

UNVEILING THE LINK BETWEEN AUDIT PLANNING AND AUDIT QUALITY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF AUDIT WORK PROGRAM AND INTERNAL AUDITOR COMPETENCE

Submission date: 20-May-2023 05:17PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 2097734400

by Jajang Badruzaman

File name: Final--Badruzaman_Management_Project_Modern_230422_053547_1.pdf (545.81K)

Word count: 7252

Character count: 41944

UNVEILING THE LINK BETWEEN AUDIT PLANNING AND AUDIT QUALITY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF AUDIT WORK PROGRAM AND INTERNAL AUDITOR COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the direct and indirect effects of audit planning on audit quality through two underlying mechanisms: audit work program and internal auditor competency. Utilizing a sample of auditors from the Regional Inspectorate of Tasikmalaya City, data were analyzed using SPSS Version 25 software, followed by testing for validity and reliability. The findings reveal that audit planning has a substantial direct and indirect impact on audit quality. The indirect effect is mediated by the audit work program and internal auditor competence, indicating that these processes play a crucial role in the association between audit planning and audit quality. This study's findings provide auditors and audit firms with significant insights into improving audit quality via effective audit planning, the implementation of audit work programs, and internal auditor competency.

Keywords: Audit Planning; Audit Quality; Audit Work Program; Internal Auditor Competence; Risk Assessment; Corporate Governance.

1. Introduction

Auditing ensures enterprises, organizations, and government agencies run efficiently, effectively, and ethically (Budiman, 2021). Internal auditing in the public sector is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity to provide value and improve an organization's operations (Asif, Searcy, & Castka, 2022). Internal auditors aid management in accomplishing their goals by conducting risk assessments, identifying process enhancements, and assessing the efficacy of internal controls (Rana et al., 2022). As the importance of internal auditing has grown, so has the necessity for high-quality auditing procedures. In addition, the quality of an internal audit is affected by various elements, such as audit planning, the internal audit work program, and the internal auditor's qualifications (Ta & Doan, 2022). Audit planning is creating a complete audit plan that describes the audit's scope, objectives, and methods (Griffith & Hammersley, 2023). The audit plan serves as a road map and a framework for completing the audit efficiently and effectively. It is also crucial to examine this in-depth since it ensures that the audit is aligned with the organization's goals and objectives (Saputra & Anggiriawan, 2021).

In addition, the internal audit work program is a detailed guide that specifies the auditing techniques and steps (Mokander et al., 2022). The work program is a checklist for the auditor to ensure that all relevant areas are covered during the audit. Also, the work schedule helps ensure that the audit is completed consistently and thoroughly (Ostaev et al., 2022). The competency of the internal auditor is another crucial component that impacts the audit's quality. The internal auditor's competency consists of auditing knowledge, abilities,

experience, and ability to communicate effectively and collaborate with other organization members (Cohen et al., 2022). To achieve high-quality internal audits, it is crucial to comprehend the linkages between audit planning, the internal audit work program, the internal auditor's competency, and audit quality (Siregar et al., 2022). By analyzing these aspects, firms can discover areas for enhancement and establish plans to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their internal audit function (Cohen et al., 2022; Mokander et al., 2022).

Moreover, society's need for a clean, fair, transparent, and accountable government has intensified, and state administrators at all levels must commit to sustaining good governance and clean government. In the public sector, the government has established goals for enhancing bureaucratic services to the public in line with the policy objective of establishing good governance (Boedihartono, 2022). Considering the government's commitment to achieving good governance, the government is concerned with enhancing the administration of government entities (Bianchi, Nasi, & Rivenbark, 2022). One of these is by enhancing the role and function of the Government's Internal Supervisory Apparatus (APIP) to create an effective oversight mechanism (Maharani, Yazid, & Yulianto, 2022). Hence, examining the relationship between audit planning, the internal audit work program, the competency of the internal auditor, and audit quality are essential for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of internal auditing in government agencies. Thus, it is necessary to comprehend how these elements influence the quality of internal audits and how they may be enhanced to enhance overall performance and fulfill the objectives of good governance.

While there is a large body of literature on the relationship between audit planning (Menekse & Camgoz-Akdag, 2022), audit work programs (Ostaev et al., 2022), and internal auditor competence (Siregar et al., 2022), there is limited empirical evidence on how these factors, directly and indirectly, affect audit quality. Most research has examined each element separately instead of analyzing their overall impact on audit quality. In addition, previous research has concentrated on the external auditing setting instead of the internal auditing context. Thus, there is a need for research that explores the role of audit planning, audit work programs, and internal auditor competency in boosting audit quality in the context of internal auditing. In addition, although some researchers have examined the impact of these factors on audit quality, the underlying mechanisms that explain how they affect audit quality have not been thoroughly investigated. This study was done among the auditors of the Regional Inspectorate of Tasikmalaya City to fill these literature gaps.

