

The Effect of Competence, Work Experience, Professionalism and Auditor Independence on Audit Quality

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The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between competence, work experience, professionalism, auditor independence to audit quality in the public accountant firms in Indonesia, precisely in Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Gresik. The research was being conducted by the questionnaire distribution model that applied to all the auditors who work in public accountant firms in Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Gresik. The research population is all the auditors who are employed by public accountant firms in 43 places at Surabaya, one place at Sidoarjo, and one place at Gresik. The sample in this research is 49 auditors from 10 public accountant firms who are willing to complete the questionnaire in this research. Hypothesis testing was done using the Partial Least Square test using WarpPLS version 6.0 software. The result in this research found that auditors' competence and professionalism has a relationship to the audit quality. In addition, work experience and auditor independence have no relationship to audit quality.

Key words: *Competence, Work Experience, Professionalism, Independence, Audit Quality.*

Introduction

In the current era of globalisation, the case of accounting manipulation on financial statements often occurs. The auditor's profession came under the community spotlight in recent years because the independent auditor was not only responsible for the opinions given on the financial statements, but also to the truthfulness of the financial statements. Accounting cases in major corporations, such as Enron, Indosat, PNC Financial Services, and Kimia Farma, almost all involve large public accounting firms. Middle-class public accountant offices are

also involved in several issues relating to the manipulation of such accounting. Many such cases make the credibility of the auditor's capability questionable by the community, whether the auditor still functions appropriately or otherwise. This credibility could affect the public's belief in the performance of a publicly certified accountant as an independent party in auditing a financial statement.

Various frauds that occur, as described in the previous case, require the auditor to be able to detect various frauds that occur in the manipulation of financial statements. Therefore, auditors must have an independent and professional attitude to be able to identify any errors and fraud in the financial statements and to produce reliable financial reports. So, it can be concluded that the quality of auditors provided for the examination of financial statements still needs to be questioned to allow further testing of the quality of financial reporting to be done. This is reflected in the audit quality variable. Audit quality is the attitude of auditors in carrying out their duties, as reflected in the results of the examination that must be reliable in accordance with applicable standards (Erlina & Muda, 2018).

Audit quality is an important topic to discuss: given the scandal of financial statements, fraud does not only occur in Indonesia, it is widespread throughout the world (Sarwoko & Agoes, 2014). This fraud also involves top-tier auditors working at renowned Public Accounting Firms or the Big 4 Public Accounting Firms. Also, the quality of audit services is important considering the financial statements are reports on the performance and achievements of the company, so it must be ensured that the quality of audit reports is in accordance with the real situation (Behzadian & Nia, 2017). In this case, performance is defined as the result of the organisation's overall operations and strategies (Irawati et al., 2019; Widiyanti et al., 2019). There are several previous studies that discuss the audit quality in their research, such as Widyaningsih et al. (2019) who examined the relationship between audit office turnover and audit quality; Harymawan et al. (2019) examined the relationship of female auditor partners and audit quality; and Kalanjati et al. (2019), which examines the relationship of audit rotation and audit quality.

This study focusses on auditor behaviour, where it examines the relationship between auditor behaviour and audit quality. Factors that have a relationship to audit quality are auditor competence, auditor working experience, auditor professionalism, and auditor independence. According to DeAngelo (1981), audit quality includes the possibility that auditors will find and report the fraud within the client's accounting system. These fraud findings depend on the auditor's will to disclose those frauds. Therefore, audit quality becomes crucial, as with high audit quality. It will generate reliable financial statements as a basis for decision-making.

