



**THE IMPACT OF FORENSIC ACCOUNTING SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES IN THE
INVESTIGATION OF CORRUPT PRACTICES.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Corruption implies breaking of organizational established codes, norms of behavior for the benefit of the perpetrator which in turn abuses and distorts public power and growth. Corruption is the giving, requesting, receiving or accepting of an improper advantage related to a position, office or assignment. This phenomenon has grown in Nigeria to an alarming stage necessitating the government to establish special institutions that tackle corruption cases. With the establishment of these established institutions, corruption is still view as been on the increase. Individuals perceived to be corrupt are not in most cases convicted when taking to court. This study therefore, employ a survey design to test weather forensic accounting can help in unraveling corruption. Also a test was carried out to ascertain whether anticorruption agencies workers have the requisite techniques and skills to unravel evidences that could lead to conviction of perceived corrupt elements. The study administers three hundred and eighty five questionnaires (385) to two major anticorruption agencies EFCC and ICPC using random sampling techniques. Reproach questions and hypothesis were set and tested at 5% confidence limits using student t-test and chi-square statistics. It was found at that forensic accounting skills and techniques have significant effect on helping investigators in uncovering corruption practices in the Nigerian and Nigeria institution(s) fighting corruption have adequate skills and techniques in carrying out investigation. The study further reviewed that political landscape cannot hamper on the service of anti-corruption agencies since they have the right laws to back up their fight.

INTRODUCTION

Corruption and economic/financial crimes have become pervasive issues both nationally and internationally within the world's economies. They impact organizations of all kinds, and no economy—whether developed, developing, or underdeveloped—is exempt from their influence. Many researchers are engaged in continuous efforts to find ways to prevent, detect, and mitigate corruption within institutions. However, despite these efforts, reducing corruption to a minimum level in many nations remains an elusive goal. Could it be that those entrusted with the responsibility of reporting corruption are shying away from their duties?

Evans (2017) suggests that corruption is difficult to pinpoint. Even when detected, there is a tendency for it not to be reported accurately, often due to the fear of deterring investors or concerns that tracing the culprits would be challenging.

All professions possess established methods, ethics, rules, protocols, techniques, or skills. In recent times, Forensic Accounting has garnered significant recognition as a crucial profession in combatting the rampant fraud that plagues the global financial realm. Thus, forensic accounting employs systematic techniques within an investigative approach, leading to admissible evidence in a court of law.

Forensic accountants are widely perceived as possessing the necessary training and relevant skills to effectively combat corruption. As the world evolves with the advancements in information and communication technology, the patterns of fraud have also shifted. The increasingly complex landscape of information and communication technology, combined with the fact that most frauds are now perpetrated using technological means, places a new responsibility on forensic accountants. They must comprehend the functioning of accounting

software and database systems in order to conduct thorough checks. This is imperative due to the escalating instances of fraud involving various forms of technology over the years. These kinds of fraudulent activities often involve collaboration with employees within a company, a category known as occupational frauds."

Relying excessively on technology without comprehending its intricate nature, patterns, behaviors, or operational architecture may result in substantial financial losses instead of gains. In light of the challenges and complications associated with digital offices, the role of a forensic accountant has become exceptionally significant. In this digital age, the responsibilities of a forensic accountant have expanded considerably. According to Dada, Enyi, and Owolabi (2013), forensic accounting encompasses investigation, litigation support, and dispute resolution. While auditing techniques can uncover instances of corruption, the specialized techniques required for detailed disclosure and prosecution fall under the purview of forensic accounting. Moreover, forensic accounting effectively bridges the gap between audit expectations concerning fraud prevention, detection, and prosecution.

Intense competition across all industries and unrealistic targets assigned to employees often create immense pressure to outperform peers. In this environment, manipulations occur to secure job positions and achieve improved lifestyles. Frauds are occurring across industries, spanning from top-level management to lower tiers, driven by personal and organizational goals. While globalization contributes to a nation's development, it also introduces new globally adopted fraudulent methods.

Technology now plays a pivotal role in communication. Focusing on the endemic and systematic corruption that once plagued Nigeria as a nation, the Obasanjo administration established two

robust agencies with mandates to receive, investigate, and prosecute corruption cases within the country. The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) was established on September 29, 2000, followed by the creation of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2003. The EFCC is entrusted with preventing, investigating, prosecuting, and penalizing economic and financial crimes such as advance fee fraud (419) and money laundering. The central theme of both ICPC and EFCC revolves around investigating fraudulent activities, aligning closely with the responsibilities of forensic accounting. This necessitates the application of techniques to uncover fraud committed by individuals, which can encompass both technological methods and skills.

This study aims to investigate and evaluate whether ICPC and EFCC are employing techniques that effectively aid in uncovering the identities involved in fraudulent acts.

Corruption has permeated our society in various forms, including within anti-corruption agencies, white-collar corruption, misappropriation of government funds, ghost workers or payroll fraud, illicit oil block allocation and sales, recurring oil contract fraud, and widespread bribery in tertiary institutions (Osondu, 2018). Informal corruption categories as identified by Osondu (2018) encompass: the advance fee scam known as 419, corporate tax evasion, bunkering, oil theft, gas flaring, insider trading, bank heists, coercion and extortion, bribery of INEC officials, and political violence. Both formal and informal corruption forms involve transactions that can be verified through a process, underscoring the pressing necessity for forensic accountants.

In Nigeria, fraud has emerged as a significant impediment to the advancement and prosperity of the Nigerian economy (Ijewereme, 2015). In the present day, forensic accountants are expected

to possess a diverse set of characteristics, skills, and knowledge derived from various fields. They must also equip themselves with pertinent information technology and legal skills, considering the challenges presented by technology in our contemporary work environment. Furthermore, a forensic accountant must have the ability to translate complex accounting information into clear, effective oral and written communication suitable for presentation in a court or tribunal. They should be adept at employing information technology tools and software to trace information and possess an understanding of the adversarial legal system and rules of evidence.

Over the years, the Nigerian government has undertaken several initiatives to address the issue of fraud within the country, including the establishment of anti-corruption institutions such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC). These agencies can effectively fulfill their mandates by employing forensic processes and conducting thorough and systematic investigations into fraudulent cases.

Investigation plays a pivotal role in forensic accounting. It entails the act or process of seeking out facts, details, or carefully examining events or transactions with the intent of uncovering wrongdoing within processes or events (Godwin, 2016). Investigations are typically initiated when suspicions arise and there's a need to establish responsibility, including determining the extent of damage. During investigations, Oyedokun (2013) highlights that detailed verification and clarification of doubts about a transaction or event are performed.

Investigations involve a series of systematic techniques that require a combination of skills and tools. When these techniques are not properly followed, investigations are likely to yield unfruitful results. This study aims to assess the techniques employed by government anti-

corruption agencies. By evaluating these techniques, we can ascertain whether these agencies are utilizing appropriate methods for investigation or keeping pace with fraudulent actors. Furthermore, this study seeks to shed light on the reason why many corrupt cases fail in court due to insufficient evidence.

Definitions of Terms

Cyber-Crime: Refers to obtaining digital information without authorization, acquiring classified information without proper authorization, gaining access to non-public computer systems, and breaching the security of a protected computer.

Cyber-forensics: This process encompasses the capture, preservation, identification, extraction, analysis, documentation, and case preparation associated with digital data and events.

Digital Environment: The digital environment encompasses the amalgamation of digital events, facts, and realities, culminating in a tangible experience that signifies a transformative way of existence.

Forensic: The term "forensic" originates from the Latin word "*forensis*," which signifies "public," relating to the forum or public discourse; it is argumentative and pertains to debate or discussion.

Forensic Accounting: This involves the utilization of financial expertise and an investigative mindset to address unresolved matters, all within the framework of adhering to the rules of evidence.

Information technology: The term encompasses the utilization of computers, storage, networking, as well as other physical devices, infrastructure, and processes to generate, process, store, secure, and facilitate the exchange of various forms of electronic data.

Need for Technical Skill in Investigation

There is an old saying: if you wait long enough, change is inevitable. This sentiment rings true for computer forensics accounting training. With the pervasive use of computers, not only will more tech enthusiasts focus on computer forensics, but attorneys and judges will also seek courses in this subject. Acquiring a grasp of computer forensics basics will aid forensic accountants in determining the types of evidence that can be extracted from a computer's operating system and the legal methods for obtaining it (John, 2005). On the academic front, comprehensive degree programs in computer forensics are now under development, alongside existing certification programs. These efforts aim to empower forensic accountants to thrive in the era of information technology.

Many researchers have highlighted that while technical skills and techniques are seen as fundamental for individuals entering an accounting career, it is a spectrum of broader personal traits that not only foster career success but also render accounting graduates more valuable to employers. Moreover, in order to effectively operate within our dynamic, modern, IT-driven landscape, forensic accountants require a foundational understanding of information technology (Madan, 2013). This knowledge equips them to grasp enhanced forensic techniques.

Concept Framework of Money Laundering

Sanusi (2003) stated that money laundering is the process through which criminals or criminal organizations attempt to conceal the illicit origin of their proceeds by integrating them into legitimate commerce and finance. According to Lisanawati (2010), money laundering entails hiding the existence, nature, or illegal source of illicit funds in a manner that makes the funds seem legitimate if discovered. Money laundering can occur via a range of methods, spanning

from banks and money transmitters to stock brokerage houses and casinos. These unlawfully gained funds provide resources for drug dealers, terrorists, arms traders, and other criminals to perpetuate and expand their activities.

The process of money laundering comprises several intricate and well-established stages. UNODC (2019) outlines it as a dynamic three-step procedure involving: Placement, where the funds are removed from direct association with the crime; layering, which involves camouflaging the trail to evade detection; and integration, aimed at reintroducing the money into criminal use while obscuring its original source. In essence, illicit funds are reintegrated into the lawful economy. Nataliya (2015) introduced a novel facet to money laundering with cyber-crime payments, a new phenomenon that doesn't necessitate the involvement of a regulated third party to transfer financial value between parties. This method presents a potential emerging money laundering technique. The proliferation of electronic funds transfer systems raises the risk of such transactions being intercepted and redirected. Simultaneously, emerging technologies could also significantly contribute to concealing the origins of money laundering.

Money laundering is often described as a process with three sequential elements: placement, layering, and integration, as defined by a report from the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (2002). The initial stage is placement, which involves physically moving currency or funds obtained from illegal activities to a location or form that appears less suspicious to law enforcement and is more convenient for criminals. These proceeds may be introduced into traditional or nontraditional financial institutions or even the retail economy.

The subsequent stage is layering, during which proceeds are separated from their illegal source through complex financial transactions, such as wire transfers or monetary instruments. The intention here is to obscure the audit trail and conceal the origin of the funds. Finally, the integration stage involves converting illegal proceeds into seemingly legitimate business earnings through normal financial or commercial operations.

While not all money laundering transactions encompass all three phases, some may involve more than one, as indicated by Duyne (2003). Nevertheless, the three-stage classification remains a useful breakdown of what can be a complex process. Contrary to many other forms of crime, money laundering stands out due to its diversity in forms, participants, and settings. Even the most reputable banks may inadvertently serve customers with impeccable credentials, as exemplified by a report in the National Mirror online newspaper (dated 11 January 2013). The Anti-Corruption Network questioned the Special Fraud Unit of the Nigeria Police and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) about the N191 billion worth of assets forfeited by the former Managing Director of Oceanic Bank, Mrs. Cecilia Ibru.

Mrs. Ibru had forfeited over N191 billion in cash and assets to the Federal Government after pleading guilty to mismanaging shareholders' funds through a plea bargaining arrangement. She faced charges for several financial offenses, including money laundering, wire fraud, and abuse of office, following her dismissal by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in the wake of the global financial crisis.

In the research conducted by Abiola (2014), it was observed that the inadequacies in anti-money laundering programs in developing countries are often linked to ineffective internal control mechanisms, particularly within financial institutions. In this context, the Technology Effectiveness Planning and Evaluation Model (TEPEM) is proposed as an underlying framework. TEPEM is a multi-model consisting of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Three-Layered Model, which encompasses contingency theory, socio-technical system theory, and structuration theory.

According to an online article by The Guardian Nigeria dated April 17, 2012, the former governor of Nigeria's oil-rich Delta state, James Ibori, was sentenced by a London court after pleading guilty to fraud and money laundering. James Ibori, who started as a petty thief and eventually became one of Nigeria's wealthiest individuals, received a 13-year jail sentence for admitting to fraud involving nearly £50 million, a sum described by the judge as likely being absurdly low. The ex-governor of Delta state in Nigeria pleaded guilty in February to ten charges related to conspiring to launder state funds, actual counts of money laundering, and one charge of obtaining money transfer through deception and fraud.

Considering other factors, it's possible that the given figure is extremely low, and the actual amount could surpass £200 million. Determining the exact amount is challenging, as Judge Anthony Pitts informed Southwark Crown Court in London on Tuesday. The forthcoming confiscation proceedings may provide more insight into the scale of the sums implicated. The Metropolitan Police estimates that Ibori embezzled \$250 million (£157 million) from Nigerian public funds.

Laundering Mechanisms

Peter and Edwin (2004) highlighted a striking feature of money laundering: the multitude of methods employed to execute it. Several significant mechanisms are linked to distinct phases of money laundering, while others are applicable throughout the three phases of placement, layering, and integration. This section provides a detailed description of four money laundering methods—cash smuggling, casinos, insurance policies, and securities—each associated with different phases of the process:

- i. **Cash Smuggling:** One of the oldest techniques used for placement, the common smuggling of currency, appears to be on the rise. Bulk shipments are driven across the border or hidden within cargo, despite the fact that exporting more than \$10,000 in currency from the United States is illegal without filing a Report of International Transportation of Currency or Other Monetary Instruments (CMIR). Criminals have even resorted to acquiring shipping businesses to facilitate cash storage within the transported goods. Individual couriers transport cash in checked or carry-on baggage, or even on their persons. Smugglers may also opt for simpler methods, such as using mail services or established shipping companies like UPS or FedEx. The practice of cash stockpiling, allowing cash to accumulate while awaiting a smuggling opportunity, is believed to have increased, particularly in port or border regions. If the overall incidence of cash smuggling has indeed risen, it could partly be attributed to the effectiveness of banks' anti-money laundering measures.

- ii. **Casinos and Other Gambling Venues:** Chips are acquired through cash transactions, and following a variable period that may involve gambling activities, these chips are exchanged for a casino-issued check, often in the name of a third party. In scenarios

where a casino operates across different nations, it could unintentionally become an accomplice in international money laundering, especially when a patron requests credit to be extended to a casino in another country. Moreover, tokens themselves might serve as a medium for acquiring goods, services, or even illegal substances.

- a. **Horse racing:** Winning tickets are purchased at a slight premium, enabling the winner to collect their money without incurring tax liability. Simultaneously, this practice allows the launderer to receive a cheque from the track, with relevant taxes being deducted from the total amount.
- b. **Structuring or “smurfing.”** This practice involves breaking down cash deposits into amounts below the reporting threshold of \$10,000. Couriers, commonly referred to as "smurfs," are employed to make these deposits across multiple banks or to purchase cashier's checks in smaller denominations.
- c. **Informal value transfer systems.** These include 'hawalas,' an Arabic term referring to a specific international underground banking system. In this system, cash exchanged in country A can be transformed into cash (or even gold) in country B. The hawala encompasses a comprehensive range of services from initial placement to eventual integration. Comparable services are available under different names across various regions globally, such as 'fechi'en' in China.
- d. **Wire and electronic funds transfers:** These refer to methods through which banks transfer control of money by sending notifications to another institution, either by cable (in the past) or electronically. Such transfers remain a primary tool at all stages of the money laundering process, particularly in layering operations. Funds can be transferred through multiple banks in various jurisdictions to obscure the trail leading back to the origin of the funds. Alternatively, transfers can be executed from numerous bank accounts, into

which deposits have been made through 'smurfing,' and funneled into a principal collecting account, often situated abroad in an offshore financial center.

- e. **Legitimate business ownership:** Dirty money can be injected into the cash revenues of a legitimate business enterprise, especially those that are already cash-intensive, such as restaurants, bars, and video rental stores. The surplus money is discreetly mixed with the existing funds. The only expense incurred with this laundering method is the tax paid on the generated income. For businesses with more comprehensive transaction records, invoices can be manipulated to create a façade of legitimacy.

iii. Insurance Policies: Single premium insurance policies, where the premium is paid in a lump sum upfront rather than in annual installments, have gained popularity. Money launderers or their clients purchase these policies and later redeem them at a reduced rate. They pay the necessary fees and penalties, ultimately receiving a 'sanitized' check from the insurance company. Furthermore, insurance policies can also serve as collateral for loans from financial institutions. Often, insurance products are sold through intermediaries. As a result, insurance companies may not always have direct contact with the beneficiaries.

iv. Securities: The securities sector is characterized by frequent and numerous transactions, with various mechanisms that can be utilized to disguise proceeds as legitimate earnings from financial markets. Moreover, securities transactions frequently span international borders. This sector predominantly finds its use in the layering and integration stages of money laundering, as most law-abiding brokers do not accept cash transactions. However, this impediment does not hinder criminal activities within the financial sector itself, including embezzlers, insider traders, or those involved in securities fraud. These

individuals typically possess (often non-cash) funds already within the financial system. In the layering phase, a money launderer can easily acquire securities using illicit funds transferred from one or more accounts. Subsequently, they can then utilize the proceeds from the sale of these securities, which appear legitimate, as clean money.

- a. **Real estate transactions.** These methods can cloak the origins of illicit funds or function as seemingly legitimate front businesses, especially if they involve a high volume of cash transactions. Properties might be acquired and disposed of using fictitious names or through shell corporations, effectively serving as collateral in subsequent layering transactions.
- b. **Purchase of goods:** This practice can be especially appealing for money laundering, particularly involving certain commodities. Gold is a favored choice due to its universal acceptance as a store of value, its ability to offer anonymity, ease of transformation, and potential for tactics like double invoicing, false shipments, and other forms of fraudulent activity. Fine art and valuable items, such as rare stamps, are also enticing targets for money laundering due to the potential to create fake certificates of sale or acquire counterfeit reproductions of masterpieces.
- c. **Credit card advance payments:** A credit card holder might use illicit funds to make a substantial payment to the issuing bank, leading to a negative balance. Subsequently, the bank issues a check to cover the deficit, which can then be deposited into a personal account, seemingly legitimizing the funds. However, recent years have seen heightened bank scrutiny of such transactions, effectively deterring the use of this method for money laundering.
- d. **Currency exchange bureaus:** These entities are not subject to the same rigorous regulation as banks and, in practice, may operate without any regulation at all.

Consequently, they often serve as channels for money laundering activities. Notably, significant foreign exchange transactions are shifting from banks to these small enterprises. The laundering process involves two primary techniques. The first method entails converting substantial amounts of illicit funds from local currency into low-bulk European currency, facilitating their physical smuggling out of the country. The second technique involves the electronic transfer of funds to offshore centers. In a documented instance, a currency bureau allegedly facilitated the exchange of over \$50 million through a foreign bank, without recording these transactions in its official records.

