Theological Assessment of Auditing Effects on Fraud Detection and Prevention in Lagos Mainland Diocese

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Abstract

Nigeria ranks fifth in a global survey on cybercrime activities, following the US, China, Russia, and Ukraine. The World Cybercrime Index identifies Nigeria as a major hotspot for cybercrime, fraud, and corruption. Despite auditing being crucial for financial accountability, fraud remains a significant issue globally, particularly in Nigeria and the Church. Frequent fraud incidents raise questions about Nigeria's current auditing procedures, highlighting potential financial losses, reputation damage, legal and regulatory consequences, and public trust in the nation and religious organisations. The aim of this study is to examine auditing effects on fraud detection and prevention from a theological perspective, using the Diocese of Lagos Mainland (Anglican Communion) as a case study. The study examined the influence of auditing on fraud detection and prevention in the Lagos Mainland Diocese, Nigeria. It involved 25 Diocesan Headquarters personnel and 25 auditors, selected through purposive sampling. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, with the Treasury Department providing qualitative data. Internal audit reports, financial statements, and regulatory guidelines were reviewed for context. The study on the auditing's impact on fraud detection and prevention is vital for enhancing knowledge and informing policymakers, regulatory bodies, and professional auditing organisations. It provides practical recommendations for improving fraud detection and prevention mechanisms, enhancing internal controls, reducing risk, and enhancing financial integrity. The findings also support the professional development of auditors and accounting professionals, promoting financial transparency and accountability in organisations.

Keywords

Nigeria, Lagos Mainland Diocese, fraud, corruption, fraud detection, fraud prevention

Introduction

The prevention of fraud, public trust, ecclesiastical integrity, and the development of the Lagos Mainland Diocese (Anglican Communion) depend on the auditor's reports at the parish, archdeaconry, and diocesan levels. In Nigeria, the auditing sector has changed to concentrate on fraud prevention and detection via the use of cutting-edge technologies like data analytics and artificial intelligence. In Nigeria, especially in the Lagos Mainland Diocese (Anglican Communion), auditing is essential for bolstering fraud prevention strategies and improving the dependability of financial reporting. Long-term survival and parishioners' faith depend on financial transparency and honesty. During each Diocesan Synod, auditing offers an objective evaluation of the Lagos Mainland Diocese's yearly financial reports.

An audit is an impartial review of an organisation's financial data to ensure correct bookkeeping and adherence to regulatory standards. Auditors can be employed by the company or a third-party company.[1] Most businesses audit their cash flow, balance sheet, and income statement financial statements annually. Auditors gather data and assess working papers from previous years. They provide third-party assurance that no major misstatements have been made. Audits help stakeholders assess governance, control, and risk management over legal entities. Since ancient times, auditing has served as a protective precaution.[2] Due to the rising differentiation of joint-stock enterprises throughout the 18th century industrial revolution, auditing grew in importance. The aim of audits has changed from being to find fraud to making sure that accounting is honest and fair. The Companies Act, 1913, which prioritises fair financial portrayal, requires audits in India. In 1951, fraud detection in the United States gained importance, with an emphasis on bookkeeping details.[3] In the 1970s, auditing shifted from verifying transactions in books to relying on systems due to increased transactions and company size and complexity. Auditors placed greater reliance on internal control in their procedures. In the 1980s, auditors reduced system work and used analytical procedures. Risk-based auditing emerged in the mid-1980s, focusing on areas with errors. Accounting scandals in the early 2000s led to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002, which expanded auditors' duties to audit internal controls over financial reporting.[4] Currently, auditors, appointments, removals, resignations, eligibility, qualification, disqualification, compensation, powers, ties, and auditing standards are all covered in Chapter X of the Companies Act, 2013.[5]

Lloyd-Jones asserts that the Bible places a strong emphasis on stewardship and responsibility in the church, calling for frequent financial audits and recommending that Christians participate in a 'God audit'. It promotes reciprocal accountability, stewardship, and the punishing of suspected fraud or poor management. To guarantee accuracy and openness, churches should conduct routine financial audits. Both internal and external audits can be carried out by church members or outside auditors. Self-evaluation, sin confession, repentance, and following God's instructions are all part of a God audit. This keeps believers close to Christ and helps them become more holy.[6] The Bible has many references to accountability, transparency, and stewardship in the church,[7] which can be interpreted as a biblical view on auditing, including those following.

1. Ezra 8:24–27: Ezra chose trusted servants to count and weigh the gifts of gold and silver given to God's house in Babylon.
2. Galatians 6:1–2: Believers are accountable to God and to each other.
3. Hebrews 10:24: Believers should hold each other accountable to help each other grow in holiness.

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[1] K. Gupta, *Contemporary Auditing* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 1095.
[2] S. E. Loeb and A. E. Shamoo, 'Data Audit: Its Place in Auditing', *Accountability in Research* 1, no. 1 (1989): 23–32.
[3] M. Derek, *History of Auditing: The Changing Audit Process from the Nineteenth Century till Date* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), 6.
[4] E. P. Kumar and B. Mohan, 'Origin and Development of Auditing', *Indian Journal of Research* 4, no. 9 (2015): 43–44.
[5] Derek, *History of Auditing*, 7.
[6] Martyn Lloyd-Jones, 'An Honest Audit: A Sermon on Philippians 3:7', 2022, https://www.mljtrust.org/sermons/other-sermons/an-honest-audit/.
[7] D. O. Ogunbiyi, 'Nigeria's Economic Challenges and the Hope of Restoration: A Socio-Theological Reading of Psalm 126:1–6', *Kwaghe International Journal of Arts, Humanities and Religious Studies* 3, no. 1 (2026): 15–35, https://doi.org/10.58578/kijahrs.v3i1.9081.

4. Hebrews 13:18: Leaders should be transparent and responsible, and strive for a clear conscience and honourable behaviour.
5. 2 Corinthians 8:20–21: Church leaders should be transparent and open in how they manage funds.

Statement of the Problem

Like other Nigerian institutions, the Lagos Mainland Diocese has serious problems with financial fraud, which compromises operational openness, financial integrity, and confidence. Even with the adoption of auditing procedures, fraud is still widespread and may be ascribed to a number of variables, including those below.

