 2019). It is known that corruption is a universal occurrence. It is pervasive both in the developed nations and in developing nations, most especially those of the sub-Sahara Africa including Nigeria. Academic and policy discussion on corruption in Nigeria has remained an opened debate (Ogbeidi, 2012). According to Atelhe & Agada (2014), corruption is a derivation of Latin origin, "corruptus" which stands for; "to destroy", and it has been variously described as a means of perversion or a procedure of changing well into bad. Enofe, Ekpulu, and Ajala, (2015) also defined financial crime as the conduct of a corporation, or of employees acting on behalf of a corporation, which is forbidden and punishable by law.

Financial crime intersects and is usually confused with white-collar crime, organised crime and state-corporate crime. Financial crime is difficult to be detected and identified and is not as evident as the conventional crime (Enofe et al., 2015).

Forensic Accounting documentary evidence that affect financial crime in Nigeria public sector.

According to William (1990), Lee (2000) and Kim (1998). Documentary evidence consists of any proof that is available for writing contracts, wills, invoices, etc. However, term can technically include any number of media upon which such documentation can be recorded and stored photographs, recordings, films, printed emails As most financial crimes, investigation is reactive or historic in nature; documents generated prior to the commission of that offence are essential and normally make the majority of evidence. Bank records, accounting records, legal documents or instruments are normally the basis for the case.

According to Lee (2000), evidence is anything. (Tangible objects, documents, and testimony) that relates to the truth or falsity of an assertion made in an investigation or legal proceeding. The goal of the fraud investigator is to collect evidence relevant to the fraud under investigation. Such evidence, when well organized, provides answers to the basic questions about fraud.

Theoretical Review

Fraud Triangle Theory

According to Albrecht et al., (2009) fraud is composed of three elements, namely: a perceived pressure, a perceived opportunity and rationalization of the act of fraud; these three elements are called the fraud triangle. This three-step process, was presented to explain a trust violation by Cressey (1953) who adamantly argued that whenever all three characteristics were present, a trust violation would occur, while the absence of any one of the elements would result in the absence of such a violation. These three elements are common to all frauds (Wells, 2001). The first element of the fraud triangle is pressure. These pressures do not have to be real, they only have to seem real to the perpetrator. When it comes to perceived pressure also referred to as non-shareable financial problem, Cressey stated “persons become trust violators when they conceive of themselves as having incurred financial commitments which are considered as non- socially sanction able and which, consequently, must be satisfied by a private or secret means” (Cressey, 1950). Pressures in Nigeria public sectors arise from Non-payment of workers’ salaries which leads to the problems such as difficulty in paying back debts, problems resulting from personal failure, inflation or recession, physical isolation of trust violator from people who can help him, living beyond one’s means, and employer-employee relations where employer’s treatment on employee is unfair (Cressey, 1953).

A perceived opportunity and to avoid being punished is the second element of the fraud triangle. He also mentioned that perceived opportunity in any of Nigeria MDAs arises when the fraudster sees a way to use their position of trust to solve their financial problem, knowing they are unlikely to be caught (Cressey, 1950). A perceived opportunities to commit fraud in Nigeria public sectors include; a weak board of directors, a lack of or circumvention of controls that prevent/detect fraudulent behavior, failure to discipline fraud perpetrators, lack of access to information, and the lack of an audit trail (Albretch et al, 2010). The Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (2002) identified five elements of an organization's internal control framework that must be taken into consideration in order to avoid fraudulent opportunities and they include the control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication, and monitoring in many MDAs in Nigeria, these are only in theory

The third element of the fraud triangle is rationalization. Perpetrators of fraud in Nigeria public sectors must find ways to rationalize their illegal acts as being acceptable and, in the process, rationalize the dishonesty of their acts (Albrecht et al, 2006). As for rationalization, Cressey believed that most fraudsters are first-time offenders with no criminal record and see themselves as ordinary, honest people who are caught in a bad situation (Cressey, 1950). Lister (2007) defined rationalization as “the oxygen that keeps the fire burning” and mentioned that although auditors in Nigeria public sectors may not be able to assess the personal value systems of each individual in the organization, they can assess the corporate culture. It is through rationalization that trust violators justify the crime to themselves in a way that makes it acceptable or justifiable.

