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Internal Auditor Competence in Covid-19 Budget Fraud Detection

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Abstract:- This study aims to analyze the effect of risk-based audit techniques, the competence and experience of auditors on the ability of government internal auditors to detect the fraud in Covid 19 budget. The survey was conducted on government auditors who work at Regional Inspectorate of Enrekang Regency amounted to 47 auditors. The data were collected by questionnaires and analyzed by multiple regression analysis. The results showed that the risk-based audit techniques, competence and experience of auditors have a significant positive effect on the detection of Covid-19 budget fraud in Enrekang Regency.

The results of the study provide a theoretical contribution to the development of knowledge related to the risk-based audit techniques, competence and experience of auditors in detecting fraud. The research results are practically expected to contribute to Enrekang Regency Government in considering ways or techniques in detecting all forms of fraud in COVID-19 social assistance or other frauds.

Keywords:- Risk-Based Audit Techniques, Auditor Competence, Auditor Experience, Covid-19 Budget

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian government has allocated a fairly large budget for economic recovery and financial stability caused by Covid-19 pandemic. Through the change of State Budget (APBN) in 2020, funds were allocated amounting to 695.2 trillion rupiah (Directorate General of Budget, Ministry of Finance, 2020). A large amount of budget is generally prone to fraud (Kumaat, 2011). In relation to the management of the Covid-19 budget, Indonesia Corruption Watch reported that there were 107 cases of social assistance abuse for the Covid-19 in 2020. During the first semester of 2021, the budget abuse for the covid-19 countermeasures increased by 5 (five) cases (ICW, 2020). Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia (BPK RI) found several cases in South Sulawesi Provincial Government which indicated a fraud in the Covid-19 budget of Rp 1.1 billion And in Enrekang Regency (https://sulsel.voice.com). Government, several cases were also found indicating fraud in the aid budget of covid-19, such as the honorary medical personnels were not paid for 6 months, the budget for Puskesmas was cut(https://mediakpk.co.id).

Fraud will also occur in any organization (Gee, 2015). The threat of fraud will have an impact on other people or organizations in form of losses, reduce reputation and legal consequences (Stamler et al., 2014). The cases and allegations of potential corruption have become a concern for many parties over accountability and transparency in the management of social assistance of Covid -19 (Launa & Lasianawati, 2021). The concerns and suspicions of various parties are due to the increasing risk of corruption in dealing with the covid pandemic (Michalak & Brzezinski, 2021). Therefore, government must pay special attention to the cases of funds abuse for the Covid-19 pandemic. Because a fairly large funds have been invested for economic recovery due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the government must ensure that the management of these funds is carried out transparently (Csonka & Salazar, 2021). The role of internal audit ensures to stakeholders that the management of state finances is carried out correctly, no errors occur and supporting the increasing of corporate governance effectiveness (Caratas & Spatariu, 2014). Internal audit is led to be an extension of management in carrying out supervision (Kaunang, 2013).

The rise of corruption cases in the budget management of Covid-19 is an indication that fraud prevention effort is still ineffective. Therefore, the internal auditors of government play a role in detecting the fraud (Agustina et al., 2021). The internal auditors will be more easily detecting fraud that occurs because they are in an organization that supervises and provides recommendations (Bandiyono, 2021). Detection is carried out if prevention efforts fail and unable to stem the fraud to occure and provide space for corruption actors to carry out their unscrupulous action (Oktaviani et al., 2016) and (Purba, 2015). Because many corruptions occur, an effective method is needed to detect the acts of fraud (Syahputra & Urumsah, 2019). Government internal auditors must be capable to detect such fraud.

By applying the risk-based audit techniques, audit procedures and efforts of auditor team are expected to concentrate on the objects of a high risk (Tuanakota, 2013). Risk-based internal auditing makes the internal auditors focus on high risk points to find the potential for possible fraud (Ar'Reza et al., 2020). Indonesian government internal audit standard (session 1210.A2) explains that auditors must have adequate capabilities and skills to evaluate fraud risk and manage fraud risk (Indonesian Government Internal Auditor Association, 2021).

In addition to risk-based techniques, auditors can also use their ability to detect fraud. Auditor competence is the ability of an auditor in form of knowledge, expertise and skills in carrying out audit activities that can be developed through a continuous education process (Pura, 2017). Competencies is important in audit activities and success in detecting fraud are influenced by auditor competencies (Zaini & Musyarofah, 2020). Therefore, auditors must have competence in detecting fraud. Detecting fraud is difficult that special competence is needed in carrying out auditing (Mulyandini, 2020).

