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REVIEW OF LITERATURE

NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

INDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

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BOOKS

- Bowersox, Donald J., Closs, David J., (1996), "Logistical Management." Tata McGraw, Hill, New Delhi.
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 Schemenner, R.W., Huber, J.C. and Cook, R.L. (1987), "Geographic Differences and the Location of New Manufacturing Facilities," Journal of Urban Economics, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 83-104.

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Garg, Sambhav (2011): "Business Ethics" Paper presented at the Annual International Conference for the All India Management Association, New Delhi, India, 19–22 June.

UNPUBLISHED DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

Kumar S. (2011): "Customer Value: A Comparative Study of Rural and Urban Customers," Thesis, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

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HOW TO REMOVE THE UNCERTAINTY CONCERNING THE CONTINUITY OF ENTITY: THE STRONGEST EVIDENCE FROM THE VIEW POINT OF THE AUDITORS IN SAUDI ARABIA

DR. BADI SALEM ALRAWASHDEH ASST. PROFESSOR PRINCESS NOURA BENT ABDULRAHMAN UNIVERSITY RIYADH THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

ABSTRACT

The research is conducted to study about the removal of the uncertainity concerning the continuity of entity based on the evidence of the view point of the auditors in Saudi Arabia. The researcher recommends that there should be specific indicators for the continuity of the company to take enforceable by the companies through the show in the financial statements, in a way that enables auditors to judge the company's intention and continuity.

JEL CODE

M4, M42

KEYWORDS

uncertainty concerning, the strongest evidence, the continuity of entity.

INTRODUCTION

onceptual framework of the accounting based on three sets of assumptions are: assumptions related to the environment of accounting, and assumptions relating to the accounting domain, and a set of assumptions to be proved.

Assumptions of accounting environment are:

- Quantification
- Exchange
- Entities
- Time Period
- And unit of measure.

While those related to accounting domain are; financial statements, market prices, personal morale, and tentativeness.

The third set of assumptions includes the following: Continuity, objectivity, consistency, stable unit, and disclosure, which are the field of the external auditor to make sure about their availability, through the mentioned means. In order to ensure compliance with these assumptions, the international accounting standards included procedures and methods to handle the data, if applied by the accounting unit, shall be considered bound to these assumptions. This paper will focus on the assumption of continuity, which were given by the issuers of International Accounting Standards and International auditing Standards great deal of importance. This importance is due to that the users of financial statements make their decisions according to what was disclosed in these financial statements. And because most of these decisions relate to investment and financing decisions that represent the long-term financial events, it becomes necessary for the auditor to deduce the continuity through reviewing the financial statements. As a result of the keenness of the Standard Committee of the International audit, the committee issued the standard No. 570, which required the external auditor, to make sure that the company has shown its intention and ability to continue working. And through a closer look by the auditor to the financial reports issued by the company, he could decide if the company applying the International Auditing Standard No. 570, the auditor may relies on several indicators to build his opinion about this aspect, such as, the strategic plan of the company, acquisition of long-term assets, financing policy, accounting ratios and etc.

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND QUESTIONS

Given the multiplicity of indicators pointing to a client company's ability to continue, the application of International Auditing Standard No. 570 by the audit firms in Saudi Arabia, depends on the auditor's assessment of the most powerful indicators to confirm the intention and the company's ability to continue. This paper will discuss this problem by the following questions:

- 1. To what extent is the commitment of auditing firms, by applying IAS No. 570 in Saudi Arabia?
- 2. What are the more accepted indicators by the Saudi auditors to assess the company's intention and ability to continue?

THE STUDY OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this study are:

- 1. Ensure compliance of audit firms operating in Saudi Arabia, to apply the requirements of IAS No. 570 (continuity), through the auditor to verify the ability and the intention of the financial statements.
- 2. To give ranks for the indicators accepted by Saudis auditors according to their importance to disclose the company's intention and ability to continue.
- 3. To develop clear and acceptable indicators by audit firms who operate in Saudi Arabia, that reflect the intention and ability of the company to continue.
- 4. Disseminate the results of the study to audit firms by the concerned authorities.

