# **INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT**



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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

**OBJECTIVES** 

**HYPOTHESES** 

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY** 

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION** 

FINDINGS

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- Bowersox, Donald J., Closs, David J., (1996), "Logistical Management." Tata McGraw, Hill, New Delhi.
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## CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS

Sharma T., Kwatra, G. (2008) Effectiveness of Social Advertising: A Study of Selected Campaigns, Corporate Social Responsibility, Edited by David Crowther & Nicholas Capaldi, Ashgate Research Companion to Corporate Social Responsibility, Chapter 15, pp 287-303.

## JOURNAL AND OTHER ARTICLES

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.

## CONFERENCE PAPERS

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

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

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## THE INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION EFFECTIVENESS IN THE JORDANIAN INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to investigate the factors contributing to the internal audit function effectiveness in the Jordanian industrial sector. Data was collected from responses to a questionnaire distributed to head of internal auditors, internal auditors and other staff of internal audit departments in the industrial sector in Jordan. The study concluded that the internal audit function in the industrial sector in Jordan is curtailed by understaffing and hampered by inadequate support from top management while, the auditors seldom extend their full cooperation. However, internal audit quality and management support are two attributes that strongly influenced the internal audit effectiveness. The auditors themselves lack appropriate knowledge and training on effective auditing approaches.

## **JEL CODE**

M420

## **KEYWORDS**

Audit function, effectiveness, internal, Jordan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

he globalization of economy, technological advancements, and complexity of business and allegations of fraudulent financial reporting have recently sharpened the ever-increasing attention to internal controls and internal auditing (Karagiorgos et al., 2009. (This developing role of the internal auditing is also reflected in its current definition, i.e. "internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve a company's operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes" (Savcuk, 2007). An effective internal audit function will add value and improve an organization's operations. Oxford Dictionary defines effective as having an effect or able to bring about the result intended. Dittenhofer (2001) and Omar, et al. (2007) defined effectiveness as the achievement of the objectives and goals. Beckmerhagen, et al. (2004) stated that in order to adequately measure audit effectiveness, evaluation must not done only on results of the audit against the planned objectives, but also the audit process (planning, execution to reporting and follow-up) and resources (auditor independence and competence). Omar, et al. (2007) explained that the effectiveness concept in the public sector focuses on the outcome or impact of a program or activity rendered to the public. A program is said to be effective if its outcome met its objective(s). Sterck and Bouckaert (2006) mentioned that the implementation of internal audit function in the public sector is most effective when there is (1) legal requirement for the establishment of internal audit function, (2) strategy for the development of competency of internal audit function staff, (3) support from top management and existence of audit committee, and (4) central unit for the advancement of the internal audit function. Once, the implementation of internal audit function is successful, building it to be effective is another challenge that needs to be overcome. Six main themes have been identified by (Van-Gansberghe, 2005) as crucial in building an effective internal audit function and they are: perception and ownership, organization and governance framework, legislation, improved professionalism, a conceptual framework, and resources. Based upon a case study of a large public sector of a higher educational institution, Mihret and Yismaw (2007) identify factors within an organization that impact on audit effectiveness. The results show that organizational setting and the auditors' attributes do not have a strong impact on audit effectiveness. However, internal audit quality and management support are two attributes that strongly influenced the internal audit effectiveness.A major part of external auditors trust to the results of internal audit activity, and this confidence is going to grow quite fast in the next future (Ward, D.D. & Robinson, J.C., 1980). Schneider (1984) realized a descriptive model study through he examined three major factors of internal auditing that have big influences over the confidence of external audit in the internal auditing: (1) objectivity (2) competence and (3) work performed. The results obtained by Schneider showed that, from external auditors' point of view, the most important factor is the quality of the work performed by internal audit, next important factors being competence and objectivity. The competence is defined by Arens and Loebbecke (1991) as being that quality of a person that accepts a professional engagement and which also has the necessary technical knowledge in order to fulfill that engagement.

TABLE 1: STUDIES AND FINDINGS IN THE INTERNAL AUDIT QUALITY

Study	Findings
Brown, R.P. (1983)	Independence/objectivity /Work performed
Schneider, A.(1984)	Work performed ,Competence
Tiessen, P. & Colson, R.H. (1990)	Competence, Work performed
Maletta, M. (1993)	Competence, Objectivity
Haron H. et al., (2004)	Work performed, Competence

Source: Haron H. et al. (2004)

Finally, internal audit effectiveness as measured by management's acceptance and implementation of internal audit findings and recommendations may impact on external auditors' reliance on internal audit work. As the extent of internal audit effectiveness exhibits variation across organizations (Mihret and Woldeyohannis, 2008; Mihret and Yismaw, 2007; Roth, 2000), the level of external auditors' reliance on internal audit work may also vary accordingly. Consequently, higher levels of acceptance of internal audit recommendations by the management may lead to higher levels of external auditor reliance than a situation where internal audit is less effective.

The objective of this study is to investigate the factors contributing to the internal audit function effectiveness in the Jordanian industrial sector.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The growing importance of internal auditing as an economic factor has led to systematic research into the factors that improve the performance of internal auditing. In line with this, Albercht et al. (1988) investigated a theoretical framework in regard with the effectiveness of internal audit. Basic output was the existence of four areas that the directors of internal audit departments could develop to enhance effectiveness: an appropriate corporate environment, top management support, high quality internal audit staff and high quality internal audit work. Hence, Asairy (1993) evaluated the effectiveness of internal audit in Saudi joint stock companies. The researcher used a questionnaire, which he sent to the directors of internal audit departments, senior company management and external auditors from 38 companies. The author argued that internal audit was affected by the support they received by the external auditors. Regarding

the effectiveness of internal audit, Asairy stated that education, training, experience and professional qualifications of internal auditors influenced the effectiveness of internal audit. Unlike the aforementioned researchers, Dittenhofer (2001) assessed the effectiveness of internal audit via a new technique, which is named "results examination". This method involves identifying the auditee's objectives, establishing the criteria that could signify their achievement and using the established criteria to determine whether and to what degree the auditee's actions have resulted in the achievement of objectives. Despite the fact that this approach is more results-oriented, its success depends on the measurability and subjectivity of the criteria chosen (Balzan and Baldacchino, 2007). Moreover, a four-step internal audit evaluation program developed by Cangemi and Singleton (2003). This evaluation method is based in compliance with the department, corporate and professional internal audit standards. For example, this evaluation program involves making a summarized review of all internal audit assignments, a detailed review of randomly selected assignments, an annual self assessment conducted by the quality assurance coordinator and a triannual external review. Some audit committees do informal evaluations while others conduct formal, written documented appraisals (Protiviti Inc., 2004). A survey of 118 audit committee members by DeZoort (1997) found that they generally acknowledge their responsibility to review the effectiveness of the internal audit function and that this responsibility is generally stated in their companies' proxy statements. An analysis of 100 audit committee charters by Bailey (2007) reveals that 98% require audit committee review of the performance of the internal audit function. Papastathis (2003) investigated the factors that led to internal audit success. In his comprehensive review, the author concluded that the effectiveness of internal control system is determined by the activities, their complexity, the specialization of personnel and the will of Administration. Similar to other studies, Van Gansberghe (2005) also examined the effectiveness of internal audit. According to his perspective, perceptions and ownership, organization and governance framework, legislation, improved professionalism, conceptual framework and resources are revealed as basic factors influencing internal audit effectiveness. In contrast to previous findings, Mihret and Yismaw (2007) and Halimah et al. (2009) the two studies introduced a new approach for the evaluation of the internal audit effectiveness by identifying factors within an organization that has an impact on audit effectiveness. As a result, the model considered four potential factors – internal audit quality, management support, organizational setting, and auditee attributes to describe audit effectiveness, and revealed the way the interaction of these factors improves audit effectiveness. More recently, BoĠa-Avram and Palfi (2010) examined the efficiency and the effectiveness of internal audit. The main output from their research was the fact that there is a large amount of methods and instruments that could combine qualitative with quantitative elements. However, the researcher stated, "the choice of used method depends on the settlement of the main objective of trying to obtain the best reflection of internal audit's relevancy and efficiency, in order to obtain a good developing of internal audit department". In Jordan, there aren't any studies that examinant the effectiveness of internal audit function in the

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### SAMPLE AND SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

To achieve the study objectives the research uses the exploratory research methods of research questionnaires. This method of data collection was considered appropriate because the information sought is not publicly available and internal auditors are in a good position to know the answers to the questions asked. To enhance the survey response rate preliminary contact was made with potential respondents ahead of sending the questionnaire. The questionnaires were sent to the remaining sample of 73 companies (industry sector), copies of the survey instrument were sent to: the director of internal audit (CAE). Cover letters and surveys, along with postage paid return envelopes, were mailed directly to each of the business executives at each of the 73 company. The research was conducted in the period from August to December 2012.A pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted prior to its administration, using academic staff with accounting experience. Constructive feedback was received and appropriate amendments are incorporated into the questionnaire. The first part of the amended questionnaire comprised of some demographic questions concerning gender, age, highest educational level, professional qualification and experience of the respondent. The second part of the questionnaire consists of questions related to the respondent's workplace. The third section of the questionnaire seeks information related the important factors that might contribute to the effectiveness of internal audit function. In this particular section, two open-ended questions were directed to the respondents to solicit their opinions on both issues and the questions are as follows: (1) "If you are an internal auditor in a industry sector organization, what are the main problems normally faced by the internal audit function?" and (2) "In your opinion, what are the important factors that will contribute to the effectiveness of an internal audit function?"

## **RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

Table 2 reviews survey question asked for the respondents to identify their job title. The options provided were: chief audit executive (CAE) to complete the survey, of the 73 respondents, 38 or almost 52.1% of survey takers indicated that they are the Chief Audit Executive (CAE) of their organization. All "other" responses identified themselves as some audit position. The audit positions identified through the "other" category include internal auditors 9.6% or senior auditor 31.5% (Equivalent to the position of Director of Internal Audit or CAE in other companies), assistant internal auditor or staff auditor 6.8%.

## **TABLE 2: RESPONDENT JOB TITLE**

	Chief executive auditor	38	52.1%
Others	Internal audit supervisor or senior	23	31.5%
	Internal auditor	7	9.6%
	Assistant auditor or staff auditor	5	6.8%
		73	100.0%
	Others	Others Internal audit supervisor or senior Internal auditor	Others         Internal audit supervisor or senior         23           Internal auditor         7

## **TABLE 3: RESPONDENT EDUCATION LEVEL**

Qualifications/ Education level	PhD	1	1.4%
	Master degree	3	4.1%
	Bachelor	69	94.5%
	Others	0	0.0%
Total		73	100.0%

Table 3 the majority of respondents have Bachelor Degree almost 94.5%, and the number of respondent holding PhD and Master Degree 4 of the sample that's almost 5.5%; this indicates that the companies are discouraging the employees to have a high degree of qualification.

## **TABLE 4: PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE**

Demographic object	The valid items	Frequency	Percentage
Professional certificate	CIA	4	5.5%
	CPA	6	8.2%
	CMA	3	4.1%
	Jordan CPA	8	11.0%
	Without certificate	52	71.2%
Total		73	100.0%

The majority of respondents haven't professional certifications; CIA holders with a percentage of 5.5 %, CPA holders 8.2 %, and Jordan's CPA holders 11 % with accumulated percentage 34.7%. This indicates that the companies don't care about the professional certifications as shown in table 4. In other words, corporate governance or audit committee should reconsider the method of appointment.

#### **TABLE 5: EXPERIENCE**

Experience	1-5 years	35	47.9%
	6-10 years	30	41.1%
	More than 10 years	8	11.0%
Total		73	100.0%

As shown in table 5, a large number of respondents have experience less than six years with a percentage 47.9%; this maybe indicates a cause weakness in the internal audit department.

## **TABLE 6: EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Education and training	Frequently	10	13.7%
	Occasionally	21	28.8%
	Planned	11	15.1%
	Not Done	24	34.2%
	Others	7	8.2%
Total		73	100.0%

As shown in table 6 a large percentage of respondents indicate that training not done with 34.2%.

TABLE 7. ORGANIZATION SIZE				
Number of Employees	Responses	Percentage		
Fewer than 100	3	4.1%		
101 to 200	42	57.5%		
201 to 300	15	20.5%		
301 to 400	8	11.0%		
more than 400	5	6.8%		
Total	73	100.0%		

Table 7 shows number of people employed by the entire organization, Which is the first main measures to describe the size of the participating organizations. Respondents were given five ranges of total employees to select from. Almost 89% of the respondents were from organizations employing between 101 to 400 employees, and all but two of the respondents were from organizations with more than 400 or fewer than 100 employees.

**TABLE 8: NUMBER OF AUDITORS** 

Number of Auditors	Responses	Percent
1	11	15.1%
2 to 5	41	56.2%
6 to 10	16	21.9%
more than 11	5	6.8%
Total	73	100.0%

Table 8 shows the second measurement of organization size used by the survey is the number of auditors authorized within the organization, including the Chief Audit Executive (CAE) or equivalent position. As before, respondents selected their answer from a list of ranges provided on the survey. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents reported staffing levels in the 2-10 range. It is important to note, however, that there were five respondents from audit organizations with more than 11 auditors; these larger audit departments are likely to be more mature and have more developed performance measures.

TABLE 9: CAE REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

	Functionally		Administrati	ively	
	Responses	Response Percent	Responses	Response Percent	
Audit Committee /board	53	72.6%	10	13.7%	
CEO	11	15.1%	47	64.4%	
CFO	9	12.3%	16	21.9%	
Others	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Total	73	100.0%	73	100.0%	

The majority of respondents selecting board members or an audit committee as shown in table 9, with many also reporting to a Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

## TABLE 10: THE MAIN PROBLEMS FACED BY THE INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION IN THE

Low grading of position of head of internal auditors	13	17.8%
Staff lack of competency/knowledge on auditing techniques	10	13.7%
Lack of experience staff in the IAF	10	13.7%
Lack of training	8	11.0%
Internal audit function does not have full support /commitment from top management	8	11.0%
Action on audit findings and recommendations not taken by audit committee/management	7	9.6%
Lack of audit staff	6	8.2%
Lack of independence	5	6.8%
lack of understanding of the role of internal audit function in an organization	3	4.1%
Negative perception from audit committee	2	2.7%
Limited/lack of resources	1	1.4%
Total	73	100.0%

TABLE 11: INTERNAL AUDIT QUALITY	
Educational background	Competence
Certification	
Training and development	
Knowledge	
Experience	
Reporting relationship	Objectivity
Mandate to investigate any area	
Freedom from conflicting duties	
Audit planning	Quality of work performed
Scope of audit	

As shown in table 10, the internal audit quality is ranked as the most important factor in contributing to the effectiveness of internal audit function with accumulated percentage 56.2 % (17.8, 13.7%, 13.7%, and 11%), internal audit quality reviewed in table 11 and it includes Competence, Objectivity, and Quality of work performed. Support of top management is significant to ascertain adequate consideration and actions are taken up on internal audit findings and recommendations. The respondents also emphasize that without the support from the top management it is difficult for internal auditors to strengthen the internal audit function in an organization. Respondents expect that top management will facilitate the internal audit departments with supplying adequate audit staff, better resources and remuneration to attract skilled and experienced staff. Consistent with prior studies, the importance of support of top management is also highlighted by other researchers such as (HUNG & HAN, 1998; NAD, 2007; Van-Gansberghe, 2005). They pointed out that the functioning of the internal audit depends largely on the attention paid and support from the top management.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the study reveal that a majority of the respondents (56.2 %) perceive internal audit quality is the most important factor that will contribute to the effectiveness of internal audit function. This is consistent with the results of a case study carried out by Mihret and Yismaw (2007), and Halimah et al. (2009). The study also showed that internal audit quality strongly influenced the internal audit effectiveness. For the purpose of this study, internal audit competence, objectivity and quality of work performed are classified as internal audit quality as these factors are the important criteria used by external auditors in evaluating the internal audit quality. These quality factors of the internal audit function are prescribed by the external auditing standards (SAS 65 AICPA, 1997) and they have been studied.

This study identifies the major problems faced by internal audit function in the industry sector organizations and hopes to provide useful insight on the factors contribute to the effectiveness of internal audit as perceived by the participants of the symposium. Overall, the findings of the study show that the lack of audit staff is ranked as the major problem faced by internal auditors in conducting an effective internal auditing. This needs utmost consideration and attention of related parties such as the top management and the audit committee in their effort for sound governance and accountability in their organizations. The findings of this study are consistent with the previous studies that highlight the importance of internal audit quality to enhance the effectiveness of internal audit function. As such, it is essential to highlight and emphasize on internal audit competence, objectivity and quality of work performed. Otherwise, internal audit function will face difficulties in achieving its' effectiveness. Overall, it can be concluded that the change and improvement of internal audit function in the industry sector will be a lengthy and slow process if existing problems are not overcome. Hence, effectiveness of internal audit function will be easy to say than done.

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