Money Laundering Laws in Nigeria

The followings are the money laundering laws in Nigeria:

- A. **Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act, 2011:** This Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act, 2011 is divided into section of three parts namely:
 - i. Part 1 – Prohibition of Money Laundering;
 - ii. Part II – Offences;
 - iii. Part III – Miscellaneous

- B. **Compliance with Anti-Money Laundering Laws (National Insurance Commission):**

Section 4 stipulates that all insurers and reinsurers must submit their personnel status reports to the Commission at the end of each quarter, in accordance with the format provided in Form G4. Additionally, this section outlines specific guidelines concerning money laundering as follows.:

 - i. Section 4(2) outlines Customer Identification in alignment with the provisions of the Know Your Customers Guidelines (KYCG) issued by the National Insurance

Commission, as well as other guidelines and regulations that may be introduced by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) from time to time.

- ii. Section 4(3) discusses Cash Transaction Reports (CTR) that are captured by the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) within seven (7) days of any single cash transaction, lodgment, or transfer of funds exceeding: N1,000,000 or its equivalent in the case of an individual, or N5,000,000 or its equivalent in the case of a corporate body.
- iii. Section 4(4) of the Suspicious Transactions Report (STR) stipulates that all suspicious transactions, regardless of the amount involved, must be submitted to the NFIU within 7 (seven) days of the transaction taking place. The approved format for filing the report is Form AML-001. Failure to file an STR will result in various penalties in accordance with the relevant laws.

C. Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, 2004: The establishment of EFCC charged with the responsibility for enforcement of all economic and financial crimes laws.

D. Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006: An Act to prohibit and punish certain offences pertaining to Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences.

E. Special Control Unit against Money Laundering (SCUML) (2005): Meant to monitor, supervise and regulate the activities of all Designated Non-Financial Institutions (DNFIs) in Nigeria in consonance with the country's Anti Money Laundering and Combating of the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regime.

- F. Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Anti-money laundering compliance manual guideline (2013):** Circular to Banks and Other Financial Institutions: Amendment of Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Regulation, 2009 (As Amended) to Align with Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act (MLPA), 2011 (As Amended), Terrorism (Prevention) Act (TPA), 2011 (As Amended) and the Revised FATF 40 Recommendation (2012).
- G. Independent Corrupt Practices Commission ICPC, Act 2000:** Specified as an Act to prohibit and prescribe punishment for corrupt practices and other related offences in Nigeria. Section 6 (d) states that the Service is to advise heads of public bodies of any changes in practices, systems or procedures compatible with the effective discharge of the duties of the public bodies as the Commission thinks fit to reduce the likelihood or incidence of bribery, corruption, and related offences.
- H. Securities and Exchange Commission Nigeria (2010):** Anti-Money Laundering/Combating Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Compliance Manual for Capital Market Operators. It is divided into three parts.
- I. Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap C20, Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 2004 (CAMA),** is the principal legislation that regulates corporate entities registered in Nigeria and the Corporate Affairs Commission (the “Commission” or “CAC”) is the supervisory regulatory body for registered corporate entities.
- J. The Income Tax (Transfer Pricing) Regulations No 1, 2012:** The money laundered abroad by corrupt military rulers and politicians is part of this “illicit outflows”. The Global Financial Integrity report found that the bulk of the illicit flow was transfer pricing (or mispricing) by global corporations operating in Africa.

Concept of Forensic Accounting

Coenen (2005) stated that forensic accounting involved the application of accounting concepts and techniques to legal problem. It demands reporting, where the accountability of the fraud is established and the report is considered as evidence in the court of law or in the administrative proceedings (Joshi, 2003).

It provides an accounting analysis that is suitable to the court, which will form the basis of discussion, debate and ultimately dispute resolution (Zysman, 2001). These means that forensic accounting is a field of specialization that has to do with provision of information that is meant to be used as evidence especially for legal purposes. The persons practicing in this field (i.e. forensic accountants) investigate and documents financial fraud, money laundering and white-collar crimes such as embezzlement and investigate allegations of fraud, estimates losses damages and assets and analyses complex financial transactions.

They provide those services for corporation, attorney, criminal investigators and the government (Coenen, 2005). Zysman, (2001), the forensic accountant's engagements are usually geared towards finding where money went, how it got there, and who was responsible. They are trained to look beyond the numbers and deal with business reality of the situation. Oyedokun(2016), stated that forensic accounting investigation is investigation that is conducted with the intention that the outcome will have legal consequences. Unlike fraud investigation, forensic accounting investigation covers both fraudulent investigations and non-fraudulent investigations. Fraud investigation is an aspect of forensic accounting investigation. Pangalos (2010), Forensic Accounting encompasses both litigation support and investigative accounting.

Forensic Accounting provides an accounting analysis that is suitable to the court which will form the basis for discussion, debate and ultimately dispute resolution. A forensic accountant is charged with the task of pouring over vast amounts of figures in order to find out where illegal

financial practices have taken place and whether or not companies or individuals have been fraudulently treated by a person or company acting on their behalf. A forensic accountant will seek to trace any financial discrepancies within a company's accounts and use so-called 'paper trails' or 'audit trails' to try and locate missing monies and also to find out who misappropriated them to begin with.

Forensic Accounting Techniques

Technology is rapidly growing thereby increasing its complexities to understand. Fraudulent acts which normally involved technology devices is also becoming more complex. The coming of the science of big data is posing a big challenge of its analytics. This depicts there is no physical intervention to identified areas of manipulation unless digital forensic is employed with better techniques and skills. Hence, forensic accountant techniques are becoming the most viable methods of detecting and preventing frauds in the organization. Therefore, to build confidence in evidence system, forensic investigators must adopt acceptable techniques and apply the right skills in proving their cases. There exist several techniques; a discussion of some of those follows.

Outlier Detective Techniques

Outliers are extreme values that deviate from other observations on data; they may indicate a variability in a measurement, experimental errors or a novelty. In other words, an outlier is an observation that diverges from a normal and intended pattern on a sample. By definition, Hawkins (1980) define an outlier as an observation which deviates so much from the other observations as to arouse suspicions that it was generated by a different mechanism. Hans-Peter, Peer and Arthur (2010) stated that this technique is applicable in fraud detection, medicine, sport statistics, detecting measurement errors and public health. In fraud detection, outlier detective technique is applicable because the behavior of a credit card owner usually changes when there is stolen. A stolen credit card is always characterized by an abnormal purchasing pattern.

According to Sergio (2017), outliers could be univariate and multivariate. Univariate outliers are found when looking at a distribution of values in a single space while multivariate outliers are n-dimensional space. Outliers are of different flavors which may be point, contextual or collective outliers depending on the environment.

Relative Size Factor Test (RSF).

The purpose of the relative size factor (RSF) test is to identify anomalies where the largest amount for subsets in a given key is outside the norm for those subsets. This test compares the top two amounts for each subset and calculates the RSF for each. Menas (2014) stated that the relative size factor theory depicts unusual fluctuations which arise from fraudulent activities or errors. RSF is a measure of the ratio of the largest number to the second largest number of a given set of data.

