ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGIES: AN INVESTIGATION OF ITS IMPACT ON AUDIT EVIDENCE

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies are pivotal to the future evolution of the auditing profession. They serve as indispensable tools, equipping auditors with the means to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their work. This research aims to explore the influence of AI technologies on audit evidence, as perceived by certified auditors employed in Nigerian IT firms. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study analyzed responses from 215 auditors, collected via a structured questionnaire. The findings revealed that expert systems and neural network technology significantly influence audit evidence. Recognizing the scientific importance of AI in augmenting the collection of audit evidence, the study recommends that Nigerian audit offices should foster a greater interest in AI technology.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Technologies, Audit Evidence.

1. INTRODUCTION

The AI science is a technological discipline that grows, extends, and develops research in order to build theory, techniques, technology, and application systems by simulating human intelligence. In a nutshell, computers have the ability to use technology to convert human knowledge into useful labor. By using AI techniques, the user may significantly enhance the traditional information transmission process by increasing transmission speed, decreasing transmission cost, and resolving a number of problem bottlenecks (Griffin; 2016; AI Topics 2016).

The massive amounts of data offered by several data sources and the almost limitless processing power of cloud computing eliminate the bottleneck preventing the advancement of AI and allow for the use of the deep learning algorithm. Deep learning also broadens the field of AI research by enabling the development of numerous machine learning applications. Numerous applications have already used deep learning. Artificial intelligence can be compared as a "container" for human wisdom in this regard.

Therefore, the advancement of deep learning algorithms and approaches will enable the expansion of this "container" to a degree that is unpredictable to humans (Demski, 2007; Greenman, 2017).

One of the business sectors where information technology (IT) approaches have been extensively used is accounting. Financial modeling software quickly proven to be of extremely useful in the analytical parts of accounting, despite the fact that IT was initially utilized in the fundamental accounting systems. However, because its early adopters were cautious, the accounting profession was thought to have adopted IT at a modest rate. In order to improve productivity, eventually face competition, and lower costs, this profession was forced to computerize its procedures and operations by the late 1990s (Manson et al., 1997; 2001).

Currently, a wide range of jobs, from elementary ones like math calculations to complex ones like statistical analysis and flowcharting, frequently make use of IT resources. These tools include logit models, checklists, toolkits, expert systems, specially developed programs and industry-standard software packages, audit enquiry software that can conduct in-depth analysis and testing of data, internal control templates that are frequently used for identifying the flaws and strengths of systems, and integrated audit monitoring modules, which are routines that are programmed to continuously monitor actual data and their processing environment (Omoteso, 2012).

Because of technology advancement, the audit profession has seen significant change throughout time. This profession has already seen several modifications. There have been significant improvements to professional ethical standards, a rise in the quantity and sophistication of auditing rules, an improvement in the quality of audit work, more competition among audit firms, lower audit prices, and the provision of new services to the public (e.g., financial and computing advices). New audit kinds and services have also been developed in this field. Together, these factors have increased competition in the auditing industry to new heights. As a result, auditors have widely used the new techniques and tools offered by IT and AI. To aid and hasten the auditor's decision-making process, they made more pertinent and timely information available. As a result, they increased the audit's effectiveness and quality (Yaniv, and Bengio 2016; He et al., 2015; Silver et al., 2016; Sun & Vasarhelyi, 2016; Vasarhelyi et al., 1998).

Financial audit may be characterized as an activity carried out by an impartial, knowledgeable individual for the purpose of examining the financial and economic data drawn from the reviewed accounting papers using pertinent review and verification techniques. According to R. D. 1636/1990, Account Auditing Regulation, the goal of this activity is to publish a report outlining the auditor's assessment of the information's dependability so that a third party is aware of it and may make use of it.

