

The Relationship between Professional Exam Performance and Certain Demographic Characteristics of Jordanian CPA Candidates

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This study aims to measure the effects of certain demographic factors that may determine the likelihood of passing the Jordanian Certified Public Accountants exam. The population of the study consists of all the 1227 candidates from year 1990 till 2009 based on the seat number assigned to them by the higher committee of the JCPA exam. A random sample of 40% (491) was taken and the usable sample number is 368. The researcher used Logistic Binary Regression Analysis to examine the relationship between the result of the exam (pass or fail) as the dependent variable and certain demographic attributes as the independent variables which encompass: experience, university performance designation, University and area of specialization. Results of the study revealed that university performance, area of specialization, Jordanian and other universities graduates, are significant variables that increase the likelihood of passing the unified JCPA exam.

Keywords: CPA, Jordan, Success Rates, Logistic Regression

1. Introduction

Jordanian legislators tried continuously to develop and regulate both accounting and auditing professions. As a result of serious efforts made by practitioners, year 1961 witnessed the birth of the first law no. (10) for the auditing profession that tried to regulate the profession like others in Jordan. Followed by law no.32 which was issued in 1985 in which the association of Jordanian Auditors was formed. And the last law was no.73 in year 2003 in which the name of the auditors association was changed to Jordanian Certified Public Accountants (JCPA) which monitors and regulates both accounting and auditing professions in Jordan.

Jordan (the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan, 2012) is a relatively small country situated at the junction of the Levantine and Arabian areas of the Middle East. Jordan occupies an area of approximately 96,188 square kilometers including the Dead Sea, making it similar in size to Austria or Portugal. However, Jordan's diverse terrain and landscape belie its actual size, demonstrating a variety usually found only in large countries.

The government has long recognized the need for establishing business-enabling structures with strong investment incentives. Developing an efficient regulatory framework activates the role of the private sector, increases the volume of domestic investment and attracts inwards international investment. A wide-ranging legislative package has been drafted and introduced to foster a more efficient and transparent business environment.

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In the past the auditing profession in Jordan suffered from many problems as indicated by Dahmash (1989). One of those problems was limited and insufficient qualifications of practitioners in the profession since individuals were allowed to come from different backgrounds of the sciences and it was not required to have a minimum working experience in a CPA firm as long as an interested person could bring an experience letter that he worked in either the accounting or auditing field in a small or large company in Jordan for a certain number of years and according to his/her qualifications. Moreover, in his paper Dahmash indicated that at the time of his study 79% of the auditors believe that university graduates do not have enough professional abilities to practise auditing right after their graduation date and there were no training centres for JCPA candidates and no standards to be followed.

Jordan has adopted IFRS (IAS) since 1990 and all Jordanian companies must prepare and publish their audited financial statements (FSs) in accordance with those standards. (Alghad, 2007). Nowadays, companies in Jordan make every possible effort to build more trust in their published financial statements which become the main source of information for dealers in securities markets and to attract more local and foreign investors which necessitates the need for qualified and knowledgeable auditors who are ready to work in the profession.

Low pass rates is one of the motives that encouraged the researcher to conduct this study as the average pass rate is almost 15% in JCPA exams, the minimum pass rate slid to 1.61% in July 1998 and then hovered at 41.37% in November 1990. Moreover, previous research about the difficulties encountered by the Nominees for the JCPA found that there are no significant differences in the opinions between those who passed the exam and those who failed to pass it, as far as the difficulties of the exam are concerned. That study was the last research conducted in Jordan about the JCPA since 2002 which is another motive to conduct this study.

The trust of users of audited financial statements has increased in Jordan due to the fact that both law (no.32) and (no.73) oblige individuals interested in practising the profession to pass the Uniform Certified Public Accountants Examination in order to be licensed given that an applicant fulfills the following conditions:

1. must be a Jordanian citizen.
2. must be legally qualified.
3. must hold any of the following certificates:
 - 3.1 Bachelor in Accounting.
 - 3.2 Diploma in Accounting.
 - 3.3 A university certificate in any of the related areas of specializations, given that it encompasses a minimum number of courses in accounting and those certificates and the specializations to be specified by rules and regulation that clarify law no.73.
 - 3.4 A professional certificate from any accredited certified public accountants associations given that the applicant holds a university certificate.
4. To complete an internship period as stated in law no.73.

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5. To pass the Uniform Certified Public Accountants Exam including an exam in all related Jordanian legislation.

