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Effect of Forensic Accounting on Nigerian Economy: Empirical Evidence from a Selected Nigerian Banks

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Abstract

The external auditors have continued to certify fraudulent financial statement as unqualified audit report. This however, had led to impoverishment of investors as well as corporate collapse and economic crisis. The failure of external auditors in their responsibility of detecting financial fraud has created a gap between the users of accounting information and accounting profession. This study therefore, examines the effect of forensic accounting on economic stability in Nigeria. Survey research design was employed through questionnaires distributed to the targeted respondents. The target population that was drawn from five branches of Fidelity bank in Nnewi metropolis with a total of 25 employees consisting of internal controls officers of the bank. The data collected was analyzed using five point likert's scale and the formulated hypothesis was tested using t-test statistical tool with aid of SPSS version 20.0. The study found that forensic accounting contributed to economic stability in Nigeria. The study thereby recommends that government should institutionalized forensic accounting as a veritable tool to strengthen and consolidate the skills required to detect economic and financial crimes effectively.

Key words: Forensic accounting, Economic stability and Nigerian banks

Introduction

Forensic accounting is a rapidly growing area of accounting that describes the engagement that results from actual or anticipated discrepancies. Forensic Accounting is an investigative mean of accounting used to decide whether an individual or an organization has engaged in any illegal financial activities. Professional Forensic Accountant may work for government or public accounting firms. Although, forensic accounting has been in existence for several decades, it has evolved over time to include several types of financial information scrutiny. Forensic accounting is the application of financial skills and investigative mentality to unsettled issues, conducted within the context of the rules of evidence (Arokiasamy & Cristal, 2009). In addition, Nigeria economic stability largely depends on various sectors of the economy such as agriculture, oil, services, transportation, overseas remittances, foreign aid, labour force and human capital (Ofodile, 2013). Thus, it is only the instrumentality of forensic accounting that can help in meeting the proper utilization of all these economic sectors towards realization of national goal. EFCC is an agency established to fight financial crimes in public sector of the economy. The activities of this agency are regulated by EFCC Act 2004.

A series of events in the last two decades have placed accounting practices on the front burner for both the international community and international financial institutions. The accountant's work is to traditionally serve public interest which means the collective well-being of the community of people and institutions (Sheetz, 2006).

The auditors' certification is very special and significant, it invests credence in financial statement; it holds them out as valid for use for a variety of decisions, which should supposedly advance user's interest. A breach of any of the fundamental ethical principles of competence and integrity therefore has far reaching consequences. For instance, it corrupts and pollutes the accounting numbers, so that they become of doubtful value (Coenen, 2008). This was clearly resulted in a number of widely publicized cases of fraud or corporate scandals namely; Enron, Worldcom, Xeror, Global Crossing, Tyco in the United States of America (USA): Parmalat in Italy and in Nigeria, Union Dicon Salt, Lever Brothers now Unilever, Cadbury and the sacking of the management and board of five banks by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) due to fraud and financial abuses, (Owojori and Asaolu 2009; Kapmag 2008). In Nigeria, corruption, money laundering and mismanagement of resources and other related crimes have assumed alarming proportions and has become order of the day both in the public and private sectors of the economy (Balarebe, 2009; Williams, 2010).

The spates of corporate failure have placed greater responsibilities on forensic accountants to equip themselves with the skills to identify and act upon indicators of poor corporate governance, mismanagement, frauds and other wrong doings. It has become imperative for professional forensic accountants to be grounded in the techniques for identifying, discovering as well as preserving the evidence of all forms of financial abuses. Though accounting practices has improved tremendously, but recent electronic frauds have become complex and sophisticated to a magnitude that they could go unrecognized (Haynes, 2009). This requires finding ways to overcome the new challenges to match the capacity of financial crime level. The failure of statutory audit to detect, prevent and reduce misappropriation of corporate fraud and the increase in corporate crime has put pressure on the professional forensic accountants and the legal practitioners to find a better way of exposing fraud in business world. This article therefore examined the concept and the need for forensic accounting; the effect of economic crime and corruption on the economy; the skills and methods of uncovering fraud and indicators of financial crime. It also highlights the challenges facing the forensic accountant, makes policy recommendation and draws conclusion.

