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The Impact of International Standards IAES on Activating Continuing Accounting Education in The Iraqi Environment

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Abstract. The accounting profession faces many challenges in the age of knowledge, as some of how the accounting function accomplishes its tasks have changed, which raised the question about the importance and value of traditional accounting jobs and skills, which require adopting ideas, work methods, and applications that differ from those previously, in addition to possessing qualifications and skills that were previously unknown. It is necessary to have them in the past. Therefore, there must be references and standards that contribute to the development of the accounting profession, represented by the accounting education standards (IAES), which have a positive impact on the quality of accounting service and activate the continuing education process so that the required task can be presented appropriately, as the continuing education system must have clear goals and outcomes that meet the needs of the labour market for specialists in the field of practising the accounting profession following the requirements of the current era. Continuing professional development for professional accountants enhances competence, skill and all outcomes of accounting work. Compliance with the International Standards for Accounting Education (IAES) and the application of continuing professional educational requirements by the accountant can also lead to Enhancing the accuracy and reliability of accounts, which is among the most important areas of need in developing the accounting profession, improving training programs for accountants, and modernising the training process. It is also desirable to provide continuous professional development. It is possible to develop a strategic plan for employment and organise the monitoring of its implementation. The research was based on a form distributed to the research community represented by the Federation Accountants and auditors in Iraq at the time. The most important conclusion of the research is that the application of international accounting education standards contributes to raising the efficiency and professional skills of accountants. The research concluded that the Union of Accountants and Auditors in Iraq supports the application of international accounting education standards by all accountant members of the Union. The research dealt with a group of sections, the first section included the research methodology and previous studies, the second section included the theoretical aspect of the research, the third section included the applied aspect, and finally, the fourth section included recommendations and conclusions.

Keywords. continuing education, accounting education standards, accountant competency, accountant skill

First: research methodology

1- Research problem:

The research problem was represented by the extent of interest in continuing education, as it is considered a continuous necessity through which correct scientific foundations can be achieved in recording and classifying financial transactions in a way that protects the interests of users of financial statements, and adopting the International Standards for Accounting Education (IAES). Continuing education in Iraq helps accountants improve their performance and express an impartial opinion that enhances the quality of the profession and the outcomes of accounting work. The research problem can be formulated through the following main question: Do international accounting education standards affect the activation of continuing accounting education, and the following sub-questions branch out from it:

A- Do international accounting education standards affect the accountant's professional competence?

B- Do international accounting education standards affect the accountant's skill and experience?

2-The importance of research:

The importance of the research is represented by discussing a topic related to the continuity of the accounting profession, especially the accounting profession in Iraq, as well as the clear implications of applying continuing education to raise the efficiency and performance experience of accountants, as the topic of applying international standards for accounting education has received wide attention from researchers and professional organizations concerned with the accounting profession. To strengthen their professional ability to acquire professional competence in recording economic events, accounting work outcomes, and the quality of financial statement information.

3. Research objectives

The research aims to achieve:

1. Identify the concept and importance of international standards for continuing accounting education.
2. Presenting the most important practices necessary for an accountant in accordance with international standards and then discussing them.
3. Explaining the concept and importance of continuing accounting education.

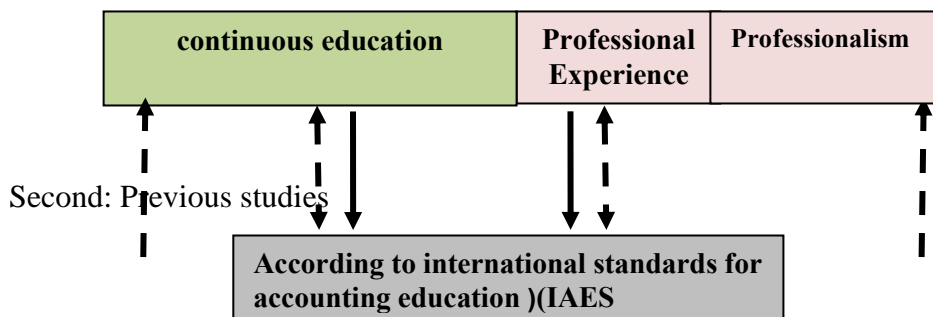
Fourth: Research hypotheses

The research is based on the following hypotheses:

- 1-The main hypothesis: There is no significant impact relationship between international standards for accounting education and continuing professional education.
- 2-There is no significant correlation between international standards and continuing professional education (professional competence and experience).