1. Internal Weaknesses: Extravagant lifestyles, financial challenges, peer pressure, and a lack of internal audit control and monitoring create vulnerabilities for fraud in the Diocese.
2. Auditing Challenges: Non-cooperation, inaccurate inventory, and technical issues make it difficult for auditors to successfully identify and stop fraud.
3. Technological and Structural Gaps: The diocese is more vulnerable to fraud because of the intricacy of contemporary financial operations, globalisation, and dependence on antiquated systems.
4. Ethical and Professional Concerns: The issue is made worse by low ethical standards among workers, a lack of ongoing training for auditors, and a lack of professional capability.
5. Economic and Legal Pressures: Efforts to guarantee financial openness and accountability are further strained by economic volatility, antiquated legal frameworks, and the slow implementation of fraud prevention measures.
6. Cultural and Religious Expectations: Church leaders are supposed to be transparent and honest as stewards of God's resources. However, the church's financial systems are weakened by deviations from stewardship procedures and theological principles.

These problems necessitate robust auditing frameworks, the integration of advanced technologies, and an emphasis on ethical and theological principles to enhance fraud prevention and detection.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to investigate the theological assessment of Auditing Effects on Fraud Detection and Prevention in Lagos Mainland Diocese, other objectives are to:

1. Assess auditing's role in identifying and preventing fraud at parish, archdeaconry, and diocesan levels;
2. Analyse auditors' problems like non-cooperation, technology issues, and inventory discrepancies;
3. Identify underlying reasons of financial fraud – ethical failings, personal financial strains, and internal controls deficiencies;
4. Combine auditing procedures with religious ideas to promote financial honesty and ecclesiastical responsibility;
5. Offer actionable suggestions for improving fraud detection and prevention systems;
6. Help regulators, legislators, and church leaders understand need for improved auditing practices and fraud prevention strategies.

These objectives aim to enhance financial accountability, improve fraud prevention systems, and reinforce the moral and ethical responsibilities of church leaders and auditors.

Research Questions

1. What is the auditor's role in identifying and preventing fraud at the parish, archdeaconry, and diocesan levels?
2. What challenges do the auditors face with organisational inventory, cooperation, and technologies?
3. What are the underlying reasons for financial fraud?
4. How can organisations combine auditing procedures with religious ideas to promote financial honesty and ecclesiastical responsibility?
5. What are the actionable suggestions for improving fraud detection and prevention systems?
6. How can this research help regulators, legislators, and church leaders understand the need for improved auditing practices and fraud prevention strategies?

These research questions align with the objectives, addressing the core themes of auditing, fraud prevention, theological integration, and professional development.

Conceptual Review

Auditing is a systematic process driven by human curiosity to verify and obtain expert opinions. Its history can be traced back to the separation of agents from principals in accounting. Agents use funds provided by the principal, prepare accounting reports, and provide an auditor's opinion before presenting them to the principal.[8] Agency theory, accounting theory, and auditing theory are intertwined.[9] Auditing is a systematic process where a competent, independent person objectively obtains and evaluates evidence to form an opinion about an entity or event's conformity to specific standards.[10]

Internal, external, and government audits are the three primary categories of audits. While independent auditors do external audits, firm workers undertake internal audits. Government audits calculate taxable income and verify tax compliance. For their credibility, auditors must retain independence while reporting financial accounts, offer professional, unbiased assessments, and exhibit the greatest calibre of professional diligence. To increase professionalism and confidence, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) stresses how crucial it is for auditors to follow independent auditing guidelines. Accurate financial representation, optimal business operations, prevention of fraudulent reporting, accurate record-keeping, independent advice to management teams, staff accountability and responsibility, reassurance to shareholders, instilling confidence in potential creditors, strengthening internal control mechanisms, and legal compliance are all made possible by auditing. Additionally, it instils trust in potential creditors, reassures shareholders, and raises staff accountability, all of which help firms expand and obtain financing more easily.[11] Audits have distinct types that focus on various aspects of an organization's operations and financial health, serving different purposes.

1. **Compliance audit:** This is a crucial process that evaluates a company's compliance with industry standards and regulations.[12] It involves a thorough review of policies, procedures, and documentation, assessing compliance preparations, security policies,

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[8] S. A. Owolabi, O. O. Jayeoba, and A. T. Ajibade, 'Evolution and Development of Auditing', *Unique Journal of Business Management Research* 3, no. 1 (2016): 32–40.
[9] D. A. Adamu, 'Public and Private Audit: An Overview of Nigerian Context', *Scholars Bulletin* 1, no. 5 (2015): 121–27.
[10] J. E. Kiger and J. H. Scheiner, *Auditing* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1994), 4.
[11] B. Bassey, O. Ubi, O. Olatunbosun, I. Asi, and E. Emmanuel, 'Auditors' Independence and Audit Quality in Nigeria', *Journal of Critical Reviews* 7 (2020): 624–35.
[12] K. Kassidy, 'Compliance Unit', accessed 8th July 2024, https://www.techtarget.com/searchcio/definition/compliance-audit.

user access controls, financial accuracy, and risk management procedures. Non-compliance can result in legal repercussions and fraud.[13]

2. **Financial audit:** A financial audit verifies financial statements using international accounting standards or other methods to identify material errors or misstatements. It helps organisations maintain a healthy financial position and avoid potential misstatements. In order to offer an unbiased assessment, a financial audit examines various financial data points and takes into account every facet of the financial process and paperwork. Account balances and transactions, historical records, IRS records, internal records, financial statements, and promises are all included.[14] The auditor gathers evidence to ensure fairness and maintain a healthy financial position. The audit also considers financial commitments, such as loans, lease agreements, employee benefits, and liabilities, and provides context for other financial reporting activities within the organisation.[15]
3. **Information system audit:** An essential procedure for assessing management controls in business applications and IT infrastructure is an information systems audit. It evaluates if the systems are protecting resources, preserving data integrity, and functioning efficiently to meet the objectives of an organisation.[16] It can be performed alongside a financial statement audit, internal audit, or other attestation engagement. Independent observers assess the effectiveness of controls, identify potential security breaches, and implement preventative measures.[17] As technology advances, more information technology threats and disruptions are introduced, necessitating high levels of assurance to mitigate these risks.
4. **Internal audit:** Internal auditing is a consulting practice that enhances an organisation's operations by evaluating risk management, control, and governance procedures.[18] It provides recommendations based on data and business process analysis, focusing on legal and regulatory compliance, financial reporting accuracy, risk management, and governance.[19] Internal auditors can also participate in investigations, conduct proactive fraud audits, and conduct post-investigation fraud audits.
5. **Operational audit:** An operational audit is a systematic review of an organisation's business practices, focusing on processes, procedures, and systems. It goes beyond financial analysis and examines management practices to identify areas for improvement. Operational auditing is a future-oriented, systematic evaluation of activities using financial data, primarily focusing on operational policies and achievements related to organisational objectives.
6. **External audit:** An external audit involves independent auditors examining a company's financial records to identify fraud, errors, or embezzlement misstatements. The goal is to ensure accuracy, compliance with laws, and fair results. The auditor's