The current study differs from previous Jordanian studies - like Al_Rajabi and Sa'ada (1995), and Momany (2002) - in its methodology as it uses a model not a questionnaire, in the study period and in the sample of the study. It did not take some demographic variables as they have been proved to be insignificant factors by previous studies affecting the performance of CPA exams like race, sex, number of years in university, psychological issues related to the exam. This study is conducted in a period that witnesses a larger number of graduates from Jordanian universities and high competition for the JCPA licence. Some of the results of this study are inconsistent with some other related studies as it was found that university name and GPA are significant factors that increase the likelihood of passing the JCPA exam. This might increase the awareness of those who are interested in taking the JCPA exam and encourage university students to exert the best of their efforts to increase their GPA as this will increase their chances to pass the JCPA exams.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows: Section 2 sheds light on previous studies in the similar field while section 3 is related to the methodology employed in the paper. Section 4 reports Results and Analysis while section 5 includes conclusions, Section 6 talks about the recommendations of the study.

2. Literature Review

Few related studies were directed to determine the variables that affect the success in the uniform JCPA exams. Al_Rajabi (1994) studied the relative importance and fairness of the subjects taken in the JCPA exam as perceived by the academicians and the certified public accountants. Results revealed different importance given by the two types of respondents to the subjects included in the JCPA exam. However, the JCPA exams did not give different relative importance to accounting subjects as indicated by academicians and practitioners and when those subjects were ranked by respondents according to its relative importance, auditing is given the first rank, followed by taxation, then cost accounting. The author recommended that grade weights given to exam subjects must be revised and the JCPA curriculum must be redesigned in a way to encompass IFRS and economic conditions in Jordan. In the same vein, Shelton, Thompson, and Serrett (2012) revealed that the American CPA exam is uniform in its development, content and assessment of candidates' knowledge base. This is due to the fact that the objective of the Uniform CPA Exam is to assess a candidate's knowledge related to concepts and practices in the fields of accounting, business and regulation. However, the researchers showed the lack of uniformity among testing USA jurisdictions regarding the amount of education required for a person to take the CPA exam and regarding the educational requirements for licensing purposes. The results of their study surprisingly found out that six states do not require a nominee to hold an undergraduate or master's degree to be able to sit for the CPA Exam. Meanwhile Al_Rajabi and Sa'ada (1995) conducted a study in which they prepared a questionnaire to examine the effect of certain demographic characteristics of JCPA candidates on their performance. They found that university GPA, and area of specialization have significant statistical effects on

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the success of nominees of JCPA; however, other characteristics like experience, number of years in an auditing position, university name were not statistically significant and did not affect the performance of candidates. Following the chain of research, Syam (2000) investigated the reality of accounting training in the Jordanian environment from the point of view of university faculty members, graduating students and owners of companies in which students conduct their on-the-job training programs. The author found that universities study plans did not give accounting training enough care, available training programs were not sufficient to bring the required results and accounting training programs are not well planned and regulated.

The last relevant study that emerged from Jordan was conducted by Momany (2002) in which the author examined the difficulties encountered by the candidates for JCPA, based on the opinions of those who have taken the exam and the exam committee members. The results reveal different opinions regarding the exam difficulties by the two groups; topics and time assigned for the exam were the most important difficulties encountered by the nominees. Furthermore, area of specialization, year in which the exam was taken and training programs were not significant factors that contribute to success on the JCPA examination.

Vessel (1992) clarified that there is an expected increase on the demand for the services of accountants and CPAs. He explained that academic qualification is one of the requirements for occupational licensing in the profession, in addition to a minimum of two years experience before issuing the licence to practise the profession. The author indicated that it is essential that CPAs study a yearly curriculum to maintain their skills and to mesh with the new developments in both accounting and auditing. In the Canadian Environment, Rayan, Lento, and Sayed (2012) explained that there are three educational routes for individuals interested in professional certification as indicated in The Certified General Accountant (CGA) designation, the Certified Management Accountant (CMA) designation or the Chartered Accountant designation (CA). All those designations require a bachelor's degree prior to students receiving their respective accounting designation. The researchers talked about the potential merger as early as of September 2013 of the three designations into a newly formed Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) that might lead to significant changes to the professional certification process. However, many issues need to be settled before the merger, like the prerequisite and co-requisite education requirement, education requirement and practical experience requirement. Moreover, the merger may average out the qualifications and experience requirements which affect the general public perception about the profession in Canada.

