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The Effect Of Competency and Professional Skepticism On Audit Quality (Empirical Study at Public Accountant Office Bandung)

Erpi Rahman[1], Solihin Royani[2], Ardhiatul Halima Tuasalamony[3], Billa Adzani Putri[4],
Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Sebelas April @gmail.com[2] , ardhiatul.h@iainambon.ac.id,[3] billa.adzani@gmail.com[4]

Abstract. The objective of this study is to assess the impact of competence and professional skepticism on the quality of audits conducted at Public Accountant Offices (KAP) located in Bandung. The present work employs a quantitative research methodology. This research sample has 35 participants who completed 48 questionnaires issued to auditors employed at Public Accountant Offices (KAP) in Bandung. The data analysis in this work employs multiple linear regression models using IBM SPSS 19.0 (Statistical Program for Social Science) software. The study findings suggest that both the competency and professional skepticism variables have a concurrent and statistically significant impact on the quality of audits. The competency variable has a partially favorable and statistically significant impact on audit quality, whereas professional skepticism does not contribute significantly to audit quality. An Adjusted R Square value of 0.553 or 55.3% indicates that 44.7% of the variance is accounted for by factors other than the independent variables in this study.

Keywords: Competency, Professional Skepticism, Audit Quality

INTRODUCTION

A financial report is a crucial instrument for providing useful information to stakeholders regarding a company's financial status. By ensuring that the financial reports comply with the criteria of the Financial Accounting Standards Statement (PSAK) No. 1, financial reports serve as valuable tools for management decision-making.

The primary objective of a financial report audit is for an accountant to evaluate the appropriateness of presenting financial reports, which include cash flows, operating results, and financial status, in accordance with relevant accounting regulations. Following a financial audit, the auditor then prepares an accountant's report to reflect his assessment (Tandiontong, 2015: 64). Legislation No. 34 of 1954 regulates the usage of designations by accountants, together with the use of recognized accounting degrees and the privilege to participate in public practice. The intended purpose of this legislation is to protect the general public from accounting practices conducted by individuals lacking the necessary permission to provide such services.

The scope of Law No. 5 of 2011 encompasses several subjects, including the permissible services provided by public accountants, the process of licencing public accountants and public accounting firms (KAP), and the pertinent rights, obligations, and limitations of these professionals. Furthermore, this legislation not only regulates public accounting firms but also oversees public accountant professional associations, public accountant professional committees, KAP and foreign public accounting firms (KAPA) or foreign audit organizations (OAA), as well

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as provides guidance and supervision by the Minister and imposes criminal and administrative penalties.

Public Accountants are seen as competent in acting as intermediaries between the interests of investors and creditors and corporate management in the realm of financial accountability. It is imperative for them to demonstrate integrity, sagacity, and professionalism, and bear a moral obligation to furnish comprehensive and truthful information about the company's performance to those who are authorized to receive such information. (Source: Tandiontong, 2015: 75). Audit quality, as defined by Tandiontong (2015: 72), refers to the probability that an auditor will detect and reveal a violation in the accounting system of their client. According to Amrin (Tandiontong, 2015: 233), the quality of an audit is assessed based on several criteria, including auditor performance, professional development, independence, and compliance with audit standards.

Given the trust placed in public accountants, both they and the public accounting company are responsible for ensuring the quality of the audits they conduct. Nevertheless, investors often harbor skepticism regarding the integrity and impartiality of public accountants when it comes to financial statements.

In relation to the utilization of Public Accountant Services and Public Accounting Firms, the OJK has concluded that AP Marlinna and AP Merliyana Syamsul have committed a grave violation of POJK Number 13/POJK.03/2017. Their statements were said to have provided perspectives that did not faithfully reflect the condition of the company, resulting in financial losses for many stakeholders.

Meanwhile, AP Nunu Nurdiyaman seemed to establish that Wanaartha Life's financial position and level of health remained in accordance with applicable legislation, such that policyholders continued to buy insurance products with substantial profits without considering the associated risks. Per Article 3 POJK 13 of 2017, Jenly Hendrawan was determined to be deficient in the requisite abilities and expertise to serve as a public accountant in the financial services industry, thereby exacerbating the violations committed by AP Nunu Nurdiyaman. http://www.ojk.go.id.