Bedard et al. (1993) define expertise or competence as someone who has extensive procedural knowledge and skills demonstrated in audit experience. Competence or expertise is broad procedural knowledge and skills demonstrated in audit experience (Asmara, 2016). Saripudin



et al. (2012) define the auditor's work experience as the experience of the auditor in conducting audits in terms of the length of time he worked as an auditor and the number of audit tasks that have been performed (Irianto, 2015). Experienced auditors have a better understanding of financial statements so that decisions made can be better (Libby & Frederick, 1990). Auditor professionalism is the ability and professional attitude (Baotham, 2007). Professionalism is the responsibility of individuals to behave better than just obeying the existing laws and regulations of society (Arens et al., 2010). Professionalism is one of the conditions that must be owned by an auditor because this will have an impact on the attitude in carrying out his/her profession as an independent auditor. Independence in the audit is an impartial perspective in the conduct of testing, evaluation of audit results, and preparation of audit reports (Arens et al., 2010). As a public accountant, it is unjustifiable to be influenced by the interests of anyone, both management and company owners, in conducting audit assignments (Goldman & Barlev, 1974).

This study aims to analyse the relationship between competence, working experience, professionalism, and independence of auditors to audit quality. We use 49 questionnaires that were already disseminated to 10 public accountant firm to analyse the relationship. This study documents that auditor competency and professionalism have a relationship to audit quality. While for auditors, working experience and independence do not have a relationship to audit quality.

This study contributes to the literature by clarifying the relationship between competence, working experience, professionalism, and independence of auditors to audit quality. Also, this study is contributing to public accounting firms to add knowledge related to factors that can influence audit quality. Therefore, this study can provide additional support for the auditor to improve the quality concerning auditing the client's financial statements and being responsible for an appropriate audit opinion.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 contains literature reviews and develops the research hypotheses. Section 3 describes the sample, variables, and research design. Section 4 specifies the empirical result. Section 5 summarises the paper and presents concluding remarks.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Behavioural Accounting Theory

Accounting is a system that generates financial information for its users in the business decision-making process. The motivation and behaviour of the accounting information system's actors become crucial aspects of the accounting information system. Siegel and

Marconi (1989) classify behavioural accounting research into five distinct categories, which are management control, accounting information systems, information system design, audit research, and organisational sociology. At first, behavioural accounting research emphasises the management accounting aspect, especially budgeting, but as the development of science, behavioural accounting also shifts into financial accounting, accounting information systems, and audit. Behavioural accounting employs behavioural science methods to complete the information overview by measuring the human factors in the context of business decision making.

Auditor Competence and Audit Quality

Auditor competence is an auditor's ability to use his/her sufficient knowledge and experience to comprehend various issues and development of auditing environment that has become more complex than ever (Putri, 2013). The study by Yusuf (2014) shows that auditor competency has a positive relationship to the audit quality of the auditor. Therefore, this study is following the research done by Alim et al. (2007) and Agusti and Nastia (2013). Based on those study results, we hypothesised that:

H₁: Auditor competence has a positive relationship to audit quality.

Auditor Working Experience and Audit Quality

The experience of a public accountant will keep expanding with increases in audit assignments done and the complexity of the firm's financial transaction that are audited, so it improves and broadens the knowledge in the aspect of accounting and auditing (Christiawan, 2004). Those improvements indicate that the longer the working period and experience that auditor had, then the better the audit quality generated (Alim et al., 2007). The research results of Sukriah et al. (2009) show that working experience has a positive relationship on audit quality. This result implies that more working experience by the auditor will improve audit quality. Based on these explanations, then we hypothesised that:

H₂: Working experience has a positive relationship to audit quality.

Auditor Professionalism and Audit Quality

High professionalism and assertiveness of the auditor is imposed as a requirement of public trust for service quality provided by the auditing profession, regardless of what the auditor has done as an individual. For an auditor, it is crucial to ensure to the client and financial statement users its audit quality during audit assignments (Carey & Simnett, 2006). If users of auditor services do not have belief in an auditor, the capability of these professionals to provide

adequate services to clients and the public will be diminished. To carry out the audit assignment professionally, the auditor must devise a plan before executing the auditing process. A public accountant that has high professional assertiveness will consider the materiality of information or information related to financial statements appropriately. This consideration emerges as it is closely related to the kind of audit opinion provided by the auditor. Therefore, the higher the professionalism of auditors, the higher the audit quality of financial statements. Based on these explanations, we hypothesised that:

H₃: Auditor professionalism has a positive relationship to audit quality.