The issue of corporate financial fraud could be traced from recent bank failure in Nigeria where management has fraudulently given loans without board approval and yet such bank annual report has been unqualified for its shady deals. However, external auditors have continued to certify fraudulent financial statement as unqualified audit report thus, resulting to impoverishment of investors and most times corporate collapse and economic crisis. Since the external auditors has failed in their responsibility of detecting financial fraud, rather has claimed to be only responsible for laying credence to financial statement this has created a gap between the users of accounting information and accounting profession. Despite this report on fraudulent activities in Nigeria, many foreign investors as well have lost several billions of dollars to fraudsters thereby leading to dis-investment from Nigeria. On this note, this study assesses the effect of forensic accounting on economic stability in Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Forensic Accounting

Forensic accounting is different from the old debit and credit accounting as it provides an accounting analysis that is suitable to the organization in resolving any dispute that may arise in such firms. Okoye (2006) defined accounting "as the process of identifying, measuring and communicating economic information to permit informed judgment and decision by the users of the information". More so, Oladipupo (2005) opined that financial investigation is an examination of the record and accounts of an organization for a special purpose. The integration of accounting, auditing and investigation yield the specialty known as forensic accounting. Forensic accounting is focused, therefore, upon both the evidence of economic transactions and reporting as contained within an accounting system, and the legal framework which allows such evidence to be suitable for the purpose of establishing accountability and/or valuation (Okolo, 2007). In other words, forensic accounting is accounting that is suitable for legal review, offering the highest level of assurance, and including the now generally accepted connotation of having been arrived at in a scientific fashion (Crumbley, 2006). Forensic accounting remains the most challenging and sophisticated area in the financial sector. Although, the profession does not possess a formal definition, Razaee, Crumley and Elmore (2006) defined forensic and investigative accounting as "the application of financial skills and an investigative mentality to unresolved issues, conducted within the context of the rules of evidence." Forensic accounting in the view of Sheetz (2006) is simply the use of accounting discipline to help determine issues of facts in business litigation.

Manning (2010) also defined forensic accounting as the application of financial accounting and investigative skills to a standard acceptable by the courts to address issues in disputes in the context of civil and criminal litigation. In the view Dimilola and Olofinsola (2007) forensic accounting is the application of accounting methods, investigative activities and law procedures to detect and investigate financial crimes and related economic misdeeds. However, Zysman (2006) sees forensic investigation as the utilization of specialized investigative skills in carrying out an inquiry conducted in such a manner that the outcome will have application to the court of law. As a discipline, forensic accounting encompasses financial expertise, fraud knowledge and a strong understanding of business reality and the working of the legal system. Its development can be achieved usually through on-the-job training and experience with investigating officers and legal counsel (Coenen, 2008).

Forensic accounting utilizes accounting, auditing and investigative skills while conducting an investigation. They often analyze, interpret, summarize and present information in a complex manner which is understandable and well documented. Also, they are often involved in various activities such as investigating and analyzing financial evidence, developing computerized system, exhibiting documents and presenting the evidence obtained, (Uche, 2009; Balarebe, 2009). Zysman (2006) reported forensic accounting as the integration of accounting, auditing and investigative skills. It provides an accounting analysis that is suitable to the court, which will form the basis of discussion, debate and ultimately dispute resolution. This 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 forensic accountants are trained to look beyond the numbers and deal with business reality of the situation (Coenen, 2008; Zysman, 2010). The court evidence indicates that a high level of expertise is necessary to analyze current complicated financial transactions and events (Razaee et al, 2006). This means that a forensic investigation may be applied in various fields such as accounting engineering, medicine, and some other disciplines (Owojori & Asaolu, 2009).

