

Awareness, Causes and Measures for prevention of Corporate Frauds in India- An Empirical Study

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Abstract:

Fraud prevention and detection has remained almost a challenge for the corporate world today especially when reports of sporadic occurrence of frauds do keep on coming, having its enormous adverse effect on the economy, the industrial climate the country, the country's image as a whole, and on the stakeholders' confidence. Occurrence of frauds has never remained confined to any large business houses alone, or for that purpose to any specific manufacturing or service organizations. Smaller organizations, Mutual Fund Business, Chit Funds, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), banking firms such as the Punjab National Bank (PNB) in India have also found their names in some or the other form of frauds. Corporate executives keep on looking for means and mechanism to prevent frauds and to detect any frauds already committed with remedial measures. Forensic Accounting, which is a specialised area of accounting that is used to investigate crime, is one such technique that helps to prevent and detect frauds.

This study examined the perception of accounting practitioners in India with particular reference to awareness about fraud and forensic accounting, causes of fraud and measures to detect and prevent fraud. The data used in the study have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. For the collection of primary data, a well-structured questionnaire was developed using Five point Likert-Scale. The data was analyzed through One-Way ANOVA to determine if the difference in the perceptions of the respondents is statistically significant depending upon the respondents' demographic profile, i.e., Gender, Age and Job description. The data was analyzed through SPSS version 23.0. The study revealed that the accounting practitioners are aware of the occurrence of frauds and further that they are in agreement to the fact that forensic accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention; Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convention and principle of 'Disclosure' and transparency, as a source of occurrence of frauds; and strong organizational value. The study further revealed that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female practitioner with regard to occurrence of fraud; material misstatement is a major cause of fraud, and proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate fraud. As regards the age as a demographic variable, the study lead to the finding that there is no difference in the perception of the respondents in terms of their age that forensic accounting can help in fraud detection and fraud prevention; poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate fraud; and fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders. Also, based on their job description, there is no significant difference in the perception of the accounting practitioners that Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud; Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities; and Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds.

Key words:-Fraud; Forensic Accounting, Fraud Detection, Fraud Prevention; Investigative Accounting; Auditing

1. Introduction

Occurrence of frauds has never remained confined to any large business houses alone, or for that purpose to any specific manufacturing or service organizations. Smaller organizations, Mutual Fund Business, Chit Funds, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), banking firms such as the Punjab National Bank (PNB) in India have also found their names in some or the other form of frauds. Fraud prevention and its detection has remained almost a challenge for the corporate management today especially when reports of sporadic occurrence of frauds do keep on

coming, with enormous adverse effect on the economy, the industrial climate, the country's image as a whole, and on the stakeholders' confidence. The present study has been undertaken examine if.

Therefore, corporate executives keep on looking for means and mechanism to prevent frauds and to detect any frauds already committed with remedial measures. Forensic Accounting, which is a specialised area of accounting that is used to investigate crime, is one such technique that helps to prevent and detect frauds.

Forensic accounting involves application of special skills in accounting, auditing, finance, quantitative methods, along with certain areas of law, and research and investigative skills to collect, analyze, and evaluate evidential matter, and to interpret and communicate the findings (Public Company Oversight Board, January 2007, and Release 2007-001, *modified*). Manning (2002) states that forensic accounting is the combination of accounting, auditing and investigative skills to a standard that is required by a court of jurisdiction to address issues in dispute in the context of civil and criminal litigation. Singleton & Singleton (2010) define forensic as the use of scientific knowledge to legal problems in a court of law. Forensic accounting involves fraud investigation, detection and prevention of fraud and analysing antifraud controls after gathering non-financial information. Forensic accounting can be defined as the science of collecting, arranging, and presenting financial data in an acceptable form by a court of jurisprudence against perpetrators of economic crimes. It is a compound discipline which merges accounting, audit, and law (Renzhou (2011, 2012).

Given the above, it was felt prudent to undertake this study in a view to analyse (i) the awareness of accounting practitioners about 'fraud and forensic accounting', (ii) their perception about causes frauds, and (iii) their perception about the measures to prevent and detect frauds.

Review of Literature

Behel (2021) conducted a study on "Perspective of Forensic Accounting in India" with the objective to understand the significance of forensic accounting in the wake of recent financial scam and examine the various application of forensic accounting in Indian firms. In India, CAs with their vast practical and theoretical knowledge has the dominance over the forensic accounting profession. Also the establishment of SFIO by the govt. of India is a one big step towards preventing fraud. The India forensic headed by CA Mayur Joshi is the only institute in India that provides the forensic accounting practices.

Biswas (2013) conducted a study on "Forensic Accounting in Indian perspective" with the objective to understand the significance of forensic accounting in the wake of recent financial scams in India and to highlight the problems of forensic accounting in India. The study was conceptual in nature and information was collected from the secondary sources. In India due to the complex and traditional judicial system, political compulsion etc., forensic accountants are facing the challenge of gathering information against "big shots" that is admissible in the court of law. It has been suggested that appointment of forensic accountants should be made mandatory in public sector and large scale companies.

Shaheen et.al. (2014) in their research work entitle "Forensic Accounting and Fraud Examination in India" suggested that appointment of forensic accountant should be made mandatory in public sectors and large scale companies for the sustainable development of the economy. The objective of the study was to understand the role of forensic accounting in fraud examination in India, to examine the various applications of forensic accounting in Indian firms. The major finding of the study was that it is being used as an investigative tool, rather than a preventive tool. If forensic auditing is made mandatory in various sectors many scams can be restricted. There is also a need to make new law for the prosecution of fraudsters, irrespective of the domicile keeping in mind the uses of information technology in fraudulent practices.

