



An Empirical Study of Teachers' Perceptions of the Academic Relevance and Career Prospects of Forensic Accounting Education

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Abstract

In recent years, financial fraud has become increasingly sophisticated, posing significant challenges to businesses, governments, and society at large. The prevalence of such fraud incidents has not only raised awareness of financial vulnerability but has also stimulated demand for specialized expertise. Forensic accounting services are increasingly recognized by Indian firms, banks, and regulatory agencies as critical tools for fraud detection, investigation, and compliance.

The present study examines commerce teachers' perceptions regarding the academic relevance and career prospects of forensic accounting education. The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design and is based on primary data collected from 88 commerce teachers through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics and the Independent Samples t-test were employed to analyze the data and examine gender-based differences in perception.

The findings indicate that both male and female teachers hold a highly positive perception of the academic relevance of forensic accounting education, recognizing its importance in enhancing students' understanding of financial fraud, professional competence, and societal value. Similarly, respondents perceive forensic accounting education as offering strong career prospects, including employability, professional advancement, and opportunities in fraud investigation and related fields.

Keywords: Forensic Accounting Education, Academic Relevance, Career Prospects, Teachers' Perception

Introduction

In an era marked by rising financial fraud, corporate scandals, and increasing regulatory scrutiny, forensic accounting has emerged as a critical discipline that bridges traditional accounting with investigative expertise. Forensic accountants play pivotal roles in detecting financial irregularities, supporting litigation, ensuring regulatory compliance, and strengthening corporate governance. Their skills have become indispensable across both public and private sectors. Despite this growing demand, forensic accounting education remains underrepresented in many academic curricula, particularly within collegiate commerce programs.

Teachers, as key stakeholders in curriculum development and student career guidance, significantly influence the academic direction and professional orientation of commerce education. Their perceptions of forensic accounting—regarding its integration with core accounting principles, practical applicability, and long-term career prospects—are crucial in determining its adoption and effective implementation in higher education institutions.

In India, forensic accounting services are increasingly recognized by firms, banks, and regulatory agencies as essential tools for fraud detection, investigation, and compliance management. Global market research indicates steady growth in the forensic accounting sector, with projected annual growth rates of approximately 7–9 percent, driven by technological advancements, heightened regulatory pressures, and the rise of cybercrime. Reports also highlight a consistent increase in financial fraud cases worldwide, underscoring the urgent need for professionals trained to detect, investigate, and prevent such irregularities.

As an interdisciplinary field combining accounting, auditing, law, and investigative techniques, forensic accounting enhances financial transparency, accountability, and organizational integrity. Education in this domain equips students with critical analytical skills, strengthens professional competence, and prepares them for emerging career opportunities in auditing, fraud examination, risk management, and corporate governance.

However, the successful integration of forensic accounting into commerce curricula depends largely on teachers' perceptions of its academic relevance and career potential. Their understanding and acceptance of the discipline influence curriculum design, teaching practices, and students' awareness and interest in the field. Furthermore, gender dynamics within academia may shape these perceptions, warranting focused empirical examination.

Addressing this gap, the present study titled "An Empirical Study of Teachers' Perceptions of the Academic Relevance and Career Prospects of Forensic Accounting Education" investigates the viewpoints of commerce teachers at the collegiate level. Based on primary data collected from 88 respondents and analyzed using statistical techniques, the study examines overall perceptions, gender-based differences, and the influence of gender on attitudes toward forensic accounting education. The findings aim to provide valuable insights for educational policymakers and academic institutions seeking to strengthen and modernize commerce education programs.

Review of Literature

Barodiya & Dubey (2025), assessed the perception of commerce faculty in Indian universities. The authors contend that while teachers recognize the high relevance of Forensic Accounting, the present and existing curriculums are frequently outdated. They highlight that including AI and Machine Learning into Forensic Accounting education are the primary driver for student employability in India's growing fintech sector.

Kar & Acharya (2025), conducted an empirical study which highlights a robust beneficial correlation between specialized Forensic Accounting education and placement in "Big Four" firms and regulatory bodies like the SEBI and SFIO. Indian teachers perceive FA not just as a topic, but as a "high-value career pivot" for conventional accounting students.