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[13] M. Green, 'Conducting a Compliance Audit', 8th July 2024, https://www.skillcast.com/blog/conduct-compliance-audit.
[14] E. B. Arens, *Auditing and Assurance Services*, 14th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2012), 3.
[15] N. Blank, 'What Is a Financial Audit & How to Prepare for One (+ Checklist)', 20th July 2024, https://www.order.co/blog/finance/financial-audit-tips/.
[16] R. K. Rainer and G. C. Casey, *Introduction to Information Systems*, 3rd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2011), 3.
[17] M. D. Stoel and D. Havelka, 'Information Technology Audit Quality: An Investigation of the Impact of Individual and Organisational Factors', *Journal of Information Systems* 35, no. 1 (2020): 135–40.
[18] D. A. Wood, 'A Descriptive Study of Factors Associated with the Internal Audit Function Policies Having an Impact: Comparisons between Organisations in a Developed and an Emerging Economy', *Turkish Studies* 14, no. 3 (2013): 581–591.
[19] D. A. Wood, 'Internal Audit Quality and Earnings Management', *Accounting Review* 84, no. 4 (2009): 1255–65.

appointment, qualifications, and reporting format are regulated by statute and jurisdiction.

7. **Performance audit:** A performance audit can be defined as a systematic evaluation of a government or nonprofit organization's operations, management systems, or programme, aiming to assess its financial sustainability, resource efficiency, and effectiveness, typically conducted by external bodies or internal auditors in Nigeria.
8. **Construction audit:** A construction audit is a crucial process that ensures a project's proper functioning and alignment with the contract, maintaining schedules, and budgets. It can be performed by the construction business, stakeholders, or government officials and can provide a competitive advantage by expanding financing ties or accessing lenders, investors, or capital markets.
9. **Forensic audit:** Forensic auditing is a specialised accounting practice that investigates a company's financial records to provide evidence in court or legal actions. It focuses on detecting financial reporting fraud or workplace misbehaviour by employees, executives, or directors.[20] Forensic accountants can prosecute parties for financial crimes, embezzlement, bankruptcy filings, business closures, and divorces and may serve as expert witnesses in trials.[21]

Empirical Framework

Some scholars, such as Richet,[22] Nwanaka,[23] Olufidipe,[24] Idowu,[25] and Olaoye,[26] believe that fraud is a global issue involving paper falsification, obtaining personal information, and identity theft. The internet's global nature, convenient hiding places, online identity verification issues, and hacking methods contribute to its growth. In some countries, tax fraud is punishable as false billing or tax forgery. It is a deliberate deception or trick used to obtain dishonest benefits or financial loss. Studying fraud in Nigeria provides insights into the challenges faced by individuals and organisations. Financial fraud, which includes mortgage, insurance, and securities fraud, is a major concern. Identity theft and income fabrication are components of mortgage fraud, minor claims rejected for lack of evidence are components of insurance fraud, and high-yield investments, Ponzi schemes, pyramid schemes, foreign exchange fraud, broker embezzlement, pump-and-dump, hedge-fund fraud, and late-day trading are all components of securities fraud. Fraudsters swindle investors by acting on insider knowledge, delivering incorrect advice, hiding important information, and misrepresenting themselves. Fraudulent organisations take advantage of generosity by asking people to give to respectable causes, frequently setting up false campaigns under trustworthy identities.[27] Nigeria's Auditor General confirmed large-scale fraud in revenue collection and remittance to

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[20] E. M. Homer, 'Testing the Fraud Triangle: A Systematic Review', *Journal of Financial Crime* 27, no. 1 (2020): 172–187.
[21] C. Honigsberg, 'Forensic Accounting', *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 16, no. 1 (2020): 147–164.
[22] J. Richet, 'How Cybercriminal Communities Grow and Change: An Investigation of Ad-Fraud Communities', *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 174 (2022): 5–19.
[23] C. Nwanaka, 'Chapter 3: Overview of the Concept of Fraud in the Nigerian Banking System', *BW Academic Journal* 1, no. 1 (2022): 8–24.
[24] E. O. Olufidipe, 'Fraud in Nigeria and Its Implication for Banks and Financial Institutions', *Nigeria Institute of Bankers Journal* 30, no. 1 (1994): 7–29.
[25] I. Idowu, 'Assessment of Fraud and Its Management in Commercial Banks in Nigeria', *International Journal of Auditing* 3, no. 3 (2009): 341–359.
[26] C. O. Olaoye and R. A. Dada, 'Analysis of Frauds in Banks: Nigeria's Experience', *European Journal of Business and Management* 6, no. 31 (2014): 90–112.
[27] J. Chen, 'Fraud: Definition, Types, Consequences of Fraudulent Behaviour', 10th January 2024, https://www.investopedia.com/terms/f/fraud.asp.

the federal government in 2009, involving revenue-generating agencies and oil firms.[28] This leads to significant money loss, draining resources, and causing significant consequences for development, socio-economic, and political programs. The AG reported sharp practices in calculating revenue from the oil sector, resulting in billions of Nigerian naira (millions of US dollars) lost annually.[29] It is crucial to report these crimes to law enforcement and dispute fraudulent charges, while victims should gather relevant documentation and continue filing important information.[30]

Fraud detection is crucial in various sectors like banking, insurance, medicine, government, and the public. Machine learning and statistical models help identify suspicious patterns, ensure compliance, and minimise damage. In the UK, a 'Failure to Prevent Fraud' offence was introduced in April 2023, holding firms liable for employee fraud without adequate prevention programmes. Increased regulation and enforcement will impact compliance requirements.[31] Internal control is a crucial aspect of an organisation's management to ensure the safety, security, and reliability of records. Accountants and auditors are responsible for detecting fraud, but management can influence their commitment. Effective fraud detection techniques are essential for protecting businesses and consumers from evolving risks. The capabilities of fraud detection solutions, such as machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), behavioural analytics, anomaly detection, data analytics, real-time monitoring, collaborative fraud intelligence, and continuous monitoring and updates, should be taken into consideration by compliance professionals. Large volumes of data can be analysed in real time by AI and machine learning, which can spot trends and abnormalities that might point to fraud.[32] Behavioural analytics can monitor user behaviour, flag suspicious activities, and detect fraudulent transactions. Data analytics tools can identify potential fraud indicators, minimise damages, and enable quick responses to fraud. Collaborative fraud intelligence can lead to a comprehensive understanding of evolving fraud tactics, enabling proactive prevention and collective defence against fraudsters.[33]

Theoretical Review

This study focuses on three key theories related to auditing's impact on fraud detection and prevention: stewardship, credibility, and fraud triangle theories.

