

Fraud Detection, Fraud Prevention and Forensic Accounting: An Empirical Study from EFCC Report

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Abstract: The proactive measures stakeholders have taken to curb fraud's excesses are vital, but fraudsters and other criminals are pushed by fraud in many economic sectors. Audit failures worldwide suggest statutory auditors lack the skills to detect and stop modern frauds, including cybercrimes and white-collar crimes, extortion, money laundering, corporate fraud, embezzlement, insolvency, and securities fraud. As the Nigerian Financial and Economic Crimes Commission (EFCC) intended, forensic accounting applies accounting skills in court cases and criminal prosecutions to stop fraud. This study examined the EFCC paper Fraud Detection, Prevention, and Forensic Accounting: An Empirical Study. The study investigates whether forensic accounting and financial crimes are linked and how they affect fraud detection and prevention. To accomplish objectives, primary questionnaire data were collected. The data was analyzed using SPSS V24. The study found a highly favourable association among Nigerian concerns between fraud detection, prevention, and forensic accounting. At fewer than 5%, the p-values of 0.006 and 0.008 show a significant connection between variables. The report proposes that more forensic accountants detect and prevent fraud to reduce financial crimes, particularly among Nigerian businesses.

Keywords: Forensic Accounting; Fraud Prevention; Fraud Detection; Financial Crime Commission; Financial Maladjustment; Corporate Stakeholders; Investigative Accounting; Criminal Litigation; Court-Appropriate Accounting Analysis.

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1. Introduction

The Economic and Financial Crime Commission has been incredibly powerful in combating corrupt practices that have arisen from many convicted political officers accused of corruption, stories of trials that resulted in few charges or penalties, and other factors that have contributed to the perception of the commission as an ivory tower in the fight against corruption in Nigeria and the repositioning of financial maladjustment in the Nigerian economy [10]. Due to audit failures that have occurred globally and led to multiple corporate collapses in the USA, Southeast Asia, and Europe (BCCI), including Enron Corporation, Tyco

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International, WorldCom, and others, criminal and fraudulent activities have deeply ingrained themselves into the fabric of the world's economies, particularly developed economies [1]. The world's economies have been deeply impacted by criminal and fraudulent activities, particularly developed economies. This is due in part to audit failures that have occurred globally, resulting in numerous corporate collapses in the USA, Southeast Asia, and Europe, including WorldCom, Tyco International, and Enron Corporation [1]; [18] Lever Brothers, African Petroleum, and Cadbury are significant in Nigeria [2]. Independent accountants do not bear primary responsibility for identifying and stopping fraud. It is a fact [4] of an assessment of whether the submitted income statements accurately and fairly depict the situation and whether the books of accounts have been kept following the law; Lever Brothers, African Petroleum, and Cadbury are a few significant ones in Nigeria [2].

Independent accountants do not bear primary responsibility for identifying and stopping fraud [5]. The two primary objectives of the independent accountant's examination are to render an opinion on whether the books of accounts have been correctly maintained following established law and whether the income statements provided present a true and fair picture of the company's financial situation as of a specific date. As to the definition, the primary duty of an auditor is to express an opinion, not to detect or avert fraud or errors.

The definition states that an auditor's primary duty is to provide an opinion, not to spot or thwart fraud or errors. Corporate stakeholders believe that statutory auditors can spot and prevent mistakes and fraud. Still, countless instances of corporate scandals and audit expectations violations have changed public opinion of the accounting profession, shifting it in some ways from statutory audits to corporate governance. Forensic accounting knowledge is crucial for accountants' professional endeavours. Significant changes had already been brought about in the accounting industry by the Enron and WorldCom scandals, among other accounting mistakes [6].

Depending on the literature being used, forensic accounting can also be referred to as investigative accounting, but it is important to distinguish one from the other. Investigative accounting is a component of forensic accounting and is typically applied when fraud is suspected. Many fraudulent activities being orchestrated by management of concerns that cannot be detected nor prevented by statutory auditors ultimately led to the collapse of many high-profile companies.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Review

2.1.1. Forensic Accounting, Fraud Prevention, Fraud Detection

According to the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), forensic accounting is the application of professional accounting skills in cases involving possible or actual civil or criminal litigation. These cases may involve fraud, evaluation of internal controls, lost profits, income, assets, or damages, generally accepted accounting and audit principles, or any other issue involving accounting expertise in the legal system [7]. There is not a single accepted definition of forensic accounting. Forensic accounting is the specialist area of accountancy that deals with engagements arising from actual or potential conflicts or litigation. "Suitable for use in a court of law" is what the term "forensic" implies, and it is to that standard and possible result that it is typically necessary for forensic accountants to work [8].

