

# **Research and Innovation**

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#### **Research and Innovation**

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## ACCOUNTING, ANALYSIS AND AUDIT

Natalia Kashchena,
PhD, Professor
Hanna Chmil,
PhD, Ass. Professor,
Hanna Verzilova,
PhD, Ass. Professor,
Igor Kononov,
PhD, Ass. Professor,
Andriv Lachkov,

PhD in Economics, Associate Professor Kharkiv State University of Food Technology and Trade, Ukraine

## FACTORS FOR ENSURING THE QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF REPORTED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Abstract. The authors proposed to consider the quality of the company's financial information as an element of the common system that also includes the following components: product quality, labour quality, and management quality. They carried out the content-analysis of the definition of quality of financial and reporting information. They also developed a system of factors of ensuring qualitative features of reporting data, consisting of two groups: exogenous and endogenous factors. The authors considered directions for improvement of qualitative features of reporting financial data in conditions of levelling the asymmetry of reporting information.

**Keywords:** financial reporting, information quality, accounting and analytical support, users.

#### INTRODUCTION

In present-day conditions, financial reporting is an important prerequisite for organization efficient business relationship between the market participants. To become a real factor of business turnover, the information, included the enterprise's financial reporting should be distinguished by qualitative characteristics, and convey meanings, necessary for interested users. The qualitative characteristics of reporting financial information determine the usefulness of financial reporting for making decisions by different user groups and are the "estimation standards," confirming the usefulness of this information.

Quality is a sophisticated integrating notion. According to the definition of the International Organization for Standardization, the notion "quality" is referred to as a cluster of properties and specific attributes, product or service characteristics, giving them an ability to meet the specified or estimated needs (Onuorah, A. C., & Friday, I. O. (2016)).

In a market economy, the quality, characterizing the efficiency of financial and economic activities of public production entities, acts as the most important factor of investment attractiveness the enterprises. Herewith, the quality of financial information is considered as a component of the common quality system, which also includes the following components: product quality, labour quality, and management quality.

First of all, particular scientists (García-Meca, E., & García-Sánchez, I. M. (2018)) formulate qualitative characteristics of reporting (accounting and analytical), rather than financial, information. On the one hand, this may mean that they equate the notions of accounting and financial information, and, therefore, determine additional attributes, on the other hand – vice versa, they separate them.

Secondly, the researchers separately identify the requirements to accounting (financial) data or reporting itself (which, in our view, are vestiges of the Soviet accounting system), herewith, some – identify them as qualitative characteristics (Abbott, L. J., Daugherty, B., Parker, S., & Peters, G. F. (2016)), other, vice versa, highlight them (Mbobo, M. E., & Ekpo, N. B. (2016)), although the range of requirements and characteristics, given by such authors, often coincides. It should be noted that requirements are imposed by users, but not to information, included in reporting, but to reporting itself, its format, and the methodology of compilation. And the information is the content, essence, nature of reporting, corresponding to certain attributes (characteristics) for the acquisition of usefulness.

Thirdly, there is an ambiguity of views in the scientific literature, regarding the list of the most qualitative characteristics. Thus, to the qualitative characteristics of accounting (financial) information, different authors attribute: reliability, timeliness, security, relevance, operability, integrity, completeness, accuracy, urgency, confidentiality, selectivity (Gros, M., Koch, S., & Wallek, C. (2017)); continuity, cyclicality, massiveness, significance, the complexity of calculation (Kantudu, AS, & Samaila, IA (2015)), openness, verifiability, accountability, neutrality (objectiveness), regulation, transparency, and completeness (Kamolsakulchai, M. (2015)). Sometimes, as a part of the characteristics, one enlists separately its components (Chu, L., Dai, J., & Zhang, P. (2018)).

#### **RESULTS**

The quality of information, reflected by financial reporting, depends on a number of exogenous and endogenous factors (Figure 1). This division, in some sense, is conventional, but it helps to present the structure and functioning of the mechanism for ensuring the quality characteristics of the reported financial information of the enterprises. The improvement of quality of financial reporting resides in reduction (or elimination) of the negative and enhancement of positive effects of these factors.

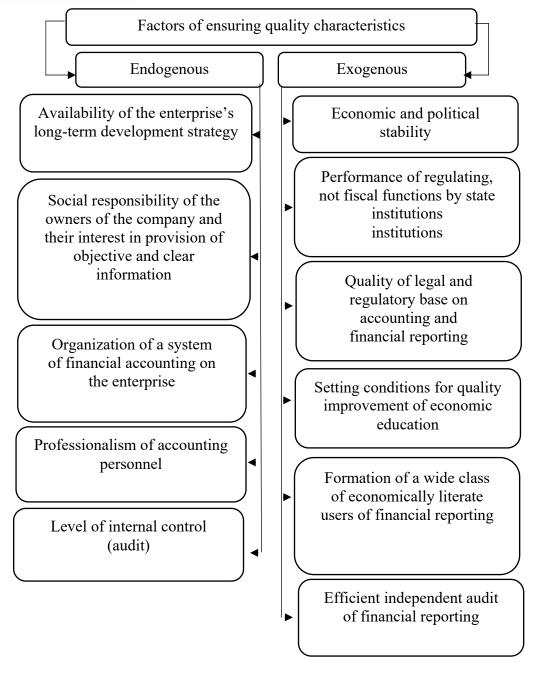


Fig. 1. Factors of ensuring quality characteristics of reported financial information (systematized by the author)

The solution of problems, related to the influence of external factors belongs to the area of competence and powers of state bodies. The responsibility for the enhancement of internal factors is laid on the owners and business managers. At the same time, it is important to solve the specified tasks with consideration of a close relationship between the external and internal factors.

To effectively solve the problem, it is necessary to eliminate the reluctance of state bodies to more actively involve a professional community to the participation in the creation of a regulatory framework on accounting and financial reporting. The business owners and managers, in their turn, are forever interested in the improvement of the quality and transparency of the reporting procedure.

Despite the importance of the influence of all above-mentioned factors, the provision of quality characteristics of reported financial information, the article proposes to consider issues, related to the nature and qualifications of the modern accountant, and the trends in the accounting profession and education.

Since financial accounting is often the only relevant and credible information, an accountant should be able to hold a rational, well-ordered, objective, and clear analysis and deliver verdicts even on the basis of insufficient information.

The variability of accounting methods and procedures, the shift away from the rigid prescriptions for selecting methods and procedures, the appearance of fundamentally new accounting categories and objects, the need for consideration of the risk factors, and the ambiguity of estimates require broad-based economic knowledge, related, in its turn, to the need for the application of professional judgment of a person, which prepares financial accounting.

While in the Western practice (in particular, the countries belonging to the Anglo-American accounting system) professional judgment plays a vital role, in the theory of domestic accounting, this notion is a fairly new phenomenon, the need for application of which is not fully understood by practitioners. This situation is due to the fact that the system of accounting and reporting (especially the one regarding taxation), existing for a relatively long period of time, has taught accountants to strictly follow the instructions and recommendations, specified by regulatory and supervisory authorities.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

To improve the quality of formation of financial accounting, one offers a mixed model for regulation of the accounting and financial reporting system through the interaction of state bodies with professional social organizations. This includes a transfer of functions of draft regulations development and methodological support for the application of IFRS to a non-profit professional body, and enhancement of state's authorities in determining the strategies for development of accounting and financial reporting; approval of normative legal acts and performance of control functions upon the implementation of their regulations.

Summing up, one should mention that an important place among the primary factors, ensuring quality characteristics of financial accounting belongs to advanced training of accounting professionals and transformation of the norms of professional ethics into everyday behavioural rules. The need for compliance with the diligence norms (objectivity and ethics of accounting) will become the key engine for the gradual acquisition of a wider spectrum of powers by the finance managers and accountants to improve efficiency of the enterprise's activity and its financial accounting.

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