Church leaders and administrators have a moral obligation to manage the church's money and resources as obedient stewards of God's gifts, according to stewardship theory in church auditing. This philosophy emphasises responsibility and transparency by showcasing prudent and moral financial management.[34] Church leaders are viewed as more than just administrators; they are stewards of the resources that God and the church have entrusted to them. To show how money is being spent and foster confidence among churchgoers, regular financial reports

[28] J. F. Adebisi and D. O. Gbegi, 'Fraud and the Nigerian Public Sector Performance: The Need for Forensic Accounting', *International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology* 5, no. 5 (2015): 5–19.
[29] Y. Kamaludden, 'Auditors, Frauds, and Fraud Detection in Nigeria's Public Sector', paper presented at the Faculty of Social Science and Administration, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Nigeria, 1995, 3.
[30] K. A. Adeyemo, 'Frauds in Nigerian Banks: Nature, Deep-Seated Causes, Aftermaths and Probable Remedies', *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (2012): 280–295.
[31] A. Chia, 'What Is Fraud Detection and Prevention', 19th July 2024, https://www.splunk.com/en_us/blog/learn/fraud-detection-prevention.html.
[32] I. F. Sydney, *Management Control System and the Prevention and Detection of Frauds in Banks* (Lagos: CIBN and Landmark Publication Ltd., 1986), 3.
[33] V. Ramaswamy, 'Corporate Governance and the Forensic Accountant', *CPA Journal* 73, no. 3 (2005): 68–79.
[34] H. M. Nalle, S. P. Pradnyani, and P. A. Wasita, 'Accountability and Internal Control of Religious Organisations (Study on GKPB Immanuel Tabanan)', *International Journal of PERTAPSI* 1, no. 1 (2023): 21–30.

and audits are essential.[35] When it comes to handling church funds, stewardship philosophy places a strong emphasis on operating honourably and avoiding conflicts of interest. The Bible has a strong foundation in the idea of stewardship, which exhorts people to use God's gifts responsibly. When evaluating a church's financial management systems and procedures, auditors use stewardship theory with an emphasis on financial openness and accuracy.[36] They point out opportunities for improvement as well as instances of exemplary management. To ensure efficient communication and accountability, auditors often meet with church leaders to talk about incorporating stewardship concepts into financial procedures.

An area of actuarial mathematics called credibility theory aids insurance firms in calculating risk premiums and generating experience-based estimations from past data. It reduces exposure to claims and losses and aids actuaries in understanding the risks involved with coverage. Actuaries and insurance firms develop models based on past losses, evaluating the veracity of statistically tested hypotheses. To project future insurance costs, they look at the losses incurred when insuring a certain subset of policyholders. In order to determine how the insurance company's experience may have varied from that of other insurance firms, actuaries then look into the company's past experiences, policy by policy.[37]

The Fraud Triangle Theory is a concept used by anti-fraud professionals and researchers to predict high fraud risk. It consists of three elements: perceived pressure, perceived opportunity, and rationalisation of fraud. Financial pressure, structural incentives, and economic conditions can increase the temptation for fraud. Opportunities for fraud are high when fraud goes undetected, and researchers often point to internal structural factors like internal controls or auditing procedures. Economic conditions, regulatory oversight, and employee risk calculation can also increase opportunities. Auditors can use the Fraud Triangle Theory to create audit procedures that address these factors, promote an ethical and accountable culture, and monitor transactions to prevent fraud.[38]

Theological Framework

According to Rae and Wong,[39] theological concepts such as stewardship, justice, fairness, responsibility, and integrity have an impact on theologians' views on auditing. The biblical concept of stewardship views people and institutions as stewards of God's resources (Luke 16:10). In the context of moral resource management, auditing is viewed as an accountability instrument. Theological viewpoints also place a strong emphasis on justice and equity, especially in Christian and Jewish traditions (Prov. 11:1). The idea of responsibility is similar to the necessity of financial accountability in businesses and in the Church (Rom. 14:2). In fact, Christian theological ethics places a strong emphasis on honesty, making sure that financial records accurately represent the truth and encouraging moral responsibility and trust (Prov. 10:9).[40]

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[35] J. Gilman, 'Financial Stewardship & Compliance: Simplifying Church Finances', 21st January 2025, https://www.acstechnologies.com/church-growth/financial-stewardship-compliance-simplifying-church-finances/.

[36] J. S. E. A. Panggabean, S. Baldric, S. Djoko, and A. D. Santos, 'The Influence of Spirituality and Competency Toward Financial Accountability: An Empirical Study in the Christian Church', *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)* 25, no. 2, ser. 2 (2023): 1–7.

[37] A. Gisler and H. Bühlmann, *A Course in Credibility Theory and Its Applications* (New York: Springer, 2005), 3.

[38] R. Abdullahi, N. Mansor, and M. S. Nuhu, 'Fraud Triangle Theory and Fraud Diamond Theory: Understanding the Convergent and Divergent for Future Research', *European Journal of Business and Management* 7, no. 28 (2015): 30–37.

[39] S. B. Rae and K. L. Wong, *Business for the Common Good: A Christian Vision for the Marketplace* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 43.

[40] M. Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 8.

According to Robson[41] and Oldroyd,[42] the writing, counting, and early auditing systems of the Babylonians and Egyptians are directly related to the development of accounting in ancient Mesopotamian cities, which gave the Roman Empire access to comprehensive financial data and information. Davis believes that the Bible mentions Joseph's story – a manager of Potifar's household – as an accounting record audit. Given that Joseph was in charge of all home belongings and business dealings, Potifar's household was clearly an old estate. Although Potifar's household size is not stated in detail in the Bible, it might be assumed from several verses (Genesis 39). As an 'officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard', Potifar even had the authority to put Joseph in jail. Joseph gradually gains authority as the head of the home, suggesting a hierarchical system. In his capacity as a manager, Joseph would assign power to subordinates and routinely review their files. The Bible's first auditor of accounting records is Joseph.[43]

Exodus 38:21 mentions the Tabernacle of the Pact, which holds accounting records requested by Moses. Rabbinic observers argue that this narrative provides a framework for appropriate human conduct, especially in religious establishments. The temple priest wore clothing without pockets, demonstrating the exacting threshold of responsibility.[44] Judaism emphasises the idea that everyone is responsible for their own conduct, words, attitudes, and ideas. Sages teach that communal finances should never be given to fewer than two or three persons, but Moses was given sole responsibility for all contributions. After the Tabernacle was completed, Moses had an audit done, resulting in the Tabernacle's accounting records.[45]

