



The impact of financial governance on improving the quality of financial reports

An exploratory study in a sample of employees of commercial banks in Basra Governorate

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Abstract:

This research aims to study how financial governance impacts the quality of financial reports and their dimensions. These dimensions include the relevance, reliability, accessibility, and consistency of financial reports. This will be achieved by measuring the relationship and impact and testing the link between financial governance and the quality of financial reports. The research adopted a descriptive-analytical approach, selecting a sample of 300 bank employees and using a questionnaire consisting of 38 items. The results were analyzed using the (SPSS V.26) statistical software to validate the hypotheses regarding the relationship and impact between the variables. Several findings emerged, most notably a significant positive correlation between financial governance and the quality of reports. Based on these findings, a set of recommendations was presented, the most prominent being the need to periodically update the legal, supervisory, and regulatory frameworks related to the application of governance in banks, which would enhance the quality of financial reports.

أثر الحوكمة المالية على تحسين جودة التقارير المالية بحث استطلاعي لعينة من العاملين في المصارف التجارية في البصرة

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المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل تأثير الحوكمة المالية على تعزيز جودة التقارير المالية وإبعادها (ملاءمة التقارير المالية، موثوقية التقارير المالية، قابلية التقارير المالية، ثبات التقارير المالية)، وذلك من خلال قياس الارتباط والتأثير واختبار العلاقة بين الحوكمة المالية وجودة التقارير المالية، واعتماد المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وتم اختيار عينة من العاملين في المصارف المبعوثة والبالغ عددهم (300) فرد، باعتماد الاستبانة التي شملت (38) فقرة، وتم استخراج النتائج من خلال البرنامج الإحصائي (SPSS V.26) لأثبتات صحة فرضيات الدراسة المتعلقة بالارتباط والتأثير بين متغيرات الدراسة، وقد تم التوصل إلى مجموعة من النتائج وكان أهمها وجود علاقة ارتباط معنوية موجبة بين الحوكمة المالية وجودة التقارير المالية، من ثم صياغة عدد من التوصيات ذات علاقة بنتائج التي توصل لها البحث وكان أهمها العمل على تحديث الأطر القانونية والرقابية والتنظيمية المتعلقة بممارسة الحوكمة بشكل دوري في البنوك مما يساعد تعزيز جودة التقارير المالية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحوكمة المالية، جودة التقارير المالية، مصارف تجارية.

Introduction:

Governance is a modern concept that has gained significant attention in recent years, as it is used to achieve quality and excellence in performance. The term governance refers to the source or reference point relied upon in managing a company or organization. It encompasses the requirements for effective management in companies and organizations worldwide and is considered a means of complementing administrative reform processes (Saif, 2023: 9).

The primary reason for the emergence of governance is the gap between management rewards and the actual performance of organizations. Furthermore, the inability to attract capital poses a threat to companies, rendering them uncompetitive and impacting the accuracy and transparency of financial reporting standard (Almaskaria, 2025: 36).

The focus on the concept of governance has increased in many advanced and emerging economies in recent decades, particularly after economic disasters and financial crises in some countries caused by financial and administrative corruption and mismanagement by corporate executives. This has led to difficulty in attracting sufficient capital, primarily due to a lack of full transparency in the financial reporting of many companies. Numerous studies have linked these issues to weak governance structures (Hanan, 2025: 97).

Governance can also play a significant role in increasing investor confidence in financial statements and attracting investments. The study comprises four sections: the first addresses the methodology; the second focuses on the theory of financial

governance and the quality of financial reports; the third examines the scientific aspects; and the fourth presents the conclusions and recommendations.

Research Problem:

This study examines the impact of financial governance on improving the quality of financial reporting. More specifically, it seeks to explore how financial governance structures, such as boards of directors, audit committees, and internal controls, contribute to enhancing transparency, accountability, and reliability in financial reporting practices. The issue can be framed as follows:

- How do financial governance mechanisms, such as the board of directors, audit committees, and internal controls, contribute to improving transparency, accountability, and reliability in financial reporting practices?

significance of study:

The concept of governance has garnered significant attention from stakeholders and researchers in recent years. However, the concept of governance in the banking sector has yet to receive sufficient attention and study. Given our firm belief in the importance of the banking sector to economic activity and its role in providing the necessary financing for investment projects and driving development in countries, it is essential to emphasize the importance of adopting the concept of governance and oversight of banks by providing a conducive business environment for both local and foreign investors. This environment should ensure that all stakeholders achieve their interests through improved quality of financial reporting.

Research Objectives:

- Clarifying the relationship between correlation and impact of the study variables: financial governance and the quality of financial reporting in the banking sector..
- To understand financial reports and the importance of the quality and integrity of the information they contain.
- To understand the actual application of financial governance and its impact on the quality of financial reporting in the banks under study.
- To examine the importance of banks adopting banking governance and its impact on the quality and integrity of the information contained in financial reports.
- To draw conclusions and formulate recommendations based on the general and specific findings.

The study population and its sample:

A questionnaire was sent to employees of commercial banks (Bank of Baghdad, Al-Mansour Bank, Al-Thiqa Bank, Iraqi Investment Bank, Development Bank for Investment, and Iraqi Credit Bank) in Basra. 320 questionnaires were distributed, and 310 were received, of which 300 were statistically valid. This represents 95% of the total number of questionnaires distributed.

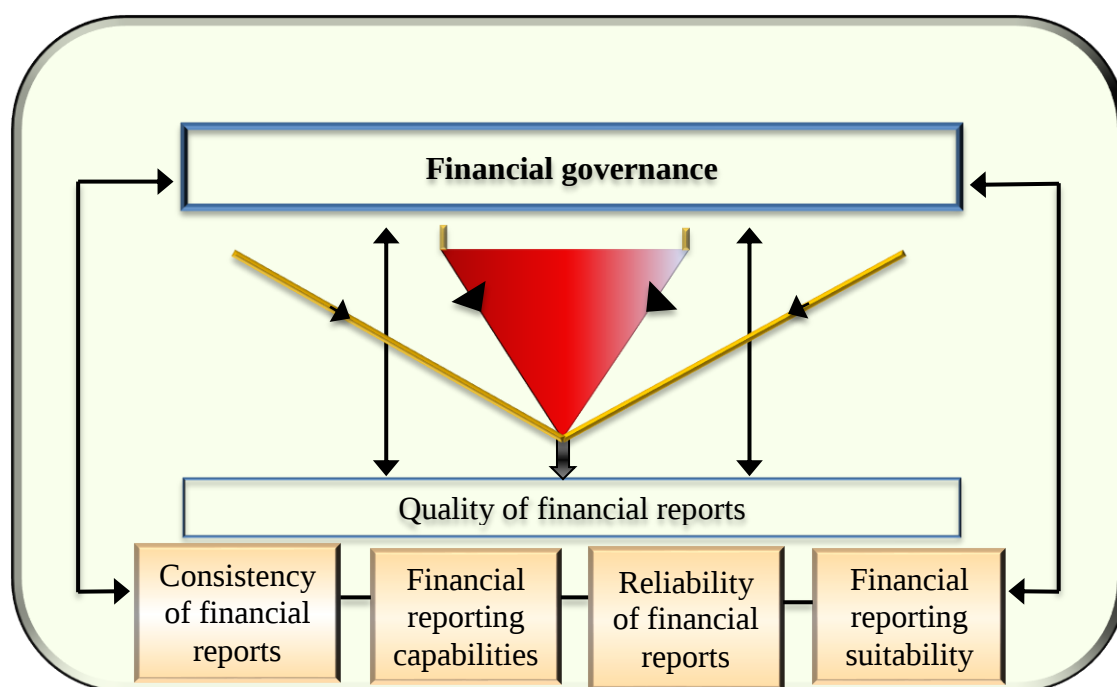
Research Hypotheses:

A.First hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between financial governance and the dimensions of financial reporting quality in commercial banks.

B.Second hypothesis: Financial governance has a significant impact on improving the dimensions of financial reporting quality in commercial banks.

Search framework:

The hypothetical study model was prepared, which reflects the nature of the relationship between the two dimensions of the study and its sub-variables, as shown in Figure.(1)



Scheme Number (1)

Source: Prepared by the researcher.

Methods of collecting data and information:

A.The research relied on available sources in foreign and Arabic books and journals, as well as university theses and dissertations found in Iraqi university libraries. Information was also gathered from the internet. This strengthens the theoretical aspects of the current research.

B.Personal interviews: The researcher conducted personal interviews with people who work in commercial banks in the city of Basra.

The limits of the study

- Spatial boundaries: Employees of commercial banks were chosen as the sample for the study.

- Temporal boundaries: This study was conducted between 2025 - 2026.

Financial governance

The term "governance" refers to a thorough set of rules and metrics for evaluating the efficacy of management performance as well as indicators that demonstrate the presence of control mechanisms that protect the company from adverse effects from any related party, be it internal or external. In this way, it guarantees the most efficient use of available resources to equitably advance the interests of all parties, ultimately resulting in favorable outcomes for the company, its shareholders, and society as a whole. (Piroska·2026 :23)The system by which firms are directed and managed is referred to as financial governance. The rights and obligations of the board of directors, shareholders, stakeholders, and other parties involved in the company's operations are outlined in the governance system. It also outlines the guidelines and methods for making decisions about the company's business, as well as the framework for establishing the company's goals, the strategies for accomplishing them, and the ways in which they should be monitored.(Al-Khawaja,2025:680) Financial governance has also been defined as: a set of standards, rules, and laws that regulate the performance and scientific and operational practices of institutions, thereby preserving the rights of stakeholders and achieving disclosure and transparency. (Atmaja: 2022, 46) It is defined as the governing procedures for effective administrative organization in various aspects, to ensure that the work of institutions proceeds in the best possible way, through which the funds of shareholders are protected and guaranteed, while also taking into consideration the protection of stakeholders such as creditors, lenders and employees (Sudiana , 2022:270).

The importance of financial governance

A . From a financial and accounting standpoint, governance is essential for identifying corruption, irregularities, and mistakes, managing risks to mitigate or minimize them, and ensuring disclosure and transparency in financial reports and accounting information, regardless of whether it is financial or not, in order to give pertinent financial information for decision-making. (Efunniyi: 2024:1602). It also enhances the value of the institution, ensures its survival, and protects it from financial distress and failure, thus preventing its exit from the business world (Affes: 2023: 33). Banks' adherence to the fundamental principles of governance strengthens investor confidence in banks as shareholders, reducing the risk of capital outflows from the economy and increasing capital inflows, thereby lowering the cost of capital for these banks. Furthermore, providing regular and reliable information increases the attraction of capital at a competitive cost (Hsu·2022 :102) .

B. Two In terms of legislation, governance methods uphold the rights of shareholders and stakeholders, provide redress for any infringements, ensure fair treatment of shareholders, and uphold the financial and accounting standards, corporate rules, and investment laws that regulate the connection. Governance applies to every organization in society, regardless of whether it is public or

private, that manufactures goods or services and thus has an impact on the welfare of the populace. This is not just restricted to economic enterprises. As a result, there are more jobs and more confidence in the economy, which supports the expansion and capacity of the private sector (Atanga Ondo, 2022: 3412).

Pillars of financial governance in banks

The pillars of financial governance in banks (ethical conduct, oversight and accountability, and risk management) are among the most important pillars upon which the banking sector is based.

- **Ethical conduct:** It refers to the ethical structure that is disseminated in the bank and which defines the values of dialogue, stating that it prevents corruption and bribery and limits activities that, in addition to explicitly addressing problems such as transactions that favor parties close to officials and lending, restrict governance. The ethical values are firmly established, and it can be said that the internal structure connected to officials and employees in the bank aims to raise. From managers down to employees, the organization's employees will initially reach sound ethical behavior without its influence. Governance cannot exist and enhances the skills and competencies capable of managing the organization's resources rationally and wisely to meet the aspirations of stakeholders. (Pasiouras, 2026: 206)
- **Oversight and Accountability:** For efficient monitoring, a system with transparency and openness in financial reporting is essential. The implementation of international, accounting, and Basel Committee norms, as well as their ability to evaluate bank performance, is critical. In addition to external supervision, the Basel framework for banking supervision promotes the stability of the banking system through an internal control system that adheres to laws and internal regulations, is regularly assessed and updated. Accountability is represented in holding officials and decision-makers accountable for the outcomes of their choices and procedures, while external auditors base their work on the principles and standards of the accounting and auditing profession. (Matsiliza: 2024, 57)
- **Risk Management:** Traditional banking activities like taking deposits and making loans have become a core part of the bank's operations, though at a lower profit margin, due to the fast changes in financial and banking markets and the greater competition. This has led to the necessity of establishing a banking risk management department, which is considered one of the most important pillars, as it is a key objective of governance and aims to mitigate potential risks and protect the interests of shareholders and stakeholders. The interests, as well as predicting them, are themselves linked to risks such as loans, and preparing studies to control activities that are related to losses in order to prevent them or reduce their impact and maintain the bank's reputation (Bozos, 2025: 102).

The quality of financial reports:

These are reports that are prepared in accordance with accounting standards and legal regulations, and are characterized by a high degree of accounting conservatism, resulting in a decrease and limitation of information asymmetry

(Assad et al,2026:49).Financial reporting is the process of preparing reports according to the applicable financial reporting framework and delivering those reports to their users in a timely manner, while avoiding any material misrepresentation of the content. This ensures that the financial reports accurately and objectively reflect the economic position of the entity during a specific period (Davis et al., 2026: 258). Two alternative methods can be used to convey the quality of financial reports: user demand and investor protection. In terms of user demand, this means figuring out what users need in order to judge the quality of financial reports based on how helpful they are from the perspective of the statement users. The second method emphasizes the degree to which the completeness and accuracy of the financial statement disclosures safeguard investors. The second approach, to be more precise, places emphasis on the degree of transparency, the completeness of disclosure, the level of conservatism, and the consistency with which accounting is used. comparability, and policies Financial statements are considered to be high-quality if they satisfy qualitative features such as relevance, reliability, comprehensibility, comparability, verifiability, and timeliness. (Babalola, 2025: 84).The accounting system aims to measure and evaluate the impact of economic events and financial transactions occurring within an organization. It summarizes and presents this information in the form of reports and financial statements. The purpose is to provide this data to all stakeholders (Chen, 2025: 103). Financial reports offer a comprehensive view of the organization's performance during the fiscal year. Financial reports are important because they are considered one of the most prominent economic resources that significantly influence the efficiency of financial markets by providing investors with information effectively, cost-effectively, and in a timely manner (Al Saleh et al, 2023: 87).

Dimensions of Financial Report Quality

- Relevance:** This describes the capacity of accounting data to impact and potentially alter the choices made by the user of the information. The notion of information relevance is almost entirely dependent on the decision-maker, particularly on how well the information matches the objective for which it was created. Giving the correct information at the appropriate moment and in a timely manner before it loses its influence on the choice is another aspect. When information is not accessible when it is needed or becomes available much after it is needed, it loses its worth and becomes useless (Hsu et al., 2022: 47).
- Reliability:** Accounting information is reliable and valuable if the accountant can use it as a barometer of the events and economic circumstances it depicts, particularly if this information is somewhat objective, as evidenced by the absence of bias, errors, and mistakes, as well as honesty in its preparation (Ellili et al , 2022:109).
- Consistency:** This involves applying the same methods and techniques used in measuring and communicating accounting information from one period to another. If a change is needed, it must be noted so that the user can take it into account (Alshehadeh et al., 2024: 3222).

- **Comparability:** For accounting information to be useful, the economic entity must maintain consistency in its use of a specific accounting method or technique from one period to another, as this will increase the ability of users of financial information to interpret the differences (Alaajeli et al., 2022: 25).

The third axis (the practical side):

1. Description and Diagnosis of Financial Auditing

Table (1) describes and diagnoses the financial governance items represented by the variables (X1X10). The percentages indicate that (71.6%) of the surveyed individuals agree with these items, while (28.4%) disagree. This results in a mean of (2.87) and a standard deviation of (0.594). The most prominent item that contributed to enriching this variable was item (X5), supported by a mean of (3.09) and a standard deviation of (0.57). Conversely, the item that contributed least to this variable was (X10), as indicated by a mean of (2.54) and a standard deviation of (0.94).

Table (1): Description and diagnosis of financial governance items

Factors		Response scale							arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
		I strongly disagree	I disagree		I agree		I strongly agree			
	T	%	T	%	T	%	T	%		
X1	1	2.0	11	22.0	21	42.0	17	34.0	3.08	0.64
X2	1	2.0	11	22.0	31	62.0	7	14.0	2.88	0.43
X3	1	2.0	18	36.0	24	48.0	7	14.0	2.74	0.52
X4	3	6.0	15	30.0	22	44.0	10	20.0	2.78	0.70
X5	1	2.0	9	18.0	25	50.0	15	30.0	3.09	0.57
X6	2	4.0	12	24.0	20	40.0	16	32.0	3.00	0.73
X7	1	2.0	7	14.0	31	62.0	11	22.0	3.04	0.44
X8	-	-	14	28.0	25	50.0	11	22.0	2.94	0.50
X9	-	-	16	32.0	25	50.0	9	18.0	2.86	0.49
X10	8	16.0	16	32.0	17	34.0	9	18.0	2.54	0.94
overall average		3.6	26.8		47.2		22.4		2.87	0.594
Overall average of the dimension		28.4			71.6					

Source: Prepared by researchers based on the outputs of the program (SPSS. V26).

2-Describing and Diagnosing the Quality of Financial Reports

Table (2) presents a description and diagnosis of the characteristics of financial report quality based on the respondents' answers to the indicators related to its variables. This is done to clarify the extent to which these characteristics are present in commercial banks. A number of indicators can be illustrated according to the description and diagnosis of the financial report quality variable:

A. The overall agreement rate for the financial reporting quality variable was (69.65%), meaning that the surveyed individuals whose opinions were questioned in the surveyed banks confirmed that their organization uses financial reporting quality based on its aforementioned characteristics. As for the surveyed individuals

whose opinions were questioned, their answers were negative, amounting to (30.35%). The initial analysis of the surveyed individuals' answers confirms that the institution possesses the characteristics of financial reporting quality. All the characteristics came with an arithmetic mean of (2.83) and a standard deviation of (.0.72)

B. The importance of describing the characteristics of financial reporting quality, represented by its attributes and diagnosis, can be ranked according to the percentage of agreement, as shown in Table:(2)

- Reliability ranked first with an agreement rate of.(%75.3)
- Comparability ranked second with an agreement rate of.(%72)
- Relevance ranked third with an agreement rate of.(%67.3)
- Reliability ranked fourth with an agreement rate of.(%63)

Table (2) describes the characteristics and diagnosis of the quality of financial reports.

reports:

Factors	Response scale								arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
	I strongly disagree		I disagree		I agree		I strongly agree			
	T	%	T	%	T	%	T	%		
Suitability										
X11	4	8.0	10	20.0	24	48.0	12	24.0	2.88	0.76
X12	3	6.0	9	18.0	28	56.0	10	20.0	2.90	0.62
X13	6	12.0	15	30.0	25	50.0	4	8.0	2.54	0.66
X14	5	10.0	18	36.0	23	46.0	4	8.0	2.52	0.62
X15	5	10.0	14	28.0	18	36.0	13	26.0	2.78	0.91
X16	3	6.0	12	24.0	22	44.0	13	26.0	2.90	0.74
X17	-	-	14	28.0	28	56.0	8	16.0	2.88	0.43
overall average	7.4		26.3		48		18.3		2.77	0.68
Overall average of the dimension	32.7				67.3					
Reliability										
X18	4	8.0	9	18.0	21	42.0	16	32.0	2.98	0.83
X19	5	10.0	8	16.0	24	48.0	13	26.0	2.90	0.82
X20	4	8.0	10	20.0	27	54.0	9	18.0	2.82	0.68
X21	5	10.0	11	22.0	22	44.0	12	24.0	2.82	0.84
X22	18	36.0	18	36.0	8	16.0	6	12.0	2.04	1.01
X23	4	8.0	15	30.0	23	46.0	8	16.0	2.70	0.70
X24	4	8.0	18	36.0	18	36.0	10	20.0	2.68	0.79
overall average	12.6		25.4		40.9		21.1		2.70	0.81
Overall average of the dimension	37						63			
Steadfastness										
X25	2	4.0	3	6.0	19	38.0	26	52.0	3.38	0.60
X26	-	-	9	18.0	25	50.0	16	32.0	3.14	0.49
X27	2	4.0	8	16.0	30	60.0	10	20.0	2.96	0.52
X28	2	4.0	11	22.0	23	46.0	14	28.0	2.98	0.67
X29	5	10.0	12	24.0	14	28.0	19	38.0	2.94	1.03
X30	2	4.0	17	34.0	15	30.0	16	32.0	2.90	0.82
X31	3	6.0	14	28.0	18	36.0	15	30.0	2.90	0.82
overall average	4.6		21.1		41.1		33.2		3.02	0.70
Overall average	24.7				75.3					

of the dimension										
Comparability										
X32	2	4.0	9	18.0	19	38.0	20	40.0	3.14	0.73
X33	1	2.0	14	28.0	24	48.0	11	22.0	2.90	0.58
X34	4	8.0	8	16.0	22	44.0	16	32.0	3.00	0.81
X35	4	8.0	9	18.0	27	54.0	10	20.0	2.86	0.69
X36	6	12.0	15	30.0	21	42.0	8	16.0	2.62	0.81
X37	2	4.0	13	26.0	29	58.0	6	12.0	2.78	0.50
X38	3	6.0	8	16.0	31	62.0	8	16.0	2.88	0.55
overall average	6.3		21.7		49.4		22.6		2.88	0.66
Overall average of the dimension	27				73					
Overall Rate of Financial Reporting Quality Variable	30.35				69.65				2.83	0.74

Source: Prepared by researchers based on the outputs of the program (SPSS. V26).

