



ACCOUNTING AND POLITICS: THE EFFECTS OF POLITICS ON THE ISSUANCE OF INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS – AN APPLIED STUDY IN THE IRAQI ENVIRONMENT

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 11 th December 2022 Accepted: 11 th January 2023 Published: 20 th February 2023	Opinions differ on the relationship between accounting and politics. The first point of view says that accounting is abstract and accountants are professional people who are abstract from political issues and neutral, while the second point of view says that accounting is not abstract, and accountants cannot be abstracted from their social connections with members of society, including politicians and their concern as individuals in society, they have social interests and seek to maximize their economic benefit and through this pursuit they will participate in one way or another in the political process . The research includes a study of the opinions of a sample of Iraqi academics and professionals by analyzing a questionnaire form distributed to the selected sample with (94) forms and then using the (SPSS) software to prove the validity of the research hypotheses, so that the research ends with a number of important conclusions and recommendations including : that the society knowledge of the relationship between politics and accounting that the first uses the second for its purposes, and the second affects the first with its numbers, that accounting at the international level is politicized to serve certain parties, that the process of preparing accounting standards at the international level is witnessing various pressures, and that bias is practiced in that process to achieve economic interests .

Keywords: Accounting , Politics , International accounting standards .

INTRODUCTION

At a time when the need to establish a new international economic system consistent with good political changes emerged, and international organizations were formed and the role and influence of multinational companies expanded in the economic life of the world and the external technical and information revolution so that they formed a new global economic system based mainly on the unipolar policy and the hegemony of the United States of America on the world politically and economically and depends mainly on the policy of internationalization of the international economy through the liberalization of trade and the elimination of all obstacles that were preventing the movement and transmission of capital goods and services and to the extent that supports the policy of complete internationalization has helped the technical revolution and the tremendous development in the economies in the solidification of this new system And this formed what was called ((globalization)) and in all fields, especially in the

economic aspects, which necessarily affected various aspects of life and other systems, including accounting, as accounting is considered the language of business and through which it is possible to stand on the financial position and the result of the activity of companies, it was necessary to affected by this new and changing reality, it tries to change and develop its methods and procedures, taking advantage of the flexibility of accounting to the extent that is consistent with international political and economic changes, international accounting standards were one of the most prominent aspects of the accounting response in today's world and according to this development they must be affected by politics and have a clear political dimensions, this effect was increased by the emergence of globalization promoted by the United States of America after it remained alone without conflict, and since accounting is the language of business, it was directly affected by politics, and thus obligated international accounting through its institutions that are dominated by the United States of



America, to develop a set of international accounting standards. Based on the foregoing the contents of the research were framed according to the following topics

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Search Problem

The relationship between accounting and politics is an influential and affected relationship, and vice versa between the two and this phenomenon extends to include not only the local (national) level but also to the global level, leading to what is called globalization and its implications and repercussions for the countries of the world. That this relationship did not detract from the space and attention required and the research problem can be summarized through the following questions:

1. Does the relationship between accounting and politics undermod by the academics and professionals in the research sample?
2. Does this relationship affect on the process of preparing international accounting standard?
3. Does this relationship embody its dimensions on the international level?

The Importance of Research

The importance of this research supplies from the fact that it is one of the rare studies that draws attention to the relationship between accounting and politics and the mutual influences between them, and the statement of the dominant parties in the issuance of international accounting standards, in addition to the lack of writings in this aspect in the Arab world, as this research contributes through:

1. The theoretical framework of the research variables represented by the relationship between accounting and politics and the effects of politics on international accounting standards.
2. The research is based on the descriptive analytical method by adopting a survey of the opinions of the sample members, and that the community in the research needs such studies if they have information about capabilities that can be employed the service future direction to improve the relationship between accounting and politics, especially in the Iraqi environment that the research dealt with.

Research Objectives

By identifying the research problem and its importance, the main objective of this research can be clarified, which is to investigate and explore the issue of politics and accounting and the relationship between them. As well as the sub-objectives, which are as follows:

1. Draw the attention to the importance of the relationship between politics and accounting.
2. A historical analysis of this relationship and the effects it may bear.
3. The impact of this relationship on the process of preparing international accounting standards.
4. Embodying this relationship and its dimensions at the international level.

Research hypotheses

The research is based on the following hypotheses:

The first main hypothesis: (There is a statistically significant correlation between accounting and politics and this relationship has implications for international accounting standards).

The second main hypothesis: (There is a statistically significant effect relationship between accounting and politics and this relationship of reflections on international accounting standards).

Study methodology

The current research relied on the descriptive and analytical approach in order to test its hypotheses, by studying the relationship between accounting and politics and the mutual influences between them, the following is an explanation of the most important steps that have been adopted to obtain this:

1. The first type related to covering the theoretical side through many sources, which were represented in scientific references (Theses, university dissertations, magazines and periodicals available in libraries, Studies and Books as well as by relying on the International Telecom Network (Internet)).
2. The second type of primary data was obtained through the field study, the questionnaire form, and it is the tool for collecting data for the research, and its formulation took into account its ability to diagnose and measure the research variables, and its expressions were relied on many research studies related to the research variable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

First : The conceptual framework of accounting and politics

1.Introductory introduction to accounting.

Accounting is an advanced social science that keeps pace with the changes that occur in society, because accounting information is the basis for making economic decisions, whether for individuals or societies. From this you can say that accounting plays an active role as an information system in continuous and interrelated processes (Al-Matarawi, 2019). Since



accounting has gone through stages of development since its inception, according to several economic, social, legal and political factors, but the decisive development is related to the emergence of the double entry , and that the first book in the accounting literature includes a complete presentation of bookkeeping according to the double entry , and it adopted a scientific and practical reference , which is Mathematics book of the Italian monk "Luca Pacioli " in Venice in 1494 , and in 1581 he also founded the first institute of accounting in the Venice as well . (Hanan, 2001)

Accounting has been defined by the American Accounting Association (A.A.A) as : "The process of determining, measuring and communicating economic information, in order to enable users to make the necessary decisions" . (Arab Society of Certified Accountants, 2001) .

And by reviewing the previous points of view, it becomes clear that accounting began as an art that requires mastery of practice and continuous training for those who wish to practice it and become professional, then it developed into a science that has its own rules and concepts. And its assumptions and principles, and then it became a service activity, and it can be said that accounting began as an unorganized profession whose methods differ from one person to another, then it soon turned into an organized profession that has general use on a larger scale, and then begun to occupy its position among modern sciences as a social science that has its importance and as a basic profession in all countries regardless of the degree of economic progress , or the nature of the economic system Applied .

2. What is politics.

Politics is defined linguistically as the art of governance and management of the state's internal and external actions, as for politics books, many definitions of politics have been mentioned , including : A Collection of Knowledge of the Art of Governing Societies (Al_Arbed , 2005) . It is a compilation of all informational and informative elements that allow at a particular moment and in a particular situation to extract the best decision. (Al_Jajawi , 2000) .

Thus, politics is the basis that controls and supervises all activities and controls them. Politicians control the political, economic and societal activities of the state, hence the economy which is the main structure of every political system in the world and within it there is a group of different activities including accounting. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States became the superior

international economic power without a competitor , and the American president put forward the draft of the new international system for international relations for the twenty-first century which is no different from colonialism in the twentieth century and the centuries before it, but it came under the umbrella of (globalization) in this regard (Al-Jajawi) points out that the new policy of capitalist countries was to return to the use of force to force developing countries to get rid of their attempts to escape from hegemony but rather sought to perpetuate and deepen inequality in order to achieve their interests (Al_Jajawi, 2000) thus, globalization became a rapidly evolving phenomenon, and its manifestations began to crystallize gradually, which calls for exposure to the concept of globalization in some detail :

- Globalization.