A study entitled "Assessing awareness and acceptance of Forensic Accounting among the Libyan Accounting Educators" was carried out by **Md. Issa and Al-azzabi** (2018) to examine the level of awareness and acceptance of forensic accounting as a profession and as an anti-corruption measures. The data was collected from lecturers, professors and graduate students through close-ended questionnaire. It was found out that there is high level of

awareness regarding forensic accounting as a fraud detection tool but the level of awareness regarding its legislation, regulation and governance services is low. The Study also revealed that auditing, fraud theory, legal knowledge/Law are the most appropriate degree for a forensic accountant apart from economics, IT and Ethics. More so, Forensic accounting being a new area of accounting is different from that of auditing.

Garg.S. (2014) carried out a study on “Forensic Accounting and its Relevance in Indian Context” with the objective to identify the meaning and need of forensic accounting. The finding revealed from the study was that there is very little awareness regarding the importance of forensic accounting. Due to the growing complexities of business environment and the growing number of Business related investigations, Forensic accounting professionals are in a great demand as they are increasingly asked to assist in the investigation of financial and business related issues of fraud cases.

Enofe et.al. (2013) have conducted a study entitled “The Impact of Forensic Accounting on Fraud Detection” in order to determine the relationship between fraud detection and forensic accounting. The data collected was from primary sources through structured questionnaire, divided into three sections, administered on fifteen firms in Benin City Edo state of Nigeria. The collected data were analysed through descriptive statistics using ordinary least square (OLS) regression and chi-square. The finding of the study revealed that Forensic accounting services provide firms with the necessary tools to deter fraudulent activities but does not curb fraudulent activities.

Enofe et.al. (2015) conducted a study “The role of Forensic Accounting in mitigating financial crimes”. The broad objective of the study is to examine the role of forensic accounting in curbing financial crimes. The study adopts a survey research design. The population of the study comprises of staffs of selected banks. Primary data was used for the purpose of this research. This research work employed the use of structured questionnaire in eliciting the required data needed to test the formulated hypotheses. Regression analysis was utilized as the method of data analysis and the results will be used in testing the hypotheses specified in the study. The study finding reveals that there is a need for forensic accountants in the Nigerian banking system, Forensic accounting is an effective tool for addressing financial crimes in the banking system and finally that Conventional accounting techniques are not effective in curbing financial crimes.

In the study entitled “Forensic Accounting Investigation Techniques and Successful Prosecution of Corruption Cases in Nigeria” by **Sorunke (2018)** with the objective to examine the potency of forensic accounting investigation techniques in corruption investigation and prosecution in Nigeria. The finding of the study reveals that there is a significant relationship between the adoption of forensic accounting investigation technique in corruption investigation and successful prosecution of corruption cases in Nigeria.

Zager.et.al (2016) have conducted a study on “The role and responsibilities of an auditor in prevention and detection of fraudulent financial reporting” with the objective to. For the study 55 questionnaires was distributed among auditors of small, medium and large audit firms. It was observed that asset misappropriation is the most common type of fraud followed by fraudulent financial reporting. The technique being practiced by perpetrators for fraudulent financial reporting is the overstatement of assets. Apart from this it is necessary that the management, board of directors, audit committee, external auditor and internal auditor have the responsibility to ensure a strong internal control so that the fraud is easily detected and prevented. Forensic audit and surprise internal audit along with job rotation, mandatory vacation, fraud training for managers and employees, positive working environment with no tolerance of fraudulent behavior, management review are some of the effective measure to prevent fraud.

Kehinde.et.al (2016) have conducted a study on “Basic Issues in Forensic accounting and Auditing” with the objective to examine basic issues in forensic accounting as well as to differentiate between forensic accounting and auditing. The different roles of forensic accountant, the competence that are required by a forensic auditor and different approaches of forensic accounting have been explained. It was found that forensic accounting and auditing are inter-linked and both can be carried out by the forensic expert.

Modugu and Anyaduba (2013) in their study “Forensic Accounting and Financial Fraud” intended to find the effectiveness of Forensic accounting with respect to financial control, financial reporting quality and improving internal control. The data was collected through well-designed questionnaire distributed among accountants, management staffs, practicing auditors and shareholders. It was found that forensic accounting is effective in fraud control, improving financial reporting and internal control. Moreover, the study recommended that proper assistance should be provided to accountant while investigating and resolving fraud and fraud related issues.

Methodology

The study employed a one way ANOVA to understand the perception of the accounting practitioners about fraud and forensic accounting in India. The data used in the study have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. For the collection of primary data, a well-structured questionnaire was developed using Five point Likert-Scale with values 5, 4,3,2,1 representing ‘very strongly agree’, ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’ and, ‘Strongly disagree’. A total of 394 respondent practitioners have been included in the studies who are working in different organizations in India.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the study:

H01: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’

H02: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to ‘causes of fraud’

H03: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’.

H04: There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ based on their age

H05: There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to ‘causes of fraud’ based on their age

H06: There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ based on their age

H07: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ according to their job description.

H08: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to ‘causes of fraud’ according to their job description.

H09: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ according to their job description.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. It is found that the sample respondents of 394 Practitioners included in the study comprises of 52.79% male respondents and 47.21% female respondents. 46.45% respondents below 30 Yrs, 19.80% below 40Yrs, 13.70% below 50 Yrs, 14.21% below 60 Yrs, and 5.84% Above 60 Yrs participated in the study. Also, with the number of respondents with regard to job description includes 9.39% Senior Manager, 23.35% Managers, 13.20% Supervisor, 11.67% Chartered Accountant, 16.24% Accountants, 9.39% Internal Auditor, 12.18% Legal Advisor and 4.57% others.