Forensic accountants thrive on detecting fraud and criminal transactions in banks, corporate entities, public sector or from any other organization's financial records. In other words, forensic accounting is all about the thrill of the hunting and discovering of inaccuracies. However, forensic accountants can be distinguished from external auditors by the assumption that auditors look at the numbers while forensic accountants look behind them (Kasum, 2009). Forensic accounting should be sufficiently thorough and complete so that it can report its finding as to accounts, inventories or the presentation thereof that is of such quality that it would be sustainable in legal proceeding, or within some judicial or administrative review (Grazoli, Janals & Johnson, 2006; Williams 2010; Oladipupo, 2005).

Forensic accounting has been variously defined by several authors' giving their divergent opinions. Forensic Accounting is an amalgam of forensic sciences and accounting. Forensic science according to Crumbley (2003) may be viewed as application of the laws of nature to the laws of man." The author also refers to forensic scientists as trained examiners and interpreters of evidence and empirical facts in legal cases that also requires expert opinions regarding their findings in court of law. The science in question here is accounting science, which means that the examination and interpretation will be of economic information.

Bologna & Lindquist (1995) defined forensic and investigative accounting which is the application of financial techniques and an inquisitive mind to controversial matters, carried within the context of the rules of evidence. More so, as a field of study, it encompasses financial expertise, basic fraud knowledge, and a sound skill and understanding of business reality and the working of the legal system. Its development has been basically accomplished with the instrumentality of on-the-job training as well as cognitive experiences as investigating officers and legal counsel.

Economic stability

Economic stability deals with the cumulative economic attributes such as the fiscal policy, debt policy, activities of the private and public sectors (Crumbley, 2003). For every nation's economy to be stable emphasis must be anchored on cumulatively avoiding macro – economic risks, increased exports of its local commodity, improves local consolidated revenues as well as improved manufacturing activities. Monetary economics which according to Kasum (2009) is the primary instrument for the nations' open market operation. Thus, this requires effective management of money in circulation with the techniques of exchange of various financial instruments. This would be not only lead to economic stability but also serves as veritable tool in strengthening the operational lapses for economic and financial crimes.

The globally acclaimed primitive recognized evidence of forensic accounting has been traced to an advertisement in a newspaper in Glasgow Scotland, appearing in 1824. At that time, arbiters, courts, and counsels, normally used forensic accountants to investigate fraudulent activities. However, it was not until the early 1900s in the United States and England, although the coining of the term Forensic Accounting by Peloubet is said to date back to 1946, therefore, the practice is relatively new in Nigeria (Kasum, 2009).

Forensic Accounting Techniques Role on Economic Stability

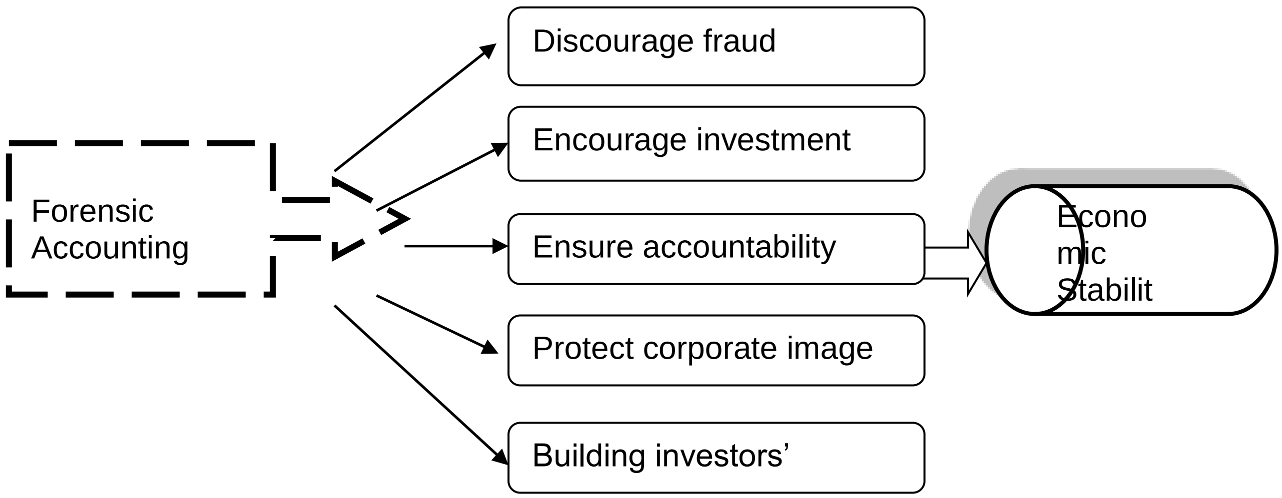
Internal control systems have been described as the basic means of preventing and detecting fraud (Wells, 2008). However, Barra (2010) observed that, what constitutes an effective internal control system is more of opinions that are based on definite knowledge established through research. Mayes & Baker (2003) carried out a survey on auditing belief about the fraud detection effectiveness of standard audit procedures. The result showed that out of the 218 standard audit procedures, 56 were considered more effective in fraud detection. This study further reveals that the most effective procedures were those that are related to internal control in terms of its existence and strength.

Also, Bierstaker, Burnaby & Hass (2004), investigated the extent to which internal auditors used the perceived effectiveness of the various fraud prevention and detection mechanisms. The outcome of the study suggest that internal control review and improvement, operational audits and reference checks on employees were the commonly used mechanisms of fraud prevention and detection, yet software and digital analysis with generally high rating of effectiveness were the fast often used. Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) 2008 has provided relevant findings regarding how fraud can be uncovered using the formal mechanisms such as internal audits and internal control features. Nevertheless, informal techniques have served as the most frequent precursor to fraud detection. About 42 percent of fraud precursors have come through tips, 23 percent through internal control, 20 percent by outsiders and 19 percent by internal audit, external audit and the police account for about 9 and 3 percent respectively (ACFE, 2008; Drew & Drew, 2010).

It has been noted that an effective internal control system is not protected against fraud (Blake, 2011). Moreover, accounting literature has accepted the fact that the effectiveness of internal system can be weakened by collusion (Barra & Griggs, 2007). Therefore, the need for the understanding of forensic accounting technique cannot be overemphasized. Specifically, Mushmat and Hamid (2012) noted that forensic accounting techniques has been able to improves the nations ' economic fortunes through building of confidence in investors at the private sector as well as improving the corporate image of public institutions and reducing cost of doing business in Nigeria.
The following are techniques used in forensic accounting.

-Demonstrates how to use Access, Excel and Power Point in a forensic setting
-Explores use of statistical techniques such as Benford's law, descriptive statistics, and correlation fine-series analysis to detect fraud errors.
-Detection of financial statement fraud using various statistical approaches.
-Explores how to score locations, agents, customers or employees for fraud risk.

Figure 2.1 Conceptualization Model of the relationship between forensic accounting and economic stability



Source: Researcher's Conceptualization Model, 2019

Effects of Fraud and Corruption in the Economy

Fraud and corruption is so endemic that it is gradually becoming a normal way of life in Nigeria and other developing countries. Financial irregularities are so common that almost every individual cannot wash his or her hand clean of it (Oladipupo, 2005). From public officeholders to the managing directors of companies, individuals perpetrate fraud and corrupt practice according to the capacity of their office. Although financial irregularities affect private and public sectors, the magnitude of public office fraud, together with the extent to which citizens are affected calls for much concern. The increase in financial crimes is making it difficult for Nigeria to meet her welfare and social responsibility to the citizenry. Uche (2009) noted that high levels of financial abuses are hindering tax collection, making the enforcement of law difficult and discouraging foreign investment. Corruption and fraud have been responsible for Nigeria's comatose economy, capital flight, unemployment, insecurity, high level of poverty, stunted economic growth and development and a whole lot of other social vices in the country (Aderibigbe, 2010). Fraud and corruption are among the greatest obstacle to Nigeria's progress, development and advancement. Corruption and fraud also represents a significant additional cost of doing business in many developing countries. They undermine development by distorting the rule of law and weakening the institutional foundation upon which economic growth and development depends (Damilola & Olinfinsola 2007).

