

# Forensic Investigation as a Tool for Financial Crime Detection and Corruption Control: A Study of Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This research evaluates the importance of forensic investigation as an instrument for identifying, preventing and curbing corruption and financial offences in Nigeria. Primary survey data were gathered using structured questionnaires. Five hundred questionnaires were distributed to senior personnel of the Nigerian Police Force, selected academic staff from tertiary institutions, partners in professional accounting firms, bank managers, senior officers of principal anti-graft agencies, and members of the Nigerian Judiciary including Senior Advocates. The collected data were analysed using analysis of variance (ANOVA). Findings indicate that forensic investigation positively influences the prevention, detection and control of corruption and financial crimes in Nigeria. The study advises that existing anti-graft statutes and regulations in Nigeria be reinforced to empower forensic inquiry, reduce or eradicate financial crimes and foster a corruption-free economy through an uncompromising campaign against financial crimes supported by the government's firm commitment to prosecute offenders.

**Keywords:** Financial Crime, Forensic Investigation, Fraud Detection, Corruption Control.

## 1.0 Introduction

A response to the mounting incidence of fraud and financial misconduct in Nigeria's economy has been the relatively recent development of forensic investigation, a specialist field offering enhanced approaches to these challenges. Omoniyi (2004) notes that the surge in fraud cases in Nigeria and globally over the last two decades underscores the need for adopting forensic investigation and fraud detection methodologies. Underlying drivers of fraud and corruption in Nigeria include economic strain, erosion of moral values, increasingly sophisticated criminal methods, limited expertise in fraud prevention and detection, uncertainty and anxiety about the future. Onuorah and Appah (2013) observe that widespread fraud in contemporary organizations has rendered traditional auditing and investigation methods inadequate for detecting and preventing frauds confronting businesses worldwide. There is little doubt about the damage inflicted on Nigeria's economy by the escalating tide of fraud and corruption.

Forensic investigation denotes the assessment of criminality by combining accounting investigative procedures with legal processes to uncover and examine financial crimes, corruption and related accounting misconduct. The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) defines financial fraud as an intentional act by one or more persons, including management, other employees, those charged with governance or third parties, involving deception to secure an unfair or unlawful advantage (Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, 2001).

Financial (or white-collar) crime encompasses a broad spectrum of offences, often with cross-border characteristics. Closely linked with cybercrime, many financial offences are increasingly executed via the internet and significantly affect international banking and

financial systems. Financial crimes impact individuals, corporations, organizations and even states, inflicting considerable monetary losses that weaken the wider economic and social fabric. Organized criminal networks frequently drive these crimes, motivated by the prospect of large potential profits. Tracking perpetrators and illicit assets is made difficult by disparities across national jurisdictions, varying implementation of international agreements, and differing levels of expertise among investigative and prosecutorial bodies.

This paper offers a critical assessment of the rationale for and the effects of forensic investigation on curbing corruption and financial crimes in Nigeria. Using survey methods, it assesses the roles played by forensic investigators in addressing corruption and financial offences in Nigeria, aiming to identify opportunities for government, corporations and the public to utilize forensic investigation services. The study tests the proposition that forensic investigation has no significant effect on corruption control and the prevention and detection of financial crimes in Nigeria.

## 2.0 Literature Review

The literature review related to this study addresses the definitions of forensic investigation, a comparison between forensic investigation and statutory audit, the necessity for forensic investigation in Nigeria's business context, and forensic investigation procedures for fraud detection.

### 2.1 The Concept of Forensic Investigation

Forensic investigation blends accounting, auditing and investigative competencies to form the specialty known as forensic accounting. Various definitions converge on the notion that forensic investigation combines accounting, auditing and investigative abilities to provide financial evidence for resolving

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litigation by applying accounting principles and techniques to legal disputes. Forensic investigation involves applying specialized knowledge and specific skills to uncover evidence of economic transactions (Zysman, 2001; Coenen, 2005; Joshi, 2003). As an emerging branch of accounting, its primary purpose is to expose fraudulent conduct inside and outside organizations whenever third-party actions reflect on the entity's operations (Enyi, 2008). Ifezulike (2007) maintains that forensic investigation entails applying financial expertise and an investigative mindset to unresolved matters within the bounds of evidentiary rules, while Ashton (2004) describes forensic investigation as accounting that employs investigative techniques integrated with accounting and business acumen to generate information and opinions for court evidence and expert witness use.

