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An Empiric Study on the Independence of the Financial Audit in Romania

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Abstract

The present article presents the results on an empiric study an empiric study on the independence of the financial audit in Romania. The methodology of research is a quantitative one. The statistic population is formed from three groups namely the financial auditors, financial managers of the audited firms and the users of the audited accounting information. The results of the questionnaire have been analysed by the help of Kruskal Wallis Test, which has shown that for every statement the differences between the three groups are significant. Next the results have been interpreted globally. This way has been demonstrated the hypothesis according to which there are differences between perspectives and expectances between the financial auditors, financial managers of the audited firms and the users of the audited accounting information in Romania regarding the independence of the financial audit. Also we concluded that the differences of perspectives on the legal norms concerning the independence in Romania are marked evidently by the group interests.

Keywords: Empiric Study, The Independence of The Auditors, Differences of Perspectives, Differences of Expectations

Introduction

At the international level the theme about the Independence of the financial audit represents a great interest and it has been intensively studied both at theoretical and empiric level. The hypothesis from which starts this research is the fact that there are differences of perspectives and expectations between the financial auditors, financial managers of the audited firms and the users of the audited accounting information from Romania concerning the independence of the present financial audit.

To demonstrate this hypothesis we have proposed the following objectives of the research:

- Determining the significance of the differences of perspectives and expectations between the three groups in Romania;
- Analysing the perspectives on the Independence of the auditors in Romania as it is seen by the financial auditors, financial managers of the audited firms and the users of the audited accounting information.

Identifying some closing possibilities of the expectations between the three groups.

In order to reach these objectives we applied a questionnaire to the financial auditors, financial managers of the audited firms and the users of the audited accounting information in Romania and Spain which contained statements connected to the role, and utility of the auditor.

Date and Methodology of Research

The theoretic research no matter how important was, we consider that it is not sufficiently in the present economic context. Today more than ever it is necessary the getting closer to the economic reality, therefore the empiric studies are more and more extended.

To demonstrate the hypothesis and to touch the objectives of the research we have made an empiric research, a quantitative one. The statistic population was chosen from the financial auditors, financial managers of the audited firms and the users of the audited accounting information from Romania and Spain.

Firstly we have realised a serious activity of research, regarding the statistic population which will enter in the study. This way we have established the three groups interested in the work of the financial auditor to whom the questionnaire is addressed - financial auditors, financial managers of the audited firms and the users of the audited accounting information. According to the characteristics of the statistic population we have established the competence of the sample for each of the three groups, so that the results to be interpreted at the global level and to have a national relevance.

The structure of the sample is the following:

Table 1. The structure of the sample

	ROMANIA				
	Sent questionnaires	Received questionnaires		The Age Average	The Experience Average ¹
		Absolute value	Percent ²		
AUDITORS	600 ³	211	35,17%	47 years	22 years
MANAGERS	504 ⁴	133	26,39%	46 years	19 years
USERS	492 ⁵	157	32,30%	36 years	12 years
TOTAL	1596	501	31,28%	-	-

Source: own processing

The questionnaire is anonymous and contains closed questions, positively formulated. To make the work easier for the person who fills in the form and to be able to quantify the answers we limited the answers to five, on a value scale from 1 to 5, according to Likert Scale, where 1 represents the maximum level of agreement, 5 represents the maximum level of disagreement, 3 represents the neutral value and 2 and 4 intermediate values of agreement and disagreement. Only one single answer is to be given.

The process of sending and receiving the answers has been by e-mail, during February-December 2012. The answers have been centralised by an informatics Excel programme, specially designed for it and interpreted with the help of econometric models Kruskal Wallis and Mann Whitney, which have shown if the differences for each statement of the questionnaire between the three involved categories are significant or not.

Also, the results of the tests have been incorporated inside some tables, which are the basis of the descriptive analyses of the questionnaire results.

¹ The average of the experience years and the age indicates that the subjects participant in the study are good knower of the studied domain, and the obtained opinions belong to specialists in the field, fact that may serve as a basis to draw conclusions

² The specialty studies show that at an average of answers of minimum 5% from the total of the initially established samples, the results are considered relevant and they can be extended for the whole statistic population.

³ The statistic population of the auditors in Romania was selected consulting the Official Register of the Auditors in Romania, from the site of the Financial Auditors Chamber in Romania, and the sample has been stratified on districts, in order to have a national relevance.

