Al-Furat Journal of Innovations in Management Sciences

ATU- AFJIMS, Volume:2, Issue:1, June 2026
ISSN : 3106-4973

External Auditing as a Tool to Reducing the Expectation Gap and Enhance the Reliability of Financial Statements

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Abstract: *External auditing constitutes a fundamental control tool aimed at enhancing the credibility and reliability of financial data for users of financial statements. Nevertheless, a gap persists between what users expect from external auditors and what auditors can actually provide within their defined professional framework, a gap known as the "expectation gap." This research aims to examine the relationship between external auditing and the expectation gap, the relationship between external auditing and the reliability of financial statements, and the role of external auditing in narrowing the expectation gap to enhance the reliability of financial statements in economic units. To achieve this objective, the study adopted a content analysis methodology for audit reports, along with a review of relevant theoretical and professional literature. The researcher relied on the inductive approach to collect data, as well as the analytical approach to understand the problem under study and analyze the research hypotheses. The financial statements and auditors' reports for a sample of five Iraqi banks were analyzed using content analysis. The researcher relied on the inductive approach to collect data, as well as the analytical approach to understand the problem under study and analyze the research hypotheses. The financial statements and auditors' reports for a sample of five Iraqi banks were analyzed using content analysis. The researcher concluded that external auditing plays a crucial role in narrowing the expectations gap by clarifying the auditor's duties and responsibilities in his report, as well as the scope of his work. This contributes to enhancing users' confidence in the financial statements. The results also showed that the quality of the audit report and its commitment to principles such as transparency and independence are important factors in narrowing the expectations gap. Furthermore, users' understanding of the nature of the audit process and the limits of the auditor's responsibilities is a key factor in explaining this gap. The results indicated that improving the clarity and content of audit reports effectively enhances users' understanding of auditors' responsibilities, reducing unrealistic perceptions. Furthermore, narrowing the gap positively impacts reliability, which contributes to making informed economic decisions.*

Keywords: External auditing, expectation gap, reliability of financial data.

1. INTRODUCTION

External audit is an important oversight tool at the level of economic units, as it contributes to enhancing confidence in the financial statements of the audited unit. It primarily serves users of accounting information in making their economic decisions, as it provides reasonable assurance that the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and international accounting standards. It also identifies errors or material misstatements, if any. However, users have unreasonable expectations regarding the auditor's performance in terms of detecting fraudulent practices or manipulations. These expectations have begun to increase, almost outperforming audit services. The reason is due to their lack of awareness of his role, scope of work, and responsibilities, which increases the gap between users' expectations and the auditors' performance. In order for external audits to enhance the reliability of financial statements, this gap must be reduced through several methods that auditing and professional bodies must adopt, such as educating users about the auditor's role, responsibilities, and scope of work, spreading the culture of auditing, and relying on modern methods and tools in performing audit tasks.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. theoretical materials

2.1.1 The problem of the study

Despite the significant role of external auditing in enhancing confidence in financial statements, there remains a noticeable gap between what users of financial statements expect from external auditors and the actual responsibilities assigned to auditors according to professional auditing standards. This expectation gap may negatively affect users' confidence in financial information and consequently reduce the perceived reliability of financial statements. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the role of external auditing in narrowing the expectation gap and its contribution to enhancing the reliability of financial statements.

Accordingly the study seeks to answer the following main question:

Main Question

How does external auditing contribute to narrowing the expectation gap and enhancing the reliability of financial statements?

Sub-questions

1- How does external auditing contribute to narrowing the expectation gap between financial statement users and external auditors?

2- How does external auditing contribute to enhancing the reliability of financial statements?

3- Does narrowing the expectation gap contribute to enhancing the reliability of financial statements?

2.1.2 Objectives of the study

1- To examine the relationship between external auditing and the expectation gap.

2- To examine the relationship between external auditing and the reliability of financial statements.

3- To investigate the role of narrowing the expectation gap in enhancing the reliability of financial statements.

4- To analyze the content of financial statements and auditors' reports to identify the relationship between external auditing, the expectation gap, and financial statement reliability.