Experience is also another necessary factor in detecting fraud. Experience refers to the length a person experiences an event. Experienced Auditors will easily detect fraud, because the many jobs they have handled will make them easier to complete the work (Ningsih et al., 2020).

Based on the explication above, this study is directed to analyze the effect of risk-based audit techniques, competence and experience of auditors on the ability of government internal auditors to detect fraud in Covid 19 budget.

II. REVIEW OF STUDY AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

➤ Attribution Theory

Weiner (2004) in (Thoron & Bunch, 2014) defines attribution theory as the way individuals interpret the success or failure of their own behavior or the behavior of others. The attribution process can be linked to a model of decision-making behavior. An auditor, when dealing with fraud during an audit, will try to find the cause of the fraud and draw conclusions about the fraud (Agustina et al., 2021). Detection is the auditor's effort in finding the risk of fraud.

> Fraud dan Fraud Detection

Fraud is an act of deviation carried out intentionally by someone with an intention of taking company assets through fraud that results in losses to the organization/company or other people and benefits the perpetrators (Purba, 2015). Fraud detection is an attempt to obtain sufficient early indications of fraud, as well as to narrow the space for the perpetrators of fraud (Kumaat, 2011). According to (Zamzami et al., 2016) the possible techniques for fraud prevention and detection are; (a) routine operational audits (b) internal control review and improvement (c) cash checks (d) password protection. There are three methods in detecting the occurrence of fraud, namely; (a) maximizing whistleblower hotlines, namely establishing an effective reporting mechanism for complaints of fraud, (b) process controls, a control specifically designed to detect fraudulent activities, irregularities, and errors, independent analysis, physical hospitalization and audit, (c) Proactive fraud detection, a verification and monitoring continuously on every transaction or business activity indicating fraud (Purba, 2015).

➤ Risk-Based Audit Techniques

Risk-based audit is a series of monitoring activities carried out in a planned, integrated and continuous manner to underatke; (a) mapping to identify the fraud risk points, (b) observations to deepen the fraud risk points (c) data verification and analysis to reveal fraud level at possible and prone risk points (Kumaat, 2011).

According to (Davies & Aston, 2011) risk-based auditing consists of several elements, namely: (a) internal risk, the risk or error occurs in the place where the company conducts its business activities (b) control risk, errors occur due to weakness or limitations of control system (c) detection risk, errors occur due to lack of experience, poor supervision or negligence by auditor. According to (Tuanakota, 2013) the risk assessment procedure consists of (a) inquiries of management and others, (b) observation and inspection, (c) analytical procedures. The more significant the risk, the more sensitive the fraud occurs so that a special fraud detection is needed (Purba, 2015). The results of the research (Swastyami, 2016), (Basri & Umar, 2021) and (Latuconsina & Rahim, 2021) show that risk-based auditing has a positive effect on fraud detection. The more effective the risk-based audit techniques applied, the more fraud detection will be carried out by the auditor. Thus, a hypothesis can be proposed:

Ha1: Risk-based audit techniques have a positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect Covid 19 budget fraud

➤ Auditor Competence

Auditor competence refers to the ability in form of knowledge, expertise and skills to undertake audit activities that can be developed through a continuous education process (Pura, 2017). Internal auditors must have the knowledge, skills, and other competencies needed to undertake their duties and because responsibilities, their activities produce recommendations to improve company performance (Bayunitri & Christinawati, 2019). Furthermore, based on BPK-RI Regulation Number 01 of 2017 concerning State Financial Audit Standards, auditors collectively must have adequate professional skills to do auditing tasks. (BPK RI, 2017). The auditor's professional skills can be in form of knowledge. expertise and experience needed to carry out auditing tasks. To maintain that professional skill, the auditor must have adequate competence and the competencies must be maintained or developed through a continuous professional education process. undertaking the auditor auditing, must competence/skills which include: (a). Knowledge of auditing standards, this knowledge can be applied in auditing that the auditor must also have educational background, expertise and experience in applying this knowledge in auditing. (b). General knowledge/object of auditing, this knowledge is about the environment of the entity, program or activity being auidited. (c) Ability to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and writing. (d) Adequate skills of auditing, can be in form of skills in statistics, information technology,

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If the competence of auditor increases, his ability to detect fraud will increase (Noch et al., 2022). Thus, a hypothesis can be proposed:

Ha2: Auditor competence has a positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect Covid-19 budget fraud