Figure (1) Default search scheme

Figure: Prepared by the researchers based on the research variables.



1- Al-Shuaiman, Nizar bin Saleh, 2021 study, research titled “The Role of International Accounting Education Standards (IAES) in Improving the Quality of Accounting as a Profession” (Field Study).

The study aimed to identify the level of weakness faced by the accounting profession in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recently, as the accounting profession faces many challenges imposed by some changes in the modern business environment and exposure to many crises, which are reflected in the decline in the quality of the accounting profession’s services, and an attempt to improve the quality The accounting profession in light of improving the accounting education system in light of the application of the International Accounting Education Standards (IAES). The study relied on a questionnaire distributed to a sample of faculty members in Saudi universities, auditors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and users of financial reports. The study agreed with the respondents' opinions about the low level of scientific and professional qualifications for practitioners in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study also concluded that the IAES accounting education standards positively impact the quality of accounting profession services, especially attention to professional skills and continuing professional development. The study recommended the necessity of holding seminars and meetings to introduce the importance of international accounting education standards reconsidering accounting education curricula to keep pace with modern changes in light of labour market requirements, and adopting an index to classify accounting education to compare it with international educational indicators.

2- Study: Shayoun, Abu Bakr Muftah and Al-Arabi Aisha Muhammad, (2021), research entitled “The impact of applying international accounting education standards on the quality of the accounting and auditing profession in light of labour market requirements”.

The study aims to identify the determinants of the quality of the accounting and auditing profession, explore the extent to which accounting education in Libya keeps pace with the requirements of the labour market, and then determine the extent to which the application of international accounting education standards contributes to improving the quality of the accounting and auditing profession. An exploratory study was conducted of the opinions of a sample of faculty members. Department of Accounting, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Misrata University, and previous studies were also analysed. The results of the study indicate a gap between the educational and academic aspects of accounting practitioners in Libya, the low quality of accounting and auditing standards applied in Libya, and a low level of awareness of the importance of accounting education standards. The results also show, from the analysis of previous literature, that there is an impact of applying accounting education standards in improving the quality of the accounting and auditing profession if their application in the Libyan environment is taken into account. The study recommends updating Libyan legislation regulating the accounting and auditing profession and reconsidering accounting education curricula to keep pace with the requirements of the labour market in Libya.

The second topic

First: Accounting Education Standards (IAES)(

1-Cognitive framework for continuing education standards (IAES)

The concept of the International Accounting Education Standards (IAES) refers to a set of general models and guidelines that lead to directing and rationalising educational practices related to accounting education. The International Accounting Education Standards Board issues these standards and other publications that help rationalise accounting education practices (Ali and Al-Za'tiri, 2020: 237).

The importance of adopting accounting education standards is due to the role they play in improving the quality of accounting work at a level that suits the requirements of the business environment, and its positive impact is demonstrated through many advantages that are achieved from adopting the application of these standards, the most important of which are ease of learning, reducing the rate of variation in business, and facilitating the freedom of accountants to move to the international level, and providing standards that are considered basic and reference standards for the requirements of accounting qualification and education and measuring the efficiency of the profession's outputs. The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) has formed a special board for international accounting education (IAESB) instead of the Education Committee of the International Federation of Accountants and is an alternative to it and is considered an independent body for setting standards. Develop and supervise its implementation around the world to ensure the possibility of improving the quality of accounting education at the global level. Likewise, bodies and the Standards Council were interested in issuing guidelines that focused on the subject of accounting education. In 1982, the Council (formerly the Education Committee) issued International Guidance No. (2) "Professional Education." In 1987, Guidance No. (7) was issued regarding "Training Requirements for Applied Accounting." In 1991, Guidance No. (9) was issued and amended in 1996, and several other guidelines were issued, the last of which was in 2003 when the IAES Accounting Education Standards were issued. This council issued six standards, and a year later the council issued Standard No. (7), and in 2006 it issued Standard No. (8). These standards were amended in 2008 and then published in 2009. (Al-Shuwaiman, 2021: 17-18).

The International Accounting Education Standards describe generally accepted good practice standards for the education and development processes necessary to prepare technically qualified accountants, and express the reference processes that individuals are expected to meet in the education and development processes of the profession at a level that obtains international recognition in application. The standards represent the basis for acquiring knowledge and skills. And the work ethics and values required, whether through training courses or academic experience. (Khait and Ahmed, 2016: 355) The most important provisions of the international standards for accounting education can be briefly discussed as follows (IFAC, 2019)(

A - Standard No. (1) IES: Requirements for entry or acceptance into the professional accounting education program: This standard specifies all the educational requirements when accepting the professional accounting education program. Standard No. (1) is considered the main gateway to achieving the effectiveness of applying other standards, as this standard provides requirements and conditions. Accounting education such as academic background and some capabilities

The measure of consistency and honesty

Dimensions	Cronbach'salpha coefficient	Honesty
International standards	0.875	0.898
continuous education	0.768	0.900
Total	0.782	0.878

Second: Description and diagnosis of the study variables

The research seeks to analyze the opinions of the studied research sample in order to obtain a comprehensive view of the research variables and their nature, to diagnose the importance of

the variables and describe them, and to determine the relationship of influence, relying on the statistical program SPSS.

1-Description and diagnosis of the independent variable International standards for accounting education for the dimension (professional competence):

From the data in Table No. (2), the research variables can be diagnosed and described, and a set of indicators appear that can be defined as follows: It was found that the number of negative answers was (0.833) from the sample group responding to the variable of international standards for accounting education, which is weak. As for the neutral answers, the average frequency was (2.06) for a community sample. Researchers confirm the availability of efficiency in the case of applying the international standards for accounting education, while the agreement formed a value of (4), which is a very high value, and the results related to the agreement were strong (4.37), while the general arithmetic mean was (4.31). The importance of the variables of the international standards for education can be ranked. Accounting competency and professional experience in terms of description in achieving continuing professional education according to the priorities of the responding sample and according to the results for the arithmetic mean, where He obtained the highest arithmetic mean, and this indicates the necessity of adopting international standards for accounting education, and it came as (This indicates that gaining the trust of stakeholders is related to other factors related to the accountant’s personality and certain characteristics and is not limited to adherence to international standards for accounting education).

Table (2)
 Description and diagnosis of the independent variable International standards IAES (professional competence)

Arithmetic mean	Strongly agree	agree	agree to some extent	disagree	strongly disagree	ferries	
4.57	27	15	0	2	0	The contents of international standards provide a set of requirements that continuously raise the professional competence of accounting practices.	1
4.37	13	24	3	2	2	The standards contribute to defining the educational outcomes that accountants must acquire to keep pace with changes	2

						in the business environment.	
4.17	21	20	2	0	1	The standards contribute to providing a level of knowledge of the surrounding environment that ensures easy integration of accounting with programs to achieve professional competenc	3
4.28	25	15	3	2	0	Standards contribute to providing a level of evaluation	4
4.11	19	20	3	0	2	The standards help gain the confidence of stakeholders in the accounting profession by promoting the spirit of self-learning to gain competency.	5
4.04	20	18	4	1	1	The standards contribute to providing a high level of efficiency for partner professionals when auditing financial statements to achieve quality joint work.	6
4.31	5	4	2.06	0.833	0.833	General arithmetic mean	7

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS

2- Description and diagnosis of the independent variable: International standards for accounting education for the (professional skill) dimension:

From the data in Table No. (3), which describes and diagnoses the research variables, it is possible to identify a group of aspects, the most important of which are:

A - The arithmetic mean of the negative frequencies of the variable description and diagnosis of the independent variable, the International Standards IAES, after (professional skill) of the total answers of respondents who confirm the availability of professional skill in the presence of the standards was very weak, while the answers of the neutral sample constituted an average of frequencies of (0.66), while the agreement reached (24.5) is a high value. As for the overall results, the arithmetic mean reached (4.40).

B - It is possible to rank the importance of the variable of the International Standards for Accounting Education in terms of the description in achieving professional skill and experience according to the answers of the responding sample according to the importance of the arithmetic mean, as follows: As for (Table 3)

Description and diagnosis of the independent variable International standards IAES (professional skill and experience)

	ferries	strongly disagree	disagree	agree to some extent	agree	Strongly agree	Arithmetic mean
1	International standards help establish guidelines and requirements for the necessary professional skills	1	1	5	18	19	4.20
2	The standards contribute to providing basic requirements for success in implementing programs skillfully.	2	2	4	14	22	4.18
3	International standards help accountants in preparing financial reports with high professional skills.	1	2	3	12	26	4.63
4	International standards provide skills that help in self-development in light of technological changes and financial crises	0	1	3	17	21	4.25
5	International standards contribute to solving risk-related problems from the experience gained from continuing education.	1	0	2	11	30	4.56
6	International standards support accounting education and curricula that develop accountant skills.	0	0	1	14	29	4.63

7	General arithmetic mean	0.66	1	3	14.3	24.5	4.40
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Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS

The results of the statistical analysis to test the research hypotheses were according to the analysis results of the SPSS program:

Testing the main hypothesis (there is no significant influence relationship between international standards and continuing vocational education). To know the influence relationship between international standards and their dimensions (proficiency and professional skill) as an independent variable from the data of Table No. (4), the following results:

The value of the Chi-Square test calculated for the dimensions of professional competence and professional experience combined is (57.118), which is higher than the tabulated value of (29.617) at a significance level of (0.05), which indicates the availability of a high compatibility relationship for the dimensions of professional competence and professional skill. Thus, the main hypothesis is rejected. The alternative hypothesis is accepted: (There is a significant influence relationship between international standards (professional competence and professional experience) and continuing professional education).

Table 4)(

The compatible relationship between the dimensions of the independent variable and global standards of professional competence and professional experience.

Sig	Chi-Squar		test Dimension and factors
	Tabulation	Calculated	
0.000	12.101	45.154	Professionalism
0.000	10.543	39.359	
0.000	29.617	57.118	For efficiency and skill

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the SPSS statistical program

2.From the data in Table (5), the coefficient of determination (R²) indicates that competence and professional skill explain an amount of (0.61) that affects the activation of continuing vocational education. The calculated value of (T) also indicates the significance of the relationship between competence and professional skill and the moral effect on the dependent variable, vocational Continuous education.

3. The second main hypothesis: There is no significant correlation between international standards and continuing professional education (professional competence and experience).

The data in Table (5) indicate the value of the correlation coefficient between professional competence and continuing education (0.700), which is a positive moral value, and this indicates a statistically significant correlation at the level of (0.01) between professional performance competence and continuing accounting education.

The value of the correlation between professional skill and continuing accounting education reached (0.675), which is a positive and significant value meaning that there is a (statistically significant) correlation at the level of (0.01) between professional skill and continuing accounting education. Thus, the second main hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted (there is no relationship). A significant correlation between international standards and continuing vocational education.

Table (5)

The correlation between international standards and continuing accounting education

Correlation and influence relationship between (proficiency and professional skill as an independent variable and continuing accounting education as a dependent variable)								
continuous education	R	R ² (χ)	The value of the constant a	Beta coefficient b	ANOVA		T-TEST	
					F	Sig		Sig
Results	0.700	0.61	2.032	0.489	0.499	0.000	6.2	0.000
	0.675	0.51	3.022	0.3.34	0.321	0.000	8.1	0.000
	0.677	0.60	2.425	0.403	0.012	0.000	8.2	0.000

We can conclude, through the answers of the sample of the study population, represented by the Federation of Accountants and Auditors in Iraq, that accountants can be developed by improving competence and professional skill to reach professional cadres that meet the requirements of quality professional performance and advancement towards levels that keep pace with global developments in the accounting profession.

Conclusions and recommendations

First: Conclusions

The conclusions were reached from the results of the analysis of the questionnaire form addressed to the study sample and are summarised as follows:

- 1- Applying international accounting education standards contributes to raising the efficiency and professional skills of accountants.
- 2- Adopting international accounting education standards contributes to determining the outcomes of continuing accounting education.
- 3- Applying international accounting education standards evaluates the skills and competence of accountants.
- 4- Applying international accounting education standards contributes to gaining the confidence of stakeholders in the efficiency and skill of accountants.
- 5- Adopting the application of international accounting education standards contributes to developing curricula for teaching accountants.
- 6- Applying international accounting education standards contributes to raising the efficiency of accountants in recording financial transactions and preparing financial statements.

Second: Recommendations

- 1- The Union of Accountants and Auditors in Iraq should support the application of international accounting education standards by all members of the Union of Accountants.
- 2- We recommend that the Union approach the bodies regulating the accounting profession in Iraq to develop continuous training programs based on the content of international standards for accounting education.
- 3- The Union of Accountants and Auditors in Iraq should coordinate with Iraqi universities to include accounting education standards in the educational curricula.
- 4- We recommend to the Union of Accountants and Auditors in Iraq the necessity of following strengthening courses for member accountants and holding strengthening courses based on the content of international accounting education standards.

5-The Union of Accountants and Auditors in Iraq should hold workshops and conferences that encourage the application of international accounting education standards.

Resources

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