





## Investigating the Effect of Board Characteristics and CEO Tenure on Audit Quality in Companies Listed on the Iraq and Qatar Stock Exchanges: A Comparative Approach

Read Naeem. Rashid Al-Bugharbee<sup>1</sup>, Hamzeh. Mohammadi Khoshouei<sup>1\*</sup>, Ismael Abbas. Manhal Abu-Ragheef<sup>2</sup>,  
Rahman. Saedi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Accounting, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Accounting Department, Wasit university, wasit, Iraq

\* Corresponding author email address: [Khoshouei@khuisf.ac.ir](mailto:Khoshouei@khuisf.ac.ir)

### Editor

Rey Segundo Guerrero-Proenza<sup>id</sup>  
Departamento de Inteligencia  
Computacional, Facultad 4,  
Universidad de las Ciencias  
Informáticas, La Habana, Cuba  
[reysgp@uci.cu](mailto:reysgp@uci.cu)

### Reviewers

**Reviewer 1:** Masoud Hoseinchari<sup>id</sup>  
Associate Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Shiraz University, Shiraz,  
Iran. Email: [hchari@shirazu.ac.ir](mailto:hchari@shirazu.ac.ir)  
**Reviewer 2:** Alinaghi Amiri<sup>id</sup>  
Professor, Management Department, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran.  
Email: [anamiri@ut.ac.ir](mailto:anamiri@ut.ac.ir)

## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

While the McFadden  $R^2$  values are reported, they lack context. How do these values compare to previous studies in corporate governance? A brief reference to relevant literature would improve interpretability.

The binary classification of audit quality (1 for high quality, 0 for low quality) may oversimplify variations in audit performance. Could a more nuanced measure, such as audit fees or discretionary accruals, be explored?

Consider discussing alternative measures of board independence, such as the proportion of independent directors on audit committees, as these may offer a more direct link to audit quality.

This finding contradicts some prior studies. Could alternative explanations, such as the role of passive versus active institutional investors, be considered?

While statistically significant, is the effect size practically meaningful? Discuss whether the observed relationship has strong economic implications.

Some of the findings contradict prior research. A more explicit acknowledgment and discussion of these contradictions would enhance the depth of the analysis.

Provide specific policy recommendations. For example, should regulators impose stricter independence requirements for auditors in institutional investor-dominated firms?

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

### 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The introduction effectively sets up the study but does not sufficiently highlight theoretical gaps. Consider explicitly identifying unresolved debates in the literature regarding the impact of CEO tenure on audit quality.

Justify the choice of Iraq and Qatar beyond their classification as emerging markets. Are there specific governance differences or regulatory changes that make them particularly interesting for comparative analysis?

While relevant studies are cited, the literature review is heavily focused on Middle Eastern research. Consider incorporating global perspectives to strengthen the theoretical framework and comparative relevance.

Why might these differences exist? Provide a more detailed discussion of institutional factors, such as regulatory environments, that could explain cross-country variations.

Report the exact VIF values rather than stating their absence. This transparency allows readers to assess the severity of any multicollinearity concerns.

Consider supplementing McFadden's  $R^2$  with Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) or Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) to provide a more comprehensive assessment of model fit.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.