The kingdom's decline in fraud (2 Kings 12) serves as an example of sound financial management. The priests established a productive accounting system under Jehoash, collaborating with contractors and tallying gifts. Cash placed at automated teller machines is one example of how this technology is still in use today. Good management is based on the principles of responsibility and verification, and it might be risky to avoid verification. The work of regulators, auditors, bank tellers, accountants, and others who uphold financial integrity is valued by God. Leaders are urged to invite people to validate their work in order to provide a personal example of public accountability.[46]

For churches and missions to build honesty and confidence, independent financial audits are a crucial procedure. They are founded on the four-phase stewardship of temple resources described in Ezra's writing (Ezra 8). Even highly resourced churches and missions are susceptible to fraud, financial abuse, and misappropriation these days. To ensure the safety of the funds, Ezra gave devoted employees instructions to weigh and count the gifts. To manage resources with cybersecurity protections and financial controls, independent auditors are required. In front of five examiners, Ezra and his twelve-person team weighed the sacred scriptures, gold, and silver once again, and the audit came out clean (Ezra 8:28-29).

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[41] K. Robson, 'Accounting Numbers as "Inscription": Action at a Distance and the Development of Accounting', *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 17, no. 7 (1992): 685–708.
[42] D. Oldroyd, 'The Role of Accounting in Public Expenditure and Monetary Policy in the First Century AD Roman Empire', *Accounting Historians Journal* 22, no. 2 (1995): 124–38.
[43] H. Z. Davis, 'Note on the First Recorded Audit in the Bible', *Accounting Historians Journal* 8, no. 1, art. 6 (1981): 1–9.
[44] W. B. Wein, 'Why Every Jew Should Become an Accountant', 4th April 2024, https://torah.org/torah-portion/rabbwein-5782-pekudei/.
[45] D. Lyon, 'Proper Accounting Is a Jewish Value', 8th December 2024, https://www.beth-israel.org/rabbi-lyons-blog-3_1_2019/.
[46] 'Financial Accountability in the Temple (2 Kings 12:1–12)', *Theology of Work Project*, 9th October 2024, https://www.theologyofwork.org/old-testament/samuel-kings-chronicles-and-work/from-failed-monarchies-to-exile-1-kings-11-2-kings-25-2-chronicles-10-36/the-southern-kingdoms-march-toward-exile-1-kings-1141-2-kings-2526-2-chroni/financial-accountability-in-the-temple-2-kings-121-12/.

The New Testament views God as the ultimate auditor and places a strong emphasis on introspection, responsibility, and comparing one's life to God's standards. This idea is frequently called a 'spiritual audit'. Scriptures like 1 Corinthians 11:31 exhort people to evaluate their spiritual well-being and behaviour on a frequent basis. The idea of an ultimate judgement day, when God will examine one's life, is widely held. It implies that God will examine every thought and deed (Rom. 14:12; 2 Corin. 5:10). Transparency and honesty are necessary for a successful audit. Although financial auditing isn't specifically mentioned, the term 'spiritual audit' is frequently used to refer to the process of assessing one's life in terms of faith and conformity with God's plan. According to Beales, the early church fathers were required to account for gifts and utilise them prudently, demonstrating a concern for appropriate financial monitoring and introducing the idea of responsible church fund management.[47]

Annual audits are essential in the Anglican Church to protect church assets and prevent mishandling of funds or investments. Confirmation of audit completion boosts parishioners' confidence. Auditors are appointed and elected during the vestry meeting, similar to corporate AGMs. The Diocesan Synod shall elect or appoint the following officers: Synod Secretary, three Assistant Secretaries, Treasurer, two Assistant Treasurers, and two Auditors. The Parish Vestry meeting shall appoint two members of the Parish as Auditors. They shall not be members of the Parish Church Council. They must have an understanding of accounting and financial procedures, and they may not be licensed public accounting firms. Some churches cannot hire professional auditors, but they must find individuals with adequate understanding. Auditors can be church members, but they must be independent of management and financial processes. The church's accounts, including operating accounts and funds, should be audited to ensure proper, authorised, complete, and accurate transactions throughout the year. The audit should also verify the proper recording of transactions, the accurate representation of assets, liabilities, income, and expenses, the effective implementation of adequate internal control procedures, and the fair presentation of financial statements for the year. The audit should also ensure that the financial records accurately reflect the church's financial position, ensuring that all financial transactions are recorded in the correct amounts and accounts.

Historical Concept

Luca Pacioli's invention of double-entry bookkeeping in 1494 led to the development of modern auditing. The Industrial Revolution led to the formation of modern businesses, requiring directors to present audited financial accounts to shareholders. Since the 18th century, auditing has been used as a safety precaution, with early check and countercheck procedures. The Industrial Revolution in England increased trade volume, leading to partnerships and major firms. The Renaissance in Italy introduced double entry accounting ideas, strengthening the accounting system and emphasising impartial audits.[48] The Society of Accountants was established in Edinburgh in 1853 and merged with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales in 1880. The 1862 English Companies Act mandated educated specialists to perform independent evaluations of firm financial accounts. As joint-stock corporations emerged, the need for independent auditors developed, leading to the English Companies Act of 1900. Legal requirements for assurance providers, particularly auditors, are found in various countries, including Nigeria.

By the 19th century, auditing evolved, with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. In the 1960s, Internal Audit was established as a unit within the Finance

[47] K. Beales, 'Auditing Revival: George Whitefield and Public Accounting in Colonial America', *Church History* 90, no. 4 (2021): 824–846.

[48] J. H. Thomas, 'Reviewed Work: *A History of Accounting Thought*, by Michael Chatfield', *Business History Review* 49, no. 2 (1975): 256–257.

Department in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, now the Bursary Department, to examine payment vouchers and perform accounting functions like checking salaries and taking stock. After an inquiry by Professor Ola's Committee into stock losses in various rations, particularly Jerry and Mammalade, resulting in significant financial losses in the Catering Department of the University of Ibadan, the council decided to establish an independent audit department in 1974.