According to Ekpo and Chime Enor [11], forensic accounting compiles and presents financial information in a way that a court of law will accept as evidence against those who have committed financial crimes. According to Howard and Sheetz [15], forensic accounting is the process of gathering, comprehending, compiling, and presenting complex financial information in a clear, accurate, and concise manner for the benefit of the prosecutor. According to Yio and Cheng [25], forensic accounting is recognized as a specific professional knowledge with unique characteristics. This recognition stems from holding a formal certification in forensic accounting, which has symbolic significance. The science of forensic accounting is the application of accounting principles and facts developed from auditing procedures, methodologies, and strategies to address legal issues that call for the integration of audit and investigative accounting expertise [9].

Enofe et al. [12] state that forensic accounting offers a court-appropriate accounting analysis as the foundation for discussion, debate, and eventual conflict settlement. The practice of evaluating, summarizing, and presenting complicated financial matters concisely, factually, and frequently as an expert witness in a court of law is known as forensic accounting, according to Howard and Sheetz [15]. It applies accounting discipline to fact-finding in business, government, courts, and regulatory bodies. Research suggests that analyzing today's complex financial transactions and events requires a high skill level. Consequently, the fight against financial dishonesty has thrust forensic accounting to the forefront.

According to Hopwood et al. [14], forensic accountants must be uniquely positioned to identify financial fraud. The authors discovered that the most important competencies were a deep comprehension of fraud schemes, a critical analysis of financial

statements, and an in-depth knowledge of financial statements. They also believed that forensic accountants should be qualified to evaluate risks and understand corporate internal control systems. Additionally, Hopwood et al. [14] contended that forensic accountants' understanding of psychology aided them in comprehending the criminal impulses that drive and support financial deceit. As a result, they listed the following abilities that may probably help forensic accountants provide their services: (i) interpersonal and communication abilities that help spread knowledge about the company's ethics, and (ii) knowledge of the legal system, court processes, and civil and criminal law.

Williams [23] enumerated the forensic accountants' technical skills and expertise. They maintained that forensic accountants were usually knowledgeable in both civil and criminal law, as well as the procedures and regulations of the legal system. Meier further underlined the significance of investigative abilities, including concepts, strategies, and patterns of fraud misuse. He recommended that forensic accountants use their imagination to understand and consider the tactics that a fraudster may use to commit and conceal fraudulent acts. As a result, he reasoned, practitioners needed to clearly and concisely communicate findings to various audiences, including those less versed in accounting and auditing.

2.1.2. Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

The Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) has been involved in several corrupt practices incorporated into the system, leading to increased complexity in the agency's operations. Since the agency's founding, there have been numerous instances of corruption in the ways that it has administered criminal justice in Nigeria, with fraud offenders and victims being the primary source of corruption, which explains how EFCC agents demand bribes and a large cut to how their operations are guided by political motivations, demonstrating the extent to which corruption has permeated the judicial administration of justice of Nigeria's apex corruption fighting body. The inadequate leadership within the EFCC justice system has impeded the low performance of criminal justice administration, which concerns justice delivery. The EFCC's leadership is viewed as incompetent and without the courage to combat corruption. Instead of combating corruption, it has taken hold of the leadership, rendering them worthless and devoid of integrity.

Even though corruption is a widespread issue that has been called the world's most pandemic issue, it severely impacts both developed and developing economies. It has a crippling effect on the economy, and there is a pressing need to turn things around. In response, several initiatives have been undertaken by succeeding administrations to lessen the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria. This includes the establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) in 2000, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2003, the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act in 1991, Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act in 2005 and Money Laundering Prohibition Act in 2011, etc. Despite these efforts, the Transparency International and World Bank report on Nigeria rated the country as the 2nd most corrupt country in 1999 and 2003. The country was rated 1st in 2000.

However, there has been significant improvement by the anti-graft institutions in charging and prosecuting senior public officers and political leaders, as well as the recovery and repatriation of significant stolen Nigerian money studies. Transparency International's 2018 and 2019 reports show Nigeria's corruption rate has significantly increased. The endemic and systemic nature of corruption in Nigeria suggests that the institutional structures for the anti-corruption crusade are either insufficiently effective or the techniques for combating it are inadequate, considering the extent of corruption in the country.