The expert systems may be used in a variety of auditing situations. Nearly all audit tasks that call on an audit professional's judgment are included. Expert systems may often be divided into three types based on their functions: internal, external, and EDP audit expert

systems. The accounting domain with the most expert systems that have been built so far is auditing. This provided the researcher the inspiration to look into this topic and see how much Nigerian's audit offices are utilizing AI for evidence gathering.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

There are four knowledge gaps that this study addresses. These gaps in information are in fact sub-problems that lead to the research topic. The first is the lack of experience now in South east Nigeria with the use of AI approaches in the field of audit evidence. This application is still in its infancy, and even while automation is widely used, its scope is mostly limited to financial reporting. It has not yet produced an impact that might modify the accounting rules or reached key accounting areas like financial analysis and audit. In order to significantly improve the total financial work, AI should replace every stage in the traditional audit job and offer appropriate decision-making recommendations. Therefore, the use of AI in the audit business is still in its infancy, both in terms of its range and depth. The complexity of AI technology and the lack of expertise with it have made adoption and development extremely challenging.

Therefore, there is still a long way to go before AI in the audit sector develops. The second is that the organizations that are required to implement AI in the audit sector would have large investment costs and minimal profits. In light of this, it is imperative to create a special AI system that is in line with the traits of the audit profession and companies according to their current circumstances. First and foremost, the biggest warranty is the capital investment. Second, the management of the firm's human resources and everyday operations must be changed with the adoption of AI technology. After the audit information system has undergone intelligent transformation, training should be provided. This training should include information security as well as how to use the new system capabilities. Due to the individualized characteristics of intelligent systems, the audit profession will require a significant amount of resources for both the system's initial implementation and ongoing operation, which poses significant difficulties for maintaining cost management for businesses. Many businesses may focus on short-term profitability rather than implementing strategic changes due to the high investment costs and poor returns. Therefore, they could halt at the beginning of the AI technology's launch. Third, while South east Nigeria now has inadequate senior accounting skills, the quality of the professional talents that is increased by the application of AI technology in the audit profession requires professional talents to manage them. The current shortage of accounting expertise in South east Nigeria is concerning; while basic accounting staff are in abundance, elite accounting skill is in short supply. In this setting, increased need for accountants results from the integration of AI with accounting activities. Therefore, in order for the accounting staff to adapt to changes in technology and the resulting changes in working circumstances, they not only require professional understanding of accounting, but they also need to become IT experts and acquire skills in the use of accounting software and data management. Last but not least, the university accounting students' training programs require revision and enhancement.

The majority of South east Nigerian institutions currently provide suitable degrees in accounting computerization. These courses do, however, have significant issues, such as a lack of linkages between theoretical knowledge and practice and the difficulties of developing a scientific computerization system, which are caused by a variety of internal and external variables. Due to these reasons, it is challenging to satisfy the demands of the profession's long-term development. Although for the time being, the talent development programs at those institutions fall short of making simultaneous modifications for reforming accounting education, university graduates will make up the majority of the workforce in the accounting profession. Actually, there aren't many AI-focused IT courses or training programs available, and there's less focus on accounting idea innovation. Due to this, university graduates lack the market competitiveness necessary to fill the need for accounting experts in the future.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The general objective is to investigate the impact of artificial intelligence on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors auditing IT companies in south east Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study included:

1. To determine the impact of expert system on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria

2. To ascertain the effect of neural network technology on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria

1.3 Research Questions

1. To what extent does expert system impact the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria?

2. To what extent does neural network technology impact the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria?

1.4 Research Hypothesis

The resultant hypotheses formulated in order to carry out this research are as follow;

H01: Expert system has no significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

H02: Neural networks has no significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study's significance comes from its examination of one of the new techniques and systems used in the audit process by using audit offices operating in South east Nigeria for artificial intelligence techniques in the gathering of audit evidence, which is a crucial component in the nature of the audit process where its significance in the accreditation of

the auditor based on the composition of his professional opinion is not in conflict with international audit standards. Two factors make the study more significant:

First, theoretical importance: The theoretical and intellectual enrichment that may result from tracking theoretical literature and earlier studies of the key factors related to artificial intelligence in the collection of audit evidence (expert systems, neural networks) in IT companies in South east Nigeria and in a form that is an integrated conceptual framework for these concepts and the methodology of their study are highlighted by this importance. This significance also emphasizes the potential to make a small contribution by following theoretical research and earlier examinations of important factors in the structure that serves as the intellectual and methodological framework of the investigation. Additionally, the project will deliver findings to South east Nigeriaian audit offices that will enable them to use artificial intelligence approaches to gather audit evidence.