Schaefer and Zimmer (1995) investigated the effects of public regulations on accountants and found that revenues recognized out of accounting profession are positively affected by practical experience, accountants without experience generate low revenues and there is a strong correlation between extra credit hours rule after the Bachelor and the abilities and effectiveness of certified public accountants. Another study surveyed the key factors that affect the percentage of success in CPA in Louisiana (State of America) was conducted by Brahamasrene and Whitten (2001) by applying a Logit approach; they concluded that age, university GPA, experience and gender have significant statistical influences on the success rate of the CPA examination. Building on the same lines,

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Whitten (2002) examined the status of CPA exam in a sample of 238 nominees in 1989 Indiana (State of America), the results show that most of those who took the exam were holding Bachelor degrees at the time of taking the exam, 51.7% of them were top-notchers in their batches, were depending on themselves in preparing for the exam and most of them were first time candidates in the exam. The results indicate that academic qualification whether it is a Bachelor or others did not have any significant influence on the success rates of the candidates, male and female performances were similar at the first attempt then male performance was better than female in the next attempts, 70% of those who passed the exam from the first attempt were depending on their professional practice in preparing for the exam and 11.7% of the candidates who passed the exam in the first attempt were from those who have experience in the public sector and this might be due to the type of knowledge that is required by the exam. Jackson (2006) found that post baccalaureate education has significantly improved candidates performance in the CPA exam. Furthermore, the 150 credit hours requirement and the completion of an accounting concentration have positive contributions to success in the CPA exam. In the same vein, Barilla, Jackson and Mooney (2008) repeated Mars et al. (1988) study after 20 years by comparing the CPA exam performance of candidates in accredited business programs from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) with that of candidates from non-accredited programs. Moreover, their study compared CPA exam performance of AACSB accounting-accredited candidates with the performance of other candidates accredited from the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (AABSP) and the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE). Like the present study, the researchers used a logit estimation technique to produce success rates to the range of (0, 1) and they used data for examinations from May 1985 through November 2003. The results of the study showed that the odds of passing all parts of the CPA exam by first-time examinees increases at AACSB-accredited accounting programs and at ACBSP-accredited programs. Coefficients related to other accreditations specifically the AACSB business school accreditation and IACBE accreditation are positive but not statistically significant. In his article about how the CPA exam is scored, Deflice (2011) said that, since the CPA exam was switched from paper and pencil to computer-based in January 2004, all candidates start with a medium test and their performance determines how difficult the next two test would be. The software contains an approved scoring model based on an agreed-upon answer key by the AICPA examination team that evaluates the candidates' answers electronically and gets scores instantly. The scoring used to take several weeks when it was a paper-and-pencil exam. Alexander in his research revealed that a group of licensed CPAs "reviewed the test questions and how candidates performed on those questions in order to judge what test performance is required to ensure protection to the public interest. The Board of Examination (BOE) used the results as a guide when it established the passing scores for each section. These passing scores were then mapped to a score of 75 on the scale used to report scores."

3. Methodology

The focal point of this study is to evaluate the relationship between certain demographic variables of the JCPA candidates and their performance in the unified Jordanian CPA exam. The data related to the candidates were taken from the official JCPA records in

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the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Jordan. The population of the study consists of all the 1227 candidates from year 1990 -the year in which Jordan adopted IFRS (IAS) - till 2009 based on the seat number assigned to them by the higher committee of the JCPA exam. A random sample of 40% (491) was taken as the researcher collected all the data related to them from the official records. However, 28 candidates were disregarded due to the unavailability of data and 95 candidates were cancelled for the fact that they have taken a seat number without showing up in the exam making the usable sample number 368.

Like other laws related to American CPA, the Canadian CPA, and the British Chartered, the Jordanian CPA laws did not restrict professional practice for accounting specialists and it did not require a minimum GPA, age, graduation year or a specific university to be entitled to sit the JCPA exam. This brought many candidates with different demographic backgrounds to the JCPA exams. The present study is an extension of prior research in the sense that although it builds on the same lines of research conducted earlier, this study, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, makes an original contribution to the body of knowledge as it examines whether certain demographic variables of JCPA candidates affect their performance.

3.1 Hypotheses of the Study

This research relies mainly upon hypothesis testing by logical empiricism. A survey methodology is adopted for the purpose of assessing the relationship between certain demographic variables of JCPA candidates and their performance in the Unified JCPA exam. Therefore, the hypotheses of the study are:

H01: There is no significant relationship between candidates' experience and their performance in the JCPA.