Legal disputes involving Public Accountants and auditors have the potential to undermine public confidence in the Public Accounting field. A rise in audit failures is observed in Bandung, exemplified by the occurrences at the Public Accounting Firm (KAP) Jamaludin, Ardi, Sukinto, and Rekan. In accordance with the Decree of the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia Number 445/KM.1/2015 dated May 29, 2015, the Ministry of Finance has issued a letter imposing a license suspension sentence on Public Accountant Ben Ardi. This ruling pertains to Regulation No. 17/PMK.01/2018 issued by the Minister of Finance, which defines the services provided by Public Accountants. A 6-month suspension sentence was imposed on Ben Ardi, CPA, for failing to fully adhere to the Audit Standards (SA) and Professional Standards of Public Accountants (SPAP) during the general audit of PT. Bumi Citra Permai's financial statements in fiscal year 2013. This decision was made based on the findings of the PPPK audit team. Licence suspension proceedings were initiated against the Public Accounting Firm (KAP) Dr. H. E. Ristandi Suhardjadinata in compliance with Republic of Indonesia Minister of Finance Decree Number 424/KM.1/2017. This penalty was levied due to non-compliance with the regulatory requirements of public accountants, specifically concerning the Independent Auditor Report (LAI) for the clients of PDAM Tirta Anom in Banjar City and PDAM Tirta Galuh in Ciamis Regency for the fiscal year 2013.

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Cases involving auditors as independent parties should be avoided if the auditor possesses adequate expertise and experience to impartially, meticulously, and comprehensively carry out an audit of financial statements. Therefore, several relevant standards stress that every auditor must possess competency, as this competence directly impacts the quality of the audit generated. There are currently 10 Public Accounting Firms registered with the Public Accounting Firm Information System. Among them, KAP Roebiandini & Rekan has 8 auditors who do not possess a certificate, while KAP AF Rachman and Soetjipto WS has 1 auditor who yet lacks an auditor certificate.

One reason for the inadequate optimization of auditor knowledge and experience in conducting objective, meticulous, and comprehensive audits of financial statements is the absence of a certificate among auditors with less than one year of work experience. According to Wardani (2014), experience can be categorized into two types: direct experience and indirect experience. Direct experience is derived via practical work experience and vigilant supervision, whereas indirect experience is established by the possession of an auditor's certificate. Insufficient auditor experience can have a negative impact on the auditor's ability to conduct the examination and the quality of the audit provided.

Professional skepticism can affect the quality of audits because, according to Rahayu and Suhayati (2010: 42), the auditor is required to impartially assess the competence and sufficiency of the evidence received throughout the collection and evaluation of audit evidence. As data is collected and evaluated at different stages of the audit process, professional skepticism must be applied consistently.

The data provided by the client must be comprehensive as incomplete or often changing data can be problematic. The data provided by the client could potentially influence the auditor's degree of professional skepticism. In order to ensure the accuracy and validity of the obtained data and evidence, the auditor need thorough data that can be evaluated and cross-examined during the audit procedure.

Previous studies provide ample evidence supporting the importance of enhancing audit quality. The research conducted by Novita et al. (2023) and Muzahid (2019) provides evidence that competence significantly influences the quality of audits. These findings indicate that the level of expertise of the auditor directly correlates with the quality of the audit generated.

Investigations conducted by Renaldi and Mawardi (2021) and Novita et al. (2023) provide evidence of the influence of professional skepticism on audit quality. The level of professional skepticism exhibited by the auditor throughout the audit process directly correlates with the resultant quality of the audit.

In order to produce a high-quality audit, an auditor must possess both a professional skepticism attitude and audit experience or skill. Given their capacity to influence the quality of the final audit, these two factors are essential to the auditing process. Academic studies (Renaldi and Mawardi, 2021; Aruan et al., 2019) provide evidence that the quality of audits is affected by the level of professional skepticism and expertise.

Audit Quality

Tandiontong (2015: 72) defines the market-assessed joint probability as the likelihood that a qualified auditor will identify and report a breach in the client's accounting system. Therefore, it can be seen as the potential for an auditor to identify and disclose a violation in their client's accounting system.

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1. According to Tandiontong (2015: 73), audit quality can be assessed based on the indicator of input orientation. This input perspective encompasses the evolution of an auditor's profession, which is evident from their practical experience.
2. Process Orientation. Analytical process orientation encompasses both autonomy and adherence to audit requirements.
3. Orientation toward output. Output orientation encompasses the performance of auditors. Knechel et al. (2012) as cited in Tandiontong (2015, 226)

Competent and independent auditors apply high-quality auditor judgment, characterized by skepticism and professional deliberation, during the implementation of the audit process. Together with a well-structured audit procedure that follows well-recognized standards, this results in the production of a reliable audit.