2.2. Theoretical Review

The ideas of fraud triangle, fraud diamond, fraud scale, and white-collar crime were used for this study. The rationale behind utilizing these theories is their pertinence to the subject matter being examined.

2.2.1. Fraud Triangle Theory

According to Wolf and Hermanson [24], specific requirements must be met for fraud to happen, and these circumstances foster an environment that is more susceptible to fraud operations. The triangle-shaped elements of pressure, opportunity, and rationalization ultimately constitute the fraud triangle theory. Financial or psychological stress is what propels someone to commit fraud. Individuals commit fraud for various reasons, and the organization has little to no influence over this aspect. For instance, a person may be pressured to commit fraud by peer pressure from colleagues who are also doing so, a shortage of funds to maintain their family, or an unfavourable work environment that makes them feel different from others if they do.

Individuals commit fraud for various reasons, and the organization has little to no influence over this aspect. For instance, a person could be pressured to conduct fraud by peer pressure from colleagues who are also doing it, a deficient company culture that makes one feel different from the rest if they do not commit the fraud, or a lack of resources to maintain their family. This hypothesis has been criticized since it is impossible to fully control this component, no matter how hard the organization tries.

Opportunity is the potential for someone to conduct fraud. When they see a chance to perpetrate fraud and escape detection, they take advantage of it. Opportunities emerge if an organization's internal controls are weak or unable to spot fraud, such as when there are insufficient procedures or standards to prevent fraud, when fraudsters are apprehended without facing the consequences, or when management lacks enough monitoring over staff. The organization has complete authority over this one aspect. Managers of organizations should thus make an effort to close any doors that may allow staff to conduct fraud. Strong internal controls to reduce fraud loopholes, internal audits, and the division of labour to prevent one person from having total control are some ways to regulate this. The most important element in preventing fraud, according to Ekpo and Chime Enor [11], is the possibility of detection, as it takes away the fraudster's imagined opportunity.

An employee's attempt to rationalize their deception is to defend their actions. For instance, dishonest conduct may be justified if an employee is experiencing accommodation concerns. Employees who believe they are being underpaid may also contend that this is a means of increasing their compensation. Therefore, the employee's justification is an act of deception intended to cover up his actions. It is a strategy to hide wrongdoing against the employer via instilling guilt in the employer for the situation.

Academics have criticized and supported this hypothesis in equal measure. Academics regard the fraud triangle hypothesis as a crucial theory for identifying, managing, and preventing fraud refer to the fraud triangle hypothesis as a crucial theory for identifying, managing, and averting fraudulent activities. While some academics and regulators have endorsed the idea, other researchers have harshly criticized it and declared it insufficient to identify and manage fraud since two of its three components—pressure and rationalization—cannot be managed. Some have referred to it as an inappropriate instrument for discouraging, averting, examining, and identifying fraudulent conduct [3]; [26] (Figure 1).

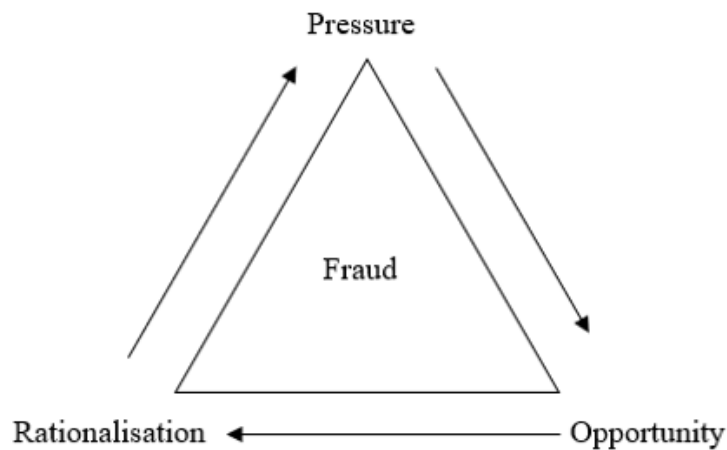


Figure 1: Fraud Triangle Theory (FTT) [27];[28]

2.2.2. Fraud Diamond Theory

The four pillars of the fraud theory—incentive, opportunity, rationalization, and capability—are an extension of the fraud triangle. Opportunity is a vulnerability a person can exploit to conduct fraud, whereas rationalization is the belief that the risk of committing fraud warrants it. Capability indicates that an individual possesses the requisite traits, talents, and abilities to conduct fraud easily. In contrast, incentive indicates a person's motivation and desire to perform the deception.