Table 1: List of demographic profile of the Practitioners

Categories	Sub categories	No. of respondents	Total	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	208	394	52.79
	Female	186		47.21
Age	Below 30 Yrs	183	394	46.45
	Below 40Yrs	78		19.80
	Below 50 Yrs	54		13.70
	Below 60 Yrs	56		14.21
	Above 60 Yrs	23		5.84

Job description	Senior Manager	37	394	9.39
	Manager	92		23.35
	Supervisor	52		13.20
	Chartered Accountant	46		11.67
	Accountant	64		16.24
	Internal Auditor	37		9.39
	Legal Advisor	48		12.18
	Others	18		4.57

Perception of the practitioners relating to forensic accounting and fraud

The perception of the respondents have been collected against 32 Statements divided into three categories, namely, (i) ‘awareness’ about occurrence of fraud and about forensic accounting, (ii) ‘causes’ of frauds and (iii) ‘measures’ to detect and prevent frauds. These 32 statements include 7 statements for ‘awareness towards fraud and forensic accounting’; 14 statements for ‘causes’ of fraud, and 11 statements for ‘measures to prevent and detect fraud’ the responses against which have been discussed here under:

Perception of practitioners relating to awareness about fraud and forensic accounting

Perception of the practitioners relating to awareness about fraud and forensic accounting has been measured in terms of ‘Mean’ and ‘Standard Deviation’, based on the overall responses received from them and the results has been displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean values and standard deviations, in descending order, of the 7 statements (out of 32 statements) relating to awareness about prevention and detection of frauds as per the responses of practitioners

Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
i.	Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud	3.789	0.956
ii.	Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant	3.515	0.954
iii.	Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost	3.502	0.627
iv.	Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India	3.421	1.105
v.	Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise	3.337	0.850
vi.	Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature	3.322	1.198
vii.	Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high rate of dishonesty in the country	3.238	0.969
Mean of the ‘means’		3.446	

Source: Computed from the responses received

It is found from Table 2 that the average mean score of the responses received from the respondent practitioners in respect of the 7 statements out of 32 statements relating to awareness about prevention and detection of frauds has been

3.446 which means ‘agree’. With regard to the mean score of individual statements, it ranges from 3.337 to 3.789, which also denotes ‘agree’. Therefore, it may be inferred that the practitioners believe that:

- i. Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise
- ii. Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India
- iii. Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature
- iv. Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high rate of dishonesty in the country
- v. Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost
- vi. Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant
- vii. Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud

Perception of practitioners relating to causes of fraud

Perception of the practitioners relating to causes of fraud has been calculated in terms of ‘Mean’ and ‘Standard Deviation’, based on the overall responses received from them. The results have been displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean Values and standard deviation, in descending order, of the 14 statements (out of 32 statements) relating to causes of frauds as per the responses of practitioners

Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
i.	Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convention and principle of “Disclosure” and transparency; a source of occurrence of frauds	4.035	0.743
ii.	Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds	3.967	0.883
iii.	Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds	3.906	0.757
iv.	Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds	3.883	1.058
v.	Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds	3.829	1.134
vi.	Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds	3.809	1.310
vii.	Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities	3.720	0.857
viii.	Non- Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds	3.675	1.206
ix.	Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner	3.604	0.826
x.	Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud	3.566	1.063
xi.	Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds	3.550	1.118
xii.	Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud	3.515	0.669
xiii.	Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud	3.418	0.954

xiv.	Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several causes of fraud	3.368	0.967
Mean of the ‘means’		3.703	

Source: Computed from the responses received

It is found from Table 3 that the average mean score of the responses received from respondent practitioners in respect of the 14 statements out of 32 statements relating to causes of fraud has been 3.703. However, with regard the individual statements, the mean score is found to be 4.035 for the statement ‘Concealment of facts and figures ‘leads to violation of accounting convention and principle of “Disclosure” and transparency, a source of occurrence of frauds’. Mean score of 4.035 implies ‘strongly agree’.

Similarly, the means of 11 statements out of 14 statements, namely., ‘Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds’; ‘Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds’; ‘Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds’; ‘Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds’; ‘Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds’; ‘Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities’; ‘Non- Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds’; ‘Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner’; ‘Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud’; ‘Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds’ and ‘Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud’ are found to be ranging from 3.515 to 3.967, meaning that these values are closer to 4, , indicating ‘strongly agree’.

The mean values of 2 statements out of 14 statements, namely, ‘Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud’ and ‘Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several causes of fraud’ are found to be 3.418 and 3.368, meaning ‘agree’.

It may therefore be inferred that the practitioners believe that the above stated 14 statements best describe the ‘causes of occurrence of fraud’.

Perception of the practitioners relating to measures for prevention and detection of frauds

The perception of practitioners relating measures for prevention and detection of frauds has been calculated in terms of ‘Mean’ and ‘Standard Deviation’, based on the overall responses received from them and the results of which have been displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Mean Values and standard deviation, in descending order, of the 11 statements (out of 32 statements) relating to measures for prevention and detection of frauds as per the responses of practitioners

Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
i.	Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds	3.814	0.843
ii.	Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders	3.776	1.058
iii.	An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds	3.733	0.903

iv.	A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds	3.685	0.875
v.	Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds	3.685	1.257
vi.	Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud	3.593	1.294
vii.	Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds	3.494	1.084
viii.	Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds	3.467	1.112
ix.	Behavioural change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds	3.428	1.177
x.	Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds	3.365	1.207
xi.	A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds	3.342	1.061
Mean of the 'means'		3.5801	

Source: Computed from the responses received

It is evident from Table 4 that the average mean score of the responses received from the respondent practitioners in respect of the 11 statements out of the 32 statements relating to measures for prevention and detection of fraud has been 3.5801. However with regard to the individual statements, the respondent practitioners 'agree' that (i) 'Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds; (ii) Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders; (ii) A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds, (iii) Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders', (iv) An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds; (v) Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds; (vi) Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud; (vii) Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds; (viii) Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds; (ix) Behavioural change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds; (x) Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds and, (xi) A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds as these statements have registered 'mean' value of 3.814, 3.776, 3.733, 3.685, 3.685, 3.593, 3.494, 3.467, 3.428, 3.365 and 3.342, respectively. This indicates that the practitioners believe that the above stated measures to prevent and detect fraud are useful in prevention and detection of frauds.

Testing of Hypotheses based on 'Gender' of the respondent Practitioners

In the aforesaid paragraphs, perception of the practitioners relating to (i) awareness about fraud and forensic accounting; (ii) causes of fraud; and (iii) measures for prevention and detection of frauds have been analyzed broadly through 'means' and 'standard deviations'. When asked to score each statement pertaining to the aforementioned three aspects on a five-point scale, the 'practitioners' rating tended to stay between 'Strongly agree' and 'agree' categories.