Before 1960, audit practice in Nigeria was not limited to companies but also to the government. Public accounts were subjected to audits since the Colonial era in 1866. The Colonial Branch of the Exchequer and Audit Department was established in 1910, and Southern and Northern Nigerian heads of audit were appointed. Nigeria was established as a nation in 1914, with an audit section as a division of the Central Secretariat in Lagos. The first Audit Ordinance in Nigeria was enacted in 1956, establishing the Federal Audit Department within the Ministry of Finance.[49]

The Nigerian National Assembly has various committees that oversee budgeting provisions and ensure strict adherence to the constitution. The Public Accounts Committee, chaired by an opposition party member, works closely with the Office of the Auditor-General. The Audit Bill, domiciled with the National Assembly, establishes the Office of the Auditor-General for the Federation, headed by the Auditor-General for the Federation. The Auditor-General's powers under this bill are not under the direction or control of any authority or person. The bill was passed in 2018 but sent for the president's assent in January 2019. The Nigerian Supreme Audit Institution is divided into four operational departments: the ministerial department, which audits accounts of government members and agencies; the extra ministerial department, which vets audited accounts of government companies, corporations, agencies, commissions, and other authorised departments; the project monitoring and evaluation department, which conducts value for money and performance audits; and the revenue audit department, which audits revenue accrued to the government.[50]

The Church of Nigeria and the Diocese of Lagos Mainland (Anglican Communion) have their roots in the founding of the Church Missionary Society, which was influenced by the spiritual reawakening and evangelism in the 16th century in England. The first church in Nigeria was founded in Badagry, Lagos State, in 1842 by the Methodist Church Mission. Anglican and Methodist collaboration began in Nigeria, especially in missionary endeavours. By 1849, the evangelistic activities of missionaries in Abeokuta had resulted in over 500 regular worshippers, 80 communicants, and 200 candidates for baptism. Abeokuta was the first station of the CMS in the interior of Nigeria, except for Oshielle. Within ten years, Ijebus became the largest group of Christians in Yorubaland and Nigeria. The United Church of England and Ireland's bishop in West Africa was Samuel Ajayi Crowther in 1864, who translated the Bible into Yoruba. The Anglican Communion was founded in the 16th and 17th centuries, but it was not until 1867 that it started operating as a communion of separate churches. The Church of Nigeria was founded in 1906 as a result of a conference of bishops in Lagos who were in communion with the Anglican Church. At this meeting, the necessity for a West African province was first brought forward. The CMS decided to divide the Diocese of Western Equatorial Africa into two dioceses in 1919 due to its significant growth, transforming the former Yoruba and Niger missions into the Diocese of Lagos.

The Diocese of Lagos Mainland was established in 2006 by reorganising the three archdeaconries of Old Lagos Diocese into seven, including the Cathedral Group of Churches,

[49] S. A. Owolabi and A. O. Olagunju, 'Historical Evolution of Audit Theory and Practice', *International Journal of Management Excellence* 16, no. 1 (2020): 2256–2269.

[50] O. F. Umanhonlen, I. R. Umanhonlen, and O. K. Ogiedu, 'Performance Audit Effectiveness in the Nigerian Public Sector: A Review of Literature', 1st September 2024, https://cnaj.anan.org.ng/article-details.php?article=12.

Idi-Oro, Yaba, Ikate, Mushin, Aguda, and Surulere. The nine-archdeaconry structure was expanded to eleven with the inauguration of Odi-Olowo Archdeaconry in 2009 and Orile/Coker from the Old Surulere Archdeaconry in 2014. Two new archdeaconries, Ijesha from Aguda and Okotafom Idi-Oro, were created at the Clergy and Clergy Wives Convocation in 2014, bringing the number of archdeaconries to eleven. In 2016, the pioneer bishop, Most Rev. (Prof.) Adebayo Akinde, retired from active episcopal responsibilities after seventy years of service. The second Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Rt. Revd. Babatunde Colenso Akinpelu Johnson, was enthroned on 24th August 2016, and the number of clergy in the diocese is around 126.

Research Design

The study aimed to investigate the impact of auditing on fraud detection and prevention in the Lagos Mainland Diocese (Anglican Communion), Lagos State, Nigeria. The research involved 25 Diocesan Headquarters personnel and 25 auditors, selected through purposive sampling. The study used structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gather quantitative and qualitative data on auditing practices and challenges. The Treasury Department provided qualitative data, while internal audit reports, financial statements, and regulatory guidelines were reviewed for context.

Validity and Reliability

To assure its validity and re-validity, the study employed a variety of data gathering techniques, such as surveys, interviews, and document analysis. Before the structured questions were properly administered, a small sample of participants was employed to pre-test the questionnaires and interview guides to assess their clarity and relevancy. Additionally, an impartial research survey was carried out to reduce bias and preserve the integrity of the study.

Data Analysis

The findings and analysis are as follows.

Table 1: Official Position

S/N	Official Position	Frequency	Percentage
1	Auditor	25	50
2	Diocesan's Staff	25	50
	Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, May 2024 – July 2024

Table 1 reveals that 25 respondents, representing 50% of the total sampling population, were certified auditors, while 25 respondents, representing 50%, were staff of the Diocesan Headquarters, Lagos Mainland Diocese (Anglican Communion), who participated in this study.

Table 2: Causes of Fraud in Lagos Mainland Diocese

Key: Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Agree (SA), Strongly Disagree (SD), Undecided (U)

S/N	QUESTION	A	D	SA	SD	U
1.	A person's extravagant lifestyle, financial hardships, coworkers or friend's pressure, and lack of internal audit control and monitoring can lead to financial fraud in the Diocese of Lagos Mainland.			50		

Source: Field Survey, May 2024 – July 2024

Table 2 shows that 50 respondents, representing 100% of the total sampling population, firmly believe that financial fraud in the Diocese of Lagos Mainland can be caused by an individual's extravagant lifestyle, financial hardships, pressure from friends or coworkers, and a lack of internal audit control and monitoring.

Table 3: Challenges and Effects of Auditing on Fraud Detection and Prevention in Lagos Mainland Diocese
Key: Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Agree (SA), Strongly Disagree (SD), Undecided (U)

S/N	QUESTION	A	D	SA	SD	U
1.	Auditors in Nigeria face significant challenges such as non-cooperation, fraud, inventory inaccuracy, and technical glitches across various sectors, including the church.			50 100%		
2.	Auditors play a crucial role in detecting and preventing financial fraud in the Lagos Mainland Diocese by ensuring the integrity of financial statements at various levels.			50 100%		
3.	The Diocese of Lagos Mainland hosts regular conferences and seminars on financial integrity, fraud detection, and prevention for auditors, church wardens, and parish accountants to equip them with the necessary skills and policies.			50 100%		
4.	The diocese has seen a significant reduction in fraud and embezzlement cases due to the hiring of experienced auditors at the Diocesan, Archdeaconry, and Parish levels.			50 100%		
5.	The Lagos mainland Diocese has seen a significant increase in the internal income and financial stability of parishes and archdeaconry, with leaks effectively addressed by both internal and external auditors.			50 100%		

Source: Field Survey, May 2024 – July 2024

Table 3 shows that 50 respondents, representing 100% of the total sampling population, strongly believe that auditors in Nigeria face significant challenges such as non-cooperation, fraud, inventory inaccuracy, and technical glitches across various sectors, including the church.

