



## **Accounting Management and Its Impact on Detecting and Preventing Fraud in Saudi Banking Systems**

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### **Abstract**

More than 5 billion online fraud endeavor happens each year in the whole world, in Saudi Arabia by itself, it is predestined that SR 16 billion is wasted every year to commercial fraud, a big portion of which is done electronically. In 2014 Saudi Arabia took the 16th in Kaspersky's list of the most susceptible countries to online attacks, as it appears that Saudi Arabia is, in particular, more susceptible to the modern defiances (Kaspersky, 2014).

This study proved that fraud can be controlled and prevented with the good use of accounting management and internal control, companies need to understand the significance accounting management role as it has become more noteworthy, and they need to enable accounting management in the decision-making process and strategic plans formulation, so they can participate more closely to prevent fraud from happening. Furthermore, it has clarified that the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA), has helped with forming laws that would help banks and individuals to prevent fraud, and it counts the bank responsible of any fraud if the client has reported the theft or loss of his card in the condition that he kept his information safe, it also encouraged banks to educate their clients about the importunacy of keeping their credentials safe and secure.

**Keywords:** Fraud, Accounting Management, internal control



## **1) Introduction**

The Saudi Arabian monetary authority (SAMA) indicated that “banks are responsible for providing secure and safe systems and services for their customers.” Only when customers do not take steps into protecting their information (user & password), or share it with other parties that security and safety become their responsibility, the client is not accounted for the non-authorized transactions that have been done through their personal cards if he already reported that he has lost his card or it got stolen from him conditioned that the client (Alghamdi, Flechais, & Jirotko, 2015), SAMA has proposed new laws regarding fraud as the use of E-Systems caused became essential.

Many scholars have investigated fraud reasons and they managed to agree on the outcome that fraud results from two main sources; fragile internal controls and the inefficient systems of the government (Casarino, 2013; Casarino, 2012; Zaworski, 2005), based on the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners study which was made of 2410 fraud cases that caused total loss of more than 6.3\$ billion, most of the frauds in the banking sector are related to the executives, it also revealed that when the fraud doer is the executive its 10X worse case than if an employee is the fraud initiator. Financial statement fraud are greatest median loss out of the basic three fraud types; asset misappropriation, corruption and, financial statements fraud (ACFE, 2016).

Companies need to plant a system for prohibition and detecting fraud, with this implementation companies can reduce the probability of fraud occurring (Bierstaker et al., 2006). Managers need to communicate the intolerance policy of any fraudulent activity to their employees, they also need to implement transparent plans for performance and rewards, and to have an environment that encourages fraud awareness (PwC, 2012)

Adenji (2010) stated that accounting management supplies the demanded information by management for the following aims; forming policies, designing, controlling and administering the company activities, alternative business paths, disclosure to the external environment, and employees, assets protecting.



It concentrates on internal managers and decision-makers, it provides the needed financial data to managers in an attempt to help them make a better business decision, and it can be seen as a method of spreading information that can be of a great significance to managers with their job performing (Adenji, 2010).

Executives are the ones who are responsible for fraud control (detection and prevention), by building a suitable internal control approach, a suitable control approach is considered to have the ability to minimize fraud probability although it cannot completely get rid of it, at the broad of the director's scale, the part of supervising the management is held by the audit committee to make sure that all fraud hazards are identified and that they are all under control (Petrascu & Tianu, 2014). Therefore, there is a need to examine how accounting management in Saudi Arabia banks can prevent fraud, and at the same time assess the means of evaluating the capabilities of the banks in preventing fraud.

## **2) Problem Statement**

Fraud is evidently considered reality contemporaneous communities and it happens in both public and private sector, recently chains of frauds have been carried out in both public and private sectors, without any suspicion these frauds have been carried out with the existence of internal auditors surveillance, going from this view we can conclude that the surveillance of internal auditors are not guaranteed to prevent fraud from happening, also with the existence of external auditors frauds still happen every day.

