

Enhancing Board-Level Performance through Cloud Accounting: Evidence from MENA Firms

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines how cloud accounting adoption affects board-level governance and performance in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It focuses on the extent to which real-time financial data, transparency, and automation improve decision-making, risk management, and strategic oversight.

Design / Methodology / Approach: A mixed-methods design was adopted, combining quantitative data from 160 structured survey responses with qualitative insights from 12 semi-structured interviews involving board members, CFOs, and financial officers across MENA-based organizations. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were used to identify associations between cloud adoption variables and governance outcomes. Thematic analysis complemented the statistical results.

Findings: Results show that firms using cloud accounting report enhanced decision-making speed, greater board reliance on real-time financial data, and improved performance monitoring. Significant correlations were observed between years of cloud usage and improvements in risk management and transparency. Qualitative themes reinforced these findings while highlighting barriers such as resistance to change among senior board members and data security concerns in regulated sectors.

Originality / Value: This study fills a regional gap in understanding how cloud-based technologies shape boardroom dynamics in emerging markets. It contributes original evidence on how digital financial systems influence governance performance at the board level, particularly in contexts with evolving corporate oversight structures like MENA.

Practical Implications: Boards and policymakers should prioritize cloud training, regulatory alignment, and data governance protocols to fully leverage performance benefits.

Keywords

Cloud accounting, Board performance, MENA region, Corporate governance, Decision-making speed, Financial transparency, Risk management, Digital transformation, Real-time data, Technology adoption, Mixed methods, Emerging markets.