



SECTION 2

**ACCOUNTING SPECIFICS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT,
DETERMINANTS OF ACCOUNTANTS' JOB PERFORMANCE**

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Abstract

In this paper, we study the working environment relation between management and accountants and investigate the factors that affect the job performance of accountants. Using factor and multivariate analysis, we find that there are very important factors, such as the work environment, job attributes and scope, personal knowledge and self-development, as well as compensation/benefits are important determinants of the performance of accountants and provide information about the relationship between owners and agents that should be taken into account in studying and investigating any future relationship between management and accountants. The results provide important empirical and theoretical implications in identifying the elements of an accountant's job performance, which, if considered, are expected to reduce jobs problem, while at the same time enhancing the relationship between management and accountants.

Keywords: Working Environment, Accounting, Job Performance

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1 Introduction

Accountants are important and significant players in improving the quality of annual financial accounting reports. Their responsibilities and roles have been considered in several studies, such as those investigating the factors that affect job satisfaction (Moyes et al., 2007; Almer & Kaplan, 2002; Burney & Wideney, 2007; Ting, 1997; Fisher, 2001; Abdallah et al., 2013). Lately, accountants seem to find it difficult to work in the current business environment and adopt normal business practices. Therefore, under tremendous pressure from others, some accountants turn to other means to complete their work. These other means test the ethical business standards and accounting practices. In the short run, these practices may succeed; however, in the long run many firms find themselves facing serious challenges, such as in the case of Enron and Arthur Anderson. The financial crises some companies face are a real example of long-term abuse and misuse of the financial and

accounting systems. Accountants are usually the ones to be blamed because they are the ones carrying out these kinds of activities. Accounting is a very tough business where accounting standards (such as GAAP and IFRS) must be followed, while meeting the company's needs. Accountants must decide what is ethical and proper and what roads are the best to travel. As a result, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (July 30, 2002) was created to change the way accounting firms do business, how accountants perform their work, and the way they audit companies' financial statements. This paper examines the relation between managers and accountants and investigates the factors that may affect the job performance of accountants.

The relationship between management and employees in general has been given close attention in previous literature. Eisenhardt (1989) defines contract job performance as "an appropriate metaphor" that governs the relationship between management and employees such as accountants. According to Jones (1995), the form of this relationship can be either

exchangeable/transactional, carried out through a delegation of power, or conducted through formal legal documents. However, one of the main challenges to the contract are the conflicting interests between the management and various employees where each group act to maximize its own interests. This in turn can lead to a decreases in the value of the firm (Jensen & Mackling, 1976). However, the inability of the management to completely monitor the accountant's behavior suggests a need for an ideal job performance model. Such a model would act as a monitoring and bonding mechanism that prevents the accountant from making decisions that reduce the value of shareholders wealth.

Bergen et al. (2001) discuss different approaches in designing a performance model contract. Nonetheless, any model can be incomplete due to the informational advantage of the accountants, inefficient markets, and the inability of a model to consider all possible situations in the world (Jones, 1995; Scott & Triantis, 2005).

Due to the lack of available data, little empirical evidence can be generated from previous studies on job contracts between management and accountants (Lyons, 2001). For example, some studies provide theoretical arguments pertaining to the incomplete contract theory (e.g., Hart, 1988; Jones, 1995), while others that consider a specific industry such as marketing (Bergen et al., 2001), procurement (Bajari et al., 2011), or economics and finance (Janda, 2006) do not directly analyze the relationship between management, accountants and the factors that affect them. This lack of available data calls for more empirical work to be done in this area.

In this paper, we consider the factors that affect accountants' performance for two reasons. First, like any other job, the accounting job suffers from the conflict of interests between management, accountants, and the well-being of shareholders. In the accounting jobs, circumstances arise which require knowledge of rules and regulations, flexibility, and sound judgment. Without solid foundations in accounting and regulations that specify the elements of the job and the relationship between owners and agents, and monitor the behavior of the owners and agents to promote sound judgments, both management and accountants could surrender to practices that lead to poor quality work and potentially threaten the existence of their firms (Doloi, 2008). Therefore, accountants should accept and perform work on the grounds that they are able to provide quality work without lowering their standards. The second reason for considering the accountants' performance is the availability of data.

A questionnaire and a cover letter were mailed to accountants working for private and public companies in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries requesting their opinion regarding issues that affect their job performance at their companies. We use multivariate analysis including factor analysis to

group the opinions and specify the factors affecting the accountants' job performance.

The results provide strong evidence that factors such as work environment (WE), job attributes and scope (JAS), personal knowledge and self-development (PKSD), and compensation/benefits (CP) are important determinants of the performance of accountants and provide information about the relationship between owners and agents. Moreover, the results from the models developed in the data analysis suggest that to lessen the problems between management and accountants, the relationship between both should be revisited and should take into account the need for a common understanding of mutual interest, shared values, partnering, balancing risks with a future business perspective, and building long-term trust relationship. These findings are consistent with those of Gill (2004) and James (2002).

It is also recommended that many aspects of the traditional relationship between accountants' performance and companies should be reviewed in the wake of the last financial, market, and accounting crisis. The results indicate that the performance measure for the relationship between companies and accountants should take into consideration a combination of the following issues: 1) Accountants (work environments, self-development, and benefits), 2) Companies (legal and tax issues, profitability, return on capital, and image), 3) Industry and economy (growth, prosperity, and market well-being).

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The next section reviews the previous studies in this area, while the following sections describe the research design, data collection, research hypothesis, empirical results, and finally, concluding remarks.

2 Literature review

Following the work of Albrecht et al. (1981) and Dean et al. (1988), the relationship between management and accountants has been studied by many researchers, who in general, failed to generate empirical evidence that contributes to the debates over the relationship between management and accountants. Some studies focused on the factors that affect the accountants at their jobs (e.g., Albrecht et al. (1981), Dean et al. (1988), and Carcello et al. (1991), where attitudes and perceptions of accountants were studied. For these authors, the relationship between accountants and management can be costly when accountants' satisfaction decreases, as this can lead to opportunistic behavior and inadequate practices. These practices affect the well-being of both accountants and management, and hence, result in a relationship that is full of uncertainties. Such relations become very costly to all parties. Hat and Moore (1988) suggest that in these conditions, accountants and owners will begin negotiating the conditions of their work as long as they are mutually benefiting from doing so.

Based on the above discussions, one can say that both management and accountants are in need of an ideal job contract that can provide them with the incentive to work ethically in a manner that protects their interests. This is because in an inadequate contract, possible conflicts of interest between the two parties may raise the organization and activity (work) costs, which hinders the level and benefits of both parties and investments, and generates negative outcomes for both firms and the market. Consequently, the following question, which this study addresses, becomes important in the face of the relationship debate and the need for empirical evidence: What are the minimum factors that should be written into a contract or taken into consideration that will allow owners and accountants to professionally and ethically achieve efficiency and avoid problems?

Previous studies explore issues faced by accountants and companies, but do not provide empirical evidence on the factors that should be considered when examining the relationship. The first line of research reports only survey results regarding the factors that affect the accountants at their jobs (e.g., Albrecht et al., 1981; Dean et al., 1988; Carcello et al., 1991; Moyes et al., 2007; Hunter & Wire, 1996). The second investigates the relationship between job satisfaction and various work issues (Patten, 2005; Ussahawantchakit, 2008; Lu & Lee, 2007).

Albrecht et al. (1981) use a questionnaire to study the attitudes of professional staff from 25 accounting firms in the United States. The results indicate that while partners reported significant levels of job satisfaction, junior staff, seniors, and managers did not. Junior staff reported a lack of satisfaction including the amount of supervision, feedback on performance, the opportunity for participation, and recognition for a job well done. Dean et al. (1988) investigate the change in perceptions of individuals to a number of work-related items from the first day of employment to the end of the first year on the job. The sample includes new accountants from a large industrial firm and one "Big 8" accounting firm. While both groups reported significant decreases in job satisfaction, the public accountants' decrease is significantly larger than the decrease for the industrial accountants. In addition, the public accountants note decreased satisfaction for all sub-categories examined, including job security, supervision, and personal growth. More recently, Carcello et al. (1991) examine whether there are differences between accounting students and lower-level practicing accountants relative to perceptions of (1) job duties and responsibilities, (2) advancement, training, and supervision, and (3) personal concerns. Samples are selected from membership rolls of Beta Alpha Psi Chapters from across the United States, resulting in a practicing accountant sample that is predominantly (85.1%) from "Big 6" firms. The results of the study

show that students have higher expectations than practicing accountants on nearly every item examined. As reported by the authors, however, "the divergence was greatest in the area of advancement, training, and supervision" (p. 6). The study also does not explicitly test for levels of job satisfaction. The authors suggest that the differences in perception that are noted may be significantly related to previously reported problems with job satisfaction in accounting.

Likewise, Moyes et al. (2007) investigate the factors that affect job satisfaction, which may assist employers in attracting and retaining more Hispanic Americans in the profession, in particular Mexican Americans. The authors surveyed 1000 Mexican American accounting professionals. 143 complete and usable questionnaires were received. The authors find that the following factors may have an impact on the level of job satisfaction as perceived by the Hispanic American accounting graduates. The factors are: (1) employee acceptance by their supervisors and peers, (2) supervision issues, (3) compensation dollar amount, (4) job enjoyment, (5) employee treatment regardless of race and gender issues, and (6) corporate environment.

Hunton and Wier (1996) investigate the influence of organizational, environmental, and individual factors of accountants in private (non-public) industry on promotion and turnover. In this study they find that promotion to higher positions for junior accountants is based on achieving educational level and professional certification.

Other studies investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and various work issues. For example, Patten (1995) examines the relationship between the supervisory actions recommended by the AECC (1993) in Statement No. 4 and the job satisfaction for entry-level accountants and whether differences exist across public accounting firms. Patten surveyed 189 entry-level staff at 14 Midwest accounting firms. The study shows that there is a significant difference between local/regional accountants and Big 6 accountants relative to both working conditions-related supervisory actions and job satisfaction. The local/regional accountants reported higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those at the Big 6 firms.

Ussahawanitchakit (2008) investigates the relationships between role stress (role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload) and job satisfaction of certified public accountants (CPAs) in Thailand. The key research questions are: (1) how role stress affects CPAs' job satisfaction, (2) whether role stress has a negative impact on job satisfaction, and (3) whether all components of role stress have different impacts on job satisfaction. 500 CPAs were randomly chosen and mailed a survey questionnaire. 189 responses were received and available for use. The results showed that role stress has significant negative associations with CPAs' job satisfaction in Thailand. CPAs with

greater levels of role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload tend to have lesser job satisfaction.

Sometimes, role stress is presented as a lack of empowerment and flexibility in attempting to meet customers' service expectations while following the organization's guidelines (Knight, Kim, & Crutsinger, 2007). Individuals with high levels of role stress tend to have low levels of job performance, outcomes, and satisfaction. Also, role stress can initiate or result either in stressful work events or in role structures whose meanings are insufficient to allow role incumbents to handle work events (Lu & Lee, 2007). Therefore, this study uses all three factors of role stress (role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload) to explain CPAs' job satisfaction in their responsibilities, functions, and duties.

In summary, the above studies suggest that ethical conduct reduces activities' costs and promotes effective job implementation. Hence, in the absence of conflict, job satisfaction and work relationships are expected to be optimal. However, it is suggested that achieving an ethical relationship depends on factors that will be presented in this paper. The current study is unique because it focuses on the factors that affect the performance of accountants at public and private companies. Based on the above studies and the objective of this study, we formulate the following hypotheses:

H1: The performance of accountants depends on factors such as work environment, job attributes and scope, personal knowledge and self-development, and compensation/benefits/promotion.

H2: A model including total assets, total revenues, and age of the company, in addition to the four factors presented in (H1), does not have an effect on the performance of accountants at their companies.

3 Data and methods

3.1 Sample selection and data

The sample used in this study comprises a group of accountants who are working for private and public companies in the GCC countries. A list of companies first was collected from the Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Trade, and Ministry of Labor in each of these countries. 250 letters were mailed and emailed to the accountants in these companies, requesting them to list all the problems and factors affecting them in performing their job at their companies. 87 (34.8%) responses were received. These responses were used to create the main survey for this study. 850 copies of the survey were mailed to accountants in GCC countries. 336 (39.5%) copies were received and valid for use. Table 1 shows the responses by industry and country.

Table 1. List of respondents by type of company and country

Country	Private Companies	Public Companies	Total respondents
UAE	54	48	102
Sudia Arabia	42	36	78
Qatar	23	21	44
Kuwait	26	19	45
Bahrain	18	15	33
Oman	21	13	34
Total	184	152	336

3.2 Research design and empirical results

To prove that the survey is a good tool to be adopted, the study uses Cronbach's Alpha (α). The value of α is 81.15%, which means that the survey is an acceptable tool to measure the objective of the study. Initially, we use factor analysis to group the opinions of different groups of accountants and overcome the Multicollinearity problem. (Trost & Oberlender, 2003). Then we use regression analysis to explore the relation between different groups' opinions. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the answers to the questions used in this study. The accountants are asked to answer a series of questions by rating them from 1 to 5, where 1 means "no effect on job performance" and 5 means "extremely significant effect of job performance". It can be noted that the mean for each question is different. These are not

surprising findings, given the fact that each question is unique. The results indicate that the driving factors behind these differences are work environments, job attributes, and benefits. The results also indicate that management should take into consideration the monetary, and work environment factors when an accountant's job is available.

3.3 Factor analysis

In this project factor analysis is used in data reduction to identify a small number of factors that explain most of the variance observed from a much larger number of variables called principal components. The eigenvalue determines the principal components, which are orthogonally varimax, rotated to obtain more evenly distributed variables among components.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation	Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	3.652	10.249	14	3.739	10.929
2	3.500	13.451	15	3.902	13.055
3	3.408	9.249	16	3.984	15.347
4	3.141	7.883	17	3.984	11.608
5	3.989	13.249	18	3.929	12.951
6	3.489	7.123	19	3.293	11.711
7	3.777	11.914	20	3.614	12.788
8	4.234	16.966	21	3.652	14.657
9	3.625	9.281	22	4.130	15.001
10	3.918	13.089	23	3.212	11.227
11	3.690	10.523	24	3.571	8.363
12	3.723	10.146	25	3.886	15.081
13	4.081	15.071			

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Table 3. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	19.527	78.109	78.109	19.527	78.109	78.109
2	3.753	11.013	89.122	3.753	11.013	89.122
3	2.939	6.748	95.870	2.939	6.748	95.870
4	1.780	3.120	98.990	1.780	3.120	98.990
5	1.345E-15	1.010	100.000			

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Table 3 lists the eigenvalues associated with each linear component (factor) before and after extraction. The eigenvalues associated with each factor represent the variance explained by that particular linear component and the percentage of variance explained. The eigenvalue also shows that there are four components (factors) extracted under a 1.010 eigenvalue minimum. The clustering of decision factors affecting the performance of accountants within the four components generates normalized cumulative sums of squared loading of 98.990 percent. This shows that the four factors (variables) depict (represent) 98.990 percent of the characteristics of the 25 variables. In other words, 98.990% of the total variation in the level of the barriers or problems (difficulties) facing the accountants in performing their job is explained by the cumulative effects of the four components (factors) extracted. Therefore, the efforts of all the interested parties in this problem (problems facing accountants in performing their job) should focus on the four factors identified in our factor analysis as standards or benchmarks when evaluating the performance of the accountants at their jobs. These factors are as follows:

1. Work environments (WE). This factor evaluates the circumstances or conditions that surround the accountants at their job. It also includes the physical or mental effort directed at doing or making something at their job and the function of completing a process or carrying out a task at their job. Most accountants are usually faced with a

specification that has been provided by owners regarding the quality and quantity of work that is going to be performed.