Empirical review

Modugu and Anyaduba (2013) examined forensic accounting and financial fraud in Nigeria and specifically if there is significant agreement amongst stakeholders on the effectiveness of forensic accounting in financial fraud control, financial reporting and internal control quality. The survey design was used in the study with a sample size of 143 consisting of accountants, management staffs, practicing auditors and shareholders. The simple random technique was utilized in selecting the sample size, while the binomial test was employed in the data analysis. Among the findings of the study was that there is significant agreement amongst stakeholders on the effectiveness of forensic accounting in fraud control, financial reporting and internal control quality and therefore recommended formalization and specialization in the field of forensic accounting.

Amake and Ikhatua (2016) examined forensic accounting and fraud detection in Nigeria public sector. A research survey design was used for the study while a sample of One hundred (100) respondents comprising of auditors and accountants of four (4) ministries was selected from Edo State in Nigeria. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis. The finding revealed that the application of forensic accounting in Nigeria's public sector is effective in detecting fraud; and there is a significant relationship between forensic accounting and litigation service in Nigeria court.

Ogiriki and Appah (2018) empirically analysed the effect of forensic accounting and auditing techniques on public sector fraud detection, investigation and prevention in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of the various techniques of forensic accounting on public sector fraud and secondly, to determine the effect of forensic auditing on fraud detection, investigation and prevention. The study adopted an ex-post factor design, structured questionnaire which was distributed to a sample of 116 from the total population of 164 for data collection and the hypothesis were analysed using regression analysis. The study revealed that the relationship between forensic accounting and auditing techniques and public sector fraud detection, investigation and prevention in Nigeria is quite significant. The study therefore concludes that forensic accounting and auditing techniques is a major panacea to the level of fraudulent activities experienced in the Nigerian public sector. It was recommended among others that government should consider providing more fraud hotlines, improve the whistle blowing policy and establish forensic accounting department in the public sector in order to enhance the fraud detection, investigation and prevention mechanism in the public sector.

Abuh and Yanusi (2018) assessed forensic accounting at combating financial crimes in Nigeria Public Sector through the effort of EFCC. Secondary data were used. A sample of 116 was obtained of the total population of 164 using Taro Yamane sample size statistical technique. Five point Likert scale questionnaire was employed while analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the research hypothesis. The study findings indicate that the application of forensic accounting skills and techniques has contributed immensely in the investigation of complex financial crimes thereby enhancing economic stability.

Conceptual Framework

Financial crime is a significant problem to the world of today. Government allocate many resources to public sector. A framework implemented in public sector to prevent internal fraud. Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) shows the research objective in this paper, it is to present a framework for effect of forensic accounting on financial crime reduction. This involves the view of eminent scholars' elaboration and explanation. The researchers' sources are mostly seminar papers, articles in relevant journals and related books on the subject under review which broaden the researchers' knowledge of the topic. Fraud is a very comprehensive field of financial crime, under which exists a range of different activities. Arising from its diverse nature, it has been difficult to offer comprehensive definition of the term financial crime. Notwithstanding the comprehensive and dynamic nature of financial crime, which many authors have tried within the limits of their environment and the scope of their understanding to offer a concise definition of financial crime. Some authors have tried to define financial crime from their legal point of view while others have defined fraud from the accounting perspective.

Methodology

This study uses descriptive research because it closely examines and determines data and reports information within a specific context. The population of concern in this study comprise of a sample of Seventy-Two (72) chief financial officers and audit managers of Eighteen (18) Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) in the southwestern region of Nigeria. Transparency, accountability, faithful portrayal, and relevance were all covered in the survey, the revenue generated by the Government is worthy target for financial crime in terms of fraud hence the need to see the effect of forensic accounting in the (MDAs) and due to proximity issues. The researcher used primary data for the study, which is data collected directly from the first-hand experience and structured questionnaire were used to collect data on the dependent and independent variables. This is because structured questionnaires are easier to administer, analyse and economical in terms of time and finance. The questionnaires were issued to the respondents through informal self-introduction through the help of a research assistant. Each entity within the questionnaire was developed to tackle a specific objective and research question to fit best in the research problem. Structured questionnaires are more convenient as most top bursary and audit staff are busy accounting officers and it is expected that they would have less time to take part in oral interviews. The questionnaires were managed through mail, drop and pick method and Auditing and Accounting social media groups. The questionnaire had Four (4) sections. Section one (1) comprised of questions that sought to find out the general information about the respondent. Section two seeks information on the robust internal controls, section three sought to find information on management override controls and section four required to find information on financial crime mitigation. The target respondents were the chief financial officers and audit managers of (18) Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) in the southwestern region of Nigeria. For verification of the reliability of the questionnaire used in this study, it was subjected to pre- trial tests by administering the instrument to a sample selected from the entire population of listed MDAs, after which the results were analysed and assessed for reliability. The data generated by the study after fieldwork was edited, coded then processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v.17.0). A master codebook designed to ensure that all the questionnaires were coded uniformly was used. According to Cohen and Manion (1980), editing of responses is intended to identify and eliminate errors made by the interviewer or respondents. Consequently, data was edited for completeness and consistency before analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse information generated from respondents. This involved the use of frequencies, percentages and means.

A regression model of the form $Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$ was used where:

Y- Financial crime mitigation (CCM) as measured by effective internal audit, vigorous fraud hotlines and an organisation culture.

X1- Robust internal controls (RIC) as a measure of control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication and monitoring.

X2- Minimization of Management overrides of controls (MOC) as a measure of an effective audit committee, functional whistle blower program and organisation code of conduct.

X3- Clear segregation of duties and responsibilities (CSDR) as a measure of control of processes and collusion of employees.

The test of significance is a method of making due allowance for the sampling fluctuation affecting the results of experiments or observations by distinguishing whether the observed difference connotes any real difference among the groups. For the purpose of the study, two coefficient of determination, denoted as R was used to indicate how well data fit into the statistical model. F-statistics was used to undertake further analysis. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests was used in the analysis of experimental data to test the variables for statistical significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frequency Table

Sex

	Frequency	Percent
Male	40	55.6
Female	32	44.4
Total	72	100.0

Age

	Frequency	Percent
18 – 29 years	9	12.5
30 – 40 years	22	30.6
41 years and above	41	56.9
Total	72	100.0

Academic Qualification

	Frequency	Percent
B.Sc/HND	38	52.8
M.Sc	10	13.9
Ph.D	24	33.3
Total	72	100.0

Descriptive Statistics on Internal Controls

The results presented in table 1 shows that 51.4% (Agreed 34.7+16.7 Strongly Agreed) of the respondents agreed that a robust internal control system does have effect on financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors. 69.4% of the respondents agreed that their organisations makes use of code of conduct. Result also showed that 88.9% of the respondents agreed to findings that asked if their organisation does have a robust audit committee. In addition, result shows that 56.9% of the respondents agreed that their organisation regularly conduct financial crime risk assessment. While finding also shows that 38.9 of the respondents agreed that their organisation have a functional whistle blower programme, furthermore 95.8% of the respondents agreed that their organisation always look into alleged fraud or illegal activity. Study further shows that 95.8% of the data agreed that Auditors strictly adhere to auditing ethics in their organisation. Result equally show that 93% of the population sampled agreed that efficient prosecution of financial crimes do exist in their organisation. Lastly, 93.1% of the respondents agreed that Auditors do detect fraudulent transactions quickly in their organisation. These results imply that robust internal controls influences financial crime mitigation.

Table 1: Internal Controls

S/N	DESCRIPTION	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREED %	DISAGREE %	STRONGLY DISAGREE %
1	A robust internal control system does have an effect on financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors	34.7	16.7	26.4	22.2
2	The organisation make use of code of conduct	61.1	8.3	9.7	20.8
3	The organisation have audit committee	72.2	16.7	2.8	8.3
4	The organisation regularly conduct financial crime risk assessment	48.6	8.3	34.7	8.3
5	The organisation have a functional whistle blower programme	0	38.9	38.9	22.2
6	Management always look into alleged fraud or illegal activity	20.8	75.0	0	4.2
7	Auditors strictly adhere to auditing ethics	58.3	37.5	4.2	0
8	Efficient prosecution of financial crimes in the organisation	45.8	47.2	4.2	2.8
9	Auditors detect fraudulent transactions quickly in your organization	55.6	37.5	6.9	0

Descriptive Statistics of Management override controls

The results presented in table Two (2) shows that 79.2% of the respondents agreed to the fact that their organisation maintains an appropriate level of skepticism while, 93.1% of the respondents agreed that their organisation does strengthen committees that have understanding of their vision.95.9% of the respondents agreed that their organisation do brainstorm on fraud risks and loopholes. In addition, 91.6% of the respondents agreed that their organisation uses the code of conduct to assess financial reporting culture. 59.8% of the respondents agreed that their organisation cultivates a vigorous whistle-blower program. Further result also shows that 100% of the respondents agreed that their organisation do expose accountants who engaged in fraudulent transactions.