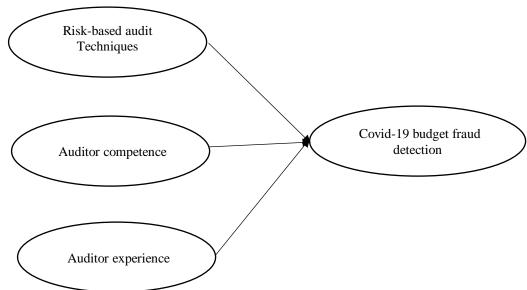
> Auditor experience

Experience is the combination of all activities or events a person has experienced (Ningsih et al., 2020). Experience is measured by the amount of time spent during undertaking tasks (Agustina et al., 2021). Auditor experience is relating to how long an auditor has worked in auditing field and how many

auditing work has been completed by an auditor. Several research results show that auditor experience has a significant positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect fraud (Bandiyono, 2021), (Agustina et al., 2021), (Hazim Widodo & Chariri, 2021), (Bandiyono, 2021), (Agustina et al. ., 2021), (Yessie, 2020). The longer the auditor works and the more jobs he has completed, the easier the auditor detect fraud. Thus, a hypothesis can be proposed:

Ha3: Auditor experience has a positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect Covid 19 budget fraud

Conceptual Framework Model



III. METHODOLOGY

This research is a quantitative approach starting from developing propositions and hypotheses then the hypothesis is tested with quantitative data until a new concept/thesis or tested hypothesis (Ferdinand, 2011). Research respondents are functional government auditors who work at the Regional Inspectorate of Enrekang Regency, South Sulawesi Province, amounted to 47 auditors. Simple Random Sampling technique was used to draw the research sample (Sugiyono, 2016). The

data form was cross-sectional data collected by a questionnaire technique (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017).

The research object was social aids for covid-19 and the research variable consists of fraud detection (Y) as an independent variable and the independent variable consists of risk-based audit techniques (X_1) , auditor competence (X_2) and auditor experience (X_3) . These variables are measured by the following indicators:

Table 1: Operasional Variabel

No	Variables	Indicators	
1	Fraud detection (Y)	 Maximize complaint channel 	
		2. Process control	
		3. Proactive detection	
		Source:(Purba, 2015)	
2	Risk-based audit technique (X_1)	Inquiries of management and others	
		2. Observatioan and inspection	
		3. Analytical procedure	

		Source: (Tuanakota, 2013)		
3	Auditor competence (X ₂)	 Knowledge of auditing standard 		
		2. Knowledge of auditing object		
		3. Communication skill		
		4. Auditing skill (statistics dan technology)		
		Source :(BPK RI, 2017)		
4	Auditor experience (X ₃)	 Length of work Volume/numbers of jobs 		
		Source :(Iskandar et al., 2022)		

The data analysis used multiple regression analysis, with the following regression equation:

 $Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$

Notes:

Y: Fraud detection α : Constanta

 $\begin{array}{lll} \beta_{1\text{--}3} & : & Coofficient \ regression \\ X_1 & : & Risk-based \ audit \ technique \\ X_2 & : & Auditor \ competence \\ X_3 & : & Auditor \ experience \\ \end{array}$

e : error term

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

> Result

The results of the descriptive analysis can be explained that the average value of the risk-based audit technique variable (X_1) is 21.44% with a standard deviation of 1.39, auditor competence (X_2) with an average value of 22.80% and a standard deviation of 1.13, auditor experience (X_3) has an average value of 24.93% with a standard deviation of 2.41 and fraud detection (Y) has an average value of 31.74% with a standard deviation of 1.15.

The results of hypothesis testing regarding the effect of risk-based audit techniques, auditor competence and knowledge on Covid-19 budget fraud detection are presented in the following table:

Table 2: Hiphotesis Test

Variable elements	Regression Coefficient Value	Tvalue	Probability
Constanta	14,560	4,196	0,000
Risk-based audit technique (X_1)	0,356	3,638	0,001
Competence (X_2)	0,256	2,143	0,038
Experience (X ₃)	0,159	2,814	0,007
Adjusted R ²			0,36

Source: Data processed in 2022

Based on the data in table 2, the regression coefficient value for the risk-based audit technique variable is positive at 0.356 and significant at 0.001 less than 0.05. So at an error rate of 5%, H01 is rejected and Ha1 (the first research hypothesis) is accepted. Thus, at the 95% confidence level, it can be concluded that the risk-based audit techniques have a significant positive effect on fraud detection. Auditor competence has a positive regression coefficient value of 0.256 and significant at a value of 0.038 less than 0.05. So at an error rate of 5%, H02 is rejected and Ha2 (second research hypothesis) is accepted. Therefore, at the 95% confidence level, it can be concluded that auditor competence has a significant positive effect on fraud detection. And the value coefficient of auditor experience is also positive at 0.159 and significant at a value of 0.007 less than 0.005. So at an error rate of 5%, H03 is rejected and Ha3 (the third research hypothesis) is accepted. Thus, at the 95% confidence level, it can be concluded that the auditor experience has a significant positive effect on fraud detection.