Outcomes of forensic inquiries may be presented in court to support deliberations, debates and ultimately dispute resolution. All conceptualizations converge on the objective of producing adequate, relevant and reliable evidence for legal scrutiny, presuming that fraud or financial misconduct is established only after a comprehensive investigation clarifies the true circumstances of the alleged misappropriation. In this study, forensic investigation denotes the process of investigating suspected fraud, misappropriation of funds and other corrupt acts to produce evidence establishing the occurrence of financial irregularities admissible in a court of law.

**2.2 Forensic Investigation and Statutory Audit**

Several authorities (Grippio & Ibex, 2003; Mazni & Mohd, 2008; Carey, Geiger & O'Connell, 2008) distinguish forensic investigation from auditing, as summarized below:

**Table 1.1: Difference between Forensic Investigation and Auditing**

S/No.	Forensic Investigation	Auditing
1.	Emphasizes producing factual evidence based on known information or data uncovered within an organization. Forensic investigators look beyond mere figures to the actual particulars of transactions.	Concentrates on giving a professional opinion on whether an organization's financial statements present a true and fair view.
2.	Performs expert witness and investigative roles.	Performs investigative roles only.
3.	Engaged on demand by an organization.	Conducted routinely as an ongoing organizational process.
4.	Handles both civil and criminal matters.	Handles primarily civil matters.

**2.3 The Need for Forensic Investigation in Nigeria**

In today's increasingly complex business milieu, firms confront many challenges and risks that are hard to manage. Globalization and modern information technology have transformed traditional business practices, accelerating electronically enabled fraud and corporate financial mismanagement.

Fraud and abuse cost U.S. businesses over \$400 billion annually, and an average organization loses about six percent of its total revenue to fraud and abuse by its own employees (KPMG, 2008).

In Nigeria, corruption, money laundering and related offences have reached disturbing levels. Widespread resource mismanagement pervades both public and private sectors. Financial crime has become pervasive and the risk of corporate fraud has intensified (Okolo, 2007). These mounting financial crimes hinder Nigeria's ability to meet social and welfare obligations to citizens. It has been argued that high-level financial abuse undermines tax collection, frustrates law enforcement and discourages foreign investment (Uche, 2009). Corporate failures have increased the duty on accountants to acquire skills to detect indicators of poor corporate governance, mismanagement, fraud and other irregularities. Thus, professional accountants must be versed in methods for identifying, discovering and preserving evidence of financial abuse. Ramaswamy (2005) states that forensic investigation involves using accounting, auditing and investigative skills to determine whether fraud has occurred. Globally,

multinational bodies have shown heightened interest in forensic investigation and emphasized corporate governance and accountability.

Nigerian companies are already leveraging forensic investigation, finding that these specialists can quantify damages suffered by parties—whether or not a legal dispute exists—and can help resolve conflicts before they reach the courtroom.

**2.4 Forensic Investigation and Fraud Detection Procedures**

A forensic investigator may carry out or support specific investigative techniques to gather evidence regarding materially misstated financial statements. Some effective fraud detection procedures performed by forensic investigators include (Carnes and Gierlasinski, 2001):

- 1. Public Document Review and Background Investigation During the Information Gathering Phase:** The forensic investigator seeks key background information about the client, the business and its economic setting. The practitioner identifies vendors, suppliers, competitors and related parties, and looks for triggering events linked to behavioural shifts.
- 2. Analytical Procedures:** Vertical, horizontal and ratio analyses of financial statements, along with budgetary and industry comparisons, help identify significant trends and changes. Such analyses may reveal unexpected or

absent relationships useful for spotting potential misstatements arising from fraud or error. Forensic investigators may scrutinize unusual or suspicious entries near reporting periods; technology-based tools can assist in detecting specific attributes.

3. **Brainstorming Session:** Before brainstorming, the forensic investigator compiles pertinent background information, prior engagement working papers and other analyses. The engagement team must understand general and industry-specific red flags affecting the entity. With this information, the team discusses issues, solicits input, and plans investigative directions. Including all team members in the session raises awareness of potential fraud and facilitates idea exchange on where financial statements might be vulnerable to material misstatement due to fraud.
4. **Interview of Management and Others:** During interviews, the forensic investigator collects background and other relevant information to pinpoint fraud risk areas. Topics include business ethics, management style, values and beliefs, strategies, reward systems, performance feedback, organizational structure, systems and controls, internal communications and other variables.

## 2.5 The Concept of Fraud

The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants defines fraud as "an intentional act by one or more individuals, among management, other employees, those charged with governance or third parties involving the use of deception to obtain an unjust or illegal advantage." Baree (2006) describes fraud as "an intentional misstatement of financial information by one or more persons, among management, employees or other third parties." Adewunmi (1986) characterizes fraud as a deliberate, premeditated act by an individual or group aimed at distorting truth for selfish monetary gain. It typically involves deception, trickery and sometimes advanced cunning, often taking forms such as forgery, falsifying documents, forging authorization signatures and outright theft.

First Bank of Nigeria Plc (2006) defines fraud as "an intentional perversion of truth designed to induce reliance so that another is persuaded to relinquish valuables or legal rights, or to surrender items held in trust." It is also described as "a false representation of facts that ought to have been disclosed, intended or likely to deceive another, leading to legal injury." Thomas (2006) identifies four core elements of fraud: a false representation of material fact; reckless disregard for the truth; reliance—where the recipient reasonably depends on the representation; and damages—financial loss resulting from these elements.

## 2.6 Concept of Corruption and Financial Crimes

Financial (or economic) crimes are non-violent offences committed by or against individuals or corporations resulting in financial loss. A crime involves the financial sector when a financial institution is implicated. Examples include tax evasion, embezzlement of corporate funds and the sale of fictitious insurance products. Offences such as money laundering, credit card fraud and cheque forgery are categorized as financial sector crimes. Many white-collar offences are primarily financial in nature. Although such crimes often carry severe penalties, their incidence is rising.

Economic crimes are described as illegal acts, carried out alone or in organized groups, aimed at generating wealth through illicit means and violating statutory and regulatory provisions governing economic activities (Okolie, 2006). Such crimes erode public trust in national systems, threaten governmental integrity and institutions, undermine national security and law and order, and generally deter investment. Despite the sophistication of criminal techniques, common traits include cheating, lying and stealing.

Financial crimes include, but are not limited to: Antitrust fraud, Bankruptcy fraud, Bribery, Computer fraud, Credit card fraud, Counterfeiting, Embezzlement, Environmental fraud, Government fraud, Identity fraud, Insider trading, Insurance fraud, Mail fraud, Securities fraud, Trade secret fraud, Embezzlement, Money laundering, Mortgage fraud, Racketeering/RICO, Securities fraud, Tax evasion/fraud and other white-collar crimes.

The Oxford Advanced Dictionary (5th Edition) defines corruption as "dishonest or illegal behaviour, especially by people in authority using their power for dishonest or illegal ends, often in return for money or advantage, e.g., bribery." The World Bank (1997) equates corruption with "the abuse of public office for private gain." Public office is abused for private gain when an official accepts, solicits or extorts a bribe. It is also abuse when private actors offer bribes to influence public policies and processes for competitive advantage. Public offices can also be abused through patronage and nepotism even absent direct bribery.

Section 2 of the ICPC Act (2000) states that "corruption simply connotes impropriety and encompasses all forms of reprehensible, indecorous and infamous conduct in the performance of some official and non-official responsibilities." Okolie (2006:203) asserts that corruption occurs "when at least two parties interact to alter societal processes or the behaviour of functionaries to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situations."