Gupta & Singh (2024), conducted a survey among professors in Delhi-NCR, discovering that 85% of educators believe Forensic Accounting should be an obligatory credit-based course. The study notes that teachers view the "absence of uniform and consistent textbooks" in the Indian setting as an obstacle to maximizing career opportunities for graduates.

Sharma & Kumar (2024), conducted a study which concentrates on the perception of teachers regarding the shift from "paper-based" to "digital" fraud inquiry. The results suggest that Indian educators are eager to adopt Digital Forensics, believing it initiates extensive career opportunities in cyber security and banking fraud departments within India.

Das & Mukherjee (2023) attempted to identify a "resource gap" in Indian colleges through empirical study. While teachers perceive FA as extremely relevant for modern careers, they report an absence of forensic software (like ACL or IDEA) in labs. The study concludes that hands-on training is vital and crucial for connecting the gap between classroom learning and expert practice.

Patel & Mehta (2022) studied the demand for Forensic Accountants in India. Researching the post-pandemic financial landscape, the authors highlight that educators have recorded an increased demand for forensic specialists due to rising corporate scams. They perceive Forensic Accounting as a "recession-proof" career path, prompting a call for more MOUs between Indian universities and expert bodies like the ICAI.

Mishra & Pandey (2022), in their study focused on the perception of faculty in Tier-1 and Tier-2 Indian cities. It shows that teachers believe the integration of Data Analytics within Forensic Accounting courses offers students with a competitive edge, specifically for functions in "Risk Management" and "Internal Audit" in multinational corporations.

Together, this body of literature demonstrates that financial fraud is a major challenge in India and that the demand for professionals skilled in forensic accounting is increasing. This reinforces the importance of exploring **commerce teachers' perceptions of forensic accounting education** both for curriculum development and to align academic programs with evolving industry and societal needs.

Research Objectives

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine teachers' perceptions regarding the academic relevance of forensic accounting education.
2. To assess teachers' perceptions regarding the career prospects of forensic accounting education.
3. To compare the perceptions of male and female teachers regarding the academic relevance of forensic accounting education.
4. To compare the perceptions of male and female teachers regarding the career prospects of forensic accounting education.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it provides empirical evidence on teachers' perceptions of forensic accounting education, an area that is increasingly important in commerce and accounting curricula but remains under-researched. The findings can assist educational institutions in designing or improving forensic accounting courses that are both academically relevant and aligned with industry needs. Furthermore, by highlighting potential gender differences in perception, the study supports inclusive and effective curriculum planning. The results can also inform policymakers and professional bodies regarding the growing career opportunities and professional relevance of forensic accounting education, ultimately helping to bridge the gap between academic training and industry requirements.

Hypotheses of the Study

H0₁: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers regarding their perception of the academic relevance of forensic accounting education.

H1₁: There is a significant difference between male and female teachers regarding their perception of the academic relevance of forensic accounting education.

H0₂: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers regarding their perception of the career prospects of forensic accounting education.

H1₂: There is a significant difference between male and female teachers regarding their perception of the career prospects of forensic accounting education.

Research Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine teachers' perceptions regarding the academic relevance and career prospects of forensic accounting education. The study is empirical in nature and is based on primary data collected from commerce teachers. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed in Google Forms. The population of the study comprises commerce teachers teaching at higher education institutes. A total of 88 respondents voluntarily participated in the study. The respondents were selected using a convenience sampling technique, as the questionnaire was circulated online to teachers through professional groups and personal contacts. The instrument consisted of three sections: demographic details of the respondents (including gender), statements relating to the academic relevance of forensic accounting education, and statements concerning its career prospects. The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale. In addition to primary data, secondary data were collected from scholarly sources such as academic journals, books, and research articles to provide theoretical support and background for the study. The collected data were organized and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to summarize teachers' perceptions. To test the stated hypotheses and examine whether there is a significant difference between male and female teachers' perceptions regarding academic relevance and career prospects, the Independent Samples t-test was applied. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure internal consistency of the measurement scale.

Results and Discussion

This section present analysis of 88 responses collected from commerce teachers. It includes results of statistical tests are performed to analyse the data.