Competence

The First General Standard (SA section 210 in SPAP, 2001) mandates that the audit must be conducted by one or more auditors who possess enough technical expertise and training. Auditors must exercise their professional skills with care and meticulousness when performing the audit and preparing the report, as specified by the Third General Standard (SA section 230 in SPAP, 2001).

Following Rahayu and Suhayati (2010: 41), auditors must possess sufficient technical skills and training, precisely expertise, training, and experience. Alsaeedi and Kamyabi authored the paper "The Impact of Auditor Competence on Audit Quality," which was published in 2018. This study investigates the correlation between audit quality and auditor competence, which encompasses technical expertise and experience. The findings suggest that auditors with greater competence tend to deliver audits of superior quality.

The existing literature investigating the correlation between competence and audit quality has demonstrated that competence exerts a favorable and substantial influence on audit quality. The study was carried out using Novita et al.'s (2023) and Muzahid (2019) methodologies.

H1: Competence has a positive and significant effect on audit quality.

Professional Skepticism

Professional skepticism is characterized by a tendency to evaluate audit evidence thoroughly and to consistently investigate and maintain awareness of situations that may indicate misrepresentation, whether caused by fraud or mistake (SA, 200). It is inherent for an auditor to possess a skeptical disposition. Wind (2014: 47) defines skepticism as a persistent attitude of distrust towards observed phenomena. Undoubtedly, this suspicion will prompt the posing of several inquiries, which will ultimately culminate in the discovery of the solution. Professional skepticism encompasses several components, such as preserving a receptive mindset, increasing consciousness, critically assessing the evidence, and seeking substantiation (Wind, 2014: 117). In 2016, Dugan et al. published a study titled "The Impact of Professional Skepticism on Audit Quality: An Analysis of Audit Review Observations." This research presents evidence that professional skepticism significantly influences the quality of audits. Through the analysis of observed audit data, the researchers found a notable association between increased professional skepticism and improved audit quality. The example mentioned earlier illustrates the need to employ a critical and objective attitude while carrying out audit operations. Previous study elucidating the connection between professional skepticism and audit quality has identified a

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positive and significant influence of professional skepticism on the latter. This investigation was conducted by Rafael and Mawardi (2021) and Novita et al. (2023).

H2: Professional skepticism has a positive and significant effect on audit quality.

METHOD

Research Design

In order to complete this study, the author employed a quantitative, survey-style methodology. Survey research, as defined by Kerlinger in (Sugiyono, 2022: 56), is a type of investigation conducted on various sizes of groups by analyzing data obtained from samples representative of the population. The objective is to identify the relative frequencies, distributions, and correlations between social and psychological variables.

The quantitative approach, as defined by Sugiyono (2022: 16), is a research methodology grounded in the positivist ideology. Applied to specific populations or samples, this approach involves gathering data using research tools and conducting quantitative or statistical data analysis to test the formulated hypothesis.

Population, Sampling Techniques, and Samples Research

The research population consists of all auditors employed in public accounting firms (KAP) in Bandung City. The sample size in this study was established using the cluster sampling technique. Cluster sampling refers to a sampling strategy employed to select a sample when the object of research or the data source is extensive, such as the population of a country, province, or district. This approach is employed due to the restricted availability of auditors who can serve as respondents. The study's sample criteria include Public Accounting Firms (KAP) in Bandung City that express their willingness to participate. The research was conducted at 8 Public Accounting Firms (KAP) in Bandung City, with a combined sample of 35 auditors. Data were gathered through primary data collection through the distribution of questionnaires to participants. This questionnaire comprises statements about the quality, competence, and professional skepticism of audits, assessed on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

Data Analysis Method

The data analysis model used in this study is multiple regression analysis. The multiple regression equation is as follows:

$$\mathbf{Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2}$$

Description:
Y = audit quality
a = constant
b = regression coefficient
X_1 = competence
X_2 = professional skepticism

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study includes auditors professionally engaged by Public Accounting Firms (KAP) located in the Bandung City region. The data collection technique was the direct distribution of questionnaires to auditors employed by Public Accounting Firms (KAP) in the Bandung City region. Among the 48 surveys distributed, 35 were returned satisfactorily. A total of thirty-five

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completed surveys are suitable for processing. Table 1 presents a breakdown of the Public Accounting Firms (KAP) that are the focus of this investigation.