Zachariah et al. [26] point out that people with capability have traits when discussing the capability factor. First, they hold a position in the company that allows them to perpetrate fraud; an example of this would be the chief financial officer. Second, because of their senior position and intelligence, which makes them aware of the weakness of internal control, it is easy for them to commit fraud. Thirdly, this kind of person is sure that no one will find out and that they can always assign blame and get away with it even if they do. Last but not least, the competent person can force others to hide the deception, and the juniors are scared into hiding any fraudulent activity by threats and bullying techniques. Many frauds are committed by the appropriate people with the proper talents and abilities, which is crucial in explaining fraud.

2.2.3. Fraud scales theory

This theory was developed from the fraud triangle theory by Albrecht et al. [3]. It refers to the concept that fraud can be analyzed and categorized based on various factors such as severity, type, and the context in which it occurs. Understanding fraud on a scale allows organizations and forensic accountants to assess risks, understand motivations, and develop preventive measures.

Fraud can range from minor offences (like employee misappropriation of funds) to large-scale corporate fraud (like financial statement fraud or Ponzi schemes). This includes asset misappropriation, corruption, and fraudulent financial reporting. Each type has different characteristics, motivations, and potential organizational impacts. Factors that increase the likelihood of fraud include organizational culture, pressure on employees, inadequate controls, and opportunity. Understanding the psychological and situational factors that lead individuals to commit fraud can help develop better prevention strategies.

The fraud scale theory informs forensic accounting by providing a framework for analyzing fraud risk and severity. Forensic accountants can use insights from fraud scale theory to assess the fraud risk levels within an organization, categorizing potential fraud schemes based on their severity and type. By understanding the scale of fraud, forensic accountants can tailor prevention strategies to address the most significant risks identified. Forensic accountants need to interpret and analyze fraud within the scale theory context to provide more actionable insights to their clients. Organizations can develop training programs incorporating fraud scale theory and forensic accounting practices to enhance awareness and detection of fraud.

2.2.4. White collar crime theory

According to his definition, a respectable, high-status someone would commit a crime while performing their official duties. He pointed out that in his day and age, the wealthy accounted for fewer than two percent of the reasons people were imprisoned for a year. In contrast, more obviously, he aimed to demonstrate the relationship between wealth, social standing, and the chance of being incarcerated for a white-collar crime. However, the percentage of typical crimes is slightly greater now, and the position of people who committed these crimes means that hiring a forensic auditor—a skilled and experienced investigator—is necessary to prevent fraud of this kind.

2.3. Empirical Review

In his research, Jamo [16] focused more on the public sector and political figures while examining the achievements and difficulties faced by the EFCC in its fight against corruption in Nigeria. The EFCC has secured several cases and recovered billions of Naira from corrupt officials in Nigeria, even though it was unable to win the majority of its cases due to its incompetence in investigating and presenting corruption cases before the Court of Justice, according to an examination of the literature. The study's conclusion urges the EFCC to investigate and prosecute corruption cases with greater sophistication and integrity.

A study conducted by Obrien [17] determined how forensic auditing affected fraud in Nigerian banks. The writer examined the kinds of deception, bank fraud patterns, and bank losses over the last 12 years. Employing descriptive statistics, the study discovered that falsification and fraudulent withdrawals are the most common forms of fraud. The author also noted that banks that actively used forensic audits reported reduced losses and fewer fraud instances. As a result, the study concluded that forensic auditing plays a crucial role in combating fraud, which is common in the financial industry.

Digital evidence, as defined by Ogbonna and Appah [18], is one of the key components of financial forensics involving information technology that impacts the practice of forensic auditing. It includes recovering data that has been deleted, whether on purpose or accidentally, as well as recovering damaged documents from computer storage drives. For documents on a network server, this would include directing network traffic while ensuring that the integrity of the systems is maintained and that the data can also be authenticated. Digital evidence may also involve using a message chest, guaranteeing that the evidence has not been altered, modified, or destroyed. Digital evidence must be preserved, and the chain of custody must be followed, more crucially, or it could become corrupted and useless for the case or inquiry.