It's essential that companies own efficient accounting management that use different practices since external auditors are not always trained to handle modern frauds like white-collar felonies like; security fraud, bankruptcies, embezzlement, contract disputes and, a probable criminal fiscal transaction such as; money laundering by pioneers criminals, therefore this study is designed to answer the question whether management accounting can provide Saudi Arabia banking sector with the requisite data to enable effective control over fraud, to answer this question the researcher used structured research approach,



this paper will identify fraud and its' specific risks to the banking sector, then it will explain the potential role of accounting management in fraud control and preventing context, also it will discuss the tools, mechanism of managerial accounting management that are used to prevent fraud.

A descriptive study method is used, with the utilization of the publicly obtainable date and policies, this paper will first introduce literature review related to the subject under investigation, followed by a part of fraud definition and some studies on the subject, then types of fraud are discussed, a view of Saudi Arabian banks is provided with some facts published by SAMA (Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority), lastly provided a review of the impact of accounting management on detecting and preventing fraud in Saudi banking systems with a conclusion of the whole paper.

### **3) Literature Review**

Many scholars have investigated the causes of organizational fraud and the techniques used to reduce the probability of fraud happening, when companies improve their internal control system (Arora & Khanna, 2009), this point of view was supported by (Albrecht, 1996) who also acknowledged that chances of fraud occurring increase when the internal controls are weak, Agyemang in 2015 has investigated the internal controls effect on fraud prevention in the banking sector, with the use of a sample of 35 management staff which involves internal auditors, this study has resulted in the finding that internal control means done by managers have been a part of preventing fraud in banks.

The central gadget that allows corporations to stop fraud is the existence of precise, timely, and pertinent information, the way to obtain such information is to establish a foundation of relevant databases and to share this information among divisions and corporations (Eurofinas & ACCIS, 2011). By adopting an enterprise-wide and inter-organizational system via sharing information among the divisions and organizations, companies can prevent fraud, the majority of fraudsters are sophisticated, experienced,



and repeatedly attempting fraud, That's why information-sharing can give corporations the ability to detect and identify probable fraudsters before they commit fraud (SAS, 2013).

Australian National Audit Office with the participation of KPMG (2012) has prepared a better practice guide; this guide included approaches that can form a defense line against any fraud attempt, it also suggested a cost-efficient controlling fraud process inside any corporation. The approaches include having an ethical culture, fraud awareness among employees, consumers, suppliers, and the effective internal control system in which permit proportionate vendors reviews, extraction and the analysis of data, and internally and externally reporting systems with the use of the web, internal channels, and hotlines.

PwC in 2012 have published out a research on fraud awareness, preventing, and detecting in the public sector which presented the conclusion that the most important and efficient tool in fraud detecting is internal control, with 36% cases have been discovered with the use of this tool, it also discovered that less than 1% of fraud cases have been revealed by external auditors as it is not the core of their job role (PwC, 2012). The existence of a forensic accountant in any company is fundamental because it can reduce fraud cases in the public sector, they have carried out interviews and used questionnaires with the public administrators from four different public sector organizations based in Malaysia (Haron, Mohamed, Jomitin, & Omar, 2014). Forensic accounting is seen as a gadget to protect companies from any financial fraud attempt, in which the forensic auditor is supposed to use his proficiency and skills to back his expert judgment with any issue (Eiya & Otor, 2013).