Auditor Independence and Audit Quality

Auditor independence is an auditor attitude that is impartial, does not have any self-interest, and is not easily influenced by other interested parties in the context of providing audit opinion. Thus, the audit opinion is provided based on high integrity and objectivity. Auditor independence is one of the vital factors to generate qualified audit results. If an auditor loses his/her independence, the audit report generated will not be on par with the current condition, thus, in the end, the audit report cannot be used as a basis for decision making (Supriyono, 1988). The higher the level of independence that the auditor had, the better the audit report quality will be. Based on these explanations, we hypothesised that:

H₄: Auditor independence has a positive relationship to audit quality.

Research Methodology

Sample and Data Sources

This study uses a quantitative research approach. The data source used is primary data sources by dissemination of the questionnaire. The population of this study is 43 Public Accountant Firms (PAF) in Surabaya, 1 PAF in Sidoarjo, and 1 PAF in Gresik that were registered in the PAF directory for the year 2017. The research sample is obtained by convenience sampling, in which the research sample is determined not on a random basis but by several select PAFs that it was predicted can provide information that is suitable for this study. The period of the data gathering process is between December 2017 up to January 2018.

Operational Definition and Variable Measurement

Dependent Variable

In this study, the dependent variable that is used is audit quality that was generated. According to DeAngelo (1981), audit quality is a probability or possibility where an auditor can find and report the fraud within the client's accounting information system. Audit quality measurement in this study adopts the Rumeneng and Rahayu (2014) study. For every question that was asked we used a Likert scale from one to five, where one is for disagree strongly and five is for strongly agree.

Independent Variable

The independent variable in this study is auditor competence, working experience, professionalism, and independence. These independent variables in this study are obtained by the dissemination of the questionnaire and adopt Rumengan and Rahayu (2014) research. For Every question asked uses a Likert scale from one to five, where one is for strongly disagree and five is for strongly agree.

Someone who is competent is someone with skill carrying out work smoothly, fast, intuitively, and less likely to or never making any mistakes. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1983) defines competence as skill from an expert, where an expert is defined as someone who has a particular skill or possesses a vast amount of knowledge related to specific subjects obtained from training and experience.

The definition of experience is a learning process and adding development of potential behaviour either from formal or non-formal education. Experience can also be defined as a process that takes someone into a particular behaviour pattern that is higher than the previous one. Working experience is a crucial attribute that is needed in the auditing process. It is proven that the level of the mistakes of inexperienced auditors has a higher value than with experienced auditors (Bouhawia et al., 2015). This phenomenon is due to the experience that will shape the expertise of someone both technically and psychologically.

According to Baotham (2007), auditor professionalism refers to professional ability and manner. Auditor professionalism becomes a critical issue that depicts auditor performance, especially in terms of audit quality. Auditor high professionalism assertiveness is valued as it needs public trust related to service quality provided by the auditor profession, regardless of what an auditor has done as an individual.

Independence, defined by Arens et al. (2017) as a most vital auditor characteristic, even auditing value, is closely dependent on public perception of auditor independence. Auditor independence is an auditor demeanour that is impartial, not having an individual interest, and not easily influenced by other parties that have an interest in terms of providing audit opinion. Therefore, audit opinion that is provided is based on high integrity and objectivity.