Corruption and organized crime in Africa may be classified into several concrete types, including:

- looting of funds and hidden wealth abroad, commonly termed 'capital flight';
- misappropriation of public funds;
- money laundering;
- drug trafficking;
- illegal arms transactions;
- gratification, involving monetary, material or physical favours as rewards for official actions;
- abuse of office, where officials breach oaths or subvert procedures for personal gain;
- nepotism, which grants undeserved benefits to relatives.

## 2.7 Corruption in Nigeria: A Sectoral Analysis

Corruption in Nigeria is conceptualized across three sectors: the private sector, the bureaucracy, and the political sphere.

**Private sector corruption** includes:

- bribery by multinational corporations;
- serious fraud within financial institutions, at times enabling criminals to gain control of banks;

- widespread corporate tax evasion;
- insider trading through illegal use of confidential information to profit in stock markets;
- payments of bribes to secure public contracts.

- creation of government positions to enrich individuals, distributed on political grounds, with national honours and favours allocated similarly.

Private sector corruption is often driven by the desire for undue financial gain, control, or monopolization of economic opportunities.

Political corruption corrodes governance by transforming power into a vehicle for enriching and entrenching those in office, enabling schemes that reward loyal supporters and plunder public resources.

**Bureaucratic corruption**, frequently targeted by definitions of corruption, arises when covert agreements are struck between public officials and private actors to secure special fiscal favours. Examples include selecting uneconomical projects to create kickback opportunities; procurement fraud—payments, kickbacks, collusion, overcharging, misrepresentation, delivery of substandard goods and services; and illicit payments. Bureaucratic corruption also encompasses extortion, fund misappropriation, nepotism, favouritism, misuse of official information, abuse of power, and even time wasting or negligence on the job.

### 3.0 Methodology

Primary data were employed in this study. The primary data consisted of structured, close-ended questions with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree on a five-point Likert scale. Five hundred (500) questionnaires were distributed to senior managers in the Nigeria Police Force, tertiary institutions, professional accountants, bankers, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC/EFCC) and the judiciary. These respondents were selected based on the authors' judgment of their engagement with forensic investigation matters in Nigeria, with the expectation that they would provide substantive information to support valid conclusions. Secondary sources included journal articles, textbooks, library materials and websites used in the literature review.

**Political corruption** involves using political authority for private enrichment or employing financial power to obtain political favours and influence. Manifestations include:

- vote buying during elections, illegal campaign contributions by wealthy interests to sway policies and laws, and rigged elections;
- diversion of public funds to benefit associates of the ruling party;
- the ruling party operating as an entrepreneurial body that secures lucrative contracts through covert channels, thereby becoming a source of political and economic corruption;

### 4.0 Data Presentation and Discussion of Results

Responses to the questionnaire formed the basis for findings, recommendations and conclusions. Of the five hundred (500) questionnaires distributed, four hundred (400) were returned, representing an 80% response rate; 100 copies (20%) were not returned. Analysis employed frequencies, simple percentages, means and standard deviations computed from the five-point Likert scale, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess variable weights.

**Table 1: Distributions of Administered Questionnaire and the Response Rate**

S/No	Sector	No of Questionnaire	No Retrieved	Response Rate %
1	Nigeria Police Force (NPF)	70	46	11.5
2	Tertiary Institutions	250	200	50.0
3	Professional Accountants	50	42	10.5
4	ICPC/EFCC	40	36	9.0
5	Bankers	50	41	10.3
6	Judiciary	40	35	8.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2: Forensic Investigation and its Relevance to Financial Crimes Control**

S/N	Research Questions	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Is forensic investigation services relevant to financial crime control in Nigeria?	301 (75.25)	79 (19.75)	3 (0.75)	6 (1.5)	11 (2.75)	4.6	1.3
2	Can forensic investigation be used to prevent fraudulent practices in Nigeria?	332 (83)	44 (11)	1 (0.25)	8 (2.0)	15 (3.75)	4.6	1.3
3	Is financial malpractice in Nigeria economy on the increase?	280 (70)	104 (26)	2 (0.5)	10 (2.5)	4 (1.0)	4.6	1.3
4	Is financial crime affecting the spate of economic development in Nigeria?	289 (72.25)	100 (25)	0	4 (1.0)	7 (1.75)	4.6	1.3
5	Do accountants and auditors need extra training in forensic investigation?	80 (20)	290 (72.5)	7 (1.75)	9 (2.25)	14 (3.5)	3.9	1.2
6	Is forensic investigation gaining ground in Nigeria?	48 (12)	330 (82.5)	5 (1.25)	7 (1.75)	10 (2.5)	3.9	1.2
7	Are the services rendered by forensic experts facing any challenges in Nigeria?	50 (12.5)	334 (83.5)	1 (0.25)	4 (1.0)	11 (2.75)	3.9	1.2