The synopsis of all efforts at eradicating and eliminating corrupting from Nigeria clearly indicate that all such efforts have been met with vigorous resistance by the corrupt and very powerful segment of the Nigerian population. The falsities and frauds which are now being uncovered are responsible for the lack of capacity utilization in the Nigerian economy. And only recently, the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) complained publicly, about how Nigerian banks are not helping matters of spurring economic development and progress through the infusion of needed resources into action production base of the economy (Aderibigbe, 2013; Nwachukwu & Maduka, 2012).

Empirical Studies

Okoye, Okaro and Okafor (2015) evaluated the scourge of audit failures in Nigeria, its consequences for the capital market and suggest what is to be done to ameliorate the situation and enhance audit quality. Their study reported that audit failure is a serious problem in Nigeria with dire consequences for the capital market and the auditing profession in Nigeria. We chronicle some of the suggestions made at various fora to tackle this problem. Okoye and Akamobi,(2009) identified the role of forensic accounting in fraud investigations and litigation support and proffer suggestions that will, hopefully, bring to public awareness the importance of this area of accounting. It was found that a forensic accountant can be of assistance in litigation support in the following ways: Assistance in obtaining the key document which should be made available as evidence.

This is very necessary in order to support or refute a claim. Olukowade and Balogun (2015) determined the roles of forensic accountants in combating fraudulent activities, differences between a forensic accountant and traditional accountant, features of a forensic accountant and the impact of forensic accountants to detect and prevent fraud. It was found out amongst others that their services will assist audit committee members in carrying out their oversight functions by providing them assurance on internal audit report. Okaro and Okoye (2011) assessed the perception of Accounting Academics on the vexed issue of whether the injection of Forensic Accounting techniques, on a cost/benefit basis. The study used a survey research design through questionnaire administered on Accounting Academics of 8 tertiary institutions in the Eastern part of Nigeria. The study reported that the perception of Accounting Academics those Forensic Accounting techniques injected in an audit and given cost/benefit considerations is capable of increasing the ability of the Auditor to detect fraud and thus help bridge the audit expectation gap in Nigeria. Enofe, Okpako, and Atube (2013) examined the effect of forensic accounting on fraud detection in Nigerian firms. Data for the study was collected from primary sources through the issue of questionnaires to fifteen firms and analyzed with descriptive statistics using ordinary least square (OLS) regression and Chi-square to test the formulated hypotheses. The study reported that the application of forensic accounting services on firms affects the level of fraudulent activities. Mushmat and Hamid (2012) assessed the role of internal audit in fraud prevention in government owned hospitals in a Nigerian setting. Survey research design through questionnaires was adopted. It was reported that audit staff in the hospital lacks the basic knowledge of fraud prevention, and this led the hospital to be more prone to fraudulent practices. Okolie (2014) ascertained the persistent widespread of corporate failures and economic crimes resulting from audit failure and the emergence of creative accounting.