⁴ As we could not establish the total of the statistic population, we have chosen a heterogeneous sample, formed of different types of firms which benefit of the auditors services: the firms that enter in the top of the 5° companies in Romania published by the Financial Newspaper, 40 small and middle enterprises part of the IMMs top in Romania; the legal banks by the National Bank in Romania; financial institutions, non banking ones that appear on the list of NBR; Societies that develop activities in the member states of EU from the Register on the site of National Commission of the Mobile Values.

⁵ As we could not establish the total of the statistic population, we have chosen a heterogeneous sample, formed of the most representative categories of the users: university professors of accounting and audit in the Romanian Universities; Master students, second year, accounting and audit specialisation, 2011-2012; financial analysts that appear in the list offered by the financial banking Analysts Association In Romania; investments societies, investments consultancy- physical and juridical persons, independent enterprises evaluators (physical and juridical) who appear in the National Commission Register of the Mobile Values; the legal banks by the National Bank in Romania; financial institutions, non banking ones that appear on the list of NBR; firms in the field of financial investments and counselling for investments; newspapers and magazines having an economic character in Romania.

Literature Review

It is said that the economic crises periods intensify the activity of realising the empiric study regarding the perception and expectations of the users of the audited accounting information. In the last years at the international level have been realised a lot of studies empiric and comparative concerning the financial audit. First of all we have to remind the fact that the European Commission has initiated a large process of consulting among the EU member countries concerning the role of the financial audit, the independence of the auditors, information given by the audit Report, concentrating the audit market inside Big Four or the problems connected to the corporative governance. There are studies which sustain the necessity of the financial audit and its reglementations by the professional organisms, considering the protection of the users on the capital markets (Ricol, 2008) and (Humphrey and others, 2009).

In what concerns the term "audit expectation gap" there are studies which sustain the necessity of educating the public regarding the limits of the financial audit (Fowzia, 2010) and (Porter, 2009).

In Romania we do not have many empiric studies on themes of financial audit. Still lately have appeared some specialty magazines, but generally they are reduced. Some examples might be: "The statistic explore of the audit market having as a purpose the appreciation of the auditor"⁶ (Jaba, Robu, 2011) and refers to the connection and direct effect which has on the independence of the auditor the financial performance of the audit firm; "The external auditors and the corporative governance under the impact of the financial crises"⁷ (Dobroţeanu and others, 2011) which treat the role of the external audit and of the corporative governance in credibility of the financial report of the firms; "The dynamic of the perceptions regarding the external audit under the impact of the financial crises"⁸ (Dobroţeanu and others, 2011) an empiric study about the degradation of the perceptions of a group of students on the problems "audit expectation gap" before starting the financial crises and after its starting; "The importance of the information offered by the financial audit for managers, investors and financial analysts"⁹ (Cernea, Ştefănescu, 2012) – an empiric study which refers to determining the degree of appreciation of the information delivered by the audit report by the users.

Years ago this type of study were specific to Anglo-Saxon countries, but today they have extended to all European countries, as they allow touching a better convergence between them. My research has a quite big extending and a very welcomed one in Romania as „at the actual moment, the specialty literature does not know a lot of studies dedicated to this problem and especially to investigating the differences of perceptions regarding the external audit in the specific circumstances of the Romanian environment”.

The Econometric Analyses of the Obtained Results

Kruskal Wallis Test is a nonparametric test used only when there are more than two independent groups. To analyse the data these have been transformed into ranks. The test has been used to evaluate if the differences at the ranks level are significant or not. The calculations have been made for each statement of the questionnaire.

The hypotheses associated to the Kruskal Wallis test are:

⁶ Jaba and other (2011)

⁷ Dobroţeanu L. and others (2011)

⁸ Dobroţeanu L. (2011)

⁹ Cernea, Ştefănescu (2012)

H_1 – There is NO statistic significant difference between the medians of the analysed groups;

H_2 – The Medians of the investigated groups differ significantly.

The hypotheses are accepted or rejected according to the value of the K coefficient associated to the test.

The Formula for Kruskal Wallis Test is the following:

$$K = (N-1) \frac{\sum_{j=0}^J N_j (\bar{R}_j - \bar{R})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^J \sum_{k=1}^{N_j} (R_{jk} - \bar{R})^2} \quad (1)$$

The first formula is equivalent to the following (2) and is being used when all the ranks R_{jk} are different and have values between 1 and N.

$$K = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \sum_{j=1}^J N_j R_j^{-2} - 3(N+1) = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \sum_{j=1}^J \frac{R_j^2}{N_j} - 3(N+1) \quad (2)$$

Where,

j = the number of groups;

N_j = the number of observations inside each group N =total number of observations;

R_{JK} = the number of observation K inside the group “ j ”;

\bar{R}_{jk} = the average of the ranks of the j group observations;

\bar{R} = the average of all ranks and observations;

K = the calculated value by Kruskal Wallis Test.