Putting this in practice, there exist a financial limits of a vendor, customer or employee which is defined from the available data if not already define. At a point where an abnormality occur, further examination of the data is required which will help to discover the nature of the abnormality. If it is notice that the record falls outside the prescribed range, then fraud or error is suspected. Osho (2017) examines the effect of forensic accounting on University financial system in Nigeria concludes that forensic accounting is the application of a specialized knowledge and specific skills to stumble upon the evidence of economic transactions.

Forensic Accountants Education/Training

According to Lee and Blaszczyński (1999), employers expected accounting students to learn a multitude of skills, not simply how to generate and use accounting information. These skills include being able to communicate, work in a group environment, solve real world problems, and use computer and Internet tools. Aderibigbe (2000) reviews in his study that forensic

accountant requires high-level of competence, integrity and honesty to perform his job. He also opined that forensic accountants must be thoroughly trained, must be competence by passing all relevant examinations/training to become a member of a recognized accountancy body. Furthermore, forensic accountants should always be outstanding in terms of integrity, honesty and probity, and must maintain a professional attitude in the performance of his responsibilities. Similarly, Harris and Brown (2000) identified specialized skills and technical abilities as basic qualities of a forensic accountant. Forensic accountants must be familiar with criminal and civil law, computer forensics and understands the courtroom procedures and expectations. These researchers also stressed investigative skills, including theories, methods, and patterns of fraud abuse. Forensic accountants think creatively to consider and understand the tactics that a fraud perpetrator may use to commit and conceal fraudulent acts especially using digital equipment's. Additionally, they need to clearly and concisely communicate findings to various parties, including those with less knowledge of accounting and auditing especially during litigations.

According to Rezaee (2002), sample of under-graduates and graduate accounting students were examined, and the results indicated that the students believed that forensic accounting is a viable career option but is not getting the proper attention in Colleges and Universities. However, Grippo and Ibex (2003) postulate that, the most important skills in forensic accounting comes from experience in accounting and auditing, taxation, business operations, management, internal controls, interpersonal relationships, and communication.

According to Akers and Porter (2003) advocated that the AICPA and the Institute of Management Accountants recognize emotional intelligence skills as critical for the success of the accounting profession. This is to enable forensic accountants have a deep and critical investigative thinking. Messmer (2004) stated that successful forensic accountants must have

analytical abilities, strong written and verbal communication skills, a creative mindset, and business acumen. They must be able to interview and elicit information from potentially uncooperative people and possess a strong amount of skepticism. The challenge of delivering graduates with a more extensive and special skill especially in computer forensic is highlighted in recent studies.

Ramaswamy (2005) believed that forensic accountants are distinctively positioned to be able to uncover financial deceptions and fraud. Therefore, their prominent skills being an in-depth knowledge of financial statements, the ability to critically analyze, and a thorough understanding of fraud schemes. He also believed the ability to comprehend the internal-control systems of corporations and be able to assess their risks. The knowledge of psychology helps them to understand the impulses behind criminal behavior that motivate and encourage financial deception. Also, interpersonal and communication skills that aid in disseminating information about the company's ethics and an understanding of criminal and civil law and of the legal system and court procedures are skills that aid forensic accountant

Rezaee, Crumbley and Elmore (2006) surveyed opinions of practitioners and academics regarding the importance, relevance, and delivery of forensic accounting education. Their results indicated that the demand for and the interest in forensic accounting will continue to increase. Their study further shows that both practitioners and academics viewed accounting education as relevant and beneficial to accounting students. However, the groups differed in opinions regarding topical coverage of forensic accounting. In searching for the skill area of forensic accountants, DiGabriele (2008, 2009), in a US study found that both academics and practitioners agreed that critical thinking, unstructured problem-solving, investigative flexibility, analytical proficiency, and legal knowledge are important and core skills for forensic accountants.

Ahadiat (2010) conducted a study in which he asked respondents to rate the skills expected of an accountant and the auditor. The results from his study shows that accounting curricula across the United States were revised to include instructions aimed at improving students' knowledge, skills, and abilities, which would go beyond their technical knowledge. These skills included, communication skills, analytical skills, presentation skills, team orientation, critical thinking, among others. However, a study conducted by Sugahara and Coman (2010) attempted to compare the differences in Japanese faculty and practitioners' perceived importance of generic skills for CPAs in order to assess accounting the CPA Law Amendment of 2003. It was found that Japanese accounting faculty and practitioners commonly perceived the information skill type as the most important, and the behavioral skill type as the second most important, but they tended to regard the interpersonal skill type as less important. Several implications are also raised from the findings to improve the quality education of Japanese CPAs and also to facilitate the international harmonization of accounting education. Studies by scholars, such as

Ekeigwe (2011), highlighted that analytical skill remains the foremost trait that forensic accountant are expected to possess. Their results also revealed that the skill sets of forensic accountant are eclectic. These include general civilization, communication, accounting, business, auditing, technology, psychology, criminology, courtroom behavior, and meta-thinking skills.

Chukwunedu and Okoye (2018) postulated that forensic accounting techniques injected in an audit and given cost/benefit considerations are capable of increasing the ability of the auditor to detect fraud and thus help bridge the audit expectation gap. This finding has implications for both accounting education and accounting practice.

To improve our digital skills for the longer term we need to start with our schools (Oliver O ,2014). Following warnings from Gools's Eric Schmidt. The Royal Society and Computing at School, England has a new computing curriculum starting in September 2014. This represents both an excellent opportunity and a major challenge. If we can teach our young people a balance curriculum of digital literacy, ICT and computer science, they will be well prepared for the future.

The educating of forensic accountants should include academics from a range of disciplines, including accounting especially auditing and corporate finance, law, criminology, computer forensics, and ethics. It should also include practitioners and researchers in the field (Kranacher, Morris, Pearson, & Riley Jr., 2008).

The pedagogy in forensic accounting education would encompass case instruction, role playing experience, guest speakers, student and academic internships in industry, communication skills involving student interaction and student presentation of evidence, all aimed at providing students with as many experiences in the field as possible. The lecture/tutorial mode does not easily lend itself to these student experiences (Maria, 2012).

An undergraduate degree in commerce majoring in Accounting will generally equip students with a number of the essential skills and a sound knowledge of accounting in the fields of management, financial reporting, finance and auditing. In the business area the students will have an understanding of economics, statistics, ethics and the legal and taxation system in which business operates. These are in the author's view essential prerequisites to the training of forensic accountants in a postgraduate setting. At this level the student numbers are usually lower and it is feasible to move away from the lecture/tutorial mode and adopt a more appropriate pedagogy. There are in the author's view, a minimum of four essential units required

in a Masters level specialization in forensic accounting. A unit in Forensic Accounting, a unit in the study of Fraud and Criminology, a unit in Forensic Information Technology, and a unit in Litigation Support.