Globalization is an economic, social and political variable that has not been witnessed in modern history, because it includes radical changes in the economy and politics aimed at preparing the global atmosphere for a new economic phase characterized by several modern patterns that represent the openness of all that is local to the outside world, and it is seen as a continuous political process It can be seen using quantitative and descriptive indicators in the political, economic and cultural fields, Observers of international life almost unanimously agree that political processes, events and activities at the present time have an increasingly international dimension . (Al_Seh, 2002)

It has been defined as : the dominance of a certain style of life which is the Western style with Arab thought and by using various means of material and political oppression through its political tool which is the multinational corporations . (Al-Rubaie and Al-Zubaidi, 2007)

(Al-Jajawi) indicates that it is a historical economic, political, cultural and technical phenomenon led by the rich countries of the center (the north) to achieve their well-being through domination over the poor (southern) peripheral countries and at their expense by global control of the capabilities and material and human resources . (Al-Jajawi, 2000)

and on this basis the researcher believes that politics has become one of the tools of the economy and the transformation is taking place from the political world to the economic world, and that globalization wants an open world without borders. However, this globalization that wants open borders if these borders are compatible with its interests and closed borders if they conflict with their interests .



3. The relationship between accounting and politics.

Politics is the art of governing and managing the state's internal and external business, and thus it constitutes the tent which societal activities and events fall under, and since accounting in the simplest and most accurate definition is : measurement and transmission, measurement of business results, financial position, and the results of this measurement to the beneficiaries, whether they are inside or outside the establishment and the parties that concern us here are the external parties, and that accounting is the main body that provides these bodies with data and information that they can benefit from in making and taking decisions, as the direct relationship between all politicians and accountants appears through the numbers that accountants provide to politicians that they rely on in making political decisions (Yassa, 2006). and that accounting is a companion of society coexisting with it, responding to the requirements and adapting to its environment, and from this it can be said that it is a national affiliation, and at the same time it extends its bridges to the external environment to receive from it and send it experience and development due to the global character that accounting reaches and the global curve that it seeks to since accounting is like a currency, it has two sides, the first is national and the second is global so to the extent that the first side dominates over the second we say that accounting has national affiliation and roots, and to the extent that the second aspect dominates over the first, we say that accounting has become a global orientation as shown in Figure No. 1. (Abdul Kadhim, 2018).

Thus two types of impact of globalization on accounting can be affected : (Samad and Al-Shujair-2012)

- **Unguided globalization (global).**

Unguided globalization is based on cooperation and exchange of ideas and information and this constitutes a necessary and useful condition in the rapidly developing and intertwined world, and extrapolating the historical path of the development of

accounting from the oldest human civilizations to the present time shows us the cultural accumulation of knowledge in this field, leading to the beginning of the internationalization of accounting science, which has emerged as a demonstration that has emerged in the few past years, for the reason :

- A. Accounting has become a stand-alone science and has become a specialized scientific branch like the rest of the sciences, after it represented a set of generally accepted foundations and rules.
- B. Many accounting problems have become an international phenomenon that takes on an international political dimension due to the development of trade and the movement of capital and multinational companies.
- C. The level of development of accounting science and what it has reached from the present time represents the outcome of the historical accumulation of human effort and the exchange of information for many decades and across the countries of the globe and to the extent that accounting has an international character.

- **directed globalization (globalization).**

At a time when undirected globalization includes a natural product of the exchange of knowledge and information between peoples, directed globalization is practiced through the compulsory purpose and dominant control, and this form is represented by colonial countries through the ages, leading to a fundamental change in the methods of control, and this trend tries to adapt accounting in a way that serves the interests of the major countries that dominate the world politically, economically and militarily, and tries to impose their culture and control in a way that ultimately serves their interests. We find the best evidence of this is the compatibility of international accounting standards to a large extent with the American accounting standards.