Now, in order to determine if the difference in the perceptions of the respondents is statistically significant depending upon the respondents' demographic profile, to begin with 'gender' that the following three broad hypotheses have been formulated and tested in respect to the perceptions of the 'practitioners' across three dimensions, namely, (i) awareness about fraud and forensic accounting; (ii) causes of fraud; and (iii) measures for prevention and detection of frauds:

H01: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to their 'awareness about fraud and forensic accounting'

H02: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to 'causes of fraud'

H03: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to 'measures for prevention and detection of frauds'.

The above hypotheses have been tested one by one through ANOVA and F-test as discussed here under:

H01: *There is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to their 'awareness about fraud and forensic accounting'*

Hypothesis H01, i.e. there is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to their 'awareness about fraud and forensic accounting' has been tested through ANOVA and F-test across all the 7 individual statements with the corresponding results displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: ANOVA and F-test on 'awareness about fraud and forensic accounting' of the basis of Gender of the respondent Practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
1. Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise	Between Groups	.146	1	0.146	0.202	0.654	Accepted
	Within Groups	283.958	392	0.724			
	Total	284.104	393				
2. Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India.	Between Groups	.071	1	.071	0.058	0.810	Accepted
	Within Groups	479.990	392	1.224			
	Total	480.061	393				
3. Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature.	Between Groups	1.028	1	1.028	0.716	0.398	Accepted
	Within Groups	563.036	392	1.436			
	Total	564.063	393				
4. Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high rate of dishonesty in the country.	Between Groups	.218	1	.218	0.231	0.631	Accepted
	Within Groups	369.356	392	.942			
	Total	369.574	393				

5. Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost	Between Groups	.204	1	.204	0.517	0.472	Accepted
	Within Groups	154.294	392	.394			
	Total	154.497	393				
6. Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant	Between Groups	.150	1	.150	0.164	0.686	Accepted
	Within Groups	358.259	392	.914			
	Total	358.409	393				
7. Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud	Between Groups	.049	1	.049	0.053	0.818	Accepted
	Within Groups	359.467	392	.917			
	Total	359.515	393				

Whereas, Column 1 (represented as Col.1) of Table 5 contains the 7 statements, Col.7 contains the Sig. values, and Col.8 indicates if the null hypothesis has been accepted or rejected.

Given that a Sig. value of 'less than or equal to' 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis, it is found that the Sig. value of all the 7 statements are greater than 0.05; hence, the null hypothesis for all the 7 statements representing awareness is 'accepted'. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of the male and female practitioners as regards their 'awareness about fraud and forensic accounting' and hence it may be concluded that:

- Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise
- Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India.
- Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature
- Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high rate of dishonesty in the country.
- Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost
- Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant
- Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud.

Again, in order to test **H02**, i.e., there is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to 'causes of fraud' has been formulated and tested through ANOVA and F-test across all the 14 statements and the result is displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: ANOVA and F-test on 'causes of fraud' on the basis of Gender of the respondent Practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
1. Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud	Between Groups	2.027	1	2.027	2.232	0.136	Accepted
	Within Groups	355.874	392	0.908			

	Total	357.901	393				
2. Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud	Between Groups	.461	1	0.461	0.406	0.524	Accepted
	Within Groups	444.324	392	1.133			
	Total	444.784	393				
3. Non- Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds.	Between Groups	3.843	1	3.843	2.650	0.104	Accepted
	Within Groups	568.573	392	1.450			
	Total	572.416	393				
4. Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds	Between Groups	1.567	1	1.567	0.913	0.340	Accepted
	Within Groups	673.156	392	1.717			
	Total	674.723	393				
5. Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds	Between Groups	.218	1	.218	0.169	0.681	Accepted
	Within Groups	505.388	392	1.289			
	Total	505.607	393				
6. Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convection and principle of “Disclosure” and transparency; a source of occurrence of frauds.	Between Groups	.320	1	.320	0.578	0.447	Accepted
	Within Groups	217.182	392	.554			
	Total	217.503	393				
7. Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several causes of fraud	Between Groups	.437	1	.437	0.466	0.495	Accepted
	Within Groups	367.200	392	.937			
	Total	367.637	393				
8. Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud	Between Groups	.625	1	.625	1.393	0.239	Accepted
	Within Groups	175.784	392	.448			
	Total	176.409	393				
9. Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds	Between Groups	1.647	1	1.647	1.470	0.226	Accepted
	Within Groups	438.983	392	1.120			
	Total	440.629	393				

10. Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds	Between Groups	.269	1	.269	.344	0.558	Accepted
	Within Groups	306.302	392	.781			
	Total	306.571	393				
11. Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds	Between Groups	.212	1	.212	.169	0.681	Accepted
	Within Groups	491.273	392	1.253			
	Total	491.485	393				
12. Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds	Between Groups	.127	1	.127	.221	0.638	Accepted
	Within Groups	225.398	392	.575			
	Total	225.525	393				
13. Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner	Between Groups	1.154	1	1.154	1.694	0.194	Accepted
	Within Groups	267.080	392	.681			
	Total	268.234	393				
14. Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities	Between Groups	1.976	1	1.976	2.696	0.101	Accepted
	Within Groups	287.313	392	.733			
	Total	289.289	393				

A Sig. value of 'less than or equal to' 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis. It is found from Table 6 that the Sig. value of all the 14 statements representing causes of fraud are greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis for all the 14 statements is 'accepted'. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of the male and female practitioners with regard to 'causes of fraud and hence it may be concluded that the Practitioners believe that:

- i. Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud
- ii. Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud
- iii. Non- Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds.
- iv. Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds
- v. Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds
- vi. Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convention and principle of "Disclosure" and transparency; a source of occurrence of frauds.
- vii. Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several causes of fraud
- viii. Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud
- ix. Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds
- x. Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds
- xi. Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds
- xii. Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds
- xiii. Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner

- xiv. Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities

Similarly, in order to test the third hypothesis, **H03**, i.e., there is no significant difference in the perception of the Male and Female Practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’, ANOVA and F-test has been conducted across 11 statements and the result has been displayed in Table 7.