The results of the analysis of determination (R^2) show the adjusted R^2 value is 0.36 which means that the risk-based audit technique (X_1) , auditor competence (X_2) and auditor experience (X_3) have effect on fraud detection by 36%. The remain 67% is the effect of other factors outside of this research on fraud detection.

➤ Discussion

• Effect of Risk-Based Audit Techniques on Fraud Detection

The result of the first hypothesis (Ha1) test shows that the risk-based audit technique has effect on Covid-19 budget fraud detection. The more effective the audit implementations with risk-based audit technique, the more fraud detection the auditors undertaken. The application of risk-based audit techniques in undertaking audit activities is important, because with this technique the auditor can trace the risk points and find fraud.

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Although fraud prevention is invariably carried out, there always occur potential fraud in certain conditions and areas and this gives opportunity for perpetrators to commit the fraud crimes (Purba, 2015). Fraud perpetrators always try to find opportunities to take action. The auditor must understand the points of fraud risk that occur. The higher the risk, the higher the demand for responsibility on auditor to detect fraud (Swastyami, 2016). Auditors must apply risk assessment procedures identify fraud risks (Tuanakota, 2013). The result of this study is in line with the opinion (Purba, 2015) who said that the more significant the risk, the more sensitive the occurrence of fraud so that a special fraud detection is needed (Purba, 2015).

• Effect of Auditor Competence on Fraud Detection

The result of the second hypothesis (H2) test indicates that the auditor competence has a positive effect on the Covid-19 budget fraud detection. This means that the more increase of ability an auditor has, the more increase of fraud detection the auditor conducts. The results of this study support the research by (Noch et al., 2022) that auditor competence has an effect on fraud detection.

Competence is the ability a person possesses in carrying out an activity. Auditors who have high competence will produce good performance in detecting fraud. In internal audit standard of Indonesian government (session 1210.A2) it is explained that auditors must have adequate capabilities and skills to evaluate fraud risk and how to manage fraud risk (Indonesian Government Internal Auditor Association, 2021).

Detecting fraud is not easy. Special competence is needed to do an examination (Mulyandini, 2020). Important competence in audit activities and success in detecting fraud are influenced by auditor competencies (Zaini & Musyarofah, 2020). Competence is needed so that the auditor can perform a quick and precise prevention and precisely and make it more sensitive to an act of fraud (Amalia et al., 2021).

• Effect of Auditor Experience on Fraud Detection

The result of the third hypothesis (Ha3) test denotes that auditor experience has a significant positive effect on the Covid-19 budget fraud detection. The longer the auditor works and the more tasks he has completed, the easier the auditor detects the fraud.

Experience is an important factor in detecting fraud. This experience is obtained from doing practices and the lenght to work as an auditor that the skills are honed over time (Iskandar et al., 2022). According to (Agustina et al., 2021) auditors with longer experience in managerial or supervisory field tend to be faster in detecting fraud. The more audit experiences a person has, the higher the likelihood of facing a fraud case because they are better to ignore irrelevant information. In addition, they are more likely to recognize evidence of fraud risk clues and as a result the more likely they are to spot fraud.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the study is that the risk-based audit technique, competence and experience of auditors have a significant positive effect on fraud detection. The more effective the audit is implemented with risk-based audit technique, the more competence the auditor will be and the longer the auditor experience, the more fraud detection will be on Covid-19 social aids budget.

IMPLICATION

The results of this study can provide a theoretical contribution to developing knowledge related to risk-based audit technique, competence and experience of auditors in fraud detection. Practically it is expected that this research can contribute to Enrekang Regency Government in considering ways or techniques in detecting all forms of fraud that occur on social aids for Covid-19 or other frauds.

LIMITATION

This study has a limitation in terms of the amount of the research respondents. It is expected therefore that further research expends and increases the amount of respondents. Another limitation is the research variables where the variables observed in this study are still very limited. Therefore, further research is suggested to observe other variables that affect fraud detection such as intelligence audits (Kumaat, 2011).

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