Table 1: Operational Definitions

Variables	Indicator
Dependent variable	
Audit Quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor perception on examination appropriateness with audit standard 2. Auditor perception on audit result report quality
Independent variable	
Competence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor perception on personal quality 2. Auditor perception on general knowledge 3. Auditor perception on specific expertise
Working experience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor perception on working period as auditor 2. Auditor perception on quantity of examination assignments
Professionalism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor perception on dedication to profession 2. Auditor perception on social responsibility 3. Auditor perception on self-reliance 4. Auditor perception on professional faithfulness 5. Auditor perception on relationship between association on same profession
Independence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor perception on independence 2. Auditor perception on independence of work conduct 3. Auditor perception on independence of reporting

Research Design

The data analysis technique used is Partial Least Square (PLS), with support from WarpPLS 6.0 software. PLS model is used for several considerations, such as the model that is used is for causality relationship between independent and dependent variable if one of the variables or both have one or more indicators or measuring variable that is not the indicator. Another

data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive statistical analysis of respondent, outer model (validity test, reliability test), inner model, and hypothesis test.

Result and Discussion

Respondent Statistic Descriptive

Table 2: Data Gathering Process through Questionnaire Description

Description	Amount	Percentage
Questionnaire dissemination	50	100%
Questionnaires returned	49	98.00%
Valid questionnaires	49	100%
Invalid questionnaires	0	0%

The questionnaire is disseminated to 45 public accounting firms (PAF) in Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Gresik. However, only 10 PAF become valid research respondents. The total questionnaires that were disseminated is 50, but only 49 questionnaires were returned, or 98% from the total.

Table 3: Respondent Characteristic Description

Characteristic	Respondent amount	Percentage
Gender		
Male	34	69%
Female	15	31%
Education Degree		
Diploma	2	4%
Bachelor (S1)	47	94%
Master (S2)	1	2%
Doctoral (S3)	0	0%
Auditor Position		
Partner	5	10.20%
Senior Auditor	11	22.44%
Junior Auditor	33	67.34%
Working Period as Auditor		
Less than 1 year	15	30.61%
More than 1 years	21	42.85%
2 up to 5 years	7	14.28%
5 up to 10 years	1	2.04%
More than 10 years	6	12.24%

Outer Model

Outer model measurement in this study is conducted by measuring the indicator reflection that valued the correlation between item score/component score estimated by the value of the outer loading factor. The minimum value of the outer loading factor for an indicator that is appropriate reflects a variable of 0.5 (Chin, 1998).

Table 4: Outer Loading Estimation Result for First Iteration

Variable	Indicator Dimension	Indicator	Outer Loading Value	Conclusion
Auditor Competence	Personal data	MP1	0.805	Significant
		MP2	0.858	Significant
		MP3	0.618	Significant
	General knowledge	PU1	0.779	Significant
		PU2	0.432	Not significant
		PU3	0.661	Significant
		PU4	0.268	Not significant
	Specific expertise	KK1	0.550	Significant
		KK2	0.681	Significant
		KK3	0.774	Significant
Working Experience	Working period	LB1	0.750	Significant
		LB2	0.551	Significant
		LB3	0.836	Significant
		LB4	0.805	Significant
	Assignment quantity	BT1	0.653	Significant
		BT2	0.760	Significant
		BT3	0.684	Significant
		BT4	0.675	Significant
Auditor Professionalism	Professional dedication	PP1	0.474	Not significant
		PP2	0.835	Significant
		PP3	0.895	Significant
	Social responsibility	KS1	0.504	Significant
		KS2	0.404	Not significant
		KS3	0.542	Significant
	Self-reliance	KM1	0.804	Significant
		KM2	0.914	Significant
		KM3	0.855	Significant
	Professional faithfulness	KP1	0.898	Significant
KP2		0.826	Significant	