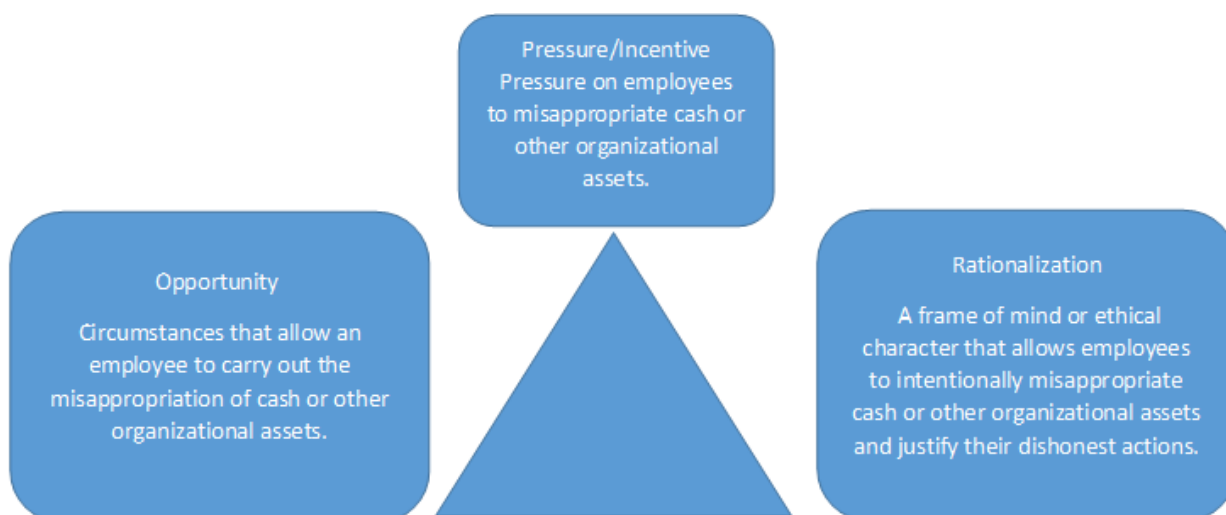
#### 4) Fraud

Fraud includes all the methods invented and used by individuals to have an advantage over others by wrong proposals or truth repression, including any tricks, deception and cunning, surprises or any other inequitable way that can lead to the deceiving of others (Black's law Dictionary, 1997). Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA, 2009) have defined fraud as the deliberate act of deception made by one party in the purpose of making a gain out of a victim party, fraud has two types i) internal fraud which is made by employees working in the organization including assets embezzlement, fraud of fiscal statement, corruption, and bribery, whereas external fraud is conducted by nonmembers (CIMA, 2009). External fraud include virus attacks through others, card skimming, stealing others identities (Berney, 2008).

Fraud occurs when there is a) incentive to perpetrate fraud, b) rationalization to justify fraud behavior, and c) the opportunity to perpetrate fraud, as illustrated in the fraud triangle (Albrecht, Howe, & Romney, 1984). Opportunity is the component that companies can control as they can border the chances of committing fraud thus reducing it, opportunity is the window for fraudsters to perpetrate fraud, as they need to think they won't get caught, and their actions are not going to be exposed, opportunity does occur for many reasons such as; incapacitated internal controls, dreadful management monitoring, the benefiting from one's power and position, and not managing to establish suitable procedures that can detect any fraud attempt (Coenen, 2009).

The other part of the fraud triangle is motivation or incentives it is the need in which encourages an individual to perpetrate fraud, it can be a financial need or any other form of need. The nonfinancial needs could result from the pressure for better outcomes at the job or the need to cover for an individual's weak performance, addictions can also be a reason for fraud for example gambling addiction or drugs (Coenen, 2009).

The last crucial part of most of the fraud attempts is the rationalization made by fraudsters that perpetrating fraud is acceptable due for many reasons when fraudsters are generally untruthful it becomes easier to them to commit fraud but if they possess a higher ethical criterion it would be harder to them to rationalize the



fraud, as they need to persuade themselves that fraud is acceptable due to their reasons (Coenen, 2009).

Figure 1: (Joseph T. Wells, 1997)

Fraud control is an issue these days that disturb the top banking executives and regulators when fraud activities happen in their financial institutions while they are managers there (Moll & Hoque, 2011).Ekeigwe (2011) sees that monitoring and auditing plans must include activities that are specifically tailored to the risk degree and kind. Committee of Sponsoring Organizations has stated that internal control can have a significant impact of reducing fraud attempts, and it's considered a key deterrent of fraud (COSO, 2004), internal control can be defined as the procedure in which the entity's broad of directors with other staff provide reasonable guarantee assertion in regard to the accomplishment of aims in; a) the effectiveness and adequacy of operations, b) the dependableness of fiscal reports, c) the compliance of the applicable laws and regulations (COSO, 2004).

Many environmental agents do increase the chance of fraud acts in the banking sector, such as; weak internal controls system, unsuitable remuneration,



absence of separation of tasks, job roles, responsibilities, and tasks ambiguity, other agents include not taking any administrative action when there is an unacceptable performance level or behavior of an employee, segregation lack of audit trails, the shortage of periodic reviews, inspections and, follow-ups on the guarantee of the compliance on the organization's objectives, procedures, and government regulations (Bologna, 1994).