THE STUDY IMPORTANCE

Conceptual framework of accounting based on multiple assumptions, and the assumption of continuity is one of the most important of these assumptions. Because it means the intention of the company and its ability to continue. Because of this importance, the Council of International Stands on Auditing allocates the standard No. 570, which required the auditor to the need to ensure the availability of the intention and ability to continue in the company under scrutiny. "For the purpose of this paper the researcher will use the statement of (the client)". Therefore, the duty of auditor in this aspect is limited in the evaluation of the company's ability and intention to continue through he financial data and reports that will be disclosed. And because of the availability of multiple indicators that reflect the company's intention and ability to continue; this important study comes to discern the strongest indicators of the assumption of continuity from the perspective of Saudis auditors, and to publish these indicators on the auditing firms through official channels to become as legal practices.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

IAS No. 570

This standard has tackled the auditor responsibilities toward auditing the financial data which indicate the management using of the continuity assumption in preparing the financial statements, where, it requires from the auditor the verification of the company's intention and ability to continue through the auditing of the financial statements and reports issued by the company management, and this means that the client company is not temporary, or it is threatened with extinction. And that this company, under the continuity assumptions continues to work, and is preparing its financial statements on the basis of this assumption, unless the intention of the company management moving toward liquidation of the company. The external auditor could rely on many indicators either from the financial reports or from the clarifications related to deduce the continuity assumption. International Standard 570 has identified the responsibility of the auditor to obtain sufficient audit evidence, and have a sign on the accuracy of the organization's management use of the presumption of the continuing the organization through the proportion and presentation of financial statements, in addition to his responsibility for any conclusion about the fundamental form of the organization's ability to continue, also it was considered that this responsibility is obligatory, even if there was not anything that requires from the organization management to do a specific assessment to the company's ability to continue as an ongoing organization. In this regard, the researcher recognizes that there are facts and gaps been included in the financial factors and reasons not included in the financial statements to support his point of view, where the auditor, by his own analysis of these facts and gaps, generates significant indictors for the continuity or not continuity of the organization. The following are some of these assumptions:

- The preparation of the financial statements of the organization according to the accrual basis which requires loading each financial period its share of the annual expenses, and giving it its share of the annual revenues. And this will be reflected in the balance sheet through accounts such as, accrued
- expenses which will be paid in the next period, and unearned revenues. And this finally means the availability of the continuity assumption.

FINANCING POLICIES

Financing policy is one of the important financial policies, because it is associated with Board of Directors and the company's interest. Financing policy cares on how to get money from different sources, in addition to the types of these funds and guarantees related thereto (Ramadan, 1996). When the emergence of long-term loans in the company's budget, and the absence of premiums payable resulting from these loans, this means that this company trusted by the banks, and it is able to meet its obligations to its creditors. Similarly, if there are corporate bonds issued before a period of time, and that the company pays interest to holders of these bonds in a timely manner, this indicates the continuation of the company in the past and later.

PROFITS ACHIEVEMENT

Profits represent the result of the company's operations for a specific period of time, often for a year starts in January 1st up to December 31st. Profits equal to total revenues minus total expenses, and shown in the income statement which was disclosed through the annual report of the company, so, if the company was making profits in previous years, this will increase the conviction of the auditor that the company will achieve a profit in subsequent years, taking into account other evidence, relating to revenue and expenses such as sales volume, pricing policy, and market share. But, in the case of the continuation of the company in achieving the losses, for a number of previous years including the current year under scrutiny, this gives an indication of the failure of the company, causing the lack for continuity.

DECLINING THE CURRENT RATION COMPARED TO THE INDUSTRY

Current Ratio is computed by dividing total current assets, on total current liabilities:

CURRENT ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES

The outcome of this equation is a number represents the company's ability to meet its short-term through its current assets. If this result was in the company 3.2 for example, and in the industry 5.4, this means that the company has 3.2 dollars as current assets versus each dollar of current liabilities, this may seems good initially, but when it compared with the industry in which the ratio is 5.4, the ratio of the company will be weak (Besley and Brigham, 2000, P. 108), which means that the company suffers from liquidity risks that may threatened its continuity.

CASH FLOW

Cash Flow statement is one of the financial statements that should be disclosed in the annual report of the company. It can be defined as a statement shows cash received and cash paid in a specific period of time to get the net cash flow that resulted from three basic activities operations, investments, and financing, in a manner leads to reconcile the cash balance in the beginning of the period and in the end of the period (Hijazi, 2007). When the net cash flow is negative, meaning that cash arrested, less than the cash paid, and without waiting for the inflows in the subsequent financial period, the company will face difficulties due to poor liquidity, limit its ability to meet its obligations, also, this may constitute an obstacle to lend to the company by banks. In this case, the auditor will come out with a negative result for the possibility of the continuation of the company.

RATE OF RETURN ON EQUITY

This rate is the more sensitive for the shareholders; it equals the result of dividing profits after taxes on the total equity. It represents, the profits obtained by the shareholders against the investment of their money in the company (Bseley and Brigham, 20000, P. 108). If this rate of return has decreased from year to year, or if it was significantly low versus the rate prevailing in the industry, the auditor tends to doubt about the company's ability to continue.