Table 7: ANOVA and F-test on ‘measures to detect and prevent fraud’ on the basis of Gender of the respondent Practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
1. Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds	Between Groups	.579	1	.579	0.366	0.546	Accepted
	Within Groups	620.396	392	1.583			
	Total	620.975	393				
2. Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud	Between Groups	2.784	1	2.784	1.663	0.198	Accepted
	Within Groups	656.242	392	1.674			
	Total	659.025	393				
3. Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders.	Between Groups	.436	1	.436	.389	0.533	Accepted
	Within Groups	439.909	392	1.122			
	Total	440.345	393				
4. Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds	Between Groups	.502	1	.502	.343	0.558	Accepted
	Within Groups	572.869	392	1.461			
	Total	573.371	393				
5. Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds	Between Groups	.674	1	.674	.545	0.461	Accepted
	Within Groups	485.397	392	1.238			
	Total	486.071	393				
6. Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds	Between Groups	2.274	1	2.274	1.937	0.165	Accepted
	Within Groups	460.215	392	1.174			
	Total	462.490	393				
7. An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds	Between Groups	1.363	1	1.363	1.671	0.197	Accepted
	Within Groups	319.655	392	.815			
	Total	321.018	393				

8. A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds	Between Groups	1.131	1	1.131	1.479	0.225	Accepted
	Within Groups	299.844	392	.765			
	Total	300.975	393				
9. A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds	Between Groups	.186	1	.186	.164	0.685	Accepted
	Within Groups	442.558	392	1.129			
	Total	442.744	393				
10. Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds	Between Groups	1.338	1	1.338	1.886	0.170	Accepted
	Within Groups	278.137	392	.710			
	Total	279.475	393				
11. Behavioral change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds	Between Groups	2.059	1	2.059	1.488	0.223	Accepted
	Within Groups	542.451	392	1.384			
	Total	544.510	393				

Given that a Sig. value of 'less than or equal to' 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis, it is evident from Table 7 that the Sig. value of all the 11 statements representing 'measures to prevent and detect fraud' are greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis for all the 11 statements is 'accepted'. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of the male and female practitioners with regard to 'measures to prevent and detect fraud' and hence it may be concluded that the Practitioners believe that:

- i. Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds
- ii. Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud
- iii. Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders
- iv. Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds
- v. Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds
- vi. Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds
- vii. An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds
- viii. A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds
- ix. A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds
- x. Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds
- xi. Behavioural change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds.

Testing of Hypotheses based on ‘Age’ of the respondent Practitioners

Based on the age of the respondent practitioners, the following three broad hypotheses regarding the perceptions of the ‘practitioners’ across three dimensions, namely, (i) awareness about fraud and forensic accounting; (ii) causes of fraud; and (iii) measures for prevention and detection of frauds, have been developed and tested in order to ascertain whether the difference in the perceptions of the respondents is statistically significant.

H04: There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ based on their age

H05: There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to ‘causes of fraud’ based on their age

H06: There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ based on their age

The formulated hypotheses have been tested one by one through ANOVA and F-test as discussed hereunder:

In order to examine if there exists any significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ based on their age, the H04 has been formulated as under:

H04: There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ based on their age

The null hypothesis H04 has been tested through ANOVA and F-test across the 7 individual statements with the corresponding results displayed in Table 8.

Table 8: ANOVA and F-test on ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting ‘on the basis of age of the respondent practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
1. Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise	Between Groups	4.201	4	1.050	1.460	0.214	Accepted
	Within Groups	279.903	389	.720			
	Total	284.104	393				
2. Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India.	Between Groups	3.726	4	.932	.761	.551	Accepted
	Within Groups	476.335	389	1.225			
	Total	480.061	393				
3. Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature.	Between Groups	4.632	4	1.158	.805	.522	Accepted
	Within Groups	559.432	389	1.438			
	Total	564.063	393				
4. Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high	Between Groups	5.960	4	1.490	1.594	.175	Accepted
	Within Groups	363.614	389	.935			

rate of dishonesty in the country.	Total	369.574	393				
5. Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost	Between Groups	1.206	4	.302	.765	.548	Accepted
	Within Groups	153.291	389	.394			
	Total	154.497	393				
6. Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant	Between Groups	6.202	4	1.551	1.713	.146	Accepted
	Within Groups	352.206	389	.905			
	Total	358.409	393				
7. Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud	Between Groups	2.940	4	.735	.802	.525	Accepted
	Within Groups	356.575	389	.917			
	Total	359.515	393				

Whereas, Column 1 (represented as Col.1) of Table 8 contains 7 statements relating to the awareness about fraud and forensic accounting, Col.7 contains the Sig. values, and Col.8 indicates if the null hypothesis has been accepted or rejected.

Given that P-value/ Sig. value of ‘less than or equal to’ 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis it is evident from Table 6.8 that Sig. value of all the 7 statements representing ‘Awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ is greater than 0.05. This implies that the hypothesis H02 (a): There is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ based on their age is accepted. This amounts to drawing the conclusion that the respondent practitioners, irrespective of their age, are of the perception that:

- i. Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise
- ii. Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India.
- iii. Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature
- iv. Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high rate of dishonesty in the country.
- v. Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost
- vi. Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant
- vii. Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud.

Similarly, in order to test if there is any significant difference in the perception of practitioners with regard to the ‘causes of frauds’ based on their age that Hypothesis **H05**, i.e. there is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to ‘causes of fraud’ based on their age has been formulated and tested through ANOVA and F-test. The result of the tested hypothesis has been displayed in Table 9.