1. Demographic Data of Respondents

Table: 1 Gender Data of Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	48	54.5
Female	40	45.5
Total	88	100

The sample consists of 88 teachers, out of which 48 respondents (54.5%) are male and 40 respondents (45.5%) are female. This indicates a fairly balanced representation of both genders in the study.

2. Reliability Statistics

Table: 2 Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.909	10

The reliability statistics show a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.909 for 10 items, which indicates excellent internal consistency. This confirms that the items used to measure teachers' perceptions of academic relevance and career prospects of forensic accounting education are reliable and consistent.

3. Teachers' Perceptions of the Academic Relevance of Forensic Accounting Education

Descriptive statistics revealed that teachers strongly agreed on the academic relevance of forensic accounting education. The mean scores for male teachers ranged from 4.35 to 4.52, while for female teachers they ranged from 4.15 to 4.35 on a 5-point Likert scale. Standard deviations were low (0.652–0.802), indicating consistency in responses.

Across all four dimensions, the mean scores for both male and female teachers exceeded 4.00, which indicate a high level of agreement regarding the academic relevance of forensic accounting education. Although male teachers consistently reported slightly higher mean scores than female teachers, the differences appear minimal at the descriptive level. This suggests that teachers' perceptions are largely similar regardless of gender. Table 3 summarizes these results.

Table 3: Gender-wise Descriptive Statistics for Academic Relevance of Forensic Accounting Education

Statement	Male Mean	Female Mean	Male SD	Female SD
Forensic Accounting education in the curriculum is academically relevant and beneficial to students.	4.52	4.20	0.714	0.687
Knowledge of Forensic Accounting enhances students' employability in the job market.	4.35	4.15	0.729	0.802
Forensic Accounting education improves students' understanding of financial fraud and corruption.	4.40	4.35	0.707	0.662
Forensic Accounting is academically relevant to the accounting profession and valuable to society as a whole.	4.50	4.33	0.652	0.656

Table 3.1 Results of Independent Samples t-Test

Statement	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
	F	Sig.
Forensic Accounting education in the curriculum is academically relevant and beneficial to students	0.816	0.369

Knowledge of Forensic Accounting enhances students' employability in the job market	0.061	0.805
Forensic Accounting education improves students' understanding of financial fraud and corruption	0.074	0.787
Forensic Accounting is academically relevant to the accounting profession and valuable to society as a whole	0.096	0.758

The above table presents the results of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, which was conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in the variance of responses between male and female teachers for each statement.

For all four statements, the significance (Sig.) values are greater than the 0.05 level of significance (0.369, 0.805, 0.787, and 0.758). Since all p-values exceed 0.05, the assumption of equal variances is satisfied. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the variability of responses between male and female teachers across any of the statements.

Because the assumption of homogeneity of variances is met, the independent samples t-test can be appropriately applied for further analysis. Overall, the results revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in their perceptions of the academic relevance of forensic accounting education, therefore, **failed to reject** the null hypothesis (H_0). This implies that gender does not significantly influence teachers' perceptions regarding the academic relevance of forensic accounting education.

4. Teachers' Perceptions of Career Prospects of Forensic Accounting Education

The descriptive results show that both male and female teachers have a positive perception regarding the career prospects of forensic accounting education. Mean scores for male teachers ranged from 4.21 to 4.35, while female teachers' scores ranged from 4.05 to 4.33. The mean scores for all statements are above 4.00 for both genders, indicating strong agreement. Male teachers report slightly higher mean scores on most statements related to job opportunities, demand for forensic accountants, professional courses, and research opportunities. Female teachers show marginally higher mean scores on statements related to career advancement and engagement in different areas of forensic accounting. Overall, the differences in mean scores between male and female teachers are small, suggesting similar perceptions across gender. Table 4 presents the gender-wise descriptive statistics.