Forensic Information System and Information Technology

Equity Funding Scandal was one of the first major financial scandals where computers were used to assist in perpetrating a fraud in 1970's. It was uncovered that the fraud was perpetrated by the CEO and other conspirators keeping electronic track of phony insurance policies by assigning special codes to them (Pearson & Singleton, 2008). Accounting graduates would be familiar with the role of IT in the field of accounting many will be familiar with at least one accounting package such as MYOB, and those students who chose computerized accounting electives may also have hands on experience of Solution 6 and SAP (Systems Applications and Products in Data Processing). In auditing, they may have been introduced to continuous audit programs, the skills of data mining and analysis, and anti-fraud programs. This unit would be concerned with ensuring that students have hands on experience with accounting software packages; data-mining software for data extraction and analysis; and continuous monitoring and auditing software for the prevention, deterrence and detection of fraudulent transactions passing through the accounting information system. Hence these classes require the use of computer labs, with the necessary computer programs, and academics with an information technology background. Software should include those whose purpose is case management, link analysis and data retrieval. Students and academics would benefit from internships or practicum programs with accounting firms involved in real ongoing fraud investigations in a digital environment.

The Control Objective for Information Related Technology (COBIT) is a management tool for Information Technology, which defines what needs to be done to implement an effective control structure in a digital environment and is meant for use by management, Information Technology

auditors, and forensic accountants. Students familiar with the SAP program can be introduced to a methodology for fraud detection, starting with an understanding of the business processes; understanding the types of fraud that could be perpetrated in each process; determining the symptoms or red flags that the fraud types would generate; use search capabilities to detect potential red flags; and investigate the red flags found. Basic application of threat monitoring of security audit logs can reveal who has accessed the system, when they accessed the system and what password they used. Thus it is possible to identify unauthorized activity within the system.

Once unauthorized activity is detected then it can be monitored over time and patterns of usage can reveal whether there is any collusion between two or more users of the system, and whether any fraud has occurred. Students would be introduced to cyber-forensics. Cyber-forensics involves the capture, preservation, identification, extraction, analysis, documentation, and case preparation related to digital data and events (Kruse II & Heiser 2002). The first step is to capture the digital evidence without altering or damaging the original. Authenticating the digital evidence for analysis is the key to maintaining a chain of custody for evidence to be viable for use in legal proceedings. Finally, analyzing the digital evidence without modifying it is also critical in cyber forensics (Pearson & Singleton, 2008). The forensic accountant needs to know the various sources of digital evidence, ranging from laptops, computers, servers, Blackberry phones, to email, voice mail, CDs, DVDs, RAM, and the internet. Encase software will enable a bit streaming backup of disk drives that may contain evidence. Accounting knowledge of business processes and cycles is invaluable in detecting and investigating fraud. Being able to identify anomalies and suspicious transactions is the key.

Software such as ACL and IDEA that can retrieve, filter, extract, sort and analyze data from accounting databases are the primary tools of forensic accountants. An understanding of the relationships between the electronic files in which the accounting information resides is

paramount. Cyber-crimes include obtaining digital information without authorization, obtaining classified information without authorization, access to any non-public computer, and access to a protected computer such as one used by the U.S. government or financial institution (U.S. Department of Justice 2002). Cyber-crime is a key fraud growth area, and the tools used are widely available and no longer require a high degree of technical skill. At one end of the spectrum, we have the novice hacker causing damage without a systematic organized plan for mischief. On the other end of the spectrum are professional hackers for hire who work as consultants to obtain internal company secrets, steal thousands of credit cards, facilitate money laundering etc.. They are parties to organized crime; however they are up for bid to the highest bidder (Pearson & Singleton, 2008). Just as digital tools and techniques are used to commit fraud and financial crimes, so digital tools and techniques can be used to detect the crime. Casey and Magenau (2002) suggested that the increasing ease by which criminals can conceal their acts and convert assets to their personal use in ways that have outpaced the knowledge and skills of both auditors and law enforcement to detect or investigate.

A study on cross-sectional of information technology impact have compared the business performance of firms with information technology to those without IT, and statistically estimated the impact (Akabom-Ita, 2012). Using data from Hardee's fast food Chain, Rajiv, Robert and Richard (1990), compared the performance of the restaurants deploying the positron technology (a computerized cash register point-of-sale and order-coordination technology) to those without Positron. They found that the use of the positron technology is associated with a significantly greater productivity for stores with high diversity of sales. The revolution in information technology has significantly changed the nature of business (Elliot, 1998) and created competitive advantages for those who appreciate its effects. Since accounting is part of human life, the advent of information technology has affected its substance of information. The

introduction of computer software and its associated technology has changed the way data was stored, retrieved and controlled in accounting systems. It is believed that the first use of a computerized accounting system was at General Electric in 1954.

During the time period of 1954 to the mid-1960s, the auditing profession was still auditing around the computer. At this time only mainframe computers were used and few people had the skills and abilities to program computers (Akabom-Ita, 2012). In the mid-1960s, the change in technology affected the size and cost of computing machines. This increased the use of computers in businesses also brought out the need for accountants to be familiar with accounting computer software. Along with the increase in computer use, came the rise of different types of accounting systems. The formation and rise in popularity of the internet and e-commerce have had significant influences on the growth of information technology audit. The Internet influences the lives of most people in the world and also increases the rate and ease of crime. Information technology auditing helps organizations and individuals on the internet find security while helping commerce and communications to flourish (Rimaswany, 2005).

The emergence of Information technology has significantly impacted on the forensic accounting profession a positive trend of improve accounting skills. First, there is a drastic increase by firms, the use of computer accounting software and associated accounting packages that facilitate forensic accounting practices. Secondly, large firms are developing computerized aid decision (CAD) software's to assist them in basic accounting practices, decision making , client acceptance issues, analytical procedures, etc. (Leech & Dowling, 2006). Thirdly, even small accounting firms have been encouraged to adopt information technology such as electronic work papers, accounting software's. Fourth, information technology impacts positively on the behavior and attitudes of individuals working in the firm, and the structure and processes of the firm. Fifth, information technology appears to increase accounting quality and productivity

through system automation, eliminating certain procedures, and enhancing information and knowledge sharing capabilities (Vera-Munoz, Hov and Chow, 2006).