Additionally, 50 respondents, representing 100% of the total sampling population, strongly believe that auditors play a crucial role in detecting and preventing financial fraud in the Lagos Mainland Diocese by ensuring the integrity of financial statements at various levels.

Also, 50 respondents, representing 100% of the total sampling population, strongly believe the Diocese of Lagos Mainland hosts regular conferences and seminars on financial integrity, fraud detection, and prevention for auditors, church wardens, and parish accountants to equip them with the necessary skills and policies.

Further, 50 respondents, representing 100% of the total sampling population, strongly believe the diocese has seen a significant reduction in fraud and embezzlement cases due to the hiring of experienced auditors at the diocesan, archdeaconry, and parish levels.

Finally, 50 respondents, representing 100% of the total sampling population, strongly believe the Lagos mainland Diocese has seen a significant increase in the internal income and financial stability of parishes and archdeaconries, with leaks effectively addressed by both internal and external auditors.

Discussion of Findings

Fraud is a prevalent issue in various organisations, particularly in the Church of God. Nigerian Christian organisations have been affected by economic downturns, employee dissatisfaction, disregard for internal controls, potential ethical deterioration, outdated systems, and regulatory delays. Church officials should monitor staff and be aware of potential opportunities for fraud.[51] Perceived opportunities include lack of security, ignorance of fraud types and methods, lack of monitoring, trust in fraudsters' ability to evade detection, and the use of technology like online and mobile banking.[52]

In 2023, Nigeria's financial institutions lost N17.67 billion due to fraud, with Lagos having the highest fraud count at 48% and 49%, respectively. The previous year saw losses of N9.9 billion. Lagos made little progress in combating financial fraud, but reduced the value of losses by 12% to N8.7 billion. Abuja's fraud count decreased by 26 to 4,548, while the value of money stolen soared by 73.17 percent to N994 million. Rivers State saw a decline to 3,285 while Ogun State remained in the top 10. Kaduna State's fraud count decreased slightly to 2766. Lagos and Kano States saw an increase in fraud, while the NIBSS reported a 325 percent increase in losses via Internet banking due to N2.4bn internal fraud on corporate accounts.[53]

Age fraud, often known as age cheating, is a global problem that lowers productivity in the public and commercial sectors, including the church, particularly in developing nations. In nearly every agency in Nigeria, more than 40% of the workforce is under-represented, which results in over-aged workers in a variety of fields, including football, Holy Orders, public service hiring, and security forces. The issue is concerning because individuals don't think twice about lying about their age if it helps them, even if it goes against the ethics and conduct code of their place of employment. This problem is not exclusive to the public sector; organised commercial industries such as finance, agriculture, oil and gas, and engineering all face this difficulty. The reasons behind age fraud could vary depending on the nation or occupation.[54]

Nigerian bank customers were scammed by over 80,658 fraudsters in 2023, a 4% decrease from 2022. However, this decline is still significant, as fraud losses have risen by 496.96% over the past five years, resulting in financial institution customers losing N59.33 billion between 2019 and 2023. The National Institute of Bankers and Supervision (NIBSS) reported in 2023 that 92% of all frauds involve deposit money institutions and that fraudsters often target people over the age of forty. A total of 62,901 fraud instances involving social media resulted in losses of N8.03 billion. Cases of armed robbery rose by 89.13%, while financial institution clients lost N658.8 million and N317.7 million as a result of card and phone theft, respectively. In 1,733 fraud cases, the absence of two-factor authentication led to losses of N192.3 million. An additional 5,273 fraud instances using compromised passwords cost N1.30 billion in damages. Phishing had a surge of 167.37 %, with 4,457 cases reported and N551.2 million in damages.[55]

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[51] L. M. Lister, 'A Practical Approach to Fraud Risk: Comprehensive Risk Assessments Can Enable Auditors to Focus Antifraud Efforts on Areas Where Their Organisation Is Most Vulnerable', *Internal Auditor* 64, no. 6 (2007): 63–70.

[52] F. Pomeranz, 'Fraud: The Root Causes', *Public Money & Management* 15, no. 1 (2009): 15–40.

[53] 'Lagos, Abuja, Rivers Lead States in N18bn Bank Fraud Loss', *Punch*, 21st August 2024, https://punchng.com/lagos-abuja-rivers-lead-states-in-n18bn-bank-fraud-loss/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20report%2C%20the,loss%20in%202023%20at%20N3.

[54] S. U. Erude, O. C. Orogun, and J. O. Iyamah, 'Age Falsification and Public Perception in Nigeria', *Journal of Public Administration and Social Welfare Research* 8, no. 1 (2023): 17–30.

[55] T. Jaiyeola, '13 Tactics Scammers Used to Defraud Nigerians in 2023', *Business Day*, 6th August 2024, https://businessday.ng/technology/article/top-tactics-scammers-used-to-steal-from-nigerians-in-2023/.

The report reveals that employees and managers are the most likely to commit fraud, accounting for 40.9% of cases and 36.8% of managers. The owner/executive category makes up 18.9% of crimes. Employees of 1-5 years commit the most fraud, at 42.4%. Around 76% of frauds come from seven key departments: accounting, operations, sales, executive/upper management, customer service, purchasing, and finance. Perpetrators with a college degree are 47.3% more likely to commit fraud than those without a degree, possibly due to higher authority and access within the organisation. Approximately 83% of individuals committing fraud have never been terminated or punished before the crimes, which could be slightly inflated due to cases never being referred to law enforcement, offenders not receiving punishment, or confidential settlement agreements.

Nigeria's anti-fraud initiatives aim to raise public awareness of fraud and the shadow economy. The Diocese of Lagos Mainland collaborates with the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to improve society. The ICPC investigates corruption reports, prosecutes criminals, and educates the public, while the EFCC investigates financial crimes like advance fee fraud and money laundering. While the Diocese of Lagos mainland (Anglican Communion) recognises the fact that the 1999 Constitution is the Nigeria's most significant law, with the Fifth Schedule (Code of Conduct) prohibiting public officers from accepting property or benefits for their actions. The Criminal Code, applicable in southern Nigeria, addresses corruption and unjust enrichment by public officials. Section 98 defines corruption and prescribes offenses for it and related offenses. The Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act states that money laundering occurs when a person in or outside Nigeria conceals or disguises the origin of, converts, transfers, removes from jurisdiction, acquires, uses, retains, or takes possession of any fund or property, knowingly or reasonably should have known, or forms part of the proceeds of an unlawful act. Whether or not a disagreement involves clerical or lay issues pertaining to religious administration, the Diocese supports resolving conflicts amongst its members outside of civil courts. In light of this, the Diocese exhorts all of its members to resolve any disputes that may arise in the manner described above, in compliance with the Church of Nigeria's (Anglican Communion's) Constitution as well as the guidelines established by our Lord Jesus Christ, His Apostles, and Disciples.