### 5) Types of Fraud

Many types can be classified based on different criteria; following explanation of the types;

- A) Identity Theft; occurs when the fraudster hide his own identity and use another one's identity, identities can be of any source such as passport, driver's license, or voter's card, this fraud type is the biggest attraction of media out of the three types of online banking frauds, identity theft victims suffer from this type of fraud as it can be complex and take months or years to mend the harm they result in(Agwu, 2013). when the thief obtains all information that the real person know he/she can use this information to conduct fraud, that is why it is recommended that these questions be tailored so that the only true person can answer (Sharma, 2003).
- B) Friendly Fraud; civil or family fraud happens when committed with the use of information of a trusted family member or friend, although many attempts to educate individuals about the importance of keeping the confidential data secured, still a lot of people share such information with their closed ones(Agwu, 2013). A rising quantity of identity theft cases have been reported that these frauds are committed by close family members or friends who pretend to be the true client (Bhasin, 2007).
- C) Internal Fraud; can be identified based on the relation of the fraudster and the bank, objective and intention, and the number of fraud cases per fraudster or group of fraudsters. In the first case fraud can be seen as internal when internal and external parties participate to commit fraud,





it is classified external when it is committed by a client or a third party, and when its committed by employees or managers it is classified internal (AGWU, 2014)

The second case there are two types of fraud; credit and theft, with credit the aim is to gain money and the intention is not paying, the aim of theft type is to steal and the intention is eternally not paying. The last classification is it can be single if done separately with no links to other frauds, or multiple if more than one attack is committed by the same fraudster "organized attack" (AGWU, 2014)

## **6) Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Saudi banks**

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the biggest Arabian country, it has a key part in old trading over centuries and it is considered an Islamic destination for Pilgrims, as the statics of the World Bank (2019) the population of the kingdom has reached (35) million, Saudi Arabia financial strength comes from its natural resources and oil, it is considered as the biggest producer of oil so it depends on its' exports.

There are 13 listed banks in Saudi Arabia and 17 foreign branches operating there, both Islamic and conventional bank types are included in the banking sector (Samar, 2011), among the Gulf Cooperation Countries, Saudi Arabia has the largest assets of both conventional and Islamic banks (Alkassim, 2005), the assets of commercial banks increased by 2.5 percent in 2018, (SAR 57.6 billion to SAR 2363.4), bank total deposits also increased by 2.6 percent (SAR 42 billion) to (SAR1661.1 billion) (SAMA, 2019).

The beginning of bank systems in KSA started with few foreign-based trading places in 1926 which were used to provide financial services to help out the pilgrims and the trading society, then foreign banks began to enter Saudi markets, after that Saudi Arabia government was created. In 1952 the Saudi Arabia government created SAMA in the objective of reaching a stabilized financial system and guaranteeing the stability of the currency, later on in 1966 they have announced new law of banking control, this law empowered SAMA with more supervisory power, with the minister of finance acceptance,



SAMA has the power to recommend fiscal entities for new licenses issuance, take the suitable action with any violations acts, and release any new regulations (Alghamdi, Flechais, & Jirotko, 2015).

Since the 80's SAMAHas provided modern gadgets and systems to enhance the financial markets of KSA and force KSA banks to invest in technology and to strengthen the operations in their front and back desks. huge alterations have been made to freshen the system, beginning with the national Automated Teller Machine (ATM) system proposition, in which customers have the ability to access their accounts from any machine around the country without the need to go personally to the bank branch, the debit, credit and charge cards were introduced, Saudi banks also entered the SWIFT payment network, lastly same-day settlement was allowed by the use of sharing the benefits of a point of sales system and an advanced electronic share trading and settlement system (SAMA, 1999).

Through the use of different services, clients currently have the ability to access their accounts such as; the branches of the bank, phone and online banking, ATMs, shopping online and sales point. systems of security vary with each bank and the channel used, for example, the online authentication differs from bank to bank as some banks do use one time PIN, whereas other banks do use two-step verification as they send it to the client telephone, but one of the security systems has been almost in all banks which is the SMS alert with every transaction made on the account, the client will receive SMS, like money transfer, deposits, withdrawal, online transactions.