Table 1 Data Collection

Nama Kantor Akuntan Publik (KAP)	Kuesioner yang disebar	Kuesioner yang kembali	%
KAP Koesbandijah, Beddy Samsi & Setiasih	6	4	66,7
KAP Dra. Yati Ruhiyati	6	6	100
KAP Roebiandini & Rekan	6	4	66,7
KAP Djoemarma, Wahyudin & Rekan	6	5	83,3
KAP Sabar & Rekan	6	5	83,3
KAP Jahja Gunawan & Rekan	6	1	16,7
KAP Prof. Dr. H. TB Hasanudin, M.Sc & Rekan	6	6	100
KAP AF. Rachman & Soetjipto WS	6	4	66,7

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2024

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The number of samples, minimum value, maximum value, average (mean), and standard deviation of each variable are reported as follows in an attempt to give a basic summary of the test.:

Table 2 Results of Descriptive Statistical Tests

Variabel	N	Min	Max	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*
Kompetensi	35	29.00	40.00	34.9714	3.15749
Skeptisme Profesional	35	31.00	45.00	39.5143	4.09714
Kualitas Audit	35	20.00	25.00	22.7143	2.13612

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

The researcher can characterize the distribution data generated from the descriptive statistical test as follows:

Among the 35 respondents (N), the competency variable (X1) indicates that the lowest competency value was 29 and the highest was 40. The mean number of respondents who agreed with the competency statement of 35 respondents was 34.9714, with a standard deviation of 3.15749. The range is equal to 11, where the range is defined as the numerical difference between the highest and lowest numbers.

35 responses (N) were recorded for the Professional Skepticism Variable (X2). These variables' lowest and highest values are associated with professional skepticism, precisely 31 and 45, respectively. The mean number of participants, totaling 35, who agreed with the statement on professional skepticism is 39.5143, with a standard deviation of 4.09714. It is the fourteen-point difference between the maximum and minimum numbers that determines the range.

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The independent variable Audit Quality (Y) represents the count of respondents (N), which is 35—the respondents' ratings for audit quality range from a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 45. Among the 35 participants, the mean number of respondents who agreed with the audit quality statement was 22.7143, with a standard deviation of 2.13612. A range is a numerical interval defined as the five-point difference between the maximum and minimum values.

Validity Test

A validity assessment is performed as a research tool to verify the suitability of the statements in the questionnaire. This test aims to assess the validity of the data acquired throughout the research using a pre-established measuring instrument, namely a questionnaire. The validity test results are displayed in Table 3 below:

Table 3 Validity Test Results

Variabel	rhitung	Sig	rtabel	Ket
Kompetensi				
1	0.611	0.05	0.3338	Valid
2	0.714	0.05	0.3338	Valid
3	0.725	0.05	0.3338	Valid
4	0.744	0.05	0.3338	Valid
5	0.675	0.05	0.3338	Valid
6	0.689	0.05	0.3338	Valid
7	0.706	0.05	0.3338	Valid
8	0.778	0.05	0.3338	Valid
Skeptisme Profesional				
1	0.707	0.05	0.3338	Valid
2	0.514	0.05	0.3338	Valid
3	0.817	0.05	0.3338	Valid
4	0.683	0.05	0.3338	Valid
5	0.742	0.05	0.3338	Valid
6	0.822	0.05	0.3338	Valid
7	0.837	0.05	0.3338	Valid
8	0.771	0.05	0.3338	Valid
9	0.846	0.05	0.3338	Valid
Kualitas Audit				
1	0.811	0.05	0.3338	Valid
2	0.870	0.05	0.3338	Valid
3	0.897	0.05	0.3338	Valid
4	0.846	0.05	0.3338	Valid
5	0.815	0.05	0.3338	Valid

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

From the validity test findings, it can be inferred that all statement items for each variable are deemed legitimate, as the computed r-value exceeds the table r value of 0.3338.

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Reliability Test

A reliability test demonstrates the consistency between the scores provided at one point in time and the scores obtained at another point in time. This test is specifically designed to evaluate the extent to which the data-collecting instrument demonstrates precision, accuracy, stability, or consistency in uncovering certain phenomena. The findings of the reliability test are displayed in Table 4 below:

Table 4 Reliability Test Results

Variabel	*Cronbach's Alpha*	N *Of Items*	Ket
Kompetensi	0.853	8	Reliabel
Skeptisme Profesional	0.896	9	Reliabel
Kualitas Audit	0.902	5	Reliabel

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the independent variable, competence, and the dependent variable, audit quality, are 0.853 and 0.896, respectively, for professional skepticism and 0.902, as shown in Table 4. Therefore, provided that the Cronbach's Alpha value is above 0.60, it can be concluded that the claims made in the three research variables are reliable.