Table 4: Gender-wise Descriptive Statistics for Career Opportunities

Statement	Male Mean	Female Mean	Male SD	Female SD
Forensic accounting education increases job opportunities and earning potential.	4.21	4.05	0.743	0.714
The need and demand for forensic accountants are growing significantly in the marketplace.	4.31	4.13	0.776	0.686
Forensic accounting education supports progression to professional courses such as CA, CMA, CS, CFA, and other certifications.	4.31	4.20	0.748	0.723
Forensic accounting education enhances career advancement and professional growth.	4.25	4.33	0.729	0.616
Forensic accounting education prepares students for careers in fraud investigation, litigation support, financial crime investigation, and risk and compliance management.	4.29	4.33	0.824	0.572
Forensic accounting education provides research opportunities for students and scholars.	4.35	4.15	0.729	0.770

Table 4.1: Results of Independent Samples t-Test

Statement	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
	F	Sig.
Forensic accounting education increases job opportunities and earning potential	0.530	0.469
The need and demand for forensic accountants are growing significantly in the marketplace	2.268	0.136
Forensic accounting education supports progression to professional courses such as CA, CMA, CS, CFA, and other certifications	0.000	0.986
Forensic accounting education enhances career advancement and professional growth	0.484	0.488
Forensic accounting education prepares students for careers in fraud investigation, litigation support, financial crime investigation, and risk and compliance management	4.535	0.036
Forensic accounting education provides research opportunities for students and scholars	0.048	0.827

The results of Levene’s Test indicate that the significance values for most of the statements are greater than 0.05, confirming that the assumption of homogeneity of variances is satisfied. However, for the statement, “Forensic accounting education prepares students for careers in fraud investigation, litigation support, financial crime investigation, and risk and compliance management,” the significance value is less than 0.05, indicating that the assumption of equal variances is violated for this particular item. In such a case, the independent samples t-test results are interpreted using the row that does not assume equal variances.

Overall, as the majority of the statements meet the homogeneity assumption and the observed mean differences between male and female teachers are minimal, the findings suggest that gender does not substantially influence teachers’ perceptions regarding the career prospects of forensic accounting education.

Furthermore, the independent samples t-test results revealed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in their perceptions of the career prospects of forensic accounting education means **failed to reject** the null hypothesis (H_0) and it is concluded that gender does not significantly influence teachers’ perceptions regarding the career prospects of forensic accounting education.

Overall Findings and Discussion

The study reveals that commerce teachers hold highly positive perceptions regarding both the academic relevance and career prospects of forensic accounting education. Teachers agreed that forensic accounting enhances students’ understanding of financial fraud, supports employability, and contributes to the accounting profession and society. Similarly, teachers acknowledged its potential to open career opportunities in areas such as fraud investigation, litigation support, professional certifications, and research.

Descriptive statistics showed that mean scores for all statements exceeded 4.00, indicating strong agreement, while differences between male and female teachers were minimal. Levene’s Test confirmed homogeneity of variances for most statements, and independent samples t-tests revealed no statistically significant gender differences in perceptions. This suggests that teachers’ views are consistent regardless of gender.

Overall, the findings indicate a broad consensus among commerce teachers on the value of forensic accounting education. The results highlight its importance in enhancing academic knowledge, professional competence, and career prospects, emphasizing the need for its integration into the curriculum to prepare students for emerging roles in finance, auditing, and fraud prevention.

Limitations of the Study

The present study is subject to certain limitations that should be acknowledged.

1. The sample size is limited to 88 commerce teachers.
2. Convenience sampling was used, and the questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms via groups and personal contacts.
3. The study considers only gender as a demographic variable; other factors such as experience, qualification, and institutional type were not examined.
4. The study is cross-sectional in nature, as the data were collected at a single point in time. Therefore, changes in perceptions over time could not be assessed.

Conclusion

Financial fraud in India has grown significantly in both **frequency and economic impact**, underscoring the need for professionals trained in forensic accounting. Within the Indian context, academic analyses confirm that **demand for forensic accountants is on the rise due to the increase in scams and white collar crimes**. Studies note a growing demand that often outpaces the availability of formally trained professionals, pointing to a **shortage of skilled forensic accountants and fraud examiners**. The study examined commerce teachers' perceptions regarding the academic relevance and career prospects of forensic accounting education. The findings indicate that forensic accounting is perceived as an important and emerging field within commerce education. The statistical analysis reveals that gender-based differences are not significant in shaping these perceptions. Overall, the study highlights the growing importance of forensic accounting education and its potential contribution to academic development and career opportunities in the field of commerce. The results provide useful insights for curriculum designers, academic institutions, and policymakers in strengthening forensic accounting education.

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