Second, the study's practical value lies in what it can provide to south east Nigeriaian audit offices' decision-makers and the potential for them to gain knowledge from its findings in a way that does not infringe on international audit standards. Additionally, the study is significant because it will address a subject related to the extent to which audit offices are using artificial intelligence technologies.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

2.1 The Correlation between Artificial Intelligence and Audit

There is a ton of literature about AI. It includes a wide variety of applications in many study fields, as well as algorithmic studies (such as Courbariaux et al., 2016). (Zhang et al., 2015; Silver et al., 2016). However, there is little study on using AI in auditing. In addition, the vast majority of "now-aged" papers are focused on expert systems. These techniques have frequently been promoted as having use in tax planning and auditing. In order to assist auditors in customizing audit programs, Gillett (1993) created audit expert system (AES) and detailed the first stages of the protracted execution process (Vasarhelyi et al., 1998). Additionally, six volumes of a book series covering a range of expert system applications and discussing the benefits these systems provided to accounting and auditing were released between 1989 and 2005. (Vasarhelyi et al., 1998).

Research Ideas for Artificial Intelligence in Auditing: The Formalization of Audit and Workforce Supplementation, Issa et al. (2016) study. This report suggests a number of AI-related study fields to investigate the most potential applications of this new technology. A number of methodological and evolutionary research questions are also raised in this work with the goal of examining how AI will change the auditing industry in the future. In this article by Bai (2017), the current state of artificial intelligence application in the field of audit services at the four largest international accounting firms is discussed. Artificial intelligence's effects on the audit industry, relevant auditing practitioners, and regulators in charge of setting standards for the sector are also examined. Should conduct a thorough investigation of the coping mechanisms.

An overview of the emergence of artificial intelligence in accounting and auditing is given in the study by Kokina and Davenport (2017). It also discusses the current capabilities of cognitive technologies and the effects these technologies will have on human auditors as well as the audit process itself. We also provide real-world applications of artificial intelligence from the business world. Through the use of artificial intelligence in auditing, Omoteso (2012) uses the same environment to look into the future. Addressed the need of using artificial intelligence by auditors to make audit decisions. It specifically examined research projects on expert systems and neural networks' application to auditing and its consequences.

Gusai (2019) conducted this study with the intention of examining the value of artificial intelligence in the fields of accounting and auditing, as well as measuring the future direction of this field. Conclusion a better and more hospitable environment in the field of accounting and auditing is made possible by this research AI. AI research advancements can undoubtedly greatly aid human endeavors.

Greenman (2017) investigates how artificial intelligence is affecting the accounting industry. AI is an essential tool that will provide these professionals the resources they need to improve the productivity and efficacy of their work. An automated system is more likely to replace the monotonous bookkeeping activities or process-driven assignments than the higher value specialities that need professional judgment. Many people think that the next generation of accountants has to comprehend artificial intelligence and be ready to deal with it.

Li and Zheng's (2018) essay focuses on using artificial intelligence to prevent accounting fraud and to produce good effects on the quality of accounting information. It also examines how this technology affects the accounting staff. The essay emphasizes the need for accounting staff to develop their seven individual skill sets in order to become fully trained individuals in the context of artificial intelligence.

According to Luo et al. (2018), this study uses the application of artificial intelligence in the accounting sector as its research topic, examines how it has affected the sector's growth, and offers pertinent solutions to its current issues.

Al Chukwudi (2018). This study's objective is to investigate how artificial intelligence affects the efficiency of accounting processes in South East Nigerian accounting businesses. The study's findings indicated that the performance of accounting functions in accounting companies in South East Nigeria is significantly impacted by expert systems. It was determined that the use of artificial intelligence improves the efficiency of accounting operations.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To achieve the study aims, the research design is essential (Bhatti et al, 2012). In this study, a quantitative research design was used. The researcher will be able to test the relationship between the research variables thanks to the quantitative research design.