In reality technology plays several roles in assisting the forensic accounting investigation and those roles need to be supervised and managed in order to support the objectives of the investigation. Forensic investigation involves a wide range of careful monitoring, assessments and evaluations when it comes to most real, accurate process of investigation and implies to most risky and delicate crime scenarios calling for forensics to take charge of every possible steps that leads to crime resolutions and further comprehensive research in the area of forensic studies. Technology brings in computer security as a form of defense against unauthorized and malicious intrusion and computer forensics allows for identification of incidents, gathering of evidence, analysis of evidence and potentially recovery of records as there has been multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary nature of computer forensics extends to records management. It is worth mentioning that computer forensic and accounting work hand in hand in modern day crime investigation.

The courts acceptance of computerized forensics evidence depends on how the overall scene investigated are protected and the deepness of records keeping and management is served at all times without any suspicious alterations and utterances towards any material used and presented as upper hand evidence in court hearings and proceedings (Rumaswany, 2005). The main role of technology in forensics involves easy access to convenience in finding out records and information to the highest level, gaining access to computer based files that is of importance in assuring the reliability, validity as well as effectiveness of computer system and its operations, technology happens to be found at the centre core as it aids in storing and keeping of confidential evidence to the crime scene, a tool that brings in effective channeling of communication, studying, interpreting and diagnosing what crime anatomy it has been on a situational basis, computer based forensics help in testing evidences on a higher continuum allowing in forensic

investigative outcomes appropriate and desirable as possible, keeping in a better track of profiles and the needed back up information files for a possible archives of crime cases that are undergoing investigations, court hearings by some of well-known forensic pathologists/psychologists as well as certain FBI, CIA, DSS and other crime organized groups for a possible cases (Winters, 2004). Another essential role of technology is for records management as it implies to the exploration of forensic methods and techniques being associated with computer forensics. For instance, according to Winters, (2004), the disciplines of records management and computer forensics allows for identification of incidents, gathering of evidence, analysis of evidence and potentially recovery of records and so forensic team and expert could utilize computer forensics principles to positively enhance records management and have valuable knowledge and expertise to share with the other computer forensics colleagues example, towards metadata expertise, functional requirements for electronic records management, recordkeeping systems design and implementation methodologies, digital preservation and retention management (Winters, 2004). In addition, proponents Wang, Gopal and Zionts (1997), believed in the rapid advance in computer and network technology, computer-based electronic evidence has increasingly played an important role in the courtroom over the last decade. Furthermore, they have also noted that computer forensics implies to the growing discipline rooted in forensic science and computer security technology, focuses on acquiring electronic evidence from computer systems to prosecute computer crimes, national security threats, as well as computer abuse, as there loses a certain mystique as a technique used solely by law enforcement and intelligence agents, and has become popular and powerful application employed by corporations as deemed for civil disputes also for employee terminations and some proceedings relating to intellectual property (Wang, 2005).

The future of computer based forensics is clear as government, courts, organizations and others are placing ample emphasis on fact finding grounds in support to computer related forensic

records upon guarding of some inadequate recordkeeping, ensuring accuracy of forensic evidence records and the guarantee aspect that these are not being put into compromise as deemed important for the court to recognize. Computer forensics can help ensure that computer forensics provides support, backup and reassurance for forensic experts in performing in ideal role and tasking as well as the quest to ensure the ongoing accessibility and integrity of technology manifested knowledge and information. Smith (2005) has indicated that, technologies played an important role in daily activities of the society as benefits are derived. Also, Sing (1992) did claim that computer crime is of perilous move to forensic research as of the present as computer base control is needed for prevention of abuses in investigations as it requires forensic specialist for records construction and maintenance in assessing effective domains of the forensics. According to Hinders (2009), forensic accounting is a field that combines accounting with information technology.

One of the reasons is because forensic accountants, as the practitioners in the field, make use of sophisticated computer programs to analyze financial data and find evidence which would be legally valid during a court proceeding. Notably, objective verification is the primary goal of forensic accounting and is also the reason why forensic accountants are asked to testify in court cases as expert witnesses. Working on both civil and criminal court case, forensic accounting professionals may be asked to calculate economic damages or to present evidence of offences. Information need to be accurate because these are used to distinguish about how much something is worth. Today, information are mostly stored in the computers especially that businesses make use of information technology at some level thus it is a duty of forensic accountants to understand and explain how information technology plays a role in offenses and likewise how information technology could pinpoint what particular components of information gathered plays a role in accumulating the offense. One of the key areas that information technology can

definitely support forensic accounting is database knowledge and an understanding of how the database system works (KPMG 2008).

As such, forensic accountants may understand all the information but not all the systems involved with these information. Looking at an offense scenario from a fraud-awareness perspective, forensic data analysis would be simply with the aid of information technology and, at times, information technology experts in examining organizational data in order that patterns of fraud profile could be identified. This data/information could be logical and/or numerical and statistical. Neural-net and other data mining technologies, for instance, could be utilized for the purpose of developing models of fraud detection, prediction and prevention where known fraud patterns are lacking or obscure. Developing an offense scenario, translating this scenario into an offense profile and applying appropriate investigative techniques to corporate databases would be convenient using different technologies.

Modern Forensic challenges

Today's technology has led to huge volume of accounting data and heterogeneous information scattered around the globe leading to challenges in auditing and forensic accounting (Luca, Steffen & Wojciech, 2017). Cybercrime and modern technologies have created borderless crimes that have opened a new page for law enforcement, anti-corruption agencies and security expert. With all these challenges, the future must include and improve on investigation tactics and techniques to meet up with the current trends of corruption and financial crime and also to protect modern societies. The increase in ICT presence in business transaction, commercial activities and government services giving corruption a hidden layer to operate, also the tight coupling of physical office technology equipment has led to the exposure of financial data and information that corrupt elements uses for social engineering to commits crimes. The process of

identifying all these corrupts elements for the purpose of appropriate punishment needs a modern investigation and high quality evidence to be presented in courtroom.

Apart from impediment of different jurisdiction and legal issues in pursuing trans-border financial crimes, highly heterogeneous complex hardware/software raises challenges especially where digital equipment are involved. Accounting software have come to stay which leads to accountants and accounting system embracing ICT system. The use of accounting software which make work faster and easy to track crimes also has the downside of the challenges of stored data and files systems, network forensic and reverse engineering(Luca et al, 2017). Though the evolution of technology has also lead to software that help in digital forensic though their usage depend on the investigators/forensic analyst techniques and skills.