Variable	Indicator Dimension	Indicator	Outer Loading Value	Conclusion
	Relationship with associates	KP3	0.932	Significant
		HR1	0.260	Not significant
		HR2	0.824	Significant
		HR3	0.889	Significant
Auditor Independence	Audit program planning	PK1	0.775	Significant
		PK2	0.739	Significant
		PK3	-0.352	Not significant
	Independence of working conduct	IP1	0.878	Significant
		IP2	0.916	Significant
		IP3	0.853	Significant
	Reporting independence	PL1	0.560	Significant
		PL2	0.513	Significant
		PL3	0.522	Significant
Audit Quality	Audit quality	KA1	0.820	Significant
		KA2	0.741	Significant
		KA3	0.355	Not significant
		KA4	0.434	Not significant
		KA5	0.817	Significant
	Report quality	KL1	0.865	Significant
		KL2	0.852	Significant
		KL3	0.476	Not significant
		KL4	0.811	Significant
		KL5	0.785	Significant

Not every proxy has an outer loading factor value of more than 0.5. A proxy that has an outer loading factor value less than 0.5 is assumed not suitable to become an indicator that reflects its respective variable. It means that the indicator that has an outer loading factor less than 0.5 will be eliminated as it regarded as not able to represent or reflect the variable.

Table 5: Outer Loading Estimation Result for Second Iteration

Variable	Indicator Dimension	Indicator	Outer Loading Value	Conclusion
Auditor Competence	Personal data	MP1	0.817	Significant
		MP2	0.881	Significant
		MP3	0.604	Significant
	General knowledge	PU1	0.809	Significant
		PU3	0.547	Significant
	Specific expertise	KK1	0.511	Significant

Variable	Indicator Dimension	Indicator	Outer Loading Value	Conclusion
		KK2	0.724	Significant
		KK3	0.787	Significant
Working Experience	Working period	LB1	0.750	Significant
		LB2	0.511	Significant
		LB3	0.836	Significant
		LB4	0.805	Significant
	Assignment quantity	BT1	0.653	Significant
		BT2	0.760	Significant
		BT3	0.684	Significant
		BT4	0.675	Significant
Auditor Professionalism	Professional dedication	PP2	0.841	Significant
		PP3	0.899	Significant
	Social responsibility	KS1	0.514	Significant
		KS3	0.554	Significant
	Self-reliance	KM1	0.803	Significant
		KM2	0.920	Significant
		KM3	0.855	Significant
	Professional faithfulness	KP1	0.901	Significant
		KP2	0.820	Significant
		KP3	0.935	Significant
	Relationship with associates	HR2	0.816	Significant
		HR3	0.894	Significant
Auditor Independence	Audit program planning	PK1	0.764	Significant
		PK2	0.725	Significant
	Independence of working conduct	IP1	0.865	Significant
		IP2	0.887	Significant
		IP3	0.827	Significant
	Independence of working conduct	PL1	0.625	Significant
		PL2	0.572	Significant
PL3		0.566	Significant	
Audit Quality	Audit quality	KA1	0.854	Significant
		KA2	0.755	Significant
		KA5	0.844	Significant
	Report quality	KL1	0.872	Significant
		KL2	0.877	Significant
		KL4	0.818	Significant
		KL5	0.780	Significant

Table 5 shows the elimination result from all indicators that have a loading factor value less than 0.5. Proxy in table 5 is appropriate to become an indicator that reflects several variables. The second iteration is an iteration to determine an indicator used for reflective indicators from each variable.

Validity Test

Table 6: Discriminant Validity Measurement Result

Variable	Original Sample (O)	p-values
Auditor Competence	0.521	0.000
Auditor Working Experience	0.512	0.000
Auditor Professionalism	0.678	0.000
Auditor Independence	0.546	0.000
Audit Quality	0.688	0.000

The discriminant validity measured by comparing the value of the square root average variance extracted (AVE) for every construct with the correlation between other constructs within the model. AVE value must be more than 0.3 or has a p-value lower than the significance rate (0.05). Based on table 6, all variables have discriminant validity more than 0.30 and p-value less than significance rate of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables are valid and reliable.