Table 9: ANOVA and F-test on ‘causes of fraud’ on the basis of age of the respondent practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)

1. Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud	Between Groups	9.822	4	2.456	2.744	.028	Accepted
	Within Groups	348.079	389	.895			
	Total	357.901	393				
2. Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud	Between Groups	2.032	4	.508	.446	.775	Accepted
	Within Groups	442.752	389	1.138			
	Total	444.784	393				
3. Non-Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds.	Between Groups	12.763	4	3.191	2.218	.066	Accepted
	Within Groups	559.654	389	1.439			
	Total	572.416	393				
4. Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds	Between Groups	6.481	4	1.620	.943	.439	Accepted
	Within Groups	668.243	389	1.718			
	Total	674.723	393				
5. Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds	Between Groups	11.202	4	2.801	2.204	.068	Accepted
	Within Groups	494.404	389	1.271			
	Total	505.607	393				
6. Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convention and principle of “Disclosure” and transparency; a source of occurrence of frauds.	Between Groups	2.512	4	.628	1.136	.339	Accepted
	Within Groups	214.991	389	.553			
	Total	217.503	393				
7. Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several	Between Groups	6.332	4	1.583	1.704	.148	Accepted
	Within Groups	361.305	389	.929			

causes of fraud	Total	367.637	393				
8. Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud	Between Groups	3.791	4	.948	2.136	.076	Accepted
	Within Groups	172.618	389	.444			
	Total	176.409	393				
9. Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds	Between Groups	9.792	4	2.448	2.210	.067	Accepted
	Within Groups	430.838	389	1.108			
	Total	440.629	393				
10. Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds	Between Groups	5.864	4	1.466	1.896	.110	Accepted
	Within Groups	300.707	389	.773			
	Total	306.571	393				
11. Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds	Between Groups	10.272	4	2.568	2.076	.083	Accepted
	Within Groups	481.213	389	1.237			
	Total	491.485	393				
12. Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds	Between Groups	2.977	4	.744	1.301	.269	Accepted
	Within Groups	222.548	389	.572			
	Total	225.525	393				
13. Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner	Between Groups	5.314	4	1.329	1.966	.099	Accepted
	Within Groups	262.919	389	.676			
	Total	268.234	393				
14. Employees having knowledge of the grey areas	Between Groups	6.757	4	1.689	2.326	.056	Accepted
	Within Groups	282.532	389	.726			

are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities	Total	289.289	393				
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Given that a sig. value of ‘less than or equal to’ 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis. It is found from Table 9 that the Sig. value of all the 14 statements representing causes of fraud are greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis for all the 14 statements is ‘accepted’. This implies that based on the age, there is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to ‘causes of fraud’ and hence it may be concluded that the Practitioners believe that:

- i. Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud
- ii. Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud
- iii. Non- Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds.
- iv. Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds
- v. Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds
- vi. Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convention and principle of “Disclosure” and transparency; a source of occurrence of frauds.
- vii. Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several causes of fraud
- viii. Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud
- ix. Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds
- x. Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds
- xi. Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds
- xii. Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds
- xiii. Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner
- xiv. Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities

Accordingly, in order to test if there is any significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to the ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ based on their age the following has been formulated:

H06: There is no significant difference in the perception of practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ based on their age.

With regard to the ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’, **H06, i.e., there is no significant difference in the perception of Practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’** based on their age has been tested through ANOVA and F-test. The result has been displayed in Table 10.

Table 10: ANOVA and F-test on ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ on the basis of age of the respondent Practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
1 . Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds	Between Groups	14.410	4	3.602	2.310	.057	Accepted
	Within Groups	606.565	389	1.559			
	Total	620.975	393				

2. Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud	Between Groups	12.247	4	3.062	1.841	.120	Accepted
	Within Groups	646.778	389	1.663			
	Total	659.025	393				
3. Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders.	Between Groups	5.519	4	1.380	1.234	.296	Accepted
	Within Groups	434.826	389	1.118			
	Total	440.345	393				
4. Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds	Between Groups	10.211	4	2.553	1.763	.135	Accepted
	Within Groups	563.159	389	1.448			
	Total	573.371	393				
5. Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds	Between Groups	4.549	4	1.137	.919	.453	Accepted
	Within Groups	481.522	389	1.238			
	Total	486.071	393				
6. Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds	Between Groups	11.960	4	2.990	2.582	.037	Rejected
	Within Groups	450.530	389	1.158			
	Total	462.490	393				
7. An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds	Between Groups	5.558	4	1.390	1.714	.146	Accepted
	Within Groups	315.459	389	.811			
	Total	321.018	393				
8. A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds	Between Groups	5.063	4	1.266	1.664	.158	Accepted
	Within Groups	295.912	389	.761			
	Total	300.975	393				
9. A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and	Between Groups	8.297	4	2.074	1.857	.117	Accepted
	Within Groups	434.446	389	1.117			

prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds	Total	442.744	393				
10. Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds	Between Groups	5.835	4	1.459	2.074	.084	Accepted
	Within Groups	273.640	389	.703			
	Total	279.475	393				
11. Behavioral change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds	Between Groups	7.111	4	1.778	1.287	.275	Accepted
	Within Groups	537.399	389	1.381			
	Total	544.510	393				

In order to accept/ reject the null hypothesis, a sig. value of 'less than or equal to' 0.05 is considered. It is evident from Table 10 that the Sig. value of 10 out of 11 statements representing 'measures to prevent and detect the fraud' are greater than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis 10 statement out of 11 statements is 'accepted'. This implies that based on the age, there is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to 'measures to prevent and detect fraud' and hence it may be concluded that the Practitioners opines that:

- (i) Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds
- (ii) Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud
- (iii) Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders
- (iv) Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds
- (v) Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds
- (vi) An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds
- (vii) A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds
- (viii) A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds
- (ix) Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds
- (x) Behavioural change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds

However with regard to one statement i.e., Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds, the sig. value was less than 0.05, i.e., 0.037 therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that

the practitioners based on their age do not believe that Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds.