Second. testing the research hypotheses

The first primary hypothesis, which states that there is a strong relationship between financial governance and the dimensions of financial reporting quality in commercial banks, was tested. The results of the correlation test related to this hypothesis are presented in Table (3).

Table (3) Results of the correlation test between the research variables

Independent variable dependent variable	Financial governance
Quality of financial reports	0.53*

Source: Prepared by researchers based on the outputs of the program (SPSS. V26).

As the total index value of the correlation coefficient reached (0. 53) at a significance level of (0. 05), Table (3) demonstrates a strong positive correlation between financial governance and the quality of financial reports, which is evidence of the link between the two factors. The conclusion from this is that the more the banks in question pay, The greater their focus on financial governance, the greater their contribution to improving the quality of financial reporting for the banks under study. This is achieved by providing a suitable environment for the auditing staff of these banks and by facilitating accurate information exchange. Based on the results of the statistical analysis of the correlation between the two study variables, the first main hypothesis was accepted at the level of the banks under study.

Examining the second major claim: According to this theory, the caliber of a company's financial statements is significantly affected by its financial management. This effect is shown in the table below as follows

Table (4) How Financial Governance Affects the Quality of Financial Reports of the Banks Under Study

Dependent Variable	Financial governance			F
	R ²	β1	β0	
Quality of financial reports	0.668	0.571 (10.025)*	0.44	64.822

Source: Prepared by researchers based on the outputs of the program (SPSS. V26).

Indicates the calculated T-value * $F < 0.05$, number = 50, $d = 1.48$. Table (4) of the regression analysis shows a significant positive effect of financial governance as an explanatory variable on the quality of financial reports collectively as a respondent variable. The calculated F-value was (64.822), which is greater than its tabulated value at two degrees of freedom (1.48) and a significance level of (0.05). The coefficient of determination (R²) was (0.44), which means that (56) of the explained differences in the quality of financial reports are due to the effect of financial governance, and the remainder are due to random variables that cannot be controlled or are not included in the regression model at all. Following up on the (B1) coefficient, it appears that increasing the attention to financial governance single unit change in the quality of financial reports results in a shift of (0.571). In regards to the (BO) coefficient, it indicates that the institution under consideration produces high-quality financial accounts, irrespective of the efficiency of the financial audit. Continuing with the (t) test... At a significance level of (0.05) and two degrees of freedom (1.48), the computed value of (11.320) is much above its critical value of (6.302). As a result, we agree with the second main hypothesis, which claims that financial governance has a big impact on the caliber of financial reporting in the banks we looked at.

The fourth axis: conclusions and recommendations:

Conclusions:

- The study showed that the participating banks demonstrated a clear commitment to effectively implementing financial governance solutions to protect themselves from potential risks and crises, achieve their aspirations, and enhance the quality of their financial reports.
- The caliber of financial reports and the choices made by internal users of financial statements are both significantly influenced by financial governance.
- The analysis findings' indicators show that the participating banks place a high priority on the board of directors' accountability for ensuring the accuracy of financial reports.
- Banks can benefit from financial governance to enhance the dimensions of financial report quality, as revealed by the statistical analysis of the correlations between the study variables.
- Financial governance significantly and positively impacts the quality of financial reports, as demonstrated by the statistical analysis results.

Recommendations:

- The necessity of selecting appropriate specializations for financial and banking operations in banks, while ensuring the specialization and independence of marketing auditors to enhance banking activity and create opportunities for creativity and innovation in banking in general by improving the quality of financial reports.
- Providing specialized courses for managers, executive directors, board members, and department heads on a regular basis to familiarize them with financial governance and its principles, while also keeping them informed of all developments in the governance system, which will enhance their expertise and increase their administrative efficiency.
- The necessity of implementing financial governance as an essential tool for economic, accounting, financial, and administrative reform.
- Working to promote a culture of governance practices through training programs that improve and develop the concepts, culture, applications, and practices of banking governance.
- Working to update the legal, supervisory, and regulatory frameworks related to governance practices in banks on a regular basis.
- The necessity of guiding banks to prepare financial statements and reports in accordance with the principles and rules stipulated by International Accounting Standards and Reporting Standards.
- Work is underway to conduct further studies and research on governance applications and sound practices, as well as studies on the dependent variable, the quality of financial reporting.

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