Additionally, it will make it possible for the researcher to objectively decide which concepts or ideas are superior to the others. It can also provide answers to inquiries about the connections between measurable variables with the goal of clarifying, imagining, and regulating occurrences (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). As a result, the quantitative research design is the best methodology for this study since it enables the use of statistical methods to assess the link between variables. This fits with the primary goal of this study's emphasis. As a result, the quantitative research design is the best methodology for this study since it enables the use of statistical methods to assess the link between variables. (2016) Sekaran and Bougie. From the perspective of qualified auditors in South east Nigerian IT organizations, this is consistent with the study's primary goal of examining the extent to which audit offices there employ artificial intelligence technology to gather audit evidence. As a result, quantitative research on the particular issue also enables analysis using a large sample to generalize the findings across a group of populations. Study's sample and population.

3.1 Sample Size and Population

Population is defined by Sekaran & Bougie (2016) as the total group of individuals, occasions, or interesting items that the researcher desires to study. The study is focused on selected Charted
Accountants in audit practicing firms in south east Nigeria. The choice of Charted Accountants within the Auditing firms is due to the fact that, these are accounting professionals who will provide necessary information needed for the study. A total of 30 Accounting and auditing firms where selected with a total staff of 215 accountants working at these firms.

3.2 Instrument for Data Collection

Data for the study were gathered using a structured questionnaire. Two sections made up the questionnaire. Artificial intelligence technologies are covered in Section (A), whereas audit evidence is covered in Section (B). The questionnaire's items were organized on a five-point Likert scale in relation to the study's goals.

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

This study's primary objective is to test the research hypotheses in accordance with its conceptual framework. Due to the quantitative character of this study, it aims to experimentally support the suggested theoretical framework by examining the correlations between variables. There were two main analyses involved. The first is descriptive analysis, which uses the SPSS Statistical Package for Social Science application to test the study hypotheses.

3.4 Validity of the Instrument

Every question in the questionnaire had a pre-test to guarantee its validity, and the questionnaire was appropriately developed. Five experts, including professionals in artificial intelligence and accounting, were given the instrument by the researcher to test

its face and content validity, and they carefully examined it to make sure it was in line with the study's goals.

3.5 Reliability of the Instrument

Prior to conducting the study's real survey, the researchers procedurally pretested twenty (20) copies of the test instrument. Through SPSS (statistical software for social sciences), the replies from the pre-study survey were put through the Cronbach Alpha's internal consistency test. The reliability test result is 0.88 based on the questionnaire's inter-item correlation of twelve (12) items. The criterion for Cronbach's alpha should be 0.700 or above because the items on the questionnaire were evenly scaled and in accordance with Sekaran & Bougie (2016). The questionnaire's items are trustworthy because they are internally consistent, as indicated by the raw Alpha Coefficient of 0.88.

3.6 Method for Data Analysis

The data collected for the study was analyzed and presented in tables. Inferential statistic of
regression analysis was used in testing the study hypotheses at 5% level of significance. The decision will be, Reject H0 if the p-value is less than 0.05.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND RESULTS

The following tables reflect the results from the perspective of the research sample members, and they include means and standard deviations for the degree to which audit offices in Nigeria employ expert systems technology to gather audit evidence:

Objective One: To determine the impact of expert system on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria

Table 1

Options	SA Freq (%)	A Freq (%)	U Freq (%)	D Freq (%)	SD Freq (%)	Mean	Std
Application software based on knowledge bases is used in a particular area of expertise	77 (35.8)	94 (43.7)	21 (9.8)	14(6.5)	9(4.2)	1.10	1.05
Expert systems are used to collect audit evidence by reformulating them in the form of computer-hosted software	82(38.1)	88(40.9)	22 (10.2)	15 (7.0)	8(3.7)	1.97	1.05
Expert systems are used to extract knowledge to resolve problems with the	80(37.2)	88(40.9)	25(11.6)	14(6.5)	8(3.7)	1.99	1.04