The correction of K , given by the formula:

$$1 - \frac{\sum_{j=1}^g (t_j^3 - t_j)}{N^3 - N} \quad (3)$$

Where, g = the number of repeating groups; t_j = the number of repeating in the group “ j ”.

The theoretical interpretation of Kruskal Wallis Test is based on the table values of the Test X^2 , for $c = j-1$ degrees of liberty and a probability of guarantee of the results of α . As bigger the sums of the group as higher the value of the test is and has more chances to a significant variation. As the differences of the between the ranks of the groups are smaller, going towards 0, the variation is insignificant.

The critical score for:

$\alpha = 0, 01$ level of test and $c = J-1 = 3-1 = 2$ degrees of freedom is 9,210, and for

$\alpha = 0, 05$ level of test and $c = J-1 = 3-1 = 2$ degrees of freedom is 5,991.

The result K obtained for every statement of the questionnaire was compared to its value X^2 from the Table. When:

$K \leq X^2$ we accepted the hypothesis as being null, the differences between groups being insignificant;

$K > X^2$ we accepted the hypothesis alternative, the differences between groups being significant.

One of the objectives of this research was determining the significance of the perspective and expectances differences that exist between the three groups in Romania. The results of Kruskal Wallis Test are as follows:

Table 2. The results of Kruskal Wallis Test regarding the independence of the financial auditors

	Auditors **	Managers **	Users **	TEST K.W.	THE RESULT OF
Express the agreement degree on the following:	-	-	-	-	-
a. The opinion stated by the auditor	1,82	1,88	2,38	23,40	S*
b. The auditors are too interested in satisfying the firm's management	3,48	3,45	3,04	15,78	S*
c. The auditors may do other types of work for the firms they do not audit	1,95	2,09	2,32	10,66	S*
d. The audit firm should prohibit its employees to own shares at the clients firms.	2,48	3,40	2,46	36,37	S*
e. The auditors should earn from a single client maximum 15% from his total cashing	3,23	3,80	3,04	27,15	S*
f. It is necessary that the auditors to be named and the fees to be fixed by an independent organism of the client firm	3,69	3,65	2,87	37,48	S*
g. It is important setting a maximum period of exercise for the same firm	2,79	3,26	2,64	22,26	S*
h. Do you agree that the auditors, apart from the financial audit services to do the following:	-	-	-	-	-
- implanting informatics systems	3,52	3,39	3,92	17,35	S*
- financial consultancy	3,55	3,14	3,69	13,12	S*
- legal consultancy	3,35	3,11	3,62	10,23	S*
- environmental audit	2,93	2,88	3,54	17,38	S*
- services of taxation and evaluation (partake)	3,43	3,18	3,61	8,15	S
- implanting quality systems	3,30	3,21	3,68	10,08	S*
- accounting services	4,19	3,62	4,02	27,38	S*

	Auditors **	Managers **	Users **	TEST K.W.	THE RESULT OF
- personnel recruiting	3,51	3,37	3,76	6,55	S
- internal audit consultancy	3,09	2,75	3,32	15,90	S*
- preventing audit for the lab risks	3,00	2,78	3,32	9,96	S*

Source: own processing

NS – NONSIGNIFICANT difference between groups, la $\alpha = 0, 05$ statistic significance;

S - SIGNIFICANT difference between groups, la $\alpha = 0, 05$ statistic significance;

S*- SIGNIFICANT difference between groups, la $\alpha = 0, 01$ statistic significance;

** the average values are for Likert Scale, in which the value 1 represents the maximum level of agreement and 5 represents the maximum level of disagreement.

Therefore, according to the obtained results as applying Kruskal Wallis Test we can notice that the statements inside the questionnaire present significant differences between the perspectives and expectances, for a significance level of 1% or 5%.

An interpretation of the results. Perspectives and expectances on the independence of the financial audit in Romania

O.U.G. 75/1999 from Romania in art 4 states that “the financial auditors, in their independent profession, must be free and seen as being free of any constraint that might touch the objectivity and professional principles”.