Reliability Test

Table 7: Composite Reliability Measurement Result

Variable	Original Sample (O)	p-values
Auditor Competence	0.894	0.000
Auditor Working Experience	0.892	0.000
Auditor Professionalism	0.961	0.000
Auditor Independence	0.903	0.000
Audit Quality	0.939	0.000

After a variable is classified valid, then the variable in this study will be tested for its reliability. Variable reliability test by composite reliability technique. To determine whether the variable is reliable or not, we use a measurement tool via the reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient must be more than 0.7. Based on table 7, all variables have a composite reliability value more than 0.70. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables are reliable and dependable for used in further analysis.

Inner Model

Inner model test is conducted by measuring the relationship of all variables included in this study. Adjusted R-square for each endogenous variable measures the relationship of all variables within this study. The endogenous variable in this study is audit quality.

Table 8: Adjusted R-square Value

Endogenous Variable	Adjusted R-square (Adjusted R²)
Audit Quality	85.9%

Based on table 8, it can be seen that the audit quality variable has adjusted r-square of 85.9%. This result shows that audit quality variables can be explained by 85.9% by auditor competence, working experience, professionalism, and independence variable. The rest (14.1%) of audit quality is explained by other variables that are excluded from this study.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 9: T-Statistic Test Result

Hypothesis	Relationship between variable	Sample original (O)	P-Value
H ₁	Auditor Competence → Audit Quality	0.170	0.100*
H ₂	Working Experience → Audit Quality	0.030	0.410
H ₃	Auditor Professionalism → Audit Quality	0.690	0.000***
H ₄	Auditor Independence → Audit Quality	0.110	0.220

Table 9 shows that there is a statistically significant and positive relationship between auditor competence to audit quality with p-value 0.100 and coefficient 0.170. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this study is accepted. This result indicates that if auditor competence is increased by one value, then audit quality will be increased by 0.170.

The relationship between working experience to audit quality has a statistically insignificant and positive relationship with coefficient 0.030. The insignificance result as the p-value of the relationship is 0.410, where it more than 0.100. Therefore, the second hypothesis in this study is not accepted.

There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between auditor professionalism to audit quality with p-value 0.000 and coefficient 0.690. Therefore, the third hypothesis of this study is accepted. This result indicates that if auditor professionalism increases by one value, then audit quality will be increased by 0.690.

The relationship between auditor independence to audit quality is statistically insignificant and positive, with a coefficient of 0.110. The insignificance result as the p-value of the relationship is 0.220, where it more than 0.100. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis of this study is not accepted.

Discussion

Auditor Competence and Audit Quality

Hypothesis 1 states that auditor competency has a relationship to audit quality. The results of this study using statistical tests showed that the auditor competence variable has a statistically significant and positive relationship to the audit quality so that the first hypothesis was received with a significant level of 10%.

Based on a valid indicator item, it indicates that curiosity, widespread thinking, and the ability to handle uncertainty increase capability of delivering more exceptional audit quality. In other words, when the auditor competency improves, the quality of the auditor will also increase. Awareness that several findings can be subjective is an indication that an auditor has decent quality. The ability to work together on the team is also able to improve audit quality.

The ability to conduct analytical reviews, auditing knowledge and also knowledge of the public sector can provide better audit quality. Also, the expertise with management, understanding the science of statistics and computer use, as well as the ability to present reports properly also are able to improve the quality of the audit. High-quality audits are audits that improve the quality of information to be relied upon (Amiruddin, 2019). This study result is in line with the research of Iryani (2017), which proves a similar result.

Working Experience and Audit Quality

Hypothesis 2 states that the auditor's working experience has a significant relationship to the audit quality. The results of this study showed that the working experience variable has a positive relationship to the audit quality but was not proven to be statistically significant, so hypothesis two was rejected. As auditors understand the audit evidence and relevant information, the auditor will find it easier to detect mistakes and know the causes of these mistakes, but, surprisingly, the relationship is not significant. This insignificance is caused as the more auditors understand, the more auditors know the possibilities to commit the act of dishonesty, and this is what causes the work experience to not have a significant relationship to the audit quality.