2. Job attributes and scope (JAS): This factor contains information about how jobs are processed and the factors that affect accountants in fulfilling their job. These roles are originally specified when the job is created. Some of the attributes come from the job description. After the job is created, the job attributes can be viewed and managed through work management in system navigator. This is an important factor that affects the relationship between owners and workers, and will eventually affect the work environment, amount of work, and quality of work. Therefore, work environment and job attributes are related factors in the sense that they can affect the future of the work performance of the accountants and the company.

3. Personal knowledge and self-development (PKSD): This factor refers to activities that improve self-knowledge and identity, develop talents and potential, build human capital and employability, enhance quality of life, and contribute to the realization of dreams and aspirations. As personal development takes place in the context of institutions, it refers to the methods, programs, tools, techniques, and assessment systems that support accountants' development at the individual level in their companies. This factor is important in the sense that it can affect the work environment and the quality of the work for accountants at their companies.

Therefore, the personal development and knowledge that is provided by the owner could affect the performance of the accountants.

4. Compensation/benefits/promotion (CBP): Employee compensation and benefits refers to all forms of payment going to employees and arising from their employment. These will lead to job satisfaction, motivation, low absenteeism, and low turnover. It will also lead to other advantages to the employees such as peace of mind and increase in self-

confidence. This factor is used in measuring the accountants' satisfaction and performance.

The four factors (principal components) will be used in subsequent analysis of the relation between management and accountants and in measuring the performance of both groups.

3.4 Regression analysis (testing H₁)

In this section, we use Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) to test H₁ to investigate the importance of the factors that may affect the accountants' job performance.

$$\text{Accountant Performance} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{WE} + \beta_2 \text{JAS} + \beta_3 \text{PKSD} + \beta_4 \text{CBP} \quad (1)$$

Where: Accountant Performance: The accountant's performance in their job

WE: Work Environment

JAS: Job attributes and scope

PKSD: Personal knowledge and self-development

CBP: Compensations, benefits, and promotion

Table 4. Regression Model Results-Accountants Performance

Variables	Coefficients	t-test	P-value
Constant	36.3668	3.790	0.000
WE	0.3716	1.820	0.076
JAS	0.3033	2.390	0.022
PKSD	0.4279	1.200	0.237
CBP	0.5812	2.210	0.034
R Square	0.7649		
Adjusted R Square	0.7381		
F Statistics	28.470		
P-Value	0.0001		

Table 4 presents the regression results for the factors used in the regression model (1) for accountants' performance. The overall model is significant with an adjusted R² of 0.7381 and F Statistics of 28.470 (0.0001). In other words, the overall model containing the above factors is statistically significant in explaining the variation in the dependent variable (the accountants' performance). Therefore, this model determines the extent to which independent variables (work environments, job attributes and scope, personal knowledge and self-development, and compensation/benefits/career advancement/promotion) can explain variations in accountants' work performance. To test the significance level of the hypotheses, the t-statistic was employed at a level of 5%. The p-value was 0.0001, which is higher than the significance rate set for this study, which is 5%. These results provide strong evidence that the above hypothesis is supported, in other words, that work environment, job attributes and scope, personal knowledge and self-development, and compensation/benefits/career advancement/promotion are important factors in determining accountants' success in performing their job. Therefore, the relationship between accountants, owners, and

regulators should be revisited and take into considerations the need for common understanding of mutual interest, shared values, partnering, balancing risks with future business perspectives, and building long-term trust relationships.

We test H₂ by formulating equation 2 below to investigate some additional variables that may affect the performance of accountants at their companies. The factor analysis discussed above is further investigated by employing the following other variables (total assets, total revenues, and age of the firm) with the traditional regression. Total assets, total revenues, and age of the firm are used to investigate the effect of these variables on the relationship between management and accountants, and on the performance of the accountants at their jobs, as well as shed some light on the relationship between companies and accountants. In other words, this part of the study explores whether there is any effect of the total assets (size of the company), total revenues, and age of the firm on the performance of the accountants and their relationship with the management. These data were generated from the Data Stream and annual reports of companies. Four dependent variables were associated with the performance of the accountants: work environment

(Y₁), job attributes (Y₂), personal knowledge (Y₃), and compensation (Y₄). These are measured separately through the questionnaire survey (see Appendix). The regression models are developed to determine the

quantitative impacts of these variables on the performance of accountants and the relationship between companies and accountants:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \beta_6 X_{6i} + \beta_7 X_{7i} \quad (2)$$

Where: Y = the value of the dependent variables (one of the three success criteria of cost, quality and time)

β_0 = constant

$\beta_1.. \beta_7$ = estimated regression coefficients

X_i = values of independent variables

Table 5. Results of Regression Analysis

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Dependent Variables	WE	JAS	PKSD	CBP
Constant	9.647*** (17.28)	8.341*** (14.53)	7.583*** (13.64)	10.164*** (19.37)
Total Revenue	5.462*** (9.572)	4.753*** (8.573)	3.749*** (5.537)	9.962*** (17.978)
Total Assets	0.00456 (1.064)	0.00783 (1.369)	0.00568 (0.875)	0.00962 (1.197)
Age of the Firm	4.783*** (9.385)	3.926*** (7.572)	3.024*** (5.385)	6.829*** (11.849)
WE		0.945*** (5.648)	0.752*** (4.759)	1.374*** (7.251)
JAS	0.835*** (5.241)		0.586*** (3.974)	0.957*** (6.793)
PKSD	0.532*** (4.648)	0.736*** (6.734)		0.869*** (7.956)
CBP	1.162*** (9.683)	0.857*** (6.813)	0.684*** (5.194)	
R ²	0.779	0.785	0.753	0.792
Adj R ²	0.725	0.833	0.697	0.741
F	11.85	12.48	9.860	13.65

Note: t statistics in parentheses

** p< 0.05, and p,0.10*** p<0.10 level

Table 5 presents the regression results generated by the four regression models for work environment, job attributes and scope, personal knowledge and self-development, and compensation/benefits/promotion. The four models overall are significant with an R^2 of (0.779, 0.785, 0.753, and 0.792) respectively and F Statistics of (11.85, 12.48, 9.86, and 13.65) at a significance level of (0.05). As can be seen from Model 1 (WE), total revenue plays a significant role in offering better work environments for accountants. These findings clearly suggest that accountants' ability to perform depends on the ability of the company to provide them with enough financial resources. We also find that the longer the company has been in service, the better it is able to meet and provide for accountants' needs. There was no significant relation between WE and total assets. This is due to the fact that the size of the company is not a factor in work environment issues.

As can be seen from Model 2, job attributes and scope (JAS), total revenues, and age of the firm can be significant in helping accountants fulfill their job. This is an important factor that affects accountants' ability to perform their job requirements.

There was no significant relationship between JAS and total assets. This is due to the fact that the size of the company is not a factor in job attributes and scope issues. Model 3, personal knowledge and self-development (PKSD) shows that there is a significant relationship between total revenue, age of the firm, and this factor. This is due to the fact that this factor affects the activities that improve self-knowledge and identity, develop talents and potential, build human capital and employability, enhance quality of life, and contribute to the realization of dreams and aspirations that required enough resources and experience.

Model 4, compensations, benefits, and promotion (CBP), shows that there is a significant relationship between total revenue and employee compensation and benefits. This factor refers to all forms of payment to employees for their employment. This factor is very important as it leads to job satisfaction, motivation, low absenteeism, low turnover, peace of mind, and self-confidence. This factor is used in measuring the accountants' satisfaction and performance. The longer the employees are in service, the better compensation and benefits they have. Therefore, the hypothesis cannot be rejected, and the results from Table 5 indicate that the performance measure for the relationship between accountants and their companies should take into consideration a combination of the following issues:

1. Accountants (work environment, self-development, and benefits)
2. Companies (legal and tax issues, profitability, return on capital, image)
3. Industry and economy (growth, prosperity, and market well-being)

4 Conclusion

This paper examines the factors that affect relationships between management and accountants. Accounting companies find it difficult to compete in the current business environment using normal business practices. Accountants were blamed for crises such as Enron and Arthur Anderson because they were the ones who carried out these activities. In addition to following GAAP and IFRS, accountants have to please and meet their companies' needs to keep their jobs. The results from this study provide strong evidence that the factors extracted by cluster and factor analysis (work environment, job attributes and scope, personal knowledge and self-development, and compensation/benefits/promotion) are important in determining the relationship between management, accountants, and regulators, and to the success of accountants in performing their job. It is recommended that all parties should take into account the need for common understanding of mutual interest, shared values, partnering, balancing risks with future business perspectives, and building long-term trust relationships. The results also indicate that the above factors are important in measuring the ethical performance of management and accountants in the accounting job process.

This study contributes to the wider debate about proper and improper job performance by accountants and management and provides theoretical and empirical implications for future research. The results establish a theoretical association between ethics, job performance, and relationship between management and employees. The findings also enhance our theoretical understanding of the importance of these factors in creating an environment of trust that governs the behavior of the management and accountants, and hence reduces jobs problems. The results also indicate that the performance measure for the relationship between management and accountants should take into consideration a combination of the following issues: 1) accountants (effective communication, self-development, and benefits), 2) companies (profitability, return on capital, image), and 3) industry and economy (growth, prosperity, and market well-being).

This paper paves the way for further research related to performance and agency theory. Further research in this area could explore additional factors beyond those extracted in this study. Factors related to the companies themselves such as profitability and return on capital may be important. Conditions within an industry (growth, innovation, and safety standards) may also be significant in explaining relationships between owners and accountants.

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Appendix A. Survey questions

	No 1	Little 2	Some 3	Sign 4	Ext 5
1. The basis for promotion in the company is fair.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Organizational factors such as the culture and politics in the company affect attitudes of the employees.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Salaries are competitive with others in the area.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ethical conflicts sometimes arise at work, such as management not wanting to apply appropriate accounting standards.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Certifications such as the CPA, ACCA, and others are recognized as important for career advancement.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Flexible working hours, holiday breaks, and training abroad are offered as benefits.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Changes in the economic outlook and external environment have significant effects on productivity.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The ability to tolerate stress is an important attribute on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The firm provides access to new technology and appropriate training.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Senior accountants treat newly-hired accountants with respect and helpfulness.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The surroundings and work environment are comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Responsibilities are well-defined with an appropriate set of guidelines.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Understanding the business environment is essential to contributing to business solutions.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The company promotes an ethical perspective which carries over to employees at all levels.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Strong communication skills are valued.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Effective time management is a concern when the volume of work assigned is overwhelming.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Conflicts within management have an impact on productivity.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Having a supervisor with an accounting background makes work easier.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Bonuses and company benefits such as pensions are competitive compared to others in the industry.	1	2	3	4	5
20. An accountant's job includes not only accounting, but other areas such as operations management.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The expected working hours and the volume of work assigned are appropriate, based on the job description and compensation.	1	2	3	4	5

22. Continuing education is required to maintain up-to-date knowledge of new accounting standards.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Career development plans for staff are fair and reasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
24. An accountant's job is purely accounting with a focus on reducing costs, increasing profits, and establishing tighter internal control systems.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The relationships between accountants and Professional staff in other departments is Cooperative and productive.	1	2	3	4	5
 Overall Performance					
a. Work environments at you company are	1	2	3	4	5
b. Job attributes and scope at your company are	1	2	3	4	5
c. Personal knowledge and self-development at Your company	1	2	3	4	5
d. compensation/benefits/career advancement/ promotion	1	2	3	4	5