- To examine the influence of audit planning on audit quality, audit work program, and internal auditor competence.
- To examine the influence of audit work programs and internal auditor competence on audit quality.
- To investigate the underlying mechanism of audit work program and internal auditor competence between the association of audit planning and audit quality.
- To propose recommendations for improving audit planning and enhancing audit quality in the context of audit work programs and internal auditor competence.
- To contribute to the existing knowledge on the relationship between audit planning, audit work program, internal auditor competence, and audit quality.

Moreover, this study is important since it contributes to the audit quality literature in the context of the Regional Inspectorate. The study's findings can shed light on the usefulness of audit planning, the internal audit work program, and internal auditor competency in enhancing audit quality. This research can assist policymakers and practitioners in enhancing the efficiency of the internal audit function in achieving good governance.

2. Literature Review Contingency Theory

The current study's theoretical underpinning is grounded in contingency theory. The contingency theory holds that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to management

and that effective management techniques depend on the specific qualities of the company and its operating environment (Abedin, 2022). In the context of internal auditing, the contingency theory implies that the efficacy of internal audit functions depends on various factors, such as the internal audit work program, the competency of internal auditors, and the nature of the organization's activities. According to the contingency theory, the relationship between audit planning, internal audit work program, internal auditor competence, and audit quality is intricate and dependent on various contextual elements. In other words, the performance of the internal audit function depends on how well these numerous aspects coincide with the activities and environment of the firm (Anin et al., 2022).

For instance, if an internal audit function functions in a complex and dynamic setting, it may require highly experienced and competent personnel who can quickly adjust to changing conditions. In such circumstances, the audit planning process and the internal audit work program may also need to be highly adaptable and agile if an organization's management structure is excessively centralized. In this instance, the internal audit function may require close coordination with other organizational units, such as the finance department, to accomplish its goals (Rana et al., 2022). In such instances, the audit planning process and internal audit work program may need to be tightly integrated with the organization's management structure. Thus, the contingency theory provides a valuable framework for comprehending the connection between audit planning, internal audit work program, internal auditor competence, and audit quality.

Audit Planning and Audit Quality

Audit quality is the extent to which an audit gives reasonable certainty that financial statements are free of major misstatements, whether due to fraud or error (Anin et al., 2022). The idea of audit quality is essential because it is a determining factor in the dependability and trustworthiness of financial statements, which is essential for preserving investor confidence in the financial markets (Karim et al., 2022). The competency of auditors, the sufficiency of the audit process, the quality of the audit report, and the regulatory environment are all elements that might influence audit quality. At the same time, the current study examines the impact of audit planning on improving audit quality. Audit planning is formulating an audit strategy (Anugraheni, Setiawati, & Trisnawati, 2022). It entails defining the audit objectives, deciding

the audit scope, determining the audit approach, developing the audit plan, and identifying the required resources to implement the plan (Anugraheni et al., 2022). The purpose of audit planning is to guarantee that the audit is conducted effectively, efficiently, and in conformity with applicable legislation and standards. Good preparation is crucial to the effectiveness of an audit since it ensures that the audit is handled methodically and exhaustively (Anin et al., 2022).

During the preparation phase, the auditor will often undertake a risk assessment to identify the organization's most susceptible areas to fraud, errors, and other threats (Siregar et al., 2022). The auditor then utilizes this information to design an audit plan that tackles these risks and ensures that the audit focuses on the organization's most vital areas. Previously, the researchers suggested that effective audit preparation could ensure that the audit is efficient, effective, and adheres to the required criteria (Anugraheni et al., 2022). Also, researchers investigated the connection between audit planning and the quality of voluntary company disclosures (Menekse & Camgoz-Akdag, 2022). The authors conclude that companies with more effective audit preparation tend to give thorough and transparent disclosures. Overall, research indicates that effective audit planning is essential for assuring audit quality. It can aid in identifying potential hazards, ensuring adequate audit coverage, optimizing audit resources, and enhancing client communication. Effective planning can help ensure that the audit is conducted in line with the required standards and that the financial statements are devoid of substantial misstatements by taking these steps. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H1: There is a positive influence of audit planning on audit quality.

Audit Planning, Audit Work Program, and Internal Auditor Competