



The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Developing the Accounting and Auditing Profession in Iraq

Oday Jasim Almaliki¹ , Maytham Abd AL-Hussien Bandar²

Abstract

In this study, we explore the effect of artificial intelligence (AI) in accounting and auditing domain in governmental and private banking institutions in Iraq. It also explores how to consider AI's influence on quality of accounting practice and audit activity not just through organisation readiness, perceived usefulness, but also the perceived ease of use and governing mechanism as predictors of decision makers' adoption and professional outcomes of AI. A comprehensive quantitative field survey was conducted using a well-organized questionnaire for Iraqi bank accountants and auditing officers. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, multiple regression and independent samples t-tests. The results reveal that the adoption of AI improves the quality of accounting processes, both in process and audit effectiveness. Aside from the behavioral components, the organisation readiness which companies are highly dependent on also has a significant impact on AI deployment. Governance mechanisms are additionally still focusing on the positive association between AI adoption and audit quality. Important contrasts were distinguished compared between the governmental and private banks, for which the private sector made more use of AI and thus better professional performances of AI in this regard with respect to the governmental banks. It shows (in short) that AI's incorporation into accounting and the audit process is enabled not only by technology but also by expert and professional training, a system of sound governance structures and regulation. These findings may hold particular implications for banks' management, policymakers and professional organizations looking for financial reporting standards to put forward themselves and for the audit itself to implement through digital transformation to increase its performance.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Audit Quality, Accounting Information Quality

دور الذكاء الاصطناعي في تطوير مهنة المحاسبة والتدقيق في العراق
عدي جاسم المالكي¹ ، ميثم عبد الحسين بندر²

Affiliation of Authors

^{1, 2} Department of Business Administration, College of Administration and Economics, University of Misan, Iraq, Amarah, 62001

¹ odayalmaliki@uomisan.edu.iq

² maytham@uomisan.edu.iq

¹ Corresponding Author

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^{1, 2} كلية الإدارة والاقتصاد، جامعة ميسان، العراق، العمارة، 62001

¹ odayalmaliki@uomisan.edu.iq

² maytham@uomisan.edu.iq

المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بيان دور الذكاء الاصطناعي في تطوير مهنة المحاسبة والتدقيق في المصارف الحكومية والأهلية في العراق، من خلال تحليل أثر تبني تقنيات الذكاء الاصطناعي على جودة العمليات المحاسبية وجودة التدقيق، فضلاً عن دراسة تأثير الجاهزية التنظيمية، والإدراك بالفائدة، وسهولة الاستخدام، وآليات الحوكمة في دعم تبني هذه التقنيات وتحسين المخرجات المهنية. اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الكمي من خلال استبانة وزعت على المحاسبين والمدققين العاملين في المصارف العراقية، وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام الإحصاء الوصفي، واختبار الثبات، وتحليل الارتباط، والانحدار المتعدد، واختبار (T) لعينتين مستقلتين. أظهرت النتائج وجود أثر إيجابي معنوي لتبني الذكاء الاصطناعي في تحسين جودة العمليات المحاسبية وجودة التدقيق، كما تبين أن الجاهزية التنظيمية والعوامل السلوكية تؤدي دوراً مهماً في تعزيز مستوى التبني، في حين تسهم آليات الحوكمة في تقوية العلاقة بين الذكاء الاصطناعي وجودة التدقيق. كذلك كشفت النتائج عن وجود فروق معنوية بين المصارف الحكومية والأهلية لصالح المصارف الأهلية من حيث مستوى استخدام الذكاء الاصطناعي وتحقيق نتائج مهنية أفضل. وتوصي الدراسة بضرورة الاستثمار في البنية التحتية الرقمية، وتكثيف برامج التدريب المهني، ووضع أطر تنظيمية واضحة لضمان الاستخدام الآمن والفعال لتقنيات الذكاء الاصطناعي في العمل المحاسبي والتدقيقي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الاصطناعي، جودة التدقيق، جودة المعلومات المحاسبية

¹ المؤلف المراسل

معلومات البحث

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1- Introduction

From the human and machine behaviour perspective, the development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has moved so quickly, that vast changes have taken place in business processes and professional practice in various domains in the world, and the financial sector in particular. AI has evolved from simple to more sophisticated, starting from the repetitive jobs we handle, data analytics as well as continuous auditing systems to anomaly detection and decision-support tools, gaining significance in accounting and auditing. These developments allow practitioners to quickly and accurately parse mountains of financial data, aid risk assessment, and refine the quality of financial reporting and audit findings to unprecedented levels. The banking sector in Iraq has been undergoing a slow yet incremental digitalization as part of large-scale investment initiatives for future innovative financial systems and financial inclusion. However, various accounting and audit services for Iraqi banks are performed by these traditional approaches and are less commonly complemented with advanced analytical and intelligent technologies. It highlights the significant disconnect between the potential capacities of AI systems and practice in the job. However, there are also barriers such as lack of technological infrastructure, limited learning opportunities, and unclear regulatory guidance for AI regulation may be factors against adoption. Hence its objective for this study is to explore the impact of artificial intelligence on the growth of accountancy and auditing jobs in government and commercial banking in Iraq. It examines impacts of AI adoption on the performance of accounting activities and audit quality and organizational and behavioral constructs and antecedents to adoption:

perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, organizational preparedness, and governance mechanisms. The practical part of the research is presenting evidence from the Iraqi banking sector which will provide some practical implication to policymakers, bank managers, and professional organizations in developing productive strategies to the digital transformation within accounting and audit areas.

2-Research Methodology

First: Research Problem:

With the rapid growth of AI-enabled technologies and their increasing uses in banking, the vast majority of Iraqi banks remain reliant on traditional accounting and auditing methods. This dependence produces a discrepancy between the potential benefits of AI and the prevailing state of professional practices. More generally, organizations' preparation, training for practitioners, and governing framework overseeing the integration of AI tools are also inadequate.

Second: Research Objectives:

1. Assess the extent to which artificial intelligence is integrated into accounting and auditing practices within Iraqi banks.
2. Investigate how the adoption of AI affects the quality of accounting processes.
3. Explore the influence of AI implementation on audit quality.
4. Identify both organizational and behavioral factors that affect the adoption of AI.
5. Compare the differences in AI adoption and its results between governmental and private banking institutions.

Third: Research Hypotheses:

Based on the objectives of the research and the review of existing literature, this study puts forward the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** The adoption of artificial intelligence positively influences accounting process quality in banks located in Iraq and is statistically significant.
- **H2:** The implementation of artificial intelligence has a positive and statistically significant impact on audit quality within Iraqi banks.
- **H3:** The level of organizational readiness positively affects the extent of AI adoption in banks in Iraq and is statistically significant.
- **H4:** Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use significantly enhance AI adoption among accountants and auditors working in Iraqi banks.
- **H5:** Governance and control mechanisms amplify the positive correlation between AI adoption and audit quality in Iraqi banks.

Fourth: Research Design and Method:

The study uses a quantitative, cross-sectional field survey method to complete the research questionnaires. A descriptive-analytical approach is taken to investigate the relationships among the variables in the study and test the proposed hypotheses.

Fifth: Population and Sample:

The focus is on the accountants and auditors from governmental and private banks in Iraq. A stratified random sampling method is used to ensure that a variety of bank types and job descriptions are captured in bank categories and jobs are adequately represented. The target sample size between 200 and 400 participants can be

included in it, to permit running multivariate statistical analyses.

Sixth: Data Collection Instrument:

The instrument to collect data is a structured questionnaire. Data is collected using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. This questionnaire consists of sections that investigate AI adoption, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, organizational readiness, governance and control, as well as audit quality and accounting processes. It also collects demographic information.

Seventh: Statistical Analysis Techniques:

We will use SPSS and SmartPLS statistical software to perform data analysis. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, can be used in this data analysis. Assessment of reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Correlational analysis to explore relationships between the variables. We assess causal relationships using multiple regression or structural equation modeling. Independent samples T-test to assess differences between government and private bank.

3-Literature Review, Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development:**1-Introduction:**

Prior research on the use of AI in accounting and auditing is thoroughly studied in this section. It focuses on impact to professional performance, audit quality, organisational preparedness, technology acceptance, and governance structures. This review aims to provide a strong theoretical and empirical foundation for the proposed research hypotheses and conceptual framework. Artificial Intelligence & Process Quality for Accounting:

The accounting industry has undergone significant changes with the fusion of AI and automation solutions. [1] mentioned that intelligent systems reduce manual data entry, increase transaction processing accuracy, and strengthen compliance to accounting standards. This transition allows accountants to focus on value-added analytical work, not the process of daily bookkeeping. [2] highlight that in the AI-based accounting information systems, internal controls as well as data validation exercises improve and enhance the reliability of financial information. What is more, [3] found that real-time data reporting on digital accounting platforms supports managerial decision-making. [4] found that the implementation of advanced analysis tools that enhances the transparency of the accounting processes and allows for consistent tracking of transactions reduces tampering with or fraudulent financial activities. Taken together, these results support the idea that adopting AI causes better quality of accounting procedures.

2. Artificial Intelligence and Audit Quality:

AI technologies that rely on techniques like machine learning and big data analytics are increasingly used in auditing today so auditors can explore a whole series of transactions instead of using a sample procedure. [5] argued that this approach serves for better risk assessment and to detect atypical transactions. More recently [6] mentioned the point that AI-supported continuous auditing systems provide instant assurance and can diagnose deficiencies early. As stated in [7] and [8], using structured and unstructured information improves audit evidence quality. They also added [9] proposed that models for continuous auditing improve overall audit efficiency with limited delay. Based on industry analyses, audit firms

utilizing AI resources achieve elevated operational efficiency, better fraud detection and a superior level of client service, indicating the positive association between the adoption of AI technologies and enhancement of audit quality [10] and [11].

3. Behavioral Implications and Professional Judgment:

With improved analytical skills, artificial intelligence also introduces challenges including issues of professional judgment and social or behavioral bias. [12] found that auditors might also begin to over-rely on the suggested rules of artificial intelligence—which could reduce their degree of professional skepticism. That should not happen; such a set of systematic and rigorous review and control systems must be in place. [13] advocated for auditors to view AI-generated results critically, not to take them for granted. Moreover, [14] suggested that audit companies should establish corporate governance frameworks and policies that require that AI assist the human operator in its judgment by improving rather than replacing human judgment. These studies provide the insights of some scholars who argue for the need for a balance between technological and professional developments.

4. Technology Acceptance and Behavioral Factors:

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), introduced by [15], posits that the two main factors influencing technology adoption are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. As [16] extended this concept, it confirms the model's relevance for professionals. For accounting and auditing, auditors are more likely to use AI tools if they believe the tools help increase performance

and are easier on their workflows. Furthermore, [4] described how user training greatly enhances perceived usefulness and acceptance of the system generally.

5. Organizational Readiness and Infrastructure:

Organizational readiness is essential for successful use of AI technologies. According to Alles [18], an institution with a strong IT infrastructure, access to data, and top-level support are crucial to continue its systems of auditing. Further, Tornatzky and Fleischer [19] also discovered the organizational context to be a key influencer of technology diffusion. ICAEW [20][21] reports suggested that inadequate digital skills in accounting teams may prevent efficient use of AI systems. Therefore, constant professional development is required to capitalize on the technology investments.

6. Governance, Ethics, and Regulatory Oversight:

AI is gaining significant importance as the use of ethics and ethical issues become ever more serious across the industries. [22] introduced the principles of transparency, accountability and fairness in AI to provide necessary requirements for strong AI systems. In the meantime, [23] and [20] recommend that professional organizations could draw explicit rules of accountability to govern the use of AI in accounting and auditing. In addition, [24] and [25] pointed out the importance of regulatory frameworks focusing not only on relevant subjects —data privacy, cybersecurity, algorithmic accountability — and especially in financial services, where public trust is paramount.

7. AI Adoption in Developing Countries and Banking Sector:

Further obstacles to making use of artificial

intelligence are found in some research studies also in emerging markets. Research conducted by [26] noted insufficient digital infrastructure and ambiguous regulations stifle technological progress. [27], as a result of high costs and insufficient training, lower levels of adoption within accounting practices are often found. [28][29] also found that the faster pace of uptake of digital technology among private banks were greater than for public sector banks, attributed to aggressive market competition as well as better investment flexibility. These observations apply to the banking sector of Iraq, which is frequently stifled by financial as well as administrative constraints in the context of the public service.

8. Literature Synthesis and Research Gap:

In general, previous studies suggest that the integration of AI improves accounting processes and audits, particularly, in the presence of organizational readiness, professional capabilities, and good governance systems. However, most of the empirical studies are conducted in developed countries and very few have done the interviews in the Middle East or Iraq. Furthermore, the research community lacks any studies aiming to integrate technology, behaviors, organization and governance into a single lens of analysis. Thus, this study aims to address one of the major gaps in existing literature by investigating empirical data from both public and private banks in Iraq on a number of contributing factors of AI usage and its professional implications based on a universal conceptual framework.

9. Study Conceptual Framework

Drawing on an analysis of the literature to propose a conceptual framework, we contend that both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use

significantly influence the adoption of AI technologies. This adoption then influences the quality of accounting procedures and audits. Moreover, organizational readiness and

governance serve as the moderating factors that amplify these relations. Figure (1) illustrates the conceptual framework of the study, including five hypotheses.

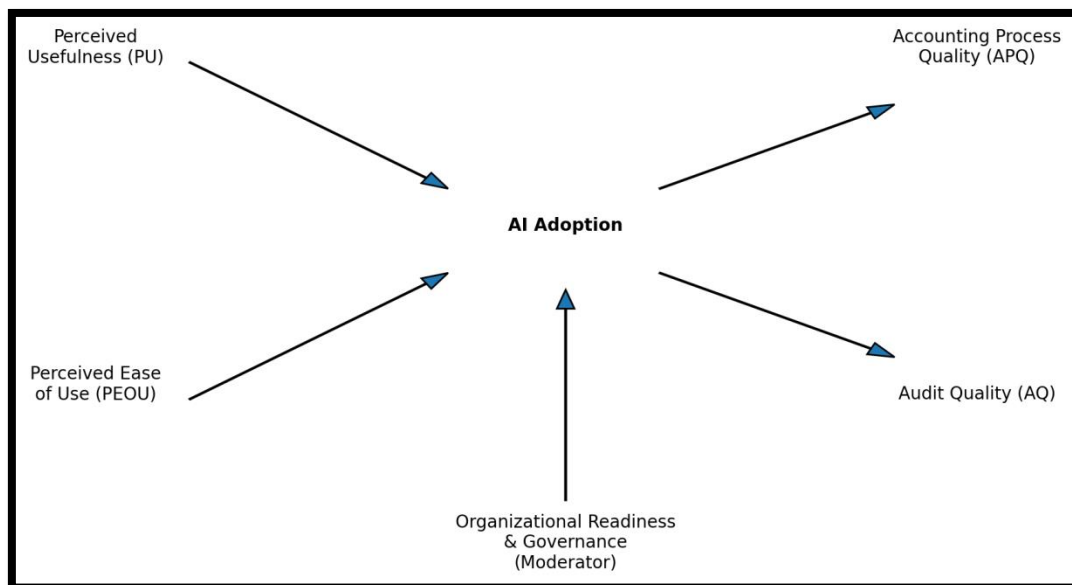


Figure (1): The conceptual framework

The figure (1) : state theThe conceptual framework assumes that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence the level of AI adoption (H4). AI adoption, in turn, affects accounting process quality (H1) and audit quality (H2). Organizational readiness has a direct positive effect on AI adoption (H3), while governance mechanisms moderate the relationship between AI adoption and audit quality (H5).

Research Hypotheses:

H1: Artificial intelligence adoption has a positive and statistically significant effect on accounting process quality in Iraqi banks.

H2: Artificial intelligence adoption has a positive and statistically significant effect on audit quality in Iraqi banks.

H3: Organizational readiness has a positive and statistically significant effect on AI adoption in Iraqi banks.

H4: Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use have a positive and statistically significant effect on AI adoption among accountants and auditors in Iraqi banks.

H5: Governance and control mechanisms strengthen the positive relationship between AI adoption and audit quality in Iraqi banks.

3- Research methodology and practical aspect:

First: Research Design:

The study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional field survey design. Data are collected from accountants and auditors working in governmental and private banks in Iraq using a structured questionnaire. The descriptive-analytical approach is used to describe current practices and test the causal relationships among study variables.

Second: Study Variables:

The study includes independent, dependent,

mediating, moderating, and control variables as summarized in Table (1).

Table (1): Study Variables and Their Roles

Variable Type	Variable Name	Symbol
Independent	Artificial Intelligence Adoption	AI
Dependent	Accounting Process Quality	APQ
Dependent	Audit Quality	AQ
Mediating	Perceived Usefulness	PU
Mediating	Perceived Ease of Use	PEOU
Moderating	Organizational Readiness	OR
Moderating	Governance and Control	GC

Reference: Prepared by the researcher using the SPSS program

Third: Research Population and Sample:

The research population consists of accountants and auditors working in governmental and private banks operating in IraqA stratified random sampling method is employed to guarantee sufficient representation of different types of banks and job classifications. The sample size ideal ranges from 200 to 400, for performing multivariate statistical analyses such as regression and structural equation modeling

Fourth: Data Collection Instrument

Primary instrument for data collection is the systematic questionnaire. It is based on a five-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. As presented in Table (3-2), the questionnaire has various demographic questions and sections that measure each variable of the study as presented in Table (2).

Table (2): Questionnaire Structure

Section	Variable	Number of Items	Scale
A	Demographic Information	6	Nominal
B	AI Adoption (AI)	5	Likert (1–5)
C	Perceived Usefulness (PU)	4	Likert (1–5)
D	Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	3	Likert (1–5)
E	Organizational Readiness (OR)	4	Likert (1–5)
F	Governance and Control (GC)	4	Likert (1–5)
G	Accounting Process Quality (APQ)	3	Likert (1–5)
H	Audit Quality (AQ)	4	Likert (1–5)

Reference: Prepared by the researcher using the program SPSS

Fifth: Measurement of Variables:

All of the constructs are assessed based on various items that have been modified from previously validated research in accounting, auditing, and information systems. The responses were collated

using mean scores to represent each variable for statistical analysis, as is shown in Table 3, which outlines the measurement methodology as reported in Table(3).

Table (3): Measurement of Study Variables

Variable	Number of Items	Measurement Method	Source
AI Adoption (AI)	5	Mean of Likert-scale items	Auditing technology studies
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	4	Mean of Likert-scale items	Technology Acceptance Model
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	3	Mean of Likert-scale items	Technology Acceptance Model
Organizational Readiness (OR)	4	Mean of Likert-scale items	Technology adoption literature
Governance and Control (GC)	4	Mean of Likert-scale items	Audit governance studies
Accounting Process Quality (APQ)	3	Mean of Likert-scale items	Accounting quality literature
Audit Quality (AQ)	4	Mean of Likert-scale items	Audit quality literature

Reference: Prepared by the researcher using the program SPSS.

Sixth: Reliability and Validity:

The reliability of the questionnaire is established by the Cronbach's Alpha for reliability test, where greater value than 0.70 represents an acceptable level of internal consistency for the questionnaire. Construct validity is established using factor analysis and calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) in the context of structural equation modeling. The content validity of the study is also controlled by a review done by academic and banking professionals.

4-Results, Statistical Analysis and Discussion

This paper presents the statistical results which come from the assessment of the questionnaire

data and goes to discuss the findings with the research hypotheses and past studies. This study includes the data gathered from descriptive statistics, reliability tests, correlation tests, regression outputs, and a comparison between public and private banking institutions.

First: Descriptive Statistics:

Descriptive statistics were done to summarize with means and standard deviations participants' perceptions as respect to the study variables. This information is set out in Table (4): Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables as displayed in Table (4).

Table (4): Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
AI Adoption (AI)	3.82	0.61
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	3.95	0.58
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	3.70	0.64
Organizational Readiness (OR)	3.55	0.67
Governance and Control (GC)	3.60	0.63
Accounting Process Quality (APQ)	3.88	0.59
Audit Quality (AQ)	3.91	0.57

Reference: Compiled by the researcher utilizing the SPSS software

The findings reveal that all variables exhibit relatively high mean scores, indicating favorable perceptions regarding the use of AI and its influence on accounting and auditing operations within Iraqi banks.

Second: Reliability Analysis:

The reliability of the measurement scales was tested as Cronbach's Alpha. Every obtained value exceeded the cutoff value 0.70, suggesting good internal consistency. Findings from the Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha) are tabulated in Table (5).

Table (5): The Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha)

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
AI Adoption (AI)	5	0.84
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	4	0.86
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	3	0.81
Organizational Readiness (OR)	4	0.83
Governance and Control (GC)	4	0.85
Accounting Process Quality (APQ)	3	0.82
Audit Quality (AQ)	4	0.88

Reference: Prepared by the researcher using the program SPSS

Third: Correlation Analysis:

Pearson correlation coefficients were determined to examine and explain relationships among variables in the study. To this end, as shown in

Table (6), the results showed that the adoption of AI positively and statistically significantly correlates with both the quality of accounting processes and audit quality as per the Table(6).

Table (6): Correlation Matrix (Key Relationships)

Relationship	Correlation (r)	Sig.	Result
AI ↔ APQ	0.62	0.000	Significant

AI ↔ AQ	0.65	0.000	Significant
PU ↔ AI	0.59	0.000	Significant
PEOU ↔ AI	0.54	0.000	Significant
OR ↔ AI	0.57	0.000	Significant

Reference: Prepared by the researcher using the program SPSS

Fourth: Regression Analysis and Hypotheses

Testing:

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test

the study hypotheses. Table (7) presents the main regression results.

Table (7): Regression Results for Main Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Beta	Sig.
H1	AI	APQ	0.48	0.000
H2	AI	AQ	0.51	0.000
H3	OR	AI	0.44	0.000
H4	PU & PEOU	AI	0.46	0.000
H5	GC × AI	AQ	0.29	0.003

Reference: Prepared by the researcher using the program SPSS

Results: Hypotheses H1-H5 were supported, demonstrating significant positive effects of AI application on the quality of accounting processes and audit quality. Such variables include overall organizational preparedness, perceived benefits, user-friendliness, and governance frameworks as well.

Fifth: Differences Between Governmental and Private Banks:

The Independent samples T-test was employed to compare governmental and private banks. The results of Table (8) show that private banks have more AI adoption and corresponding results.

Table (8): T-test Results by Bank Type

Variable	Bank Type	Mean	T-value	Sig.
AI Adoption	Governmental	3.60		
AI Adoption	Private	4.05	3.21	0.001
Audit Quality	Governmental	3.75		
Audit Quality	Private	4.10	2.98	0.003

Reference: Prepared by the researcher using the program SPSS

It is confirmed by these findings that: "H6." There are statistically significant differences in the adoption of AI and its effect on audit quality for governmental and private banks.

Sixth: Discussion of Results:

The results indicate sharply that the integrated AI significantly improves the performance of accounting and audit in Iraqi banks. This is consistent with the current international literature

that highlights the importance of data analysis and computerised data analytics in improving audit quality and the integrity of financial reporting. The significant impacts of organisational readiness illustrate the demand for an efficient IT system and continuous professional development. In addition, effective governance mechanisms are necessary to ensure that AI is being used in a way that is beneficial, and it does not infringe ethical standards and confidentiality on data. The differences observed between the governmental and private banking are probably reflective of private banks' more flexible behaviour or greater investment in technology.

5- Conclusions and Recommendations:

First: Conclusions:

AI adoption in the accounting process.

- The use of AI has a statistically significant positive impact on the excellence of accounting systems, by increasing accuracy, speed of processing, and the meeting of accounting regulations.

AI has a vital role in improving audit quality for the improvement of the quality of audit:

- AI plays a powerful role in enhancing audit quality by leading to better audit quality due to enhanced risk assessment capabilities, widening the AI audit scope and discovery of irregular transactions.

Determinants of AI Adoption:

- The perceived usefulness and ease of use factors account for most AI adoption by the ITA by accountants and auditors, are the main influence factors that have been mentioned in the Technology Acceptance Model on AI adoption (TAM) which is an influence on

accountants' behaviour and is consistent with the technology acceptance model.

Role of organizational readiness:

- Implementation of AI requires high-level organization adaptability, which consists of IT support; ready infrastructure, availability of data; and management attitude to support.

Governance: A factor of importance for the quality of audit

- Ethics, transparency, and accountability are supported through governance and controls frameworks, which contribute to the positive impact of AI on audit quality.

Adoption of AI in Banking:

- Compared to government banks private banks have higher rates of AI adoption and better professional outcomes.

SECOND : Recommendations:

Banks are recommended to define AI strategies that are part of the bank's operations in the accounting and auditing field. Continual professional development programs to raise data analytics and AI capability can be established. Further development of modern IT and data management infrastructure and proper data policies must be undertaken to support AI projects. There must be guidelines put in place and guidelines adopted by professional societies and regulators that determine what is ethically acceptable use of AI in the fields of accountancy and auditing that are based on principles outlined. Strong governance mechanisms should be built to safeguard data privacy, enforce cybersecurity, and encourage accountability. National digital transformation efforts should help government banks.

THIRD: Study Contributions

The empirical findings and insights regarding the uptake of AI in accounting and auditing, particularly in Iraqi banking system and tangible recommendations for executives and regulatory agencies and professional bodies of banks are presented in this paper.

FOURTH: Study Limitations

1. Data for the studies were collected through self-report questionnaires.
2. The cross-sectional nature precludes examination of the long term effects.
3. The whole focus was exclusively on the banking sector.

FIFTH: Recommendations for Future Research

1. Conduct longitudinal studies in which long-term impacts of AI on society are monitored.
2. Broaden the research to sectors of insurance and public systems.
3. Use mixed-methods design with surveys and interviews.
4. Learn about the impact of regulations on the adoption process of AI tech

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