collection of audit evidence							
Advanced software languages are used to improve the collection of audit evidence	79 (36.7)	88(40.9)	23(10.7)	14 (6.5)	11(5.1)	2.02	1.10
Expert systems are used to be able to advise and make the right decisions regarding audit evidence	78 (36.3)	90(41.9)	23(10.7)	14 (6.5)	10(4.7)	2.01	1.07
Knowledge and control of the search for audit evidence are represented within databases	80(37.2)	86(40.0)	27(12.6)	13(6.0)	9(4.2)	2.00	1.06
The expert system is used as a hierarchical frame that reflects the accounting knowledge set for audit evidence	80(37.2)	93(43.3)	25(11.6)	9(4.2)	8(3.7)	1.93	1.00
The expert system is used to collect audit evidence to be encrypted in a program and stored in the system's knowledge base	82(38.1)	94(43.7)	17(7.9)	14(6.5)	8(3.7)	1.94	1.03

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 1 shows the response of responses of respondents on the impact of expert system on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria. It shows that 77(35.8%) strongly agreed that application software based on knowledge bases is used in a particular area of expertise, 94(43.7%) of them agreed, 21(9.8%) of them were undecided and 14(6.5%) of them disagree with the assertion that application software based on knowledge bases is used in a particular area of expertise, while 9(4.2%) strongly disagree. With a mean and standard deviation of 1.10 $\pm$ 1.05 this result implies that application software based on knowledge bases is used in a particular area of expertise. The table also shows that 82(38.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that expert systems are used to collect audit evidence by reformulating them in the form of computer-hosted software, 88(40.9%) of them agreed to this, 22(10.2%) of them were undecided and 15(7.0%) were in disagreement with the assertion that expert systems are used to collect audit evidence by reformulating them in the form of computer-hosted software, while 8(3.7%) strongly disagreed. With a mean and standard deviation of 1.97 $\pm$ 1.05 the result indicates that majority of the respondents agree that expert

systems are used to collect audit evidence by reformulating them in the form of computer-hosted software.

Furthermore, the table shows that 80(37.2%) of the respondents strongly agree that expert systems are used to extract knowledge to resolve problems with the collection of audit evidence, 88(40.9%) of them agreed and 25(11.6%) of them were undecided on the assertion, 14(6.5%) disagreed with the assertion that expert systems are used to extract knowledge to resolve problems with the collection of audit evidence, while 8(3.7%) of them strongly disagreed. With a mean and standard deviation of 1.99 $\pm$ 1.04 the result implies that expert systems are used to extract knowledge to resolve problems with the collection of audit evidence. Also, the table show that 79(36.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that advanced software languages are used to improve the collection of audit evidence, 88(40.9%) of them agreed and 23(10.7%) were undecided, then 14(6.5%) disagreed with the assertion that that advanced software languages are used to improve the collection of audit evidence, while 11(5.1%) of them strongly disagreed. With a mean and standard deviation of 2.02 + 1.10 the results imply that advanced software languages are used to improve the collection of audit evidence. The table further shows that 78 (36.3%) of the respondents strongly agree that expert systems are used to be able to advise and make the right decisions regarding audit evidence, 90(41.9%) of them agreed and 23(10.7%) of them were undecided, while 14 (6.5%) of the respondents disagreed to this assertion and 10(4.7%) of them strongly disagreed. With a mean and standard deviation of 2.01 $\pm$ 1.07 this result implies that expert systems are used to be able to advise and make the right decisions regarding audit evidence. The table also revealed that 80(37.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that knowledge and control of the search for audit evidence are represented within databases, 86(40.0%) of them are in agree to this, while 27(12.6%) of them were undecided, 13(6.0%) of the respondents disagree with the assertion, while 9(4.2%) strongly disagreed.