H02: There is no significant relationship between candidates' university performance designation and their performance in the JCPA.

H03: There is no significant relationship between candidates' area of specialization and their performance in the JCPA.

H04: There is no significant relationship between candidates' universities and their performance in the JCPA.

3.2 Estimation Technique

The researcher used logistic regression analysis to analyze the data collected which is an extension of multiple regression (Gujarati, 1995, Gujarati, & Sangeetha 2011) in which the dependent variable (Exam Performance) is not a continuous variable and may have only two values (0 or 1). Therefore, the value being predicted represents a probability and it varies between 0 and 1. The usage of this technique distinguishes this study from prior studies evolved in the Jordanian environment. The logistic regression results are obtained using Social Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The general

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model intended to be employed in this study to test the hypothesis can be specified as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4$$

Where: y refers to pass rate in the JCPA which is a dummy variable that could be either 1 or 0, b_1-4 refers to the coefficients for independent variables, and a is the constant value. X_1 refers to Experience, X_2 refers to University Performance Designation, X_3 refers to Area of Specialization, and X_4 refers to Universities.

4. Results and Analysis

Table 1 shows the summary statistics of the demographic characteristics of JCPA candidate sample of the study. It shows that most of the candidates (32.8%) have 1 to 5 years experience which might indicate that most of them do not depend on their experience to pass the exam and they might have depended more on their study and preparation, relied on their area of specialization or on the knowledge they have acquired during their study at Jordanian universities.

The results further revealed that the university performance designation of most of the candidates for JCPA sample of this study (49.7%) is Good, followed by (28.6%) who had a Satisfactory designation, while Excellent is the lowest designation with (1.5%). This might justify the low passing rate in most of the JCPA exams as it is very important to make sure that licensed JCPAs have the necessary skills and knowledge before allowing them to practise such important profession.

Moreover, the results show that 57.6% of the candidates graduated from Jordanian Universities and as two are missing (0.5%) the remaining candidates (41.8%) graduated from other foreign and regional universities.

This might be due to the fact that the costs of the JCPA exam are lower than those of other professional exams like the American CPA and the British Chartered, in addition to the necessity to take another exam in Jordanian Laws and legislations for those who passed the CPA, Chartered or any other professional certificate in order to be accredited by the Jordanian Bureau of Audit which is the current rule-making body in charge of holding, supervising, monitoring and granting the licence to practise the profession as a JCPA. Moreover, it might be easier for Jordanian university graduates to pass the exam as they take some accounting courses in their universities related to Jordanian laws like taxation accounting and Jordanian commercial law.

The results presented in Table 1 show that the area of specialization for 84.5% of the sample of the study is accounting and the remaining are other areas of specialization (14.9%).

Finally, results revealed that 71.5% of the candidates failed, while only (28.5%) passed in the JCPA exam.

Table 2 represents the only-intercept model where $\ln(\text{odds}) = -.908$, with odds ratio = 0.403. That is the predicted odds of students who passed the exam is 0.403. This means

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the ratio of the probability that a candidate will pass the JCPA is 40% to the probability that 60% probably will not pass the exam. Thus odds are about 2 to 5 in favour of passing the exam. This shows that the passing rate in the JCPA for each candidate sample of the study is about 40%, that is in case we did not enter any of the selected independent variables into the model which is significant as shown in Table no.2.

The omnibus tests of model coefficients shown in Table no. 3 indicate that at least one of the predictors included in the model has significantly increased our ability to predict the relationships; $\chi^2(4) = 43.572$; p-value =0.000. (The model fits the data: $p = 0$).

Table 1: JCPA Candidates' Demographic Characteristics

Experience	No. of years	Total Number of Candidates	Percentage
	1-5	119	32.3%
	6-10	64	17.4%
	11-15	102	27.7%
	16-20	41	11.1%
	>20	37	10.1%
	missing	5	1.4%
	Total	368	100.00%
CGPA	University Performance Designation	Total Number of Candidates	Percentage
	Excellent	5	1.4%
	Very Good	68	18.5%
	Good	167	45.4%
	Satisfactory	96	26.1%
	Unknown	32	8.7%
	Total	368	100.00%
University	Jordanian or other Universities	Total Number of Candidates	Percentage
	Jordanian Universities	212	57.6%
	Other Universities	154	41.8%
	Unknown	2	0.5%
	Total	368	100.00%
Academic Qualifications			
	Accounting	311	84.5%
	Others	55	14.9%
	Public Administration	9	4.9%
	Unknown	2	0.5%
	Total	368	100.00%
Performance in the JCPA exam			
	Fail	263	71.5%
	Pass	105	28.5%
	Total	368	100.00%