Source: Field Survey, 2026

**HYPOTHESIS 1**

The formula for ANOVA is given as:

Total Sum of Squares  

$$SS_T = \sum_i \sum_j X_{ij}^2 - \frac{T^2}{n}$$

Between Sum of Squares

$$SS_B = \sum \frac{T_i^2}{n_i} - \frac{T^2}{n}$$

Within Sum of Squares

$$SS_W = SS_T - SS_B$$

Where

SST = Total sum of square. It represents the total variability of the observations.

K = Number of population

N = Total number of observations

j = j<sup>th</sup> observation in the jth sample

T = Total of all observations

X = The mean of all observations

No	A	A <sup>2</sup>	B	B <sup>2</sup>	C	C <sup>2</sup>	D	D <sup>2</sup>	E	E <sup>2</sup>
1	301	90,601	79	6,241	3	9	6	36	11	121
2	332	110,224	44	1,936	1	1	8	64	15	225
3	280	78,400	104	10,816	2	4	10	100	4	16
4	289	83,521	100	10,000	0	0	4	16	7	49
5	80	6,400	290	84,100	7	49	9	81	14	196
6	48	2,304	330	108,900	5	25	7	49	10	100
7	50	2,500	334	111,556	1	1	4	16	11	121
	1,380	373,950	1,281	333,549	19	89	48	362	72	828

For between the groups, variations were derived as follows:

SSB or K sample means:

$$\frac{(\sum x_1)^2}{n_1} + \frac{(\sum x_2)^2}{n_2} + \frac{(\sum x_3)^2}{n_3} + \frac{(\sum x_4)^2}{n_4} + \frac{(\sum x_5)^2}{n_5} - \frac{(n \sum x_k)^2}{n}$$

Where  $\sum(x)_b = \sum A + \sum B + \sum C + \sum D + \sum E$   
 $= 1,380 + 1,281 + 19 + 48 + 72 = 2,800$

$\sum(x)^2_w = \sum A^2 + \sum B^2 + \sum C^2 + \sum D^2 + \sum E^2$   
 $= 373,950 + 333,549 + 89 + 362 + 828 = 708,778$

Mean square between groups

$$SSb = \frac{(1,380)^2}{7} + \frac{(1,281)^2}{7} + \frac{(19)^2}{7} + \frac{(48)^2}{7} + \frac{(72)^2}{7} - \frac{(2,800)^2}{35} = \frac{1,904,400}{7} + \frac{1,640,961}{7} + \frac{361}{7} + \frac{2304}{7} + \frac{5784}{7} - \frac{7,840,000}{35} = 283,601.42$$

Degree of freedom =  $k - 1 = 5 - 1 = 4$ ;  $283,601.42/4 = 70,900.36$

$$SSW = 373,950 - \frac{(1,380)^2}{7} + 333,549 - \frac{(1,281)^2}{7} + 89 - \frac{(19)^2}{7} + 362 - \frac{(48)^2}{7} + 828 - \frac{(72)^2}{7} = 201,176.58$$

Degree of freedom =  $n - k = 30 = 201,176.58/30 = 6,705.89$

f. calculated =  $\frac{70,900.36}{6,705.89} = 10.57$

**4.1 Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis 1: Forensic investigation is significantly relevant to financial crime and corruption control in Nigeria.**

**Table 3: ANOVA Summary for Hypothesis 1**

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-calculated	F-critical
Between Groups	283,601.42	4	70,900.36	10.57	2.690
Within Groups	201,176.58	30	6,705.89		
<b>Total</b>	<b>484,778.00</b>	<b>34</b>			