With a mean and standard deviation of 2.00 $\pm$ 1.06 the result indicates that majority of the respondents agree that knowledge and control of the search for audit evidence are represented within databases. It as well shows that 80(37.2%) of the respondents strongly agree that the expert system is used as a hierarchical frame that reflects the accounting knowledge set for audit evidence, 93(43.3%) of them agree to this assertion while 25(11.6%) of them were undecided, and 9(4.2%) of them disagree, while 8(3.7%) of the respondents strongly disagree. With a mean and standard deviation of 1.93 $\pm$ 1.00. Lastly, the table shows that 82(38.1%) of the respondents strongly agree that the expert system is used to collect audit evidence to be encrypted in a program and stored in the system's knowledge base, 94(43.7%) of them agree whereas 1(7.9%) of them were undecided, 14(6.5%) of them disagree and 8(3.7%) of them strongly disagree. With a mean and standard deviation of 1.94 $\pm$ 1.03, the result implies that majority of the respondent strongly agree that the expert system is used to collect audit evidence to be encrypted in a program and stored in the system's knowledge base.

Objective two: To ascertain the effect of neural network technology on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria

Table 2

Options	SA Freq (%)	A Freq (%)	U Freq (%)	D Freq (%)	SD Freq (%)	Mean	Std
Neural network technology is used to complete the collection and practical implementation of integrated electronic audit evidence.	83(38.6)	93(43.3)	19(8.8)	9(4.2)	11(5.1)	1.94	1.05
Neural networks are used to store information about the collection of evidence for the collection of links and communications	83(38.6)	94(43.7)	20(9.3)	9(4.2)	9(4.2)	1.92	1.01
Electronic processing units are available for the collection of neurons that make information available to users	76(35.3)	94(43.7)	22(10.2)	14(6.5)	9(4.2)	2.00	1.05
Neural networks are used in mathematical models of audit guides formulated in diagrams that mimic the qualities found in computer systems	76 (35.3)	90(41.9)	23(10.7)	13(6.0)	13(6.0)	2.06	1.12
Neural networks are used to process information on audit evidence and provide solutions to complex problems in parallel	84(39.1)	81(37.7)	25(11.6)	15(7.0)	10(4.7)	2.00	1.10
Neural networks contribute to providing solutions and recommendations to the user in a clear and accurate picture about the evidence of auditing	80(37.2)	86(40.0)	23(10.7)	15(7.0)	9(5.1)	2.03	1.11
Neural networks allow the user to enter instructions and information related to	81(37.7)	90(41.9)	21(9.8)	12(5.6)	11(5.1)	1.99	1.08

audit evidence to obtain accounting information						
Neural networks can explain the steps of collecting audit evidence to reach the solution and the reasons behind this solution	79(36.7)	87(40.5)	23(10.7)	14(6.5)	12(5.6)	2.04	1.11

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 2 shows that 83(38.6%) of the respondents strongly agree that neural network technology is used to complete the collection and practical implementation of integrated electronic audit evidence, 93(43.3%) of them agree and 19(8.8%) of them were undecided, whereas 9(4.2%) of them disagree to this assertion, 11(5.1%) of them strongly disagree. With a mean and standard deviation of 1.94 $\pm$ 1.03, this result implies that majority of the respondents agree that neural network technology is used to complete the collection and practical implementation of integrated electronic audit evidence. The table also shows that 83(38.6%) of the respondents strongly agree that neural networks are used to store information about the collection of evidence for the collection of links and communications, 94(43.7%) of them agree to this assertion, whereas 20(9.3%) of them were undecided, 9(4.2%) of them disagree and 9(4.2%) strongly disagree. With a mean and standard deviation of 1.92 $\pm$ 1.01, the result implies that majority of the respondents agree that neural networks are used to store information about the collection of evidence for the collection of links and communications. The table also shows that 76(35.3%) strongly agree that electronic processing units are available for the collection of neurons that make information available to users, 94(43.7%) of them agree to this assertion, then 22(10.2%) of them were undecided and 14(6.5%) of them disagree to the assertion while 9(4.2%) of them strongly disagree.