According to Owajori and Asaolu [19], an increasing number of businesses only conduct business online, making it difficult for forensic auditors to analyze these businesses without entering cyberspace. Due to the lack of a paper trail and the simplicity with which someone can conceal their identity online, these instances are extremely challenging to follow. Any electronic device, including cell phones, electronic organizers, and other network communications tools like hubs and routers, that can store data of evidentiary value is considered an electronic device. Examining these gadgets is comparatively more sophisticated and typically requires more specialist gear than retrieving data from storage media.

Obrien [17] researched forensic auditors' role in corporate governance. They noted that the necessity for forensic auditors arose from the ongoing financial fraud that caused the company to collapse and the statutory audit's inability to identify and stop fraudulent activity that had impoverished investors. Considering them, their study examined the effects of forensic auditors on corporate governance. This theoretical study examined the functions of forensic auditors in stopping fraudulent activity, the differences between forensic and statutory auditors, the traits of forensic auditors, and the influence of forensic auditors on corporate governance. Research findings indicated that forensic auditors enhanced management accountability and reinforced

the role of external auditors. Company governance has been positively impacted by independence and giving audit committee members confidence in internal audit reports to help them carry out their supervision duties. This has decreased company failure and investor impoverishment.

The impact of forensic auditing services on fraud detection in Nigerian banks is discussed by Ogbonna and Appah [18]. Both primary and secondary data sources were consulted. In Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State, twenty-four banks were given a well-structured questionnaire consisting of three sections. This helped collect the primary data, which were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, Granger Causality, Augmented Dickey-fuller, and ordinary least squares. The outcome shows that the degree of bank fraud is impacted by using forensic auditing services.

Enofe et al. [12], on the effect of forensic auditing on fraud detection in Nigerian firms. The study explored the relationship between fraud detection and forensic auditing. The primary data were collected with the help of a well-structured questionnaire of three sections administered to fifteen firms in Benin City Edo State. The collected data were analyzed with descriptive statistics using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression and Chi-square. The study reveals that applying forensic auditing services to firms affects fraudulent activities. Enofe et al. [12] examined the persistent widespread corporate failures and economic crimes resulting from audit failure and the emergence of creative auditing.

Enofe et al. [12] observed that corporate failures have resulted in the loss of jobs and slow economic growth and development in developing countries such as Nigeria. The study examined the concept, the need, and the role of forensic auditing in solving the problem of economic crimes and corruption in a developing economy like Nigeria. Empirical and descriptive research methods were adopted in the collection and analysis of data. Findings revealed that the application of forensic auditing is still very low due to the high cost of forensic auditing equipment and the time and resources required to train the forensic accountant. The paper concludes that forensic accountants must be employed to reduce economic crimes and corruption and enhance economic growth and development in developing economies.

The effectiveness of forensic investigation techniques in corporate fraud deterrence in Nigerian banks was studied by Eze and Gottschalk [13]. This study used a survey research approach, gathering data from primary sources via questionnaires and interviews. Reports on fraud and forgeries in the banking industry comprise secondary sources. The data were analyzed using statistical tools such as Z-test, regression analysis, frequency tables, mean scores, and percentages. Three hypotheses were generated and tested. The outcome strongly correlated with corporate fraud prevention and forensic investigative techniques. Their finding also revealed that expert services of forensic investigators are normally required to prosecute fraud. Still, most of Nigeria's audit and auditing personnel suffer from inadequate awareness of and familiarity with forensic investigation techniques. Thus, this study suggested adopting forensic investigative methods in our professional literature via International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). We feel that the study contributes to the little current literature on forensic auditing, where little previous study has been done in Nigeria.

Using a self-administered interview, Digabriele [10] mined how new information technology affected forensic auditing operations in Cross River State. Interviews with forty auditing experts directly or indirectly associated with the investigative auditing industry were undertaken. The ANOVA statistic was used to examine the given data. The study's findings demonstrated that auditing professionals must improve their proficiency with computerized auditing systems to organize, oversee, manage, and evaluate the work completed. Thus, to conduct investigative audits today and in the future, auditing professionals should gain a deeper understanding of and assess their computerized auditing systems.