Education on corruption and its effects on society are being promoted by the Diocese of Lagos Mainland. It is believed that the House of Clergy and Laity may bring about constructive change. In order to carry out an anti-corruption campaign successfully, they have to work together using creative strategies such as media platforms, sermons, and workshops. A potent instrument for reaching out to bigger congregations and alerting the public about wrongdoing is the pulpit. Every Nigerian citizen, from the elites to the underclass, where corruption is rife, should adopt this strategy. It must be noted that financial statements are crucial for a diocese's financial success, serving as a log of all monetary exchanges within the diocese. They aid in making investment decisions, obtaining loans, assessing financial status, and evaluating the diocese's performance. Financial statements also aid the Diocesan in making decisions on assessments, donations, and regulations based on the diocese's operations.

In Lagos Mainland Diocese, it is believed that auditors in the twenty-first century have problems as a result of the complexity of financial transactions, globalisation, and technological advances. They must comprehend how these activities affect a company's financial records and stay up to speed on accounting crises to assure compliance. Auditors must efficiently analyse massive data volumes as the auditing process becomes more reliant on technology and data analytics. To assure the accuracy and dependability of financial data, auditors must adapt and evolve. Auditors face the challenge of maintaining independence and objectivity in an interconnected business world where they rely on clients' information for audits. They must adhere to strict professional ethics to ensure the integrity of their audits. In a highly competitive market, auditors must balance meeting client expectations with maintaining the integrity of the auditing process. They must also develop new techniques and strategies to detect and prevent fraud, requiring strong investigative skills and staying updated on fraud prevention trends. Auditors must also adapt their processes to audit virtual assets and transactions, understanding cybersecurity risks and controls to effectively audit in a virtual environment. In summary, auditors must navigate these challenges to ensure the integrity of their work and maintain their independence in a rapidly changing business landscape. Auditors in the 21st century face the challenge of auditing in a rapidly changing accounting environment. They must stay updated with accounting standards and new business practices to ensure accurate and reliable audits. This requires a strong technical understanding of accounting standards and continuous knowledge updates. By developing the necessary skills to adapt to these challenges, auditors can ensure the accuracy and reliability of financial information in a dynamic world.

In Lagos Mainland Diocese, auditors are required to provide assurance services, including assessing financial statements, including financial statement notes. These notes provide crucial information on balances, transactions, and other data. It is crucial for auditors to gather sufficient audit evidence about the disclosures made in these notes and to consider them throughout the audit process. Auditors in the Lagos Mainland Diocese are in charge of assuring financial reporting accuracy by verifying information and resolving potential fraud. They must follow high professional standards, which include ongoing technical training, and acquire abilities for establishing confidence in information. The move to technology and data has resulted in new business models, with much of an organisation's value driven by information other than audited financial accounts. The Diocese hosts frequent conferences and seminars on fraud detection and prevention, and the implementation of internal and external auditing methods has helped auditors avoid violating international norms.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The economic crisis has led to a significant increase in fraud, with over half of respondents reporting a slight or significant increase in fraud in the past year. Employers should closely monitor these individuals to prevent unethical behaviour and be aware of employees seeking opportunities to be alone in the workplace. Artificial intelligence (AI) is crucial in anti-fraud analytics and forensic accounting methodologies, ensuring the integrity and trustworthiness of corporate organisations and financial institutions. To combat fraud and corruption, multiple approaches, repetition, and follow-up activities are needed. Technology and social media can mobilise citizens to participate in anti-corruption issues, but improving access to these platforms at the grassroots level is essential. Low-tech communication approaches should be included in engagement and outreach strategies. Moving beyond monitoring and evaluation for accountability allows for adaptation and improvement, ensuring no one is left behind.

The results of the study suggest a three-pronged method for detecting and preventing fraud: sophisticated risk management, anti-fraud technology, and education on fraud risks. By training employees to spot suspicious activity, education can lower the number of CEO fraud cases, phishing, social engineering, and account takeover problems. Digital footprinting, social media lookups, device fingerprinting, and AML checks are all part of a comprehensive anti-fraud approach. This strategy is enhanced by transaction monitoring, which analyses real-time payment data and verifies credit card information using technologies like card BIN lookups. To improve detection accuracy and adjust to changing fraud trends, rule development and machine learning are crucial. There are several methods for preventing and detecting fraud, including inventory management, bank reconciliations, internal controls, corporate codes of conduct, and operational audits.

Auditors in the Diocese of Lagos Mainland are responsible for providing assurance services to build trust and confidence in information and ensuring sufficient measures are in place to identify, report, provide guidelines, and stop financial fraud and financial misappropriation. In light of the study's results, and to guarantee that all hands are on deck to eliminate financial fraud in Nigeria, the Church, and elsewhere, institutions should use the most efficient fraud prevention and detection procedures. This is because the survey found that the present fraud prevention and detection techniques are viewed as the least effective in addressing fraud threats. Forensic accounting procedures and the employment of forensic accountants, which are widely regarded as the most successful ways, should be promoted at all levels of government, including municipal, state, and federal.

The Bible has played a significant role in shaping the field of auditing, influencing key figures, guiding ethical practices, and promoting accountability. While there are both positive and negative aspects to consider, the future of the relationship between the Bible and auditing is bright. By upholding biblical values of honesty, integrity, and stewardship, auditors can continue to serve as ethical leaders in the profession, ensuring the trust and confidence of stakeholders. It is hereby recommended that the use of more internal and external data to respond to external risk indicators and provide electronic confirmations for audit evidence be adopted. Churches and organisations should use cloud bookkeeping solutions for remote bookkeeping procedures, enabling smooth communication and data exchange. Auditors should be trained in cybersecurity and cybercrime, and all parish accounting officers should be retrained. In summary, the auditors' tasks in the Lagos Mainland Diocese shall include the following: auditing the diocese's accounts before each session of the synod, examining and confirming the correctness of the diocese's books and finances, providing a report to the diocesan board before each session of the synod, and certifying that the diocese's securities exist and are secure.

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