### **7) SAMA regulations**

The clause (3-3) of SAMA Electronic banking regulations sates that banks are the responsible party of the security and safety of their customers as long as that their customers did not violate their own security by not safeguarding their account number and password or share this information with any third party, this rule does not apply for credit and debit cards as any customer have the ability to authorize a third party to have access for his/her card (SAMA, 2010). Clause (7-1) hold banks the responsibility of any security penetration or unauthorized transactions,



if the customer, the cardholder has reported the lost or steal of his card as long as he has follows the aforementioned rules, unauthorized use is defined in SAMA E-banking regulations as “The use of a credit card or debit card by anyone other than the client (card holder) who does not have actual or implied authorization”.

SAMA rules have asserted that banks should use different methods such as; the bank website or promotional brochures and publications to enlighten their clients about their several systems of bank services uses and the preserve the online account number and passwords, preserve their bank cards and the PINs, the use of safe passwords and the need to change those passwords regularly, and the way to profile a complaint (SAMA, 2010).

### **8) The role of accounting management in fraud prevention**

IMA Institute of Management Accountants which is based in the US has asserted that organizational strategy style and enforcement are a significant professional quality of any management accountant, and this job position is basically considered management partnership as it provides management with the needed financial statements and expertise in control (IMA, 2008). The role of the accountant has changed in this era as it became more significant than only handing reports, it has become more a management accountant and he plays a significant role in decision-making and strategies (Forsait, Tilt, & Xydias-Lobo, 2004).

The Institute of Management Accountants (then the National Association of Accountants) have identified management accounting as "the process of identification, measurement, accumulation, analysis, preparation, interpretation, and communication of financial information used by management to plan, evaluate, and control an organization and to assure appropriate use of and accountability for its resources. Management accounting also comprises the preparation of financial reports for non-management groups such as shareholders, creditors, regulatory agencies, and tax authorities" (IMA, 2008, p.1)

Huge modifications have been made to change the nature of the accountant role in the past twenty years, such as activity-based costing standards and balanced scorecard concepts which enabled the accountant to



have more role in strategy developing and decision-making in current companies (Talha, Raja, & Seetharaman, 2010). These changes have asserted the essential need for the participation of management accounting in facing actual business hardness that requires strategic decisions (Johnson & Kaplan, 1987).

Ernst & Young (2010) and Deloitte (2015) from the big four accounting companies have tried to give aids for stop fraud, the detection and prevention of fraud must be system-wide but basically done by the internal auditors. When proficient audit and internal control are used there should be no undetected fraud in any accounting year (Ernst & Young, 2010; Deloitte, 2015). The job perspective of accounting management is evolving from the basic old fashion to more a partner in any company, the position in the organizational hierarchal structure does not matter as much as the role and aims of this section in the company (Forsait, Tilt, & Xydias-Lobo, 2004; CLINTON & WHITE, 2012).

Basically one particular step that helps with fraud prevention and detection in all companies is the need for continuous close attention from managers to the practices of management (Turpen & Messina, 1997). In simple terms, organizational management must initiate and implement measures and strategies that enable suitable, accurate, important information that needed to reduce the hazards of fraud and avoid its happening, the need for management to do so now is of importance as occupational fraud is increasing (KPMG, 2013).

One fundamental side of organizational risk management is fraud monitoring, (CIMA) Chartered Institute of Management Accountants sees that any suitable fraud control must have four parts prevention, detection, deterrence and response (CIMA, 2009). To reach the aim of fraud control, appropriate and suitable data analysis and considerable consideration must be given to fraud as a section of the total risk management work scope, the thorough comprehending of the companies' operational environment, body, and fiscal activities that management accounting department own is considered valuable as it gives the company the leverage to get utmost advantages (Charron & Lowe, 2008).



CIMA and AICPA (the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants) both share the vision that management accounting possess the essential knowledge and experience that enables it to be considered as an effective entrant in fraud risk management (CGMA, 2012).

### **Conclusion**

It has been proved that fraud can be controlled and prevented with the good use of accounting management and internal control, companies need to understand the significance accounting management role as it has become more noteworthy, they need to enable accounting management in the decision-making process and strategic plans formulation, so they can participate more closely to prevent fraud from happening.

In Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA), has helped with forming laws that would help banks and individuals to prevent fraud, and it counts the bank responsible of any fraud if the client has reported the theft or loss of his card in the condition that he kept his information safe, it also encouraged banks to educate their clients about the importunacy of keeping their credentials safe and secure.



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