Next we will analyse the answers for every statement of the questionnaire:

a. The opinion emitted by the auditor is absolutely independent;

Though the three groups express the agreement to this statement the resulted differences as applying Kruskal Wallis Test are significant for a signification threshold of 1%. This way, the financial auditors and the financial managers of the audited firms express a high degree of agreement, with an average value of the answers of 1, 82, respectively 1, 88, while the users of audited accounting information expressed a moderate agreement, with an average value of the answers of 2, 38. This difference resulted between the average value of the answers is influenced by a percent of 22% from the users of the accounting information do not think that the opinion stated by the auditor is absolutely independent.

b. The auditors are too interested to please the management of the firms;

The differences of perspectives resulted as applying the Kuskal Wallis Test referring to this statement is significant, for a signification threshold of 1%. 42% of the users of the audited accounting information agree to this statement, and the financial auditors and the financial managers of the audited firms are between null and disagreement, with average values of the answers of 3,48 respectively 3,45.

Surprisingly, in the actual economic context we notice a modification of the perception of the financial auditor on his own work. The answers to the questionnaire demonstrates that 21% of the financial auditors in Romania recognise that are interested to please the management of the audited firms and therefore to maintain its clients.

c. The auditors can do other type of services to the firms they do Not audit;

Referring to doing other things by the financial auditors and of other type of services to the firms they do not audit, the Law 26/2010 states in art. 1.2. "other activities" which can be done by the financial auditors apart from the financial audit services, always with "respecting the specific regulations to each of the activities of the independence principle". The activities which they specify are: the internal audit, accounting-financial management, accounting-financial consultancy, professional training in the field, accounting expertise, evaluation, juridical reorganisation or financial consultancy.

To this statement the three groups have manifested different levels of agreement. The differences between the groups are significant, for a signification threshold of 1%. The highest level of agreement was expressed by the financial auditors with an average level of the answers of 1,95, followed at a small difference by the financial managers (average level of the answers of 2,09). The lowest level of agreement has been expressed by the users with average level of the answers of 2, 32.

d. The audit firm should prohibit to its employees to own shares from the clients firms;

The Regulation of Organising and Functioning of the Financial Auditors Chamber in Romania in Chapter V art 61 specifies that, the following incompatibility between the members of an audit mission and the audited firm: "to not involve directly or indirectly in developing the financial activity of the client, not having the right to own shares or social parts, to sign loan contracts or to guarantee loans ..."

The perspectives of the three groups on this aspect present significant differences, for a level of significance of 1%. 52% of the users of the audited accounting information express the agreement to this statement, and the average value of the answer is of 2.46. They consider that in order to keep the Independence of the opinion, the auditors must not have any financial interest in the audited firm.

The financial auditors, with an average value of the answers of 2.48 accept the statement as a deontological rule, as a legal norm imposed to this profession.

At a big difference, almost a point is the answers of the financial managers of the audited firms, with an average value of the answers of 3.40. They express this way an opinion between disagreement and the null opinion. 64% of them have expressed that owning shares by the auditors in the audited firm, from their point of view, does not represent a negative thing.

e. The auditors must earn from a single client maximum 15% from the total cashing;

The three questioned groups present significant perspective differences in front of this theme, for a level of significance 1%. The users of audited accounting information have expressed a null opinion, realising an average value of answers of 3.04. Considering the fact that the users of audited accounting information at the European level declare in favour of this statement, is surprisingly the null opinion of the users in Romania. 41% of the users agree to this statement, and 38% do not agree.

The financial auditors in Romania demonstrate that they understand the general perspective of the users of audited accounting information on this theme, and the average value of answers is 3.23 and is situated very close to the null position. Also interesting is this position of the auditors, as it can have negative effects on the small firms, which might disappear fact that would have an advantage on concentrating the audit market inside the big audit firms. 27% agree to this statement and 40% do not agree, these percentages being represented probably by the big or small firms that have answered to the questionnaire.

Totally disagreeing to this statement are the financial managers of the audited firms, with an average value of the answers of 3.80. 67% of them do not agree the fact that the auditors must earn from a single client maximum 15% from the total cashing.

f. It is necessary that the auditors to be named and their fees to be fixed by an independent organism of the client firm;

From this perspective the Directive 2006/43/CE in Chapter IX, art 37 and 38 state that the legal auditor or the audit firm "is named by the General Gathering of the Shareholders or the members of the audited entity". More users think that in this way it is threatened the Independence of the financial auditor and their naming and fixing the fees should be done by an independent organism.

The differences resulted as applying Kruskal Wallis Test between the three groups are significant, for a significance threshold of 1%. The users of the audited accounting information in Romania agree to this statement, with an average value of the answers of 2.87, opposite to the perspectives of the other groups which indicate an intermediate position between the null and disagreement.

What is interesting is the fact that the auditors in Romania did not express the total disagreement to the statement. Having an independent organism to name the auditors and fix the fees would affect the functioning principles of a private firm on the audit market. Moreover, surprising is the average of the answers of the financial managers in Romania, who did not expressed a totally disagreement-though logically they prefer to choose themselves the auditor to being imposed by an independent organism.

g. It is important fixing a maximum period of exercise for the same firm;

Referring to fixing a maximum period of exercise for the same firm, from Independence reasons, the Directive 43/2006/CE in art 42 (2) recommends that the legal auditors of the public interest institutions to change after maximum 7 years from the moment they have been named and might come back after 2 years, norm that it is transposed exactly the same in the Romanian legislation.

The three questioned groups present significant perspective differences from this perspective, for a level of significance of 1%.

The users of the audited accounting information express the agreement on fixing a maximum period of exercise for the same firm, with an average value of answers of 2.64. They see in this way projected the Independence position of the auditors.

The financial auditors accept the recommendation of the European Directive, as a sign of understanding of the difficult circumstances through which the auditor profession passes.

At a high distance are the perspectives of the financial managers, who demonstrate a null opinion, with an average value of the answers of 3.26, regarding fixing a maximum period of exercise for the same firm. 56% of them are not interested of changing periodically the financial auditor.

h. Do you agree that the auditors, apart from the services of financial audit, to do other services for the firms they audit (the ones in the table)

The National Ethic Code of the Professional Accountants in Romania reminds of a series of incompatibilities between the work of the auditor and doing "other services" different firm the financial audit. O.U.G. 75/1999 in art 15.2 defines the term of incompatibility as being "all

the situations that lead to touching the fundamental task of independence in doing the independent profession of the financial auditor”.

In Romania, the Regulation of organising and functioning of the Financial Auditors Chambers in Chapter V, article 61 specifies that one of the conditions of incompatibility in which the auditor can find himself is “if develops accounting activities, consultancy, or other similar activities” for the same client for whom they are doing audit.

E O 90/2008 in art 21.3. states that “a statutory auditor or an audit firm must not do a statutory audit in the case in which there is any type of financial direct or indirect relation, of business, or any kind or relation- including doing extra services, others than those of financial audit- between the statutory auditor and the audit firm, or the network the audit firm belongs to on one hand and the audited entity on the other hand, in these circumstances in which a third objective, reasonable and informed part could draw conclusions that the Independence of the statutory auditor of the audit firm can be destroyed”.

The same E O 90/2008 in art 21 4 talks about situations in which can be threatened the independence of the auditor and refers to” checking his own activity” or at” the own interest”.

At the global level all three groups which have participated at the study have manifested the disagreement to this statement. It is not a total disagreement (as there are persons who expressed in favour of “other services”), but most of the average values are between 3 and 4 meaning between a null position and a disagreement.

The strongest level of disagreement is from the auditors (with an average value of 4.19) and the users of the audited accounting information (with an average value of 4.02) towards doing accounting services.

In almost all cases the significant difference is marked by the polarisation of the answers of the financial managers and of the users of audited accounted information:

As a common feature, it can be noticed that a big part of the financial managers of the audited firms in Romania agree to doing other services by the financial auditors except from accounting services, and the users of the accounting information in Romania DO NOT agree to doing additional services, as they consider that in this way it is affected the Independence of the auditors.

Though the differences resulted as applying the Kruskal Wallis Test are significant for a signification threshold of 1% (in 8 cases) and significant for a signification threshold of 5% (in 2 cases), the general idea is that the audit firms should not involve in doing the financial audit Works with doing other services for the audited firm.

If we analyse at a global level the results of the questionnaire connected to the independence of the financial auditors we can notice a certain polarisation of the answers according to the interests of each group.

For example, the users of audited accounting information are very interested in getting an independent opinion on the financial situations from the financial auditors:

- 65% of the users DO NOT accept for the financial users not even doing any kind of services to the firms they do NOT;
 - 49% declare themselves in favour of establishing for the auditors of a maximum period of exercise for the same firm;
 - 41% of the users want the limiting of the auditors’ earnings from a single audited firm.
- Still for protecting the Independence of the financial auditors:
- 59% of the users think that the audit firm must prohibit the audit partners to own shares or any other materials in the audited firm;

- 39% consider that it would be necessary for the financial auditors to be named and their fees to be fixed by an independent organism.

Contrary to the interests of the users come the interests of the financial managers of the audited firms. These are interested of a strong observation of the activity of the auditors in the audited firms:

- 64% of the financial managers in Romania DO NOT agree to prohibiting owning shares by the partners of the audit mission;

- 56% of the financial managers DO NOT agree to fixing a maximum period of exercise for the same firm;

- 61% want to choose their own financial auditors and DO NOT consider that it is necessary to be named and the fees to be fixed by an independent organism;

- 67% of the financial managers in Romania ARE NOT interested in limiting the earnings of the auditors from a single audited firm.

Regarding doing other "different services" by the financial audit of the audited firm it is noticed a polarisation of the answers between the financial managers and the users of the audited accounting information. In general the financial managers accept doing "other services" by the financial auditors, whereas the users do not accept doing it, thinking that in this way it will be affected the Independence of the auditors.

The position of the financial auditors is different of the position of the users and that of the managers of the audited firms.

- 75% of the financial auditors in Romania declare themselves in favour of doing other type of services for the firms they DO NOT audit;

- 56% of the financial auditors DO NOT think that it is necessary for the auditors to be named and especially their fees to be fixed by an independent organism.

In the following cases we notice how a big part of the financial auditors accept legal reglementations that are imposed to them:

- 27% of the financial auditors agree to limiting the auditors earnings from a single audited firm;

- 40% agree to fixing a maximum period of exercise for the same firm; and

- 47% agree to prohibit owning shares in the audited firm.

The general objective of the European Commission is related to the actual economic crises and the confidence crises through which the audit profession passes, being that of "contributing to the efficient functioning of the financial and nonfinancial markets by consolidating the role of the auditor profession on the market". One of the most difficult problems named by the Commission is exactly "the discrepancy between the expectances and reality" which there is between the interested factors in the financial audit.

One of the proposals of the European Commission presented in the Work Document of the Commission's Services is: "The consolidation of the independence and professional of the statutory audit and the audit societies", proposing from this perspective "options of reducing the risk of appearing eventual interest conflicts due to doing other services different from the audit ones", "options of reducing the risk of appearing eventual interest conflicts due to the current system in which "the entity selects and pays the auditor", " and "options of reducing the risk for a potential conflict of interests due to the "familiarization danger"."

Conclusions

The realised research has allowed demonstrating the hypothesis according to which there are differences between expectations and perspectives from the financial auditors, managers of audited firms and the users of audited accounting information regarding the independence of the financial audit. By the help of Kruskal Wallis Test it has been demonstrated that in 100% of the questionnaire statements referring the role and utility of the financial audit there are significant differences between perspectives and expectances between the three groups in Romania.

The statement referring to doing “other services” by the financial auditors to the firms they audit has determined in Romania a polarisation of the results between the opinions of the financial managers and of the users of the audited accounting information. The financial managers of the audited firms in Romania agree to doing “other services” by the financial auditors they audit, besides accounting services. A big part of the users of the accounting information in Romania DO NOT agree to doing the additional services as they consider that in this way it is affected the Independence of the auditors.

If we analyse the results connected to the independence of the auditors from the perspective of the Kruskal Wallis Test it is noticed a polarisation of the results according to the interests of each group. The statements refer at themes such as owning shares at the client firm; limiting the maximum earnings from a single firm, naming the auditors and fixing a maximum period of exercise for the same firm. The financial managers of the audited firm declare themselves totally in disagreement to the restrictions imposed to the auditors. All these statements do not represent threatens to the Independence, from their point of view.

The users of audited accounting information agree that these reglementations and see them as being important for keeping the Independence of the auditor. The auditors are in a position of accepting the imposed rules.

As a resulted conclusion from the global analyses of the answers of the questionnaire connected to the independence of the financial audit in Romania, we can say that the differences of perspectives on the legal norms concerning the independence are marked evidently by the group interests.

In the actual economic context it is very important a closure of the perspectives and expectances of the three groups interested in financial auditor’s work. From this perspective we propose two solutions: in case in which the expectances are realistic, but the attributions are not comprised in the actual legal norms of the financial auditors, we propose MODIFYING THE LEGAL NORMS IN AGREEMENT TO THE ACTUAL NECESITIES, and in case in which the expectances are non-realistic we propose EDUCATING THE PUBLIC, as to reduce these differences between perspectives and expectances.

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