With a mean and standard deviation of 2.00 $\pm$ 1.05, the result indicates that majority of the respondents agree that electronic processing units are available for the collection of neurons that make information available to users. Also, the table shows that 76 (35.3%) of the respondents strongly agree that neural networks are used in mathematical models of audit guides formulated in diagrams that mimic the qualities, 90(41.9%) of them agree, whereas 23(10.7%) were undecided to the assertion, 13(6.0%) of them disagreed and 13(6.0%) strongly disagreed with the assertion. With a mean and standard deviation of 2.06 $\pm$ 1.12, the result implies that majority of the respondent agree that neural networks are used in mathematical models of audit guides formulated in diagrams that mimic the qualities. The table further shows that 84(39.1%) of the respondents strongly agree that neural networks are used to process information on audit evidence and provide solutions to complex problems in parallel, 81(37.7%) of them agreed to the assertion, whereas 25(11.6%) of them were undecided, 15(7.0%) disagree and 10(4.7%) strongly disagree. With a mean and standard deviation of 2.00 $\pm$ 1.10, the result indicates that neural networks are used to process information on audit evidence and provide solutions to complex problems in parallel. The table as well revealed that 80(37.2%) of the

respondents strongly agree that neural networks contribute to providing solutions and recommendations to the user in a clear and accurate picture about the evidence of auditing, 86(40.0%) of them agree to the assertion, whereas 23(10.7%) were undecided, 15(7.0%) of them disagree and 9(5.1%) of them strongly disagree.

Furthermore, the table shows that 81(37.7%) of the respondents strongly agree that neural networks allow the user to enter instructions and information related to audit evidence to obtain accounting information, 90(41.9%) of them agree to this assertion as well, whereas 21(9.8%) of them were undecided and 12(5.6%) disagree and 11(5.1%) of them strongly disagree.

With a mean and standard deviation of 1.99 $\pm$ 1.08, the result implies that majority of the respondents agree that neural networks allow the user to enter instructions and information related to audit evidence to obtain accounting information.

Finally, the table shows that 79(36.7%) of the respondents strongly agree that neural networks can explain the steps of collecting audit evidence to reach the solution and the reasons behind this solution, 87(40.5%) of the of them agree, whereas 23(10.7%) of them were undecided and 14(6.5%) of the disagree with the assertion, 12(5.6%) of them strongly disagree. With a mean and standard deviation of 2.04 $\pm$ 1.11, the result shows that majority of the respondents agree that neural networks can explain the steps of collecting audit evidence to reach the solution and the reasons behind this solution.

4.1 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₁: Expert system has a significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

H₀: Expert system has no significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

Table 3: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.942[a]	.888	.888	.34422	1.825
Source: SPSS Version 26					
a. Predictors: (Constant), Export System					
b. Dependent Variable: Audit Evidence					

Table 4: ANOVA[a]

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	200.297	1	200.297	1690.430	.000[b]
	Residual	25.238	213	.118		
	Total	225.535	214			
Source: SPSS Version 26						
a. Dependent Variable: Audit Evidence						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Export System						

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.111	.051		2.201	.029
	Export System	.923	.022	.942	41.115	.000

Source: SPSS Version 26
a. Dependent Variable: Audit Evidence

Result Summary

R   = .942

R^2 = .888

F   = 1690.430

T   = 41.115

DW = 1.824

4.2 Interpretation of the Result

A linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the impact of expert system on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria (table 3 – 5) shows that there is strong positive relationship between export system and audit evidence (R- coefficient = .877). The R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 88.8% of the variation in audit evidence can be explained by export system with no autocorrelation as Durbin-Watson (1.824) is less than 2. With the linear regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .34422. The regression sum of the square 200.297 is more than the residual sum of the square 25.238 indicating that the variation is due to chance. The F-statistics = 1690.430 shows that the model is significant. The extent to which export system impact audit evidence with .942 value indicates a positive significance relationship between export system and audit evidence which is statistically significant (with t = 41.115) and p = .000 < 0.05.

▪ **Decision Rule**

Reject null hypothesis (Ho) if P-Value < 0.05 and do not reject Ho if otherwise

Decision

Since the P-Value 000 < 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho) and then conclude that expert system has a significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

H$_1$: Neural networks has no significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

H$_O$: Neural networks has no significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

Table 6: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.889[a]	.791	.790	.54731	.864

Source: SPSS Version 26

a. Predictors: (Constant), Neural Network Technology
b. Dependent Variable: Audit Evidence

Table 7: ANOVA[a]

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	241.518	1	241.518	806.282	.000[b]
	Residual	63.803	213	.300		
	Total	305.321	214			
a. Dependent Variable: Audit Evidence						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Neural Network Technology						

Table 8: Coefficients[a]

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.050	.079		-.631	.529
	Neural Network Technology.	1.011	.036	.889	28.395	.000
Source: SPSS Version 26						
a. Dependent Variable: Audit Evidence						

Result Summary

R   = .889

R^2 = .791

F   = 806.282

T   = 28.395

DW = .864

4.3 Interpretation of the Result

A linear regression analysis was conducted to ascertain the effect of neural network technology on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria. (Table 6 – 8) shows that there is strong positive relationship between neural network technology and audit evidence (R- coefficient = .791). The R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 79.1% of the variation in audit evidence can be explained by neural network technology with no autocorrelation as Durbin-Watson (.864) is less than 2. With the linear regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .54731. The regression sum of the square 241.518 is more than the residual sum of the square 63.803 indicating that the variation is due to

chance. The F-statistics = 806.282 shows that the model is significant. The extent to which neural network technology impact audit evidence with .889 value indicates a positive significance relationship between neural network technology and audit evidence which is statistically significant (with t = 28.395) and p = .000 < 0.05.

- ▪ **Decision Rule**

Reject null hypothesis (Ho) if P-Value < 0.05 and do not reject Ho if otherwise

Decision

Since the P-Value 000 < 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho) and then conclude that neural networks has a significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Expert system has a significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria. (With t = 28.395) and p = .000 < 0.05.

2. Neural networks has a significant impact on the audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors of IT companies in south east Nigeria. (With t = 41.115) and p = .000 < 0.05.

6. CONCLUSION

Even though artificial intelligence has great promise for the present and the future, most researchers and organizations are unaware of the knowledge and abilities that it requires. According to the researcher's experience, it is necessary to evaluate how artificial intelligence would affect audit evidence.

In order to acquire skills and information, the goal of this study is to investigate the effect of artificial intelligence on audit evidence.

In order to examine the general issues posed by investigators or researchers, the current study examines a current topic concerning the integration of artificial intelligence in audit evidence.

From the perspective of certified auditors of IT companies in South East Nigeria, the study's two key issues are: how much do expert systems influence the audit evidence? And how much do certified auditors of IT firms in south-eastern Nigeria think neural network technology has an impact on the audit evidence.

This is the research problem addressed by this study. The information from this study will help researchers access the Impact of Artificial Intelligence in audit evidence from the point of view of certified auditors in IT companies in South east Nigeria. In this study, the primary source was a Questionnaire conducted on certified auditors in IT companies in South east Nigeria.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that:

1. The audit offices in South-East Nigeria have shown a greater interest in artificial intelligence technologies due to their practical use in enhancing audit evidence gathering.

2. To enhance the gathering of audit evidence, emphasize the necessity to employ complex programming languages, encrypt them in a program, and preserve them in the system's knowledge base.

3. Stress the value of incorporating neural networks into mathematical audit guide models that are represented in diagrams that resemble computer systems.

4. South-east Nigerian audit offices should have electronic processing units in the form of neurons that make information available to users for the collecting of audit evidence.

5. Place special emphasis on educating auditors to stay up with technical developments in AI applications for gathering audit guides, expressing knowledge, and managing the search for such evidence inside databases.

6. The significance of developing the process of gathering and reformulating audit evidence into computer-embraced software for its function in enhancing the effectiveness of the audit process.

7. Make greater use of neural networks, particularly when it comes to giving users clear and accurate suggestions regarding the audit guidelines, as well as solutions and the justifications for those solutions.

8. Due to their significance in enhancing the gathering of audit evidence, pay more attention to providing auditors with numerous chances to learn and practice the application of artificial intelligence approaches.

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