Testing of Hypotheses based on ‘Job description’ of the respondent Practitioners

Based on the Job description of the respondent practitioners, the following three broad hypotheses regarding the perceptions of the 'practitioners' across three dimensions, namely, (i) awareness about fraud and forensic accounting; (ii) causes of fraud; and (iii) measures for prevention and detection of frauds, have been developed and tested in order to ascertain whether the difference in the perceptions of the respondents is statistically significant.

H07: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ according to their job description.

H08: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to ‘causes of fraud’ according to their job description.

H09: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ according to their job description.

The formulated hypotheses have been tested one by one through ANOVA and F-test as discussed here under:

In order to know if there exists any significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ according to their job description, the *H07* has been formulated as under:

H07: There is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to their ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ according to their job description.

The null hypothesis *H07* has been tested through ANOVA and F-test across 7 individual statements with the corresponding results displayed in Table 11.

Table 11: ANOVA and F-test on ‘awareness about fraud and forensic accounting’ on the basis of Job description of the respondent Practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. value (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
1. Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise	Between Groups	3.029	7	.433	.594	.761	Accepted
	Within Groups	281.076	386	.728			
	Total	284.104	393				
2. Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India.	Between Groups	8.604	7	1.229	1.006	.426	Accepted
	Within Groups	471.457	386	1.221			
	Total	480.061	393				
3. Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature.	Between Groups	7.965	7	1.138	.790	.596	Accepted
	Within Groups	556.099	386	1.441			
	Total	564.063	393				

4. Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high rate of dishonesty in the country.	Between Groups	4.793	7	.685	.724	.651	Accepted
	Within Groups	364.781	386	.945			
	Total	369.574	393				
5. Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost	Between Groups	2.217	7	.317	.803	.585	Accepted
	Within Groups	152.281	386	.395			
	Total	154.497	393				
6. Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant	Between Groups	5.682	7	.812	.888	.516	Accepted
	Within Groups	352.727	386	.914			
	Total	358.409	393				
7. Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud	Between Groups	4.929	7	.704	.766	.616	Accepted
	Within Groups	354.586	386	.919			
	Total	359.515	393				

Given that a Sig. value of 'less than or equal to' 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis, it is found that the Sig. value of all the 7 statements are greater than 0.05; hence, the null hypothesis for all the 7 statements representing awareness is 'accepted'. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners as regards their 'awareness about fraud and forensic accounting' based on their job description. Hence it may be concluded that the practitioners irrespective of their job descriptions are of the perception that:

- (i) Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise
- (ii) Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India.
- (iii) Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature
- (iv) Forensic accountant in India is up to a hard job because of the high rate of dishonesty in the country.
- (v) Benefits of using forensic accountant outweigh its cost
- (vi) Forensic accountant is different from traditional accountant
- (vii) Forensic accountant who is not affected by the limitations of the audit process is in a better position to discover fraud.

Now, in order to test if there is any significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to the 'causes of fraud' according to their job description that Hypothesis H08, i.e., there is no significant difference in the perception of the Practitioners with regard to their 'causes of fraud' according to their job description has been formulated. The formulated hypothesis has been tested through ANOVA and F-test and the result is displayed in Table 12 as under:

Table 12: ANOVA and F-test on 'causes of fraud' on the basis of job description of the respondent practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. value (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
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1. Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud	Between Groups	5.229	7	.747	.818	.573	Accepted
	Within Groups	352.672	386	.914			
	Total	357.901	393				
2. Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud	Between Groups	5.839	7	.834	.733	.644	Accepted
	Within Groups	438.946	386	1.137			
	Total	444.784	393				
3. Non- Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds.	Between Groups	9.272	7	1.325	.908	.500	Accepted
	Within Groups	563.144	386	1.459			
	Total	572.416	393				
4. Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds	Between Groups	11.332	7	1.619	.942	.474	Accepted
	Within Groups	663.392	386	1.719			
	Total	674.723	393				
5. Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds	Between Groups	13.750	7	1.964	1.542	.152	Accepted
	Within Groups	491.857	386	1.274			
	Total	505.607	393				
6. Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convection and principle of “Disclosure” and transparency; a source of occurrence of frauds.	Between Groups	7.632	7	1.090	2.005	.053	Accepted
	Within Groups	209.871	386	.544			
	Total	217.503	393				
7. Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several causes of fraud	Between Groups	4.348	7	.621	.660	.706	Accepted
	Within Groups	363.290	386	.941			
	Total	367.637	393				
8. Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud	Between Groups	2.908	7	.415	.924	.487	Accepted
	Within Groups	173.500	386	.449			
	Total	176.409	393				
9. Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds	Between Groups	6.570	7	.939	.835	.559	Accepted
	Within Groups	434.059	386	1.125			
	Total	440.629	393				
10. Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds	Between Groups	4.853	7	.693	.887	.517	Accepted
	Within Groups	301.718	386	.782			

	Total	306.571	393				
11. Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds	Between Groups	8.330	7	1.190	.951	.467	Accepted
	Within Groups	483.155	386	1.252			
	Total	491.485	393				
12. Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds	Between Groups	11.640	7	1.663	3.001	.004	Rejected
	Within Groups	213.886	386	.554			
	Total	225.525	393				
13. Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner.	Between Groups	8.668	7	1.238	1.842	.078	Accepted
	Within Groups	259.565	386	.672			
	Total	268.234	393				
14. Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities	Between Groups	4.515	7	.645	.874	.527	Accepted
	Within Groups	284.775	386	.738			
	Total	289.289	393				

Given that a sig. value of 'less than or equal to' 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis it is found from Table 12 that the Sig. value of all the 13 statements out of 14 statements representing causes of fraud are greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis for all the 13 statements is 'accepted' and that for one statement it is rejected. Therefore, for the 13 statements based on the job description, where there is no significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to 'causes of fraud', it may be concluded that the practitioners believe that:

- (i) Material misstatement is a major cause of fraud
- (ii) Irregularities in financial transactions encourage the scope of financial fraud
- (iii) Non- Compliance of accounting policies results in corporate frauds.
- (iv) Poor internal control results in reduced operational efficiency and increased corporate frauds
- (v) Misuse of technology often leads to committing frauds
- (vi) Concealment of facts and figures leads to violation of accounting convention and principle of "Disclosure" and transparency; a source of occurrence of frauds.
- (vii) Inappropriateness of accounting policy is one of the several causes of fraud
- (viii) Weak implementation of Early Warning Signal (EWS) increases the occurrence of corporate fraud
- (ix) Over ambitious target may drive employees to commit frauds
- (x) Unethical organizations lend up in committing frauds
- (xi) Poor organization culture aids to commitment of organized frauds
- (xii) Domestic financial pressure of the employee can drive him to earn easy money from the organization he works with in a fraudulent manner
- (xiii) Employees having knowledge of the grey areas are likely to take the advantage for committing unscrupulous activities

With regard to one statement, i.e. Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds has sig. value less than 0.05; therefore the null hypothesis has been rejected. This implies that the practitioners do not believe that Organizations apathetic to employees cause are prone to invite commitment of frauds.

Accordingly, in order to test if there is any significant difference in the perception of the practitioners with regard to the ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ based on their job description the following hypothesis has been formulated:

H09: There is no significant difference in the perception of practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’ based on their job description.

With regard to the ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’, **H09, i.e., there is no significant difference in the perception of practitioners with regard to ‘measures for prevention and detection of frauds’** based on their job description has been tested through ANOVA and F-test. The result has been displayed in Table 13.

Table 13: ANOVA and F-test on ‘measures to prevent and detect fraud’ on the basis of job description of the respondent practitioners

Statements (Col.1)	Between/ Within Groups (Col.2)	Sum of Squares (Col.3)	Df (Col.4)	Mean Square (Col.5)	F (Col.6)	Sig. value (Col.7)	Hypo. Accepted/ Rejected (Col.8)
1. Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds	Between Groups	10.800	7	1.543	.976	.448	Accepted
	Within Groups	610.175	386	1.581			
	Total	620.975	393				
2. Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud	Between Groups	8.927	7	1.275	.757	.624	Accepted
	Within Groups	650.099	386	1.684			
	Total	659.025	393				
3. Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders.	Between Groups	3.264	7	.466	.412	.895	Accepted
	Within Groups	437.082	386	1.132			
	Total	440.345	393				
4. Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds	Between Groups	13.541	7	1.934	1.334	.233	Accepted
	Within Groups	559.829	386	1.450			
	Total	573.371	393				
5. Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds	Between Groups	8.713	7	1.245	1.007	.426	Accepted
	Within Groups	477.358	386	1.237			
	Total	486.071	393				
6. Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds	Between Groups	9.853	7	1.408	1.200	.301	Accepted
	Within Groups	452.637	386	1.173			
	Total	462.490	393				

7. An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds	Between Groups	6.253	7	.893	1.095	.365	Accepted
	Within Groups	314.765	386	.815			
	Total	321.018	393				
8. A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds	Between Groups	6.031	7	.862	1.128	.345	Accepted
	Within Groups	294.944	386	.764			
	Total	300.975	393				
9. A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds	Between Groups	14.664	7	2.095	1.889	.070	Accepted
	Within Groups	428.080	386	1.109			
	Total	442.744	393				
10. Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds	Between Groups	8.047	7	1.150	1.635	.124	Accepted
	Within Groups	271.427	386	.703			
	Total	279.475	393				
11. Behavioural change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds	Between Groups	16.765	7	2.395	1.752	.096	Accepted
	Within Groups	527.745	386	1.367			
	Total	544.510	393				

Given that a Sig. value of 'less than or equal to' 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis, it is evident from Table 13 that the Sig. value of all the 11 statements representing 'measures to prevent and detect fraud' are greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis for all the 11 statements is 'accepted'. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of the respondent practitioners based on their job description with regard to 'measures to prevent and detect fraud' and hence it may be concluded that the Practitioners believe that:

- i. Proper training of employees helps in reducing corporate frauds
- ii. Management review on regular basis reduces the chances of fraud
- iii. Fair practices of financial reporting strengthen the confidence of stakeholders
- iv. Independent audit should be done on regular basis for early detection of frauds
- v. Prevalence of a strong accountability system will reduce the chances of financial frauds
- vi. Conducive organizational environment can help in a bigger way to prevent corporate frauds
- vii. An inbuilt strong corporate governance system can eliminate the scope of corporate frauds

- viii. A proactive surveillance system can help the organization prevent frauds
- ix. A free and open system of sharing internal information without fear and prejudice can be very effective in preventing the occurrence of corporate frauds
- x. Strong organizational value can prevent occurrence of corporate frauds
- xi. Behavioural change in an employee for a considerable long period may be an indication of his involvement in unethical practices and commitment of frauds.

Conclusion

Forensic Accounting is beneficial in a variety of ways. It not only deals with issues which are relating to economic damages but also the practices of Forensic Accounting by the organization helps in bringing transparency and fairness in financial reporting. It plays a key role in tracing the financial frauds and white-collar crimes. The practices of Forensic Accounting by the firm strengthen the interest of stakeholders, customers, employees and suppliers who are directly involved with the companies.

As regards the awareness for prevention and detection of fraud, 7 statements were asked to the practitioners and the mean value and standard deviations of their responses in the Likert's type scale were calculated which resulted in to the findings that the practitioners agree that, Occurrence of financial frauds in India is on a rise; Forensic Accounting can help in fraud detection and prevention in India; Forensic accountants are analytical and inquisitive in nature. Likewise, their perceptions about the causes of fraud, have also remained between strongly agree to agree across parameters/statements. Similarly, their perceptions regarding the measures for prevention and detection of fraud have also remained between strongly agree to agree across statements.

With regard to the awareness of accounting practitioners about 'fraud and forensic accounting', (ii) their perception about causes frauds, and (iii) their perception about the measures to prevent and detect frauds, there is no difference.

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