2.1.3 **The importance of the study**

This research addresses one of the most important topics in the economic units' environment, namely the role of external audit in bridging the expectations gap and its impact on the reliability of financial statements. The importance of this topic stems from the growing discrepancy between what auditors actually provide and what users of financial reports assume. The importance of the research also lies in providing an analytical framework for the content of financial reports and auditors' reports that serves external audit offices in Iraq and external parties such as investors and shareholders in understanding the role played by auditors in enhancing confidence in financial statements by identifying material violations, manipulations, and errors. The research also seeks to highlight the most important matters that professional bodies should adopt, such as raising users' awareness of auditors' responsibilities and the auditor's disclosure in his report of the limits of his work in a clearer and more precise manner to facilitate understanding by users.

2.1.4 Study Hypothesis:

H1: External auditing has a significant role in narrowing the expectation gap between users of financial statements and external auditors.

H2: External auditing has a significant positive effect on enhancing the reliability of financial statements.

H3: Narrowing the expectation gap has a significant positive effect on enhancing the reliability of financial statements.

2.1.5 Study Methodology:

For the purpose of this study, researchers, in the theoretical aspect, used descriptive models to analyze the problem and test the validity of its hypotheses. As for the practical aspect, the researcher was able to use descriptive models to produce a theoretical approach, relying on a review of references and sources, and representation in books related to the research topic, in addition to university dissertations and related Arab and foreign scientific studies. This lesson was used to address the research problem and test its hypotheses.

***2.1.6 study* References:**

1. Theoretical sources: These include articles, books, and dissertations in Arabic and foreign languages, in addition to numerous Arabic and foreign academic dissertations.
2. Practical sources: These include reports from boards of directors and auditors' reports for economic units, such as banks listed on the Iraq Stock Exchange.

2.1.7 study Limitations:

Researchers often face several obstacles during academic writing, including the following:

1. Time constraints, which represent a significant challenge for the researcher during the writing process.
2. The researcher’s commitment to avoiding unauthorized quotations and ensuring the use of scientifically rigorous methods.

2.1.8 Previous studies

1- Study [1]

Study Details	Details	Seq.
[1]	Researcher and Year	-1

ATU- AFJIMS, Volume:2, Issue:1, June 2026
ISSN : 3106-4973

The Relationship Between Audit Expectation Gap and Audit Report Readability.	Study Title
The statistical population of this study consists of all companies listed during the period 2014–2020. A systematic exclusion method was used in selecting the sample. The research sample included all companies listed on the Tehran Stock Exchange, excluding companies that were suspended from trading for more than six months, companies that entered the stock market during the study period, and those for which access to information was insufficient.	Study Sample
This study specifically aims to examine the impact of audit report readability on the expectation gap related to the audit provided by the independent auditor. Assuming that high audit quality is associated with improved readability, the audit expectation gap is considered a relatively well-established area in auditing literature.	Study Objective
Auditors are recommended to use clear and simple language in their reports. Presenting information in a way that is understandable to stakeholders, and focusing on key points and audit implications, can improve the readability of audit reports and thereby help narrow the audit expectation gap. Increasing stakeholders' awareness of the roles and responsibilities of auditors can also contribute to reducing the audit expectation gap and improving the understanding of audit reports. Therefore, it is suggested that auditors organize workshops and training sessions to enhance public awareness. As a result, stakeholders may become more familiar with the nature and outcomes of audit processes, which would promote more realistic expectations of audit reports.	Key Findings

2- Study: [2]

Study Details	Details	Seq.
[2]	Researcher and Year	-2
The Role of External Auditing in Enhancing Corporate Governance in Economic Institutions - A Field Study	Study Title	
A questionnaire was then used to collect data, the results were analyzed using the SPSS statistical analysis program, and a set of appropriate statistical tests were conducted..	Study Sample	

The aim of this study is to analyze the role of external auditing in enhancing corporate governance within economic units.	Study Objective
The study concluded that the quality of the external auditor's report contributes significantly to enhancing corporate governance, in addition to the efficiency and independence of the external auditor and evaluating the internal control system by revealing errors and violations in the financial statements, which enhances the reliability of accounting information and supports the consolidation of the principles of transparency and accountability within the institution.	Key Findings

2.2. METHODS

2.2.1 The Concept of External Audit

It is an independent examination of the financial statements of a specific economic unit, conducted by a qualified auditor in accordance with approved auditing standards, with the aim of expressing an impartial technical opinion on whether the financial statements have been fairly presented, in all material respects. [1]. Audit quality reflects the impact of the auditor's independence, integrity, and objectivity on the auditors' opinions regarding the quality of financial statements [2]. Therefore, it can be said that external auditing is an independent and objective examination process conducted by a qualified external party, aiming to confirm the truthfulness and fairness of the economic unit's financial statements and verify their compliance with applicable accounting standards and laws, with the aim of providing an impartial opinion in the form of a report submitted to the economic unit's stakeholders. [3]. External auditing is an independent examination conducted on the financial statements and the accompanying disclosures by an external auditor who possesses independence. The primary objective of this type of audit is to provide a neutral professional opinion on the fairness and reliability of the financial statements, based on Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) or International Standards on Auditing (ISA). [4].

2.2.2 The Importance of External Auditing

External auditing plays a crucial role as a tool—rather than an end in itself—for serving various stakeholders who rely on audited financial statements in decision-making processes, both short-term and long-term. Its importance lies in enhancing the reliability and quality of financial reports, which contributes to informed and effective decision-making. Among the most prominent beneficiaries of external audit are:

1. **Management:** Management relies heavily on accurate accounting data for planning and decision-making. Independent verification by an external auditor contributes to the reliability of the information used. [5].
2. **Shareholders:** Use audit reports to ensure the financial statements are free from fraud or manipulation. Audits also help attract new investors by confirming financial transparency. [6].
3. **Investors:** Seek information on profitability, stock price performance, and future earnings to assess the company’s financial health. [7].
4. **Employees:** Are interested in the company’s ability to provide

compensation, benefits, and job security. [8].

5. Customers: Need assurance of the company's continuity, especially in long-term partnerships for goods or raw materials. [9].

6. Government Authorities: Use audited data for economic monitoring, policy-making, and taxation. External audits enhance the transparency and accuracy of financial information. [10].

7. Banks and Lending Institutions: Require audited reports to assess financial stability before granting loans or credit lines. [11].

2.2.3 Objectives of External Auditing

The primary objective of external auditing is to provide an independent and unbiased professional opinion on the fairness and accuracy of financial statements, which helps enhance trust and credibility in the disclosed financial data. Such information significantly influences the decisions of current and potential investors [12]. While external auditing initially focused on detecting fraud, errors, and manipulation in accounting records, its scope has expanded over time. It now includes critically examining accounting systems to ensure transactions are accurately recorded and financial statements reliably reflect the economic position of the entity. Additionally, evaluating the effectiveness of internal control systems has become a key goal of external audits. [13].

2.2.4 Expectation gap

A. The nature of the expectation gap in auditing: -

The audit expectation gap refers to the difference between what users of financial statements expect from the external auditor and what the auditor actually does. Auditing standards emphasize that the responsibility of the external auditor is to plan and perform the audit in order to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. However, due to the nature of audit evidence and the characteristics of fraud, the external auditor can obtain reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Therefore, the failure of auditors to meet the expectations of users can lead to an audit expectation gap, which affects users' judgments about financial reports. [14].

The increasing criticism directed at the auditing profession from various segments of society interested in the audit process has led many professional bodies and researchers to focus on the audit profession. The most significant reasons for this include: the auditor's responsibility for detecting and reporting errors and fraud; the auditor's responsibility for detecting and reporting illegal activities; and the auditor's responsibility for assessing the audited company's ability to continue as a going concern. These factors contribute to the gap between the expectations of users of financial statements and the responsibilities of auditors. The audit expectation gap is a common phenomenon among many stakeholders — auditors, users of financial data and the reasonableness of their expectations, and the limitations imposed on the audit profession — and it is an issue that affects all societies. [15]

B. Definition of expectation gap: -

In general, the expectation gap represents the difference between what the auditor has done or can do in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and what is required of or expected from the auditor — what society expects the auditor to do. However, some believe that the expectation gap reflects the difference between the auditor's responsibilities and the interpretation of the auditor's report between the auditor and users of financial statements. Others view it as the gap between management's requirements and the auditor's professional performance, as well as the gap between the auditor's efforts and the expectations of financial statement users. [16].

Al-Furat Journal of Innovations in Management Sciences

ATU- AFJIMS, Volume:2, Issue:1, June 2026
ISSN : 3106-4973

C. Components of the expectation gap: -

Expectation Gap Related to External Auditors [17].

1- Auditor Performance Gap: The difference between the expected performance of the external auditor in accordance with auditing standards and the actual performance of the external auditor.

1. **Auditor Independence Gap:** Due to the deviation of the external auditor's actual behavior from the expected independence — as outlined by professional conduct rules and societal expectations — this has led to increased skepticism about the auditor's independence among users of financial reports, whether during the audit process or in reporting audit results.

2. **Auditor Reporting Gap:** The difference between the expectations of financial report users regarding the external auditor's opinion on the financial statements and the actual opinion disclosed by the auditor in the audit report about those statements.

2.2.5 Reliability of financial data:

What Are Financial Statements?

Financial statements refer to a set of accounting reports and documents that provide accurate information about the financial performance and financial position of any economic entity — whether it is a company, organization, or government agency — over a specific period of time. These statements aim to present a clear and transparent picture of the entity's financial status, facilitating informed decision-making by various parties such as investors, creditors, managers, and regulatory bodies. The preparation and presentation of financial statements is one of the primary objectives of the accounting process, due to the significant importance of these statements to both the economic entity and the stakeholders who rely on them to make various decisions based on their current or future interests. Despite the diversity and variety of information sources, financial statements remain the most important source of financial information for any economic unit, regardless of its field of activity or country of operation. They provide a reliable and cost-effective picture of the unit's financial performance.

2.2.5Definition of Financial Statements:

Financial statements are defined as a comprehensive set of accounting and financial documents that are closely interconnected, enabling a clear and accurate view of the financial position and financial performance of an entity at the close of its accounts.

According to [18], financial statements are written records that reflect a company's business activities and financial performance. These statements are often audited by government authorities, accountants, or economic units to ensure their accuracy and for purposes related to taxation, financing, or investment. As stated by [19], financial statements represent the final outcome resulting from a series of accounting treatments applied to data related to the events and activities of the economic unit. The purpose is to provide comprehensive and concise information to all parties who may benefit from it in making various decisions.

3. Applied study

3.1 Historical Overview of the Research Sample

A. Research Sample: The research sample was selected from a group of banks listed on the Iraq Stock Exchange for the year 2024. A total of five (5) banks were chosen, namely: Credit Bank, Al-Mansour Bank, Al-Ahli Iraqi Bank, Gulf Commercial Bank, and Al-Warka Bank. These banks

form the basis for studying the role of external auditing in reducing the expectation gap and its role in enhancing the reliability of financial statements. the level of disclosure is measured through the equation outlined below:
The indicators and items of the research variables are used to analyze the content of the auditor's reports and the financial reports of the economic units (the research sample) to measure the extent of the impact of external auditing on reducing the expectation gap and increasing the reliability of financial reports through the dimensions of the independent variable (external auditing) and its indicators and the dimensions of the expectation gap and reliability, and then extracting the general average of the axes to know the level of achievement of the items and indicators. Through the equation, the disclosure rate for each axis can be calculated as follows:

Reporting Ratio = Disclosed Indicators / Total Indicators × 100%

Table (1) shows the results of the content analysis in a sample of banks listed on the Iraq Stock Exchange, which were analyzed according to five main items representing the axis of "external audit", namely: comprehensiveness and completeness, compliance with standards, experience and competence, evaluation of the control system, and the competence and experience of the auditor. The table shows that the Bank of Baghdad and Mansour Bank achieved the highest percentage of application of external audit, reaching (72% and 71%) respectively. This is due to the strength of the competency and experience item, which reached 14% in both banks, and compliance with standards, which reached 15% and 13% for the two banks, respectively. The achievement rate was high for the other items, with the exception of the internal control evaluation item, which reached 9% in the Bank of Baghdad and 8% in the other bank. Therefore, the auditor should clearly disclose in his report when evaluating internal control. As for the other banks, the audit rates varied slightly, but they were good, with the exception of (the National Islamic Bank and the Islamic Bank of the South), where the audit was at its lowest levels compared to the other banks in the research sample, as it reached 64% in both banks. This is attributed to: The weakness of each item (neutrality, comprehensiveness and completeness) by 7% and 9% respectively in the National Islamic Bank, while the lowest items in the Islamic Bank of the South were (neutrality, comprehensiveness and completeness, expressing an opinion).

Table (2) shows the results of the content analysis in a sample of banks included in the study sample, which were analyzed according to five main items representing the "expectations gap" axis, namely: defining responsibilities, scope of audit, reporting violations, communication effectiveness, transparency and clarity. We note from the table that the Islamic Bank of the South, the Islamic National Bank, and the Trans Iraq Bank achieve the highest application rate for the expectations gap axis, reaching 58%, 57%, and 56%, respectively. This indicates the existence of a large gap between the expectations of users of the financial statements and the performance of the auditor as a result of the weakness of each item (communication, transparency, and clarity) in the auditors' reports for those banks. However, the expectations gap decreased to the lowest level in the Bank of Baghdad, reaching 50%, due to the high scrutiny of the aforementioned bank, in addition to the fact that the gap items had good application rates.

ATU- AFJIMS, Volume:2, Issue:1, June 2026
ISSN : 3106-4973

Table (3) We note from the table that the Bank of Baghdad and Mansour Bank achieved the highest percentage of financial data reliability, reaching (74% 72%) respectively. This is due to the strength of the disclosure item for the Bank of Baghdad, which reached 18%, and the honest representation item for Mansour Bank, which reached 15%. The achievement rate was high for the other items, with the exception of the caution item, which reached 8% in the two aforementioned banks. As for the other banks, the reliability rates varied slightly but were good, but the lowest rate was in (the Islamic South Bank). Reliability in them was at its lowest levels compared to the other banks in the research sample, as it reached 63%. This is attributed to the weakness of each item (caution and caution, and completeness) at a rate of 8% for both items. As a result, the researcher believes that the reliability in the financial reports of the banks in the research sample was very good as a result of the external audit, which is an effective tool in providing confidence in financial reports.

C Testing Research Hypotheses

After studying and analyzing the results of each axis, the researcher tested the research hypotheses based on external audit indicators and the expectation gap in achieving the dimensions of reliability of the financial data of the Iraqi banks in the research sample. Table (4) shows the results of the content analysis for each bank:

1- The relationship between external audit and the expectations gap

The table shows that there is a relative relationship between the level of implementation of external audit and the expectation gap. In the Bank of Baghdad, the percentage of implementation of external audit was (72%), compared to an expectation gap of (50%), which indicates that the expectation gap was much lower when auditing was high in that bank. Also, external auditing was low in the Iraqi Islamic Bank, with a percentage of (68%), while the expectation gap reached 54%, which means that the decline in auditing is facing an increase in the expectation gap. From the above, the researcher believes that the higher the level of external auditing with its principles (such as comprehensiveness, independence, professionalism...), the lower the expectation gap between users of financial statements and auditors, which leads to the rejection of the first hypothesis that stated (external auditing does not contribute to reducing the expectation gap) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (external auditing contributes to reducing the expectation gap).

2- The relationship between external audit and reliability

It is clear from the table that there is a relative relationship between the level of application of external audit and reliability in financial reports, as the audit and reliability ratios varied in the research sample banks. However, when comparing the values of external audit with reliability, we find that there is a clear direct relative relationship, as banks with higher audit ratios also show higher reliability ratios, as the highest percentage of application of external audit was in each of the banks (Bank of Baghdad, Mansour Bank, Warka Bank) and reached (72%, 71%, 70%) respectively, while the percentage of achieving reliability dimensions in the same banks reached (74%, 72%, 71%), which indicates that auditing was very high in the Bank of Baghdad. In addition, the reliability ratio was also high, and when the audit ratio decreased in the other two banks, the reliability ratio also decreased in them. Based on the above, the researcher believes that the higher the level of external auditing with its principles (such as comprehensiveness, independence, professionalism...), the greater the reliability. Based on this, she rejects the second hypothesis, which states that (external auditing does not contribute to achieving the reliability of financial data), and accepts the alternative hypothesis, which states that (external auditing contributes to achieving the reliability of financial data).

Al-Furat Journal of Innovations in Management Sciences

ATU- AFJIMS, Volume:2, Issue:1, June 2026
ISSN : 3106-4973

3- The relationship between the expectation gap and reliability

By analyzing the content of auditors' reports and financial statements, the table shows that there is a relative relationship between the level of expectations of financial statement users and reliability. The percentages of the expectation gap varied among the sample banks, reaching the highest percentage in the Iraqi Islamic Bank, reaching 53%, which is the highest percentage compared to other banks, while the percentage of reliability in the financial statements in that bank reached 69%. If we compare this to the Gulf Commercial Bank, where the percentage gap is 52% and the percentage of achieving reliability dimensions reached (70%), this indicates that the expectation gap is relatively inverse to reliability. The larger the gap between what users expect from the auditor and the work he performs, the less confidence there is in the reports approved by the auditor, and vice versa. To reinforce this, we note that in the Bank of Baghdad, the percentage of the expectation gap reached 50%, while reliability achieved its highest levels at 74%. This means that the widening of the expectation gap leads to a decrease in users' confidence in the financial statements, and consequently, reliability decreases. Based on the above, the researcher believes that reducing the expectations gap by enhancing communication, increasing clarity, and defining responsibilities in the auditor’s report according to its principles works to increase confidence in the financial statements audited by him. Based on this, the third hypothesis is rejected, which states that (reducing the expectations gap does not contribute to increasing the reliability of financial statements), and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states that (reducing the expectations gap contributes to increasing the reliability of financial statements).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Conclusions

This chapter includes a set of conclusions reached by the research after completing both the theoretical framework and the analytical practical section:

1. Auditors enable stakeholders to make informed decisions based on reliable and verifiable data.
2. External auditing helps narrow the expectation gap by clarifying the auditor's responsibilities and the nature of their work. However, some users still believe that the responsibility for detecting fraud lies entirely with the auditor.
3. Data shows that the reliability of financial information increases when an independent and experienced external auditor is present, especially when they adhere to international professional standards and demonstrate a degree of transparency in reporting material issues.

4.2. Recommendations

1. Enhancing compliance with modern international auditing standards that recommend disclosure of key issues and the need to disclose the limits of the auditor's responsibility and management's responsibility for preparing financial statements.
2. Include in continuing professional development programs for auditor's modules dedicated to understanding the expectations gap and its impact on the credibility and societal effectiveness of audit work.

3. The need to focus on training auditors and developing internal control tools to ensure more comprehensive and effective implementation.

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Tables:

Table (1): External audit effectiveness ratios for the research sample banks

Percentage of application of the item for the external audit axis					Bank Name Axis Items
Iraqi Islamic Bank	Gulf Commercial Bank	Warka Bank	Mansour Bank	Bank of Baghdad	
9%	7%	7%	12%	9%	Comprehensiveness and completeness
11%	15%	13%	13%	15%	Compliance with professional standards
9%	7%	13%	11%	11%	Neutrality
15%	11%	15%	8%	9%	Evaluation of the internal control system
13%	15%	13%	13%	13%	Expressing an opinion
11%	14%	9%	14%	14%	Auditor's competence and experience
68%	69%	70%	71%	71%	Total items for each bank

Al-Furat Journal of Innovations in Management Sciences

ATU- AFJIMS, Volume:2, Issue:1, June 2026
ISSN : 3106-4973

Source: Prepared by the researcher

Table (2): Expectation gap ratios for the research sample banks

Item implementation rate for the expectation gap					Bank Name Axis Items
Iraqi Islamic Bank	Gulf Commercial Bank	Warka Bank	Mansour Bank	Bank of Baghdad	
11%	12%	9%	14%	10%	Defining Responsibilities
10%	11%	11%	8%	9%	Audit Scope
11%	9%	9%	9%	10%	Reporting Violations
10%	10%	11%	10%	10%	Communication Effectiveness
11%	10%	12%	9%	11%	Transparency and Clarity
53%	52%	52%	50%	50%	Total Items for Each Bank

Source: Prepared by the researcher

Table (3): Percentages of achieving reliability of financial data for the research sample banks

Item implementation rate for the expectation gap					Bank Name Axis Items
Iraqi Islamic Bank	Gulf Commercial Bank	Warka Bank	Mansour Bank	Bank of Baghdad	
15%	15%	15%	15%	13%	Faithful Representation
11%	12%	15%	13%	18%	Disclosure
10%	13%	8%	13%	15%	Verifiability
10%	10%	8%	8%	8%	Cautiousness
8%	10%	10%	10%	10%	Completeness
15%	10%	15%	13%	10%	Neutrality

Al-Furat Journal of Innovations in Management Sciences

ATU- AFJIMS, Volume:2, Issue:1, June 2026
ISSN : 3106-4973

69%	70%	71%	72%	74%	Total

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on Excel

Table (4): Results of applying the external audit axis and the gap between expectations and reliability for the research sample banks

Reliability of financial data	Expectation gap	External audit	Bank name	
74%	50	72%	Bank of Baghdad	1
72%	50	71%	Mansour Bank	2
71%	51	70%	Warka Bank	3
70%	52	69%	Commercial Gulf	4
69%	53	68%	*Iraqi Islamic Bank*	5

Table: (5) The relationship between the research variables

type of relationship	Research variables
Reverse	External Audit --- Expectations Gap
Reverse	Expectations Gap --- Reliability in Financial Reporting
proportionality	External Audit ---- Reliability in Financial Reports