The following were listed by Thornhil [22] as barriers to the effective use of forensic auditing: the inability of law enforcement to prosecute offenders successfully; constitutional restraints; defence attorneys' practice of requesting adjournments; insufficient existing procedural laws; backlogs and sluggish court proceedings; jurisdiction issues; and the expense of both investigation and prosecution. Put another way, Nigeria's lax legal system makes it difficult to use forensic auditing services. To support this claim, Soyemi [21] said that there had been difficulties in using forensic auditing services, such as unethical management and inadequate budgeting practices, hiding financial irregularities of hired auditors, lack of cooperation among the company's employees and manipulation of financial reports, among others. It takes time for the forensic accountant to build up his case by gathering evidence to prove that the action was fraudulent and the fraud was perpetuated by the accused. Owolabi [20] asserted that, in reality, a fraud case takes time to uncover; therefore, the case is not just closed by the long period it takes to resolve it.

3. Methodology

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of forensic accounting on fraud detection and prevention. The questionnaire was used to gather relevant data and was administered to target respondents in Oyo State, Nigeria. A sample size of one hundred was drawn from the population under study. The population was 1,000, consisting of professional accountants,

auditors, bankers, academics, financial analysts, and financial statement preparers. The researcher employed a random sampling technique to select the sample from the population. Eighty questionnaires were retrieved out of hundreds of questionnaires administered.

The data collected were coded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS V 24). Thirty percent of the respondents were between 20 and 44, 40 percent were between 45 and 54, and the remaining 30 percent were 55 years and above. Hence, it is evident that most of the respondents are older and experienced (Table 1).

4. Results and Discussion

The null hypothesis goes thus: forensic accounting has no significant effect on fraud detection and prevention. From the result, it was discovered that there is positive effectiveness, although the correlation is weak. Thus, an effective forensic accounting system will lead to effective fraud detection and prevention. The 'F' ratio (7.344) is significant, indicating that forensic accounting is a potent factor in determining fraud detection and prevention in an organization. The model gives a good account of the dependent variable of fraud detection and prevention in forensic accounting systems as R² due to regression (102.515).

Ho1: Forensic accounting has no significant effect on fraud detection and prevention.

Ha1: Forensic accounting has a significant effect on fraud detection and prevention.

The hypothesis of interest has two variables: Forensic Accounting and Fraud detection and prevention. This analysis was carried out at a 0.05 level of significance. The model obtained from the data analyzed using SPSS 23 is written below.

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Where;

β_0 - Is the constant or intercept

X_1 - Independent variable Forensic Accounting

Y - Dependent variable Fraud detection

ε - Is the error component.

Table 1: ANOVA

| Adjusted R = 0.087 | | R=0.216* | | R squared = 0.42 | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| | Sum of squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| Regression | 102.515 | 1 | 11.939 | 7.344 | 0.008(a) |
| Residual | 4.485 | 8 | 1.959 | | |
| Total | 107.100 | 9 | | | |
| Coefficients of the regression line | | | | | |
| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients(β) | t | Sig |
| Constant | 10.555 | | | 2.128 | 0.006 |
| Forensic Accounting | .138 | | .206 | .595 | 0.568 |

*Significant at 0.05 alpha level

The coefficient of the determinant of R= 0.42 indicates that a good forensic accounting system accounts for a 22% variation in fraud detection and prevention. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states that forensic accounting significantly affects fraud detection and prevention. The p-value of less than 0.05%, as evident in the 0.006 and 0.008 results, shows that there is indeed a significant relationship between forensic accounting and fraud prevention/detection. This, therefore, supports the work conducted by several scholars, such as [1]; [2]; [13].

5. Conclusion

It is clear from statistical evaluations of the importance of forensic accounting and how it affects fraud detection and prevention that it is crucial to Nigerian fraud detection and prevention efforts. Forensic auditing expertise is essential to combat financial

irregularities in Nigeria's public and private sectors. In Nigeria, professional accountants are also becoming more aware of the issue. Forensic accounting is a potent instrument for identifying and preventing fraud in Nigeria. Consequently, the following conclusions are drawn:

- More forensic accountants should be involved in fraud detection to lower the incidence of financial crime in Nigeria.
- Forensic accounting courses ought to be offered at Nigerian universities and polytechnics to raise the level of expertise of accountants who leave institutions of higher learning.

5.1. Recommendations

Forensic accountants should always prioritize their education, training, experience, and skills so that their specialized opinions can be trusted.

- Anti-graft agencies should consider hiring forensic accountants to help them in court cases involving financial or economic crimes.
- Both other personnel and the leadership team should receive the necessary education. Workers should receive in-depth instruction on the policies and procedures of the organization.
- Materials and a supportive environment should be made available to forensic accountants so they can fully realize their potential.

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Ethics and Consent Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines. Participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

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