**Decision:** Since the F-critical value of 2.690 at 0.05 level of significance is less than the F-calculated value of 10.57, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, **forensic investigation has proved to be significantly relevant to financial crime and corruption control in Nigeria.**

**Table 4: Services Rendered by Forensic Investigators and Fraud Control**

S/N	Research Questions	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Is forensic investigation in Nigeria hindered by lack of government transparency in decision making?	266 (66.5)	121 (30.25)	1 (0.25)	2 (0.5)	10 (2.5)	4.5	1.3
2	Financial crime is commonly perpetrated by public office holders in Nigeria	264 (66.0)	118 (29.5)	0	10 (2.5)	8 (2.0)	4.5	1.3
3	Is lack of adequate internal control system hindering financial crime control in Nigeria?	286 (71.5)	92 (23.0)	4 (1.0)	12 (3.0)	6 (1.5)	4.6	1.3
4	Poor remuneration to employees in Nigeria has led to increase in financial crime rate	99 (24.75)	274 (68.5)	3 (0.75)	7 (1.75)	17 (4.25)	4.0	1.2
5	Is forensic investigation aiding in fraudulent malpractices in Nigeria?	70 (17.5)	304 (76.0)	6 (1.5)	12 (3.0)	8 (2.0)	3.9	1.2
6	Has the services of forensic investigation prevented or reduced fraud in your company?	90 (22.5)	285 (71.25)	7 (1.75)	5 (1.25)	13 (3.25)	4.0	1.25
7	Are the bulk of fraudulent malpractices in your organization carried out internally or externally?	11 (2.75)	28 (7.0)	12 (3.0)	150 (37.5)	199 (49.75)	2.0	4.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

**Hypothesis 2: The services rendered by forensic investigators are significantly beneficial for reduction of fraud in Nigeria.**

**Table 5: ANOVA Summary for Hypothesis 2**

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-calculated	F-critical
Between Groups	173,299.14	4	57,766.38	8.75	2.690
Within Groups	197,944.86	30	6,598.16		
<b>Total</b>	<b>371,244.00</b>	<b>34</b>			

**Decision:** Since the F-critical value of 2.690 at 0.05 level of significance is less than the F-calculated value of 8.75, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, **the services rendered by forensic investigators are significantly beneficial for reduction of fraud in Nigeria.**

TABLE 3:

**HYPOTHESIS 2: Services Rendered by Forensic Accountants and Fraud Control**

S/N	Research questions	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly		Mean	Std. Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
1	Is forensic investigations in Nigeria hindered by lack of government transparency in decision making	266	66.5	121	30.25	01	0.25	02	0.5	10	2.5	4.5	1.3
2	Financial crime is commonly perpetrated by public office holders in Nigeria	264	66.0	118	29.5	0	-	10	2.5	8	2.0	4.5	1.3
3	Is lack of adequate internal control system hindering financial crime control in Nigeria	286	71.5	92	23.0	4	1.0	12	3.0	6	1.5	4.6	1.3
4	Poor remuneration to employees in Nigeria has led to increase in financial crime rate	99	24.75	274	68.5	3	0.75	7	1.75	17	4.25	4.0	1.2
5	Are forensic accounting aiding in fraudulent malpractices in Nigeria	70	17.5	304	76.0	6	1.5	12	3.0	8	2.0	3.9	1.2
6	Has the services of forensic accounting prevented or reduced fraud in your company	90	22.5	285	71.25	7	1.75	5	1.25	13	3.25	4.0	1.25
7	Are bulk of the fraudulent malpractices in your organization carried out internally or externally	11	2.75	28	7.0	12	3.0	150	37.5	199	49.75	2.0	4.0

**Hypothesis 2**

No	A	A <sup>2</sup>	B	B <sup>2</sup>	C	C <sup>2</sup>	D	D <sup>2</sup>	E	E <sup>2</sup>
1	266	70,756	121	14,641	1	1	2	4	10	100
2	264	69,696	118	13,924	0	0	10	100	8	64
3	286	81,796	92	8,464	4	16	12	144	6	36
4	99	9,801	274	75,076	3	9	7	49	17	289
5	70	4,900	304	92,416	6	36	12	144	8	64
6	90	8,100	285	81,225	7	49	5	25	13	169
7	11	121	28	784	12	144	150	22,500	199	39,601
	1,086	245,170	1,222	286,530	33	255	198	22,966	261	40,323