The number of audit assignments, confusion in the collection and selection of evidence, the opportunity to learn from failure and success, and the motivation of auditors to get the job done quickly, do not have a relationship on the audit quality. The more audit tasks, the more auditors cannot divide the focus. The mistake in sorting out the evidence certainly will not relate to improving audit quality. The result is in line with the research of Kovinna and Betri (2014).

Auditor Professionalism and Audit Quality

Hypothesis 3 states that the auditor's professional assertiveness has a positive relationship to audit quality. The results of this study showed that the auditor professionalism variable has a positive relationship to audit quality and proved to be significant, so hypothesis three was accepted. Also, it can be concluded that the professional assertiveness of auditors is one of the essential factors to improve the quality of audit results.

Several factors are indicators in the professional assessment of auditors. These factors are to uphold the auditing profession, completing the work of the audit for inner satisfaction, never withdrawing from the task given, creating a transparency in the report for the community, providing honest opinions, planning the level of materiality. These factors are believed able to improve audit quality. Also, receiving an assessment from external auditors, providing accuracy in materiality, supporting the organisation that oversees the audit work, working following the external standards of auditors also have a significant relationship to the audit quality. Any indicators that are not eliminated can improve the audit quality generated by auditors. Auditors with high professional commitment will behave following the public interest and will not damage the professional image (Kusumawati & Syamsuddin, 2018). The results of this study were in line with the research conducted by Lesmana and Machdar (2015).

Auditor Independence and Audit Quality

The fourth hypothesis states that the auditor independence has a significant and positive relationship to the audit quality. The results of this study showed that the auditor independence variable has a positive relationship but is not significantly proven, so that the fourth hypothesis was rejected.

There are several indicators of independence as a program preparation, including investigative independence and free from (1) leadership intervention to determine, eliminate, or modify certain parts of the financial statements being examined, (2) an attitude of not cooperating about the application of procedures in selected audits, (3) the efforts of other parties on the subject of audit work, (4) client management efforts to determine the post to be examined, (5) personal interests or relationships that limit the inspection to the records of activities, certain people who

should be included in examination. The results showed that all indicators of independence were not proven to be able to improve audit quality.

The independence of the auditor is the attitude of impartiality, has no personal interest, and is not easily influenced by the parties interested in providing opinions. So, the opinion of the auditors is given based on high integrity and objectivity. However, when the independent attitude of the auditor clings to the personal justification of auditors, although the audit evaluation is done wrongly and cannot be justified, it certainly does not improve the quality of the audit report. Although the independent attitude is necessary, if the independent auditor does not have a level of knowledge or competence, it is not able to produce a qualified audit report. This is because the auditor also requires two-way communication with superiors to formulate the appropriate audit program. If the steps selected in the check are correct, then the audit quality is likely to increase. This study results are in line with the study of Al-Khaddash et Al. (2013).

Conclusion

This research aims to analyse the relationship of competence, working experience, professionalism, and independence of auditors to the audit quality. We used 49 questionnaires as a sample that were distributed to 10 public accounting firms. Based on the results of the data and analysis that has been done, it can be concluded that the competence of auditors and professionalism of auditors has a positive relationship to the audit quality. While the working experience and independence of auditors have no relationship to the quality of auditors. That is, the higher competence and professional assertiveness in an auditor, the audit quality will be increased.

This research has limitations where researchers are not able to directly monitor the process of filling questionnaires, allowing the filling of questionnaires to be done randomly by respondents or, in other words, not following the actual circumstances. Although the process of filling the questionnaire becomes a limitation in this research, the questionnaire is an appropriate instrument to illustrate the competence, professionalism, work experience, and independence of the auditor. Further research is expected to provide a differentiator between the auditors who are research respondents. This differentiator can be based on positions (junior, senior, and partner) respondents in the PAF where they work. Also, it is hoped that the researchers further conduct direct monitoring in the process of filling questionnaires in order to provide reliable results that follow the actual circumstances.



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