In recent times, everyday news leads with financial fraud and corruption as headlines in public and private sector. There is no doubt that perpetrator of these crimes carry out their act under the nose of internal auditors which are meant to prevent fraud and corruption. It suffices to say that due to the failure of internal auditor's failure system, external auditors are initiated. Then later, a creation of anti-crime commissions were created, yet fraudulent activities are on the increase (Abu &Acho, 2018). Consequently, Nigerian rating and fortunes continue to be on the downside with series of empirical evidences shown that corrupt element are more sophisticated (in techniques and skilss) than anti-corruption crusaders. Economically, fraudulent activities are has become a serious calamity to both developing and developed countries. The detection and pining it on an individual or a group is becoming very elusive due to complex nature of device or techniques used by fraudsters and also lack of investigation techniques and skills that will be acceptable in court as evidence. Though forensic is a useful tool in solving corrupts cases, lack of

diligent and technical presentation of evidence in court rooms have always allow culprit to walk free from court cases.

Fighting Corruption by EFCC and ICPC

Recovery of fraudulent crimes can only be achieved by identification of culprits through effective investigation and litigation. In this realm, many forensic technologies tools and techniques can help investigators to do their jobs better. In develop nation, forensic sciences has become a robust research and government is seriously supporting it. Research has created tools and techniques that can identify, collect, analyze, interpret and preserve evidence. These may sometimes use DNAanalysis which within a matter of minutes can create profile from degraded sample (Danielle, Dawn, charle&Heather, 2018). Other forensic technologies used are facial and clothing imaging and other biometric systems.

Internal control and seen to a tradition means of detecting and controlling fraudulent activities with an organization (Abuh&Acho, 2018).However what internal control is made up of varies from organization to organization which may be term opinions. Also Abu and Acho cited Blake, 2011 posting that effective internal control system alone cannot guard against fraud. In continuation, Sorunke (2018) posted that the failure of traditional internal control system has led to the birth of forensic accounting as a means of fraud detection. In Nigeria, corruption has become so endemic that everyone agrees that it is one of the issues causing economic backwardness. Unfortunately, effort put in by various anti-corruption agencies to check corruption is proving abortive (Sorunke, 2018).AdegbieandFakile, (2012) opined that war against corruption is lost because of non-availability of appropriate support service for litigation which most a times lead to misjudgment or incorrect submission by layers and judges. Obasanjo

(2017) posted that lack of technical knowhow, political will and skills makes high profile corruption cases involving political expose persons walk free the country without conviction. It has become clear to every citizen that anti-corruption investigators and prosecutors can only win the war on corruption if they can come up with legally acceptable techniques which will lead to legally acceptable evidence in court room. Today, the general beliefs of all scholars, researchers and Nigerian citizen is that forensic accounting investigation techniques can offer solution to menace of fraud but only when the right skills and techniques of investigation is applied.

In an empirical study carried out by Dada (2014) on forensic accounting techniques as it relates to EFCC in Nigeria, the research posited that corruption prevention is significantly and positively related to fraud prevention. At the same times, the study states that the EFCC has no forensic accounting unit or department. The researches urge the EFCC as a matter of urgency to established a forensic accounting unit and get the service of trained expert to carry out investigation of corruption cases. Adebisi and Gbegi (2015) in their study involving EFCC, ICPC and code of conduct Bureau (CCB) empirically found out in their study that application of forensic skills and techniques will build confidence in investors in Nigeria.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

Nigerian political space and daily operation is always fill with the news of corruption with many assertion coming from different angles depending on fire the shot and which angle he/she is looking at. While some blame politics, religious organization and families upbringing for corruption, it has become difficult to actually pinpoint the angle corruption is coming from. The

emergence of new political part with a new government has not answered the yearning of the people. This study takes on the corruption fighting agencies to ascertain whether their techniques and skills in fighting corruption is lacking but prove the opposite. This shows the complex nature of Nigerian society and its operation.

It has been observed that techniques and skills possessed by corruption investigators are adequate. All answered question set for the study confirms that techniques and skills used by forensic accountant and corruption investigators are adequate and relevant. This is in line with the view of (Gbegi& Adebisi, 2014)who stated that theimprovement of forensic accounting skills and techniques has raised the hope of uncovering fraud globally. He attested that forensic accounting has helped to uncovering fraud and corruption in countries such as Britain, Canada, Germany and United States where better techniques are in use. Forensic accounting skills and techniques have influence on improving investigation which in turn reduces fraud in the Nigerian public sector. This is supported by the view of John (2019) that the improvement of corruption skills and techniques in fraud investigation will raised the hope of reducing fraud globally. This assertion may sound weird but it is clear that politician don't involve in investigation. This means that investigators with good skills and using improved techniques will nailed fraudsters and corrupt persons.

Conclusion

The study evaluated why techniques and skills is important fraud investigation in both public and private sector of Nigeria by Anti-Corruption Agencies. It should be emphasized that whether within the businessworld or in the public sector, the ultimate responsibility for investigating fraud cases rests on the skills and techniques acquired. Forensic accounting and investigation are not new to the developed nor is it in developing nations. Acquiring good skills and using modern techniques have contributed greatly to Anti-Corruption Agencies in Nigeria in the investigation of complex fraud cases particularly EFCC and ICPC as more money has so far been recovered.

Recommendation

The findings of this research have provided enough evidence to advocate a holistic approach to fighting corruption rather than doing a piece meal approach of saying this and that is concern for corruption. Although, there have been several efforts by the past and present political regimes in fighting corruption, it appears that some of the efforts put in place were able to yield minimal outcomes. The recent initiative regarding application of information communication technologies (ICTs) in the general management of public affairs has been considered as effective mechanism to complement the effort in curbing. The current initiative to reduce the level of corruption in Nigeria necessitates the implementation of e-governance strategy which revolves around the Treasury Single Account (TSA), internet banking, and limitation in cash withdrawal, the Government Integrated Financial Management Information System, and cashless policy among others. These numerous strategies have been utilized to minimize corrupt practices in Nigeria. Some of these strategies have provided opportunity to prevent ghost workers from continuous existence in Nigerian public sector. Although, the adoption of these measures has been producing positive outcomes, however, there are numerous challenges affecting the effective functioning of e-governance especially among the citizens.

These challenges range from social arena where there is low literacy level, poor basic education, lack of access to internet by rural populace, lack of feedback, low level of technological adaptation, different languages, shortage of skills, poor IT literacy as well as political aspects that revolves around lack of cyber laws, poor reform agenda, low budget allocation among others. To make the use of ICTs more effective in the public sector, the government needs to ensure training and retraining of its staff in handling ICTs for effective service delivery, provide affordable market for internet users, re-orientate the local community

of its benefits and provide enabling environment for effective implementation of e-governance at the local, state and national levels. Integration of all these aspect will reduce corruption.

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