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Table 2: Variables in the Equation

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 0 Constant	-.908	.121	56.390	1	.000	.403

Table 3: Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1 Step	43.572	4	.000
Block	43.572	4	.000
Model	43.572	4	.000

Moreover, under the model summary presented in Table 4, we see that the -2log Likelihood statistic is 357.114,” which is used to measure how poorly the model predicts the decision- the smaller the statistic the better the model- and by entering the variables “Experience, University Performance Designation, Area of Specialization and Universities” into our model this value is decreased to be 43.572. Furthermore, Nagelkerke R Square is 0.175 which means the independent variables explain 17.5% of the variation in the dependent variable.

Table 4: Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	357.114 ^a	.122	.175

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 5 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

The classification Table shows us the sensitivity of prediction is 27.7% “P(Pass/ event did occur); and the specificity of the prediction is 89.1% “P(Pass/event did not occur); and if we add all predictors we will increase the overall accuracy to 71.3%.

The Hosmer and Lemeshow tests the null hypothesis there is a linear relationship between the predictor variables and the log odds of the dependent variable. The results showed that $\chi^2(7) = 5.524$; p-value =0.596; which means the data fit the model well.

Table 7 shows the Variables in the Equation Table, the final model coefficient is given, odds ratio and the Wald statistic “which tests the unique contribution of each predictor, in the context of the other predictors, it could be Noticed that “University Performance, p-value = 0.014” and Universities, p-value = 0.000”; Specialization, P-value=0.02; and the constant with p-value =0.000; are statistically significant.

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Table 5: Classification Table^a

Observed			Predicted		
			JCPA_Performance		Percentage Correct
			Fail	Pass	
Step 1	JCPA_Performance	Fail	112	26	89.1
		Pass	70	26	27.1
	Overall Percentage				71.3

a. The cut value is .500

Table 6: Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	5.524	7	.596

Table 7

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	Experience	.018	.101	.032	1	.857	1.018
	University Performance	.450	.183	6.076	1	.014	1.569
	Area of Specialization	1.174	.506	5.391	1	.020	3.235
	Jordanian & other Universities	1.175	.297	15.617	1	.000	3.239
	Constant	-6.011	1.126	28.501	1	.000	.002

From the odds ratio “Exp(B)”, we have the following results.

- 1- Although Experience coefficient is positive results show that it is not statistically significant in increasing the likelihood of success in the JCPA exam. This might indicate that work experience does not help candidates in passing the exam. This result supports AlRajabi and Sa’ada (1995) who found that experience was not statistically significant and did not affect the performance of JCPA candidates. However, it is not consistent with Brahamasrene and Whitten (2001) who concluded that experience was one of the significant variables that influence the success rate of the American CPA examination. Moreover, this result is inconsistent with Whitten Brahamasrene, and Meszaros, (2002) who found that vocational experience in accounting was one of the factors that contributed to success in the American CPA exam. This is evidenced by the fact that 70% of those who passed the CPA exam at Indiana State in 1988 depended on their experience in practice, while 30% depended only on their study. The inconsistency between the results of this study and Brahamasrene and Whitten (2001) and Whitten Brahamasrene and Meszaros (2002) studies could be related to different environments or due to the fact that a JCPA candidate’s work experience might not expose them to enough knowledge or experience that might benefit them while taking the exam and they might have accepted to work in any unit in a certain Jordanian company and not a CPA firm or to accomplish certain tasks assigned to them even though it might not be related to accounting or auditing fields just to be able to get an experience letter in those fields to fulfill one of the requirements to be eligible to take the JCPA exam. Moreover, experience in the public sector

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might increase the likelihood of passing the exam as one part of the JCPA exam is to pass a paper in Jordanian legislations. Therefore, the null hypothesis H01 that says "There is no significant relationship between candidates' experience and their performance in the JCPA" is accepted.