Table 2: Management over ride controls.

S/N	DESCRIPTION	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREED %	DISAGREE %	STRONGLY DISAGREE %
1	The organisation maintains an appropriate level of skepticism	0	79.2	9.7	11.1
2	The organisation strengthen committees that have understanding of their vision	13.9	79.2	2.8	4.2
3	The organisation brainstorm on fraud risks and loop holes	4.2	91.7	0	4.2
4	The organisation use the code of conduct to assess financial reporting culture	33.3	58.3	0	8.3
5	Your organisation ensures that the entity cultivates a vigorous whistle-blower program	4.2	55.6	18.1	22.2
6	Your organisation expose accountants who engaged in fraudulent transactions	41.7	58.3	0	0

Descriptive statistics of financial crime mitigation

Further, results presented in table Three (3) shows that 90.3% of the respondents agreed to the fact that documentary evidence affect financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors.95.8% of the respondents agreed to the fact that their organisation have effective internal audit. Further result shows that 55.5% of the respondents agreed that their organisation have vigorous fraud hotlines. 79.2% of the respondents agreed that their organisation have structures for regulatory compliance strategies. Further result shows that 94.5% of the respondents agreed that their organisation do probe suspected financial performance.79.2% of the respondents agreed that

their organisation have risk assessment culture. The results herein imply that Forensic accounting documentary evidence influences financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors.

Table 3: Financial crime mitigation

S/N	DESCRIPTION	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREED %	DISAGREE %	STRONGLY DISAGREE %
1	Documentary evidence affect financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors.	18.1	72.2	8.3	1.4
2	The organisation have effective internal audit	48.6	47.2	4.2	0
3	The organisation have vigorous fraud hotlines	20.8	34.7	15.3	29.2
4	The organisation have structures for regulatory compliance strategies	16.7	62.5	8.3	12.5
5	The organisation probe suspected financial performance	54.2	40.3	1.4	4.2
6	The organisation have risk assessment culture	12.5	66.7	0	20.8

Ho1 - internal control system does not have effect on financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors.

Decision Rule: If chi- square calculated value is greater than the chi-square critical value, then you reject your null hypothesis and otherwise, do not reject. Or if the p-value is larger than the significance level, we fail to reject the null hypothesis because we do not have enough evidence to conclude that the data do not follow the distribution with specified proportions.

Table 4: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.154 ^a	3	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	29.630	3	0.000

Since our p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05), then we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that, a robust internal control system have effect on financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sectors.

Ho2 - Forensic accounting documentary evidence does not affect financial crime mitigation in Nigeria Public sectors.

Table 5: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.657 ^a	3	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	20.202	3	0.000

Since our p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05), then we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that Forensic accounting documentary evidence affect financial crime mitigation in Nigeria Public sectors.

Conclusions

Based on the findings above, the study concluded that robust internal controls, management override controls and forensic accounting documentary evidence have a based and significant effect on financial crime in Nigeria public sector. The study concluded that the use of forensic accounting significantly reduces the occurrence of financial crime cases in the public sector and, therefore, can help in preventing and detecting fraud cases in the public sectors. Forensic accounting as a financial crime-detecting weapon is one of the strategic tools for dealing with such crimes. The study also concluded that the use of forensic accounting leads to better results in the organizations. Forensic accounting is conducted to improve the understanding in detecting and reducing accounting and financial crimes. Majority of the MDAS' practices it, as one of the tools to investigate an organisation is financial statements for fraudulent activities as requested by certain parties. Forensic accounting activities such as investigative accounting and litigation support and enrich the MDAS' performance.

Recommendations

The following recommendations based on the study findings are suggested to help boost financial crime mitigation in Nigeria public sector. Internal controls need to be reviewed and rectified frequently as infrequent review may increase the fraud or rationalizations that enable management to justify, override of controls. Therefore, for effective financial crime mitigation, management override of controls should be put in check. Risk, as the fraudster can identify and exploit the weaknesses in internal control. To minimize management overrides, the study recommended the following; conducting an engagement team discussion regarding fraud risks; making inquiries of management, the audit committee, and others in the organisation to obtain views about the risks of fraud and how those risks are addressed; considering fraud risk factors such as incentives and pressures for management to override controls and attitudes.

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