For between the group variation:

$$\sum(x)^2_b = \sum A + \sum B + \sum C + \sum D + \sum E = 1,086 + 1,222 + 33 + 198 + 261 = 2,800$$

$$\begin{aligned} \sum(x^2)_w &= \sum A^2 + \sum B^2 + \sum C^2 + \sum D^2 + \sum E^2 \\ &= 245,170 + 286,530 + 255 + 22,966 + 40,323 = 595,244 \end{aligned}$$

Mean square between groups

$$\begin{aligned} SSb & \frac{(1,086)^2}{7} + \frac{(1,222)^2}{7} + \frac{(33)^2}{7} + \frac{(198)^2}{7} + \frac{(261)^2}{7} - \frac{(2,800)^2}{35} \\ & \frac{1,179,396}{7} + \frac{1,493,284}{7} + \frac{1089}{7} + \frac{39,204}{7} + \frac{68,121}{7} - \frac{7,840,000}{35} \\ & = 173,299.14 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom} = k - 1 = 5 - 1 = 4;$$

$$173,299.14/4 = \underline{57,766.38}$$

Mean square within the group

$$\begin{aligned} SSW &= 245,170 - \frac{(1,086)^2}{7} + 286,530 - \frac{(1,222)^2}{7} + 255 - \frac{(33)^2}{7} + 22966 - \frac{(198)^2}{7} + \\ & = 197,944.86 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom} = n - k = 35 - 5 = 30$$

$$= \frac{197,944.86}{30} = 6,598.16$$

$$\begin{aligned} f. \text{ Calculated} &= \frac{57,766.38}{6,598.16} \\ &= \underline{8.75} \end{aligned}$$

ANOVA RESULT

Source of variation	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F-cal.	f. critical.
Between groups	173,299.14	4	57,766.38	8.75	2.690
Within groups	197,944.86	30	6,598.16		
Total					

Decision: Since f. critical value 2.690 at 0.05 level of significance is less than f. calculated value of 8.75, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the services rendered by forensic investigators are significantly beneficial for reduction of fraud in Nigeria.

## 5.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Strengthen Anti-Graft Statutes:** Combating financial crime demands a comprehensive, uncompromising approach and the Nigerian government must demonstrate full commitment to the principles of justice, the rule of law and due process when prosecuting offenders. Existing anti-graft statutes and regulations in Nigeria should be reinforced to empower forensic inquiry.
2. **Enhance Public Service Delivery:** Public and private sector authorities should ensure fair treatment of citizens through proper procedures and timely delivery of entitlements; such actions will reduce incentives for involvement in financial crimes in Nigeria.
3. **Continuous Professional Development:** Professionals in forensic investigation must continually pursue updated knowledge and skills to increase their effectiveness in practice.
4. **Attitudinal Change:** All Nigerians should adopt attitudinal changes that contribute to corruption reduction and elimination of financial crimes.
5. **Strengthen Law Enforcement Capacity:** Law enforcement agencies must act swiftly to secure evidence and to freeze or seize illicitly obtained assets, even though tracing perpetrators and illegal assets may be complex and sometimes very difficult.

## 6.0 Conclusion

This study critically examined the rationale for and the influence of forensic investigation on curbing corruption and financial crimes in Nigeria, concluding that forensic investigators provide services that significantly contribute to fraud reduction. Using survey methods, the paper assessed the contributions of forensic investigators to controlling corruption and financial crimes in Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that forensic investigation is notably relevant to controlling corruption and financial offences in the country.

Forensic investigation has become integral to protecting corporate assets and business interests amid constant change. Its services yield high-value benefits for both private and public sectors. As technologies evolve, opportunities for sophisticated fraudulent schemes grow, but forensic investigators, leveraging innovation and creativity, are well-placed to address these threats.

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