- 2- The 1.569 odds ratio for "University Performance" indicates that for each one point increase on the "University Performance" scale passing the exam will increase by a factor of 1.569. This means that there is a positive statistically significant relationship between university performance designation and nominee's performance on the JCPA exam. Therefore, candidates with higher university performance are expected to do one and a half times better than those who had lower university performance. This might urge all those who are planning to take the JCPA to exert more efforts while studying as this will bring positive effects on their performance in that exam. This result supports Al_Rajabi and Sa'ada (1995) who found that university GPA is a significant statistical factor that affects the success of nominees of JCPA. It is also consistent with Brahamasrene and Whitten (2001) who concluded that university GPA was one of the significant variables that influence the success rate of the American CPA examination. The results also support Momany's findings (2002) that candidates with low university cumulative average are having more difficulties in passing the JCPA exams. This leads to the rejection of null hypothesis H02 of this study which states that "There is no significant relationship between university performance designation and candidates' performance in the JCPA".
- 3- Also; the 3.235 and 3.239 odds ratio for "Area of Specialization" and "Universities", respectively, have strong effects and in the same direction which indicates that for each one point increase in either variable scale, passing the exam will increase by a factor of 3.235 and 3.239, respectively. This might indicate an improvement in the Jordanian auditing profession since the latest law (no.73) requires candidates for JCPA exam to hold a Bachelor in Accounting, a Diploma in Accounting or a university certificate in any of the related areas of specialization plus a certain number of years of experience according to their qualifications. This result supports Al_Rajabi and Sa'ada (1995) that "area of specialization" has a significant statistical effect on the success of nominees of JCPA and the results related to universities indicate that the probability of passing the JCPA for Jordanian university graduates is three times more than other university graduates. This might be due to the fact that JCPA exams encompass exam papers related to Jordanian laws and legislations which are taken as compulsory courses in all accounting curriculum at all Jordanian universities. While these courses are not taken by other universities graduates. The results also support Jackson's (2006) findings which showed that post baccalaureate education has significantly improved candidates performance in the CPA exam and the 150 credit hours requirement and the completion of an accounting concentration have positive contributions to success in the same exam. However, this result is inconsistent with Shelton, Thompson, and Serrett (2012) as they found that six states do not require a nominee to hold an undergraduate or master's degree to be able to sit for the CPA Exam. This result is also inconsistent

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with Dahmash's (1989) findings that individuals who were allowed to come from different backgrounds of sciences without a minimum number of credit hours in accounting and auditing. Likewise, this result is different from the findings of Al_Rajabi and Sa'ada (1995) who found that university name is one of the factors that is not statistically significant and did not affect the performance of candidates. Based on this, both null hypothesis H03 and H04 are rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between candidates' area of specialization and candidates' universities and their performance in the JCPA.

- 4- The constant variable with negative coefficient or statistically significant but with opposite direction might indicate that there might be other variables that may affect log odds of success. These other variables are not taken in this study and it could be age, study habits, number of credit hours, governmental or private universities, training programs, number of hours studied in preparing for the exam, educational level, experience in the public or private sector, accredited or not accredited universities and gender.

4. Conclusion

Finally, the model indicates that university performance, area of specialization, Jordanian and other universities are significant in increasing the probability of success on the JCPA exam. However, the independent variables explain 17.5% of the variation in the dependent variable which might be related to other variables that could have an impact on the performance of the candidates.

Therefore, the final logistic regression is:

$$\text{Logit(JCPA)} = -6.011 + 1.569 \text{ "University Performance"} + 3.235 \text{ "Area of Specialization"} + 3.239 \text{ "Jordanian and non_jordanian Universities."}$$

5. Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the researcher recommends the following.

1. Jordanian companies are strongly encouraged to offer training programs for their employees to equip them with the necessary skills and know-how and to up-date them with all the related developments in accounting and auditing. This will bring more qualified people to the profession and increase the likelihood of passing the JCPA exam.
2. Candidates who graduated from non_Jordanian universities are urged to take more credit hours in Jordanian laws and regulations as this is very important to be able to practise the profession, protect themselves and to build more trust and confidence with their customers and to be able to pass the required exam.

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3. Universities students who are planning to be JCPA are advised to exert the best of their efforts during their study as university performance proved to be a significant factor in increasing their chances to pass the JCPA exam.
4. It is necessary for non-accounting majors to take more credit hours in the field of accounting and auditing since “area of specialization” is another factor that contributes to the success in JCPA exams.
5. Other variables not taken in this study could be examined as a recommendation for further studies to explore their relationship with candidates’ performance in the unified JCPA exam. These variables could be age, study habits, number of credit hours, governmental or private universities, training programs, number of hours studied in preparing for the exam, educational level, experience in the public or private sector and gender.
6. The Ministry of Trade and Industry must encourage all researchers in getting all the necessary data about the JCP exams, candidates and the marks in each exam they have taken and to use the results of those researches in improving the profession and its required exam.

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