This has resulted in loss of jobs and slow economic growth and development in developing countries such as Nigeria. It is against this background that this article discusses the concept, the need and the role of forensic accounting in solving the problem of economic crimes and corruption in a developing economy like Nigeria. Empirical and descriptive research methods were adopted in the collection and analysis of data. Findings revealed that the application of forensic accounting is still at a very low level due to high cost of forensic accounting equipment and the time and resources required in training the forensic accountant. The paper concludes that there is need to employ the services of forensic accountants in order to reduce economic crimes and corruption so as to enhance economic growth and development in developing economies. Okoye, Nwoye and Abiahu (2018) examined the contributions made by the predictive models in predicting creative accounting practices in the selected manufacturing company in Nigeria, while making further effort at determining whether or not the predictive capabilities of the Beneish 8-Predictive variables and the Altman model differ significantly. The research work was quantitatively designed, thus, data obtained from secondary sources comprising Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of Dangote Cement Nigeria Plc (2000–2015). Beneish 8-Predictive variables and Altman model using the Multiple Regression Analysis, and Wilxocon statistical techniques. The result of the analyses showed that the Beneish 8-Predictive variables made significant contributions in predicting possible Creative Accounting practices in Dangote Cement Nigeria Plc. It also found that there was no significant difference in the predictive capability of the Beneish 8-Predictive variables and the Altman Z-score model when jointly applied in predicting possible tendencies of Creative Accounting practices in publicly listed manufacturing companies in Nigeria Nwoye, Obiora and Ekesiobi (2015). Examined the effect of Nigeria macroeconomic environment on the performance of the national economy: implications adopting data extracts from the CBN annual reports, SEC statistical bulletins and the NBS, the relevant macroeconomic variables selected for this study were subjected to the OLS regression analysis towards ascertaining the extent of relationship existing between the macroeconomic indicators selected and the nation's growth level. Result obtained in this study showed that although a unique relationship exist between the country's national currency exchange rate to a US dollar, inflation rates, monetary policies, and the extent or level of GDP growth the country has attained, the sustenance and continued maintenance of an upward growth remain a source of worry to Nigerians and national economists, considering the country's unsolved problems of energy generation and distribution which in turn has undermined the performance of the industrial and employment sectors. Okoye, Nwoye, Ekesiobi and Obiorah (2018) evaluated the quality of governance Nigeria may have witnessed in the post 1999 democratic regimes of Nigeria with emphasis on the annual GDP growth rate statistics, annual GDP achieved (in US$), unemployment rates as co-published by the International Monetary Fund, annual national Budget of Nigeria as published by the World Bank Group and the country's corruption perception index as rated by Transparency International (TI) for the years 1999 – 2016.

These were all employed by the study for graphical evaluation and assessment purpose using charts. Indicative pointers from the charts shows that though the country's annual budget has continued to rise since 1999, the country's employment sector has not really benefitted from this acclaimed shoot up given the recent upward movement of the country's unemployment rate and the consequent downward pace in the rate at which the economy of Nigeria is growing in recent times. Kolawole, Salman, Durodola, Babatunde and Igbekoyi (2018) examined forensic accounting and alleviation of fraudulent practices in Nigerian deposit money banks. The study employed primary data obtained through questionnaire administration to staff of selected banks in Lagos State. With the aid of ordered logit regression, results of the study revealed that forensic accounting reduces asset misappropriation in Nigerian deposit money banks. The study concluded that there is a strong relationship between forensic accounting and alleviation of fraud practices in deposit money banks of Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that management of Nigerian banking sector should train auditors on the dynamics and scope of financial crimes, the legal environment, fraud prevention and ethical issues. Alabdullah, Alfadhl, Yahya and Rabi (2013) examined the impact of forensic accounting on financial corruption. The study made use of primary data and employed correlation research design. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the forensic accounting methods, effectiveness of the control and auditing bodies to detect financial corruption cases. Onuorah and Ebimobowei (2012) conducted study on fraudulent activities and forensic accounting services of Port Harcourt Bank, Nigeria. The study used a sample of (24) banks and analyzed the aid of least-squares, and Granger Causality. The results of the study revealed that the forensic accounting application impacts the level of fraudulent activities in the banks. Enofe, Omagbon and Ehigiator (2015) determined the effect of forensic audit on corporate fraud in Nigeria. The study employed primary data with the aid of questionnaire. Data were analyzed using ordinary least square (OLS) regression technique. The study shows that the frequent utilization of forensic audit services will significantly help in the detection, prevention as well as reduction of incidences of fraud in businesses. Adegbie and Fakile (2012) assessed forensic accounting as an antidote to economic and financial crime in Nigeria. The hypotheses were tested with Chi-Square was applied to achieve the objectives. The study documented that forensic accounting is a financial strategy to curb and resolve economic and financial crimes in the Nigerian economy. Modugu and Anyaduba (2013) conducted a study on forensic accounting and financial fraud in Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the agreement amongst stakeholders on the effectiveness of forensic accounting in financial fraud control, financial reporting and internal control quality. The simple random technique was utilized in selecting the sample size, while the binomial test was employed in the data analysis. The study observed that there is significant agreement amongst stakeholders on the effectiveness of forensic accounting in fraud control, financial reporting and internal control quality.