LAWSUITS

A large number of lawsuits against the company mean that the company is suffering from multiple problems with the stakeholders especially the customers and suppliers. And this may lead to the liquidation of the company.

MARKET SHARE

This indicator means the percentage of the company's sales volume of a certain product, to the whole sales of the same product in the market. For example; if the sales volume of the company was 7,000 dollars and the whole sales 100,000, the market share of the company is: 7,000 / 100,000 = 7%. Therefore, if the market share of the company was in continuing increase, good profits will be achieved. While, declining of the market share means losing many of the customers which leads to lower profits that threaten the company's continuity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are a lot of studies that tackled the international Audit Standard number 570:

1. A study by the Arab Forum of Accountants (2008) under the title: "Analytical Study of the Reports of the External Auditor in the Light of the Standards of U.S. and British".

The study aimed to indicate cases of doubt about the continuance of the company, where the researcher has mentioned that there are many indicators can not limited their impact on the financial statements, such as, frequency of operational losses, significant decrease in the working capital, lack of ability to get new credit, and lower ability to meet the financial obligations, and these situations, may force the company to liquidation.

- 2. A study by Zureikat and Hmboz (2010) titled: "The Application of IAS No. 570 "the continuity" by Jordanian Statutory Auditors".
- The study aimed to identify the IAS No. 570, and to identify the role of the auditor in assessing the carport's ability to continue, and the commitment of the Jordanian auditors to IAS No. 570. And the results were as follows:
- Jordanian auditors are aware about their responsibility to assess the ability of customers to continue in the future.
- Jordanian auditor is committed to identifying indicators of doubt, that affect the continuity of client companies such as, the highest increase in current liabilities from current assets, the emergence of negative financial ratios, suffering of operational losses, and to stop the distribution of profits to shareholders.
- 3. A study by Swayeed (2009) under the title: "To Predict Financial Failure".

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The study aimed to clarify the indicators and guidance contained in IAS No. 570, which addressed the auditor responsibility when auditing the financial data that they show the availability of the assumption of continuity in the company, as a basic for the preparation of financial statements. The researcher pointed out three types of these indicators:

- Financial indicators: such as, negative financial ratios, the increase of current liabilities from current assets, and the lack for financing projects for new
 products.
- Operational indicators: such as; loss of administrative leaders, the loss of franchise, and labor problems.
- Other indicators: such as; changes of governmental regulations, and lawsuits against the company.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by using the descriptive analytical approach, were the secondary data was collected from the books and articles about the topic, while, the primary data were collected from the study sample through a questionnaire designed for the purpose of ranking the indicators of continuity according to their importance from the point of view of the Saudis auditors.

THE STUDY LIMITS

This study was conducted in January 2012, and it was limited on the audit firms in Riyadh city.

THE STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The study population consists from the employees of audit firms operating in Riyadh city, with 30 of auditors, to represent the study sample.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The following questionnaire was distributed on the respondents to put ranks for each indicator according to its importance from the respondent point of view:

No.	Indicators	The Rank
1.	The use of accrual basis is evidence of continuity.	
2.	Strategic Planning indicates to the company's intention and ability to continue.	
3.	The existence of long-term financing policies represents the ability to continue.	
4.	Non-profits for successive periods, means weak capacity to continue.	
5.	Ongoing declining in the working capital, limits the ability to continue.	
6.	Lower liquidity ratio means lower ability to continue.	
7.	Weak in cash flow, leads to lower ability of the company to meet obligations, which threaten its continuity.	
8.	Declining of ROE threaten the company's continuity.	
9.	Increase the lawsuits against the company, may causes the liquidation of the company	
10.	Decreases in the market share leads to difficulties in continuity.	
11.	Ignoring legislations by the company may end its existence.	
12.	Low customer satisfaction indicates to the company failure.	
13.	The application of international accounting principles is an evidence of the company's intention to continue.	

RESULTS OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The statistical analysis for the ranking of the indicators from the point of view of the sample members did not confirm the existence of any indicator most likely to be accepting as the major indicator according to Saudis Auditors vision to ensure the continuity of the company. Where, the first statement received the first rank based on the opinion of four respondents out of 12 respondents. And in the same time the sixth statement has occupied the same level. Therefore, Saudis auditors are focusing on the use of accrual basis and liquidity ratio as evidence to the company's continuity. While the last rank was to the statement No. 13 which is: "The application of international accounting principles is an evidence of the company's intention to continue".

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends that there should be specific indicators for the continuity of the company to take enforceable by the companies through the show in the financial statements, in a way that enables auditors to judge the company's intention and continuity.

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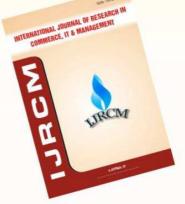
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