Classic Assumption Test

Normality Test

The objective of the normality test is to ascertain if the collected data distribution closely approximates or adheres to a normal distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is a statistical testing method employed in this work to assess the normality. A dataset is considered to be regularly distributed if the resulting probability asymptotic significance value (two-tailed) is above 0.05. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	
	Unstandardized Residual
N	35
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.200

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, derived from Table 5 above, show that the statistical test value is 0.200, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, it may be concluded that the study's data exhibit a regular distribution and meet the requirements of the normality test.

Multicollinearity Test

The Multicollinearity Test is used to determine if there is a correlation between independent variables in a well-formed regression model. Intercorrelation among the independent variables should be absent. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values below ten or tolerance values over 0.10 indicate the absence of multicollinearity.

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Table 6 Multicollinearity Test Results

Variabel	Tolerance	VIF
Kompetensi	.354	2.825
Skeptisme Profesional	.354	2.825

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

These findings are evident from the total VIF value of 2.825, less than 10, and the tolerance value of 0.354, more significant than 0.10. Hence, it can be inferred that the variables examined in this study lack or do not exhibit multicollinearity with other independent variables.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test aims to determine if there is unequal variance in the residuals of different observations in the regression model. Refer to the table below for the findings of the heteroscedasticity test conducted in this work:

Table 7 Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Variabel	Sig.	Keterangan
Kompetensi	.444	Bebas heteroskedastisitas
Skeptisme Profesional	.179	Bebas heteroskedastisitas

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

According to the test findings obtained from Table 7, heteroscedasticity does not impact the regression model used, as each variable's significance value exceeds 0.05.

Multiple Linear Regression Test

The effect of independent variables, namely competence (X1) and professional skepticism (X2), on the dependent variable of audit quality (Y) is quantified using multiple linear regression analysis. The regression equation obtained from the multiple linear regression test is as follows:

Table 8 Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

	Unstandardized Coefficients		*Standardized Coefficients*		
Variabel	B	*Std. Error*	Beta	T	Sig.
Kompetensi	.303	.130	.447	2.321	.027
Skeptisme Profesional	.184	.100	.353	1.834	.076

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

Analyzing the data in Table 8 allows for the development of a prediction model for the variables of competence and professional skepticism regarding audit quality.

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2$$

$$Y = 4{,}851 + 0.303X_1 + 0.184X_2$$

The regression equation above can be explained as follows:

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Under the premise that the competence variable (X1) and professional skepticism (X2) do not impact the audit quality variable, the a-value of =4.851 remains constant. With utf the independent variable, the audit quality variable will remain unchanged.

Based on the study's analysis, it can be concluded that the competence regression coefficient (X1) value of 0.303 indicates a positive impact of the competence variable on audit quality, assuming that no other factors are considered. For each incremental unit in the competence variable, the audit quality will be influenced by a factor of 0.303. The b2 value, or regression coefficient value of professional skepticism (X2), of 0.184 indicates that the professional skepticism variable positively impacts audit quality. Under the assumption that other factors are not considered in this study, each incremental unit in the professional skepticism variable will result in a 0.184 improvement in audit quality.

Simultaneous Significance Test (F Test)

This test aims to jointly assess the impact of all independent variables included in the model on the dependent variable. The results of the concurrent test (F test) are displayed in the table included below:

Table 9 Simultaneous Significance Test (F Test) Results

Model	*Sum of Squares*	Df	*Mean Square*	F	Sig.
Regression	89.841	2	44.921	22.013	<,001[b]
Residual	65.301	32	2.041		
Total	155.143	34			

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

The table above shows that the significance value for the influence of Competence (X1) and Professional Skepticism (X2) on Audit Quality (Y) is 0.001, which is less than the threshold of 0.05. Additionally, the value of **I***HXa* 22.013 is greater than the value of **I***Ybi* 3.29. These findings suggest that competence (X1) and professional skepticism (X2) have a significant simultaneous influence on audit quality (Y).

Determination Coefficient Test

The purpose of this test is to assess the impact of X_1 (Competence) and X_2 (Professional Skepticism) on the Y variable (Audit Quality) by examining the adjusted R-Square value of the determination coefficient. The Adjusted R^2 determination coefficient test yields the following results:

Table 10 Results of Determination Coefficient Test

Model	R	*R Square*	*Adjusted R Square*	*Std. Error of the Estimate*
1	.761[a]	.579	.553	1.42852

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

The provided table indicates that the Adjusted R Square value is 0.553, which is equivalent to 55.3%. These findings indicate that professional competence and skepticism have a significant impact of 55.3% on the dependent variable, audit quality. The remaining 44.7% of the variation is attributed to factors other than the independent variables examined in this study.

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Partial Significance Test (t-Test)

The objective of this test is to ascertain the extent to which one independent variable may independently account for the variation in the dependent variable. Presented below are the outcomes of the hypothesis test conducted using the t-test:

Table 11 Partial Test Results (t-Test)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		*Standardized Coefficients*		
Variabel	**B**	***Std. Error***	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
Kompetensi	.303	.130	.447	2.321	.027
Skeptisme Profesional	.184	.100	.353	1.834	.076

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

Based on the results of the t-test in the table above, the following results were obtained: With a significance value of 0.027 <0.05 and a t-test value of 2.321 > t-test 2.036, the competency variable (X1) is statistically significant. With a significance value of 0.76 > 0.05 and a t-test value of 1.834 < t-test 2.036, the professional skepticism variable (X2) is statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Competence on Audit Quality

The competency variable (X1) is 2.321, greater than the critical value of 2.036. The significance value of 0.027 is less than 0.05. This is consistent with the initial hypothesis: "Competence has a substantial influence on audit quality." This indicates that H1 has been authorized. Therefore, it may be asserted that competence substantially and positively impacts the quality of audits. Consequently, the level of expertise an auditor possesses will directly determine the quality of the audit offered. Conversely, if auditors cannot demonstrate expertise, they will also encounter difficulties in carrying out the audit process.

Having received formal training in accounting and auditing, a trained auditor will possess a more comprehensive knowledge of financial analytical abilities, auditing standards, and accounting principles during an audit. During the audit process, the auditor will not only be more proficient in identifying errors committed by the client but also diligently scrutinize any irregularities in the financial accounts. Similarly, a proficient auditor will exercise greater caution in selecting relevant information regarding the audit procedure than a less proficient auditor.

The current study's findings support Renaldi and Mawardi R (2021) conclusions, as published in the Journal of Accounting Science, Volume 14 (2), indicating the significant and beneficial influence of competence on the quality of audits. Meanwhile, research conducted by Novita R. et al. (2023) and published in the Research In Accounting Journal, Vol. 3 (1), provides evidence that competence has a positive and significant influence on audit quality in Public Accounting Firms (KAP) in the Pekanbaru region.

The Influence of Professional Skepticism on Audit Quality

A value of 0.76, greater than the significance level of 0.05, is obtained for the professional skepticism variable (X2). The value of $b\mathcal{H}\boldsymbol{X}bb$ is 1.834, which is lower than the value of $tbbi$ 2.036. Based on the second hypothesis proposed, which asserts that "professional skepticism has a substantial influence on assurance quality in audits," This suggests that the H2 switch is

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deactivated. Hence, it may be asserted that professional skepticism has minimal influence on the quality of audits. This phenomenon can be attributed to the widespread presence of professional skepticism in auditing, where auditors remain hesitant to make statements for which they lack dependable proof.

Research conducted by Tawakkal (2019) in the Journal of Economics, Vol. 2 (2), and the Scientific Journal of Accounting Research, Vol. 8 (8), has shown that professional skepticism has no substantial impact on audit quality. Nevertheless, it contradicts the conclusions of the research conducted by Carpenter et al. in Tawakkal (2019), which asserts that a decrease in audit quality will occur when auditors need more professional skepticism. The widespread worry among auditors about the possibility of substantial audit risks arising from errors or omissions during the auditing process makes their skepticism more pronounced. Consequently, the audit reports exhibit a high level of quality.

CONCLUSION

1. From the presented research findings, the following conclusions can be inferred: The findings of this study provide partial evidence supporting the notion that the Competence variable (X_1) exerts a positive and statistically significant impact on Audit Quality (Y). These findings indicate a positive correlation between the level of expertise exhibited by an auditor and the quality of the audit generated.
2. This study's findings provide limited evidence that the variable of Professional Skepticism (X_3) does not exert a statistically significant impact on Audit Quality (Y).
3. Competence and professional skepticism exert a concurrent and substantial impact on the quality of audit outcomes. The determination coefficient test yielded an Adjusted R square value of 0.553 or 55.3%. This indicates that competence and professional skepticism have a 55.3% impact on the dependent variable, audit quality. The remaining 44.7% is attributed to factors other than the independent variables evaluated in this study.

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