METHODOLOGY

A survey research design is used in quantitative analysis to collect information without manipulation. A survey collects and gathers data from a sample of the study population which represents the entire group.

However, the target population that was drawn from five branches of Fidelity bank in Nnewi metropolis with a total of 25 employees consisting of internal controls officers of the bank.

The data were analysed and hypotheses formulated for the study were tested with t-test, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 software package.

Decision Rule:

Using SPSS, 5% is considered a normal significance level. The accept reject criterion was based on the mean value.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Analysis of Data Collected on Question "to what extent does forensic accounting contributed to economic stability in Nigeria?"

S/N	Questionnaires	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Tot
1	Reduces high levels of financial abuses	8	16	0	1	0	25
2	Hindering tax collection is minimized	5	17	1	2	0	25
3.	Ensure that foreign investment is not discouraged.	10	15	0	0	0	25
4.	Building of confidence in investors	7	14	1	2	0	25
5	Improving the corporate image of public institutions	9	13	2	0	1	25
6	Reducing cost of doing business in Nigeria.	9	12	1	2	1	25

Source: Field survey, 2019

Test of Hypothesis

Ho: Forensic accounting has not contributed to economic stability in Nigeria.

Table 2: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Agree	22.5000	6	1.64317	.67082
	Disagree	1.5000	6	1.04881	.42817

Table 3: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Agree - Disagree	21.00000	2.60768	1.06458	18.26341	23.73659	19.726	5	.000

In the above, the mean of those agree that forensic contributed to economic stability is 22.5 while those against is 1.5. In this case the mean of agreed respondent is higher than that of disagreed. Looking at the confidence interval of the difference, the lower value is 18.3 and upper value is 23.8. At 5% significant level, the p-value is .000 showing that there is a significant effect.

This means that forensic accounting reduces high levels of financial abuses as well improved on the amount of tax collecting, encouraging foreign investment, building of confidence in investors at the private sector thereby reducing cost of doing business in Nigeria. Therefore, we reject null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis which uphold that forensic accounting contributed to economic stability in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Forensic accounting practices are having neither new to developed nor developing nations like Nigeria. Financial crime in the Nigerian public sector is alarming and is not only crumbling the economy but also affecting the nation standard of living and cooperate image outside the shore of Nigeria. Conclusively, this study has analyzed why concrete attention should be given to the problem of financial crimes in the Nigerian public sector with the aid of forensic accounting. It has been discussed and it should be emphasized that whether within the business world or in the public sector, the ultimate responsibility for investigating financial crime cases rest with anti-corruption agency (EFCC) while discouraging and preventing financial crime and corrupt practices rest with the government and management but specifically forensic accountants. Above all, result of the study reveals that the uses of forensic accounting reduce the rate of financial crimes in the Nigerian public sector thereby leading to economic stability. The application of forensic accounting skills and techniques has contributed immensely to anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria in the investigation of complex financial crimes. Consequent upon several findings from this research, the study therefore recommends that Government should institutionalized forensic accounting as a veritable tool to strengthen and consolidate the skills required to detect economic and financial crimes effectively.

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