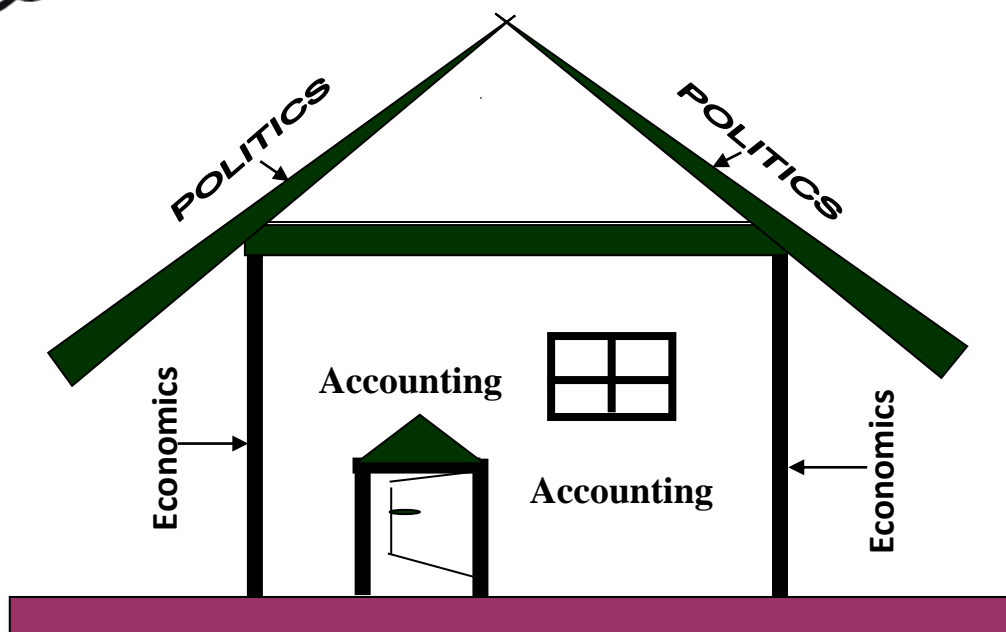


Figure (1) The relationship between economics, politics and accounting

Source : (Al-Jajawi, 2000).

Second : The impact of politics on the issuance of international accounting Standards.

The accounting standard is defined as a written statement issued by an official or professional organization or related to an element of the financial statements or a specific type of operations or events related to the financial position of the enterprise in order to achieve the accounting objectives to the maximum extent possible (Tawfiq, 1997) . It is defined as: general decision rules that derive from the goals and theoretical concepts of accounting and that guide and develop methods of accounting. (Noor and Jajawi , 2009)

The standard is considered the best way to do something if it is good it speeds up the communication process and avoids explaining and interpreting the methods every time, and the ninth international conference held in Paris 1967 represented the first serious attempt to internationalize accounting standards if it resulted in the formation of the International cooperation Committee for the Accounting Profession (ICCAP) , which It endorsed the establishment of the International Accounting Standards Committee (IAS) in 1973, which announced since its inception the preparation and development of accounting standards until the number of standards until 2004 reached (42) standards (Al_Doughaji , 2005) , acceptance of international accounting standards among users is one of the characteristics that should be available in accounting standards and this acceptance is of relatively indication meaning that

the limits of acceptance of the criteria will narrow or widen according to the narrowness or breadth of the user base and if the uses of the financial statements that are prepared according to those standards in the framework of the countries will renew the framework of the condition of acceptance within the borders of that country to the regional or international level, It can be said that the acceptance will become of regional or international significance and there are those who believe that the emergence of multinational companies have intensified efforts to issue International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) With the emergence of these companies, accounting problems have emerged the most prominent of which is the preparation of consolidated data due to the diversity between the accounting standards used in the country in which the branch is located and those used in the country in which the parent company is located, which led to a reduction in the credibility and comparability of these data, which in turn affected the user's ability to choose the appropriate investment opportunity . (Al_Matarawi , 2019)

There are several factors that indicate the need for international accounting standards , including : (Al-Sobh , 2002)

1. Comparison : Decision making depends on the comparison between alternatives that require the presence of information prepared according to unified principles , and if the main goal of accounting is to provide useful information in the process of decision making, the standards facilitate

this comparison by standardizing the basis for preparing that information .

2. The cost of information processing : When these informations are prepared according to different accounting methods, the decision-maker is forced to follow a method to unify the basis for its preparation , which bears the cost of processing that can be provide it if the information is prepared on a standard basis .

Third. The dominant parties in the issuance of international accounting standards and the extent of the impact of the latter American standards Accounting.

to begin with it must be noted that the focus will be attributed to exposure to the American style in the field of making accounting standards at the international level on the other hand , international accounting standards are nothing but the result of many powerful pressures that have an interest in it and reaching a specific standard is the result of a process of settling conflicting positions (Abdel-Kadhim , 2018) many parties dominate the process of setting international accounting standards :

- Securities and Exchange Commission .
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- Financial Accounting Standards Board .
- Major accountants and audit firms .
- Other influential parties .

From Figure (No. 2) we notice the control of accounting firms and the American Institute on the process of setting international accounting standards .

Despite the widespread belief that the basic international accounting standards issued by the International Accounting Standards Committee deal with all accounting issues, the practical reality indicates the need to develop an additional guide to provide a comprehensive set of international accounting standards on the broad lines of the accounting subject, without going into the exact details, it is characterized by the existence of multiple alternatives to measurement and accounting disclosure, and it does not address a number of accounting issues related to multiple industries and does not address some of the issues that may face scientific application, in light of this situation, companies are forced to return to American accounting standards, which are a comprehensive guide to collecting financial accounting issues. So far (42) accounting standards that address all issues in detail (Al-Arbeed , 2005) . The councils of accounting standards began, led by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) and the American Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) have begun to issue standards oriented towards fair value , and when reviewing accounting standards oriented towards fair value we find that the International Accounting Standards Board follows the steps of the American Financial Accounting Standards Board on the grounds that they are tested and evaluated periodically, and therefore the international accounting standards and the American accounting standards do not differ in terms of substance, but the first one puts greater options in order for the companies of different countries to choose what suits their understanding (Al-Khatib and Al-Qishi 2004) .

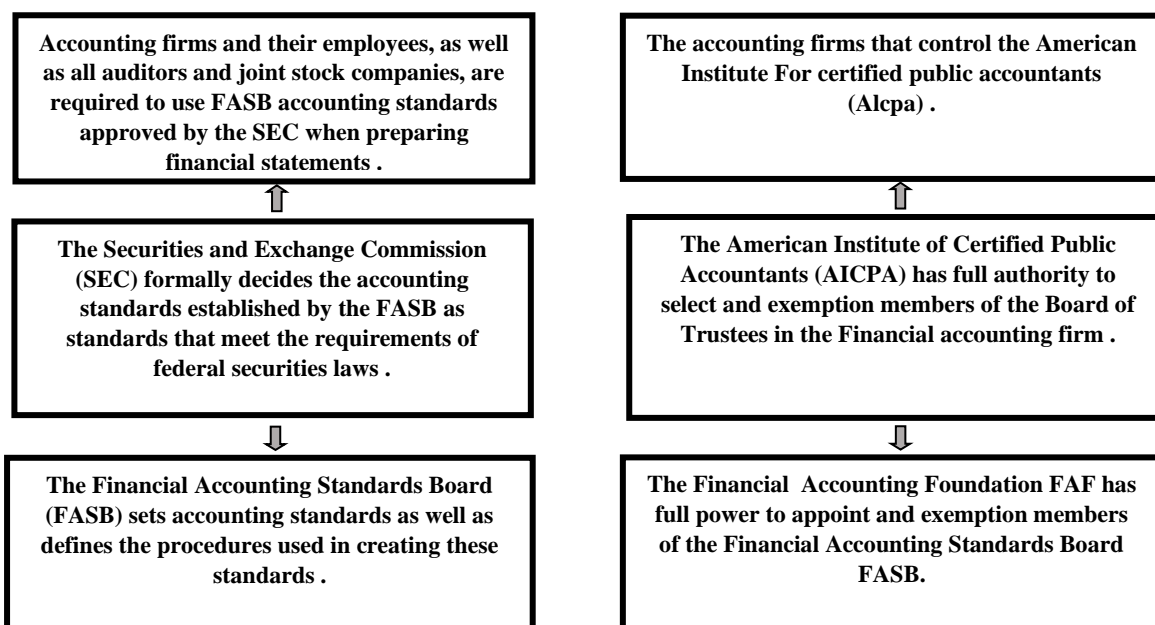


Figure (2) The control of accounting firms and the American Institute on setting accounting standards
 Source: (Al-Jajawi , 2000).



And to make a comparison of international accounting standards and American Accounting We note the consistency and dependence of international accounting standards on American accounting standards, This is shown in Table (No. 1) . (Al_Arbid , 2005)

Table (1) Comparison of international accounting standards and American accounting standards

Ar	Standard type	The number	Percentage
1	International accounting standards conforming to American accounting standards	36	%86
2	International accounting standards that do not match with American accounting standards	6	%14

Source : prepared by the researcher

We conclude from the above table that the international accounting standards are originally American accounting standards that have been internationalized, in addition to most of the American accounting standards, and this shows the extent of American influence in the issuance of international accounting standards

PRACTICAL RESULTS

Description of the community and sample.

1. Research community and sample

The statistical community for the research included a group of academics and professionals in Iraq , as the questionnaire was distributed manually to the sample, numbering (110) questionnaires, and (94) of them were retrieved, and the recovery rate was equal to (85.5%) and all answers are valid for

statistical analysis, and table (2) prepared by the researcher to clarify the personal characteristics of the research sample individuals .

Table (2) indicates that most of the research sample are academics whose percentage was (51.06%) , as well as (48.94%) of the respondents are professionals, and this is a good indicator for the subject under study , as well as (57.45%) of the respondents are from who are holders of higher degree (PhD and MSc) and this is a positive indicator for their understanding of the idea of the subtracted research, in terms of years of service, we note that the largest percentage of respondents was the service category (6_10) years and (16) years and over) as it reached the rate is (28.72%) and this is a good indicator .

Table (2) Personal characteristics of the research sample

Distribution of the research sample members according to job qualification		
The ratio	Repetition	Categories
Academic	48	%51.06
Professional	46	%48.94
Distribution of research sample members according to academic qualification		
The ratio	Repetition	Categories
Ph.D	21	%22.34
MSc	33	%35.11
Professional	40	%42.55
Distribution of the research sample members according to the number of years of service		
The ratio	Repetition	Categories
Less than 5 years	18	%19.15



6 – 10 years old	27	%28.72
11 – 15 years old	22	%23.40
16 years and over	27	%28.72
Total	94	% 100

Source : prepared by the researcher based on the results of the electronic calculator

2. Statistical analysis and processing methods :

Based on the nature of the research and the objectives it seeks to achieve , the questionnaire was unloaded and analyzed through (SPSS) program with the use of several appropriate statistical methods, and the following is a group of statistical methods that the researcher used :

- Cronbach's alpha scale to measure the reliability or stability of the questionnaire .
- The arithmetic mean in order to find out the level of increase or decrease in the responses of the study sample for each paragraph related to the search axes, bearing in mind that the phrases were arranged according to the highest arithmetic mean .

- The standard deviation to identify the extent of the deviation of the responses of the research sample for each of the paragraphs related to the research axes .
- Factorial analysis : The method of factor analysis aims to find a group of factors that are responsible for generating differences in a group consisting of a large number of response variables .
- T-test to find differences between the mean of two samples .

Within the framework of the statistical treatment of the questionnaire data, the five-point Likert scale was used to measure the answers to the questionnaire items, the answers used are limited to the following :

Table (3) the scale of the response to the paragraphs

Category	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	I do not agree	Strongly disagree
Class	5	4	3	2	1

Source : prepared by the researcher.

Whenever the arithmetic mean is greater or equal than the hypothetical mean (3), this is evidence that the direction of the research sample answers is compatible with the movement of the scale, and whenever it is less than (3) it indicates that the answers are not agree with the movement of the scale.

1. Tests of validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

A. Validity Test : For the purpose of ascertainin the apparent validity of the questionnaire it was presented to a group of experts and arbitrators with specialization in the fields of scientific research (accounting, management, economics, statistics, computers), in order to make observations regarding the clarity of each paragraph and the appropriateness of each paragraph for the axis to which it belongs and the observations and opinions of the majority of the arbitrators about the paragraphs of the questionnaire were taken

into account, so some of them were modified and some new paragraphs were added to them .

B. Test of stability : stability means the stability of the scale and not contrast with itself, that is, the scale gives the same results with a probability equal to the value of the coefficient if it is re-applied to the same population and for the purpose of ensuring the stability of the scale used, the (alpha Cronbach) coefficient was used to determine the accuracy of the answers of the members of the research sample. The values of the (Cronbach's alpha) coefficient are statistically acceptable when these values are equal to or greater than (0.60) specifically in administrative and accounting research. Table (4) shows the value of the stability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha)) and the validity at the total level of the variables

Table (4) Title of the axes, stability coefficient, and (Cranach's alpha) honesty

Interlocutor	Axis address	Number of phrases	Stability coefficient	Honesty
The second axis / 1	The relationship between accounting and politics.	10	0.761	0.872
The second axis / 2	The impact of the relationship on the preparation of international accounting standards	10	0.876	0.935
The second axis / 3	Embodying the relationship and its dimensions at the international level	10	0.784	0.885

Source : prepared by the researcher based on the results of the SPSS program

- Analyzing the correlations between research dimensions and their variables and testing hypotheses.**

To complement the descriptive and diagnostic processes based on the data of the descriptive analysis the correlations between the research variables were identified as shown in the table below :

Table (5) the correlation between the dimensions of the variables used in the research

			Correlations	
			Acc.	Pol
Spearman's rho	Acc	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.756**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	70	70
	Pol	Correlation Coefficient	.756**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	70	70

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source : prepared by the researcher based on the results of the SPSS program

The data of Table (5) indicate that there are correlations between accounting and politics, and that this relationship has implications for international accounting standards, and that correlations between the two variables exist on the basis of a significant correlation at a significant level (0.00), and the total index of the relationship of the two variables is equal to (**0.756) at level (0.00), these results indicate the strength of the correlation between the two variables and this refers to the acceptance of the first main hypotheses which states(that there is a statistically significant correlation between accounting and politics and that this relationship has implications for international accounting standards).

- Analyzing the influence relationships between research dimensions and their variables and testing hypotheses.**

To achieve the second main hypothesis (there is a statistically significant influence relationship between accounting and politics, and this relationship has implications for international accounting standards) . A simple linear regression was used between the dependent variable and the independent variable as follows : It is clear from Table (6) that the effect of the independent variable was significant because the value of (sig) is less than (0.05) and so is the value of (R2=0.989), and this explains (98%) of the variable and because the amount of Beta is equal to (B=0.995), and this means that the increase in dependence on



the independent variable by one unit increase (0.995)

units of the dimensions of the dependent variable

Table (6) Analysis of the influence relationship of the independent variable with the dependent variable

Influence relationship	Adjusted R Square	T	Beta	Sig.
The relationship between accounting and politics and the implications of this relationship on international accounting standards	.989	55.889	.995	.000

Source : prepared by the researcher based on the results of the SPSS program.

and through this data it appears to us to accept the second main hypothesis that indicates that there is (a statistically significant effect relationship between accounting and politics and that this relationship has implications for international accounting standards) .

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

• Conclusions

After this presentation of the relationship of accounting to politics; The researcher reached as well as the conclusions reached in the body of the research to a set of conclusions, can be identified as follows :

1. The accounting is not abstract and that the strong relationship exists between economics and accounting on the one hand , and between economics and politics on the other hand, and between politics and accounting on the third hand and these interrelationships have mutual effects .
2. The Iraqi accounting environment at the present time needs deliberate and organized efforts to deal with the variables of the Iraqi economic environment .
3. The development of economic thought especially the issue of price determination had important repercussions on the Accounting Profession Council and its role in rationalizing economic policies .
4. The society has knowledge and awareness of the relationship between politics and accounting and that the first uses the second for its purpose and the second affects the first with its numbers and that accounting at the international level is politicized to serve certain parties and that the process of preparing accounting standards at the international level is witnessing various pressures, and that bias is practiced in that process to achieve economic interests .

• Recommendations

In light of the above results , the researcher recommends :

1. That the politicians and officials in the state harmonize between the national economic, social and cultural requirements on the one hand and

the requirements of the international environment in a way that enables the adaptation of the international environment and its positive aspects in favor of the national environment .

2. Carrying out adequate studies to show the suitability of international accounting standards, as well as the non-dependence of the Accounting and Control Standards Board with the International Accounting Standards Committee, and that the council be separated into two councils, the first for accounting standards and the second for audit evidence, and to expand participation in the membership of the council, in addition to the importance of forming an integrated secretariat for it and that the drafts of the proposed standards are presented to various parties for their opinions and proposals, and the most important ones are those that will apply these standards .
3. Reconsider the authority to which the Accounting Standards Board in Iraq is linked, represented by the Office of Financial Supervision, so that the link is represented by the Iraqi Council of representatives, to give it legal force and describe it as binding with the accounting standards issued by it .
4. The need to build a research database at the level of the Arab world to be adopted by the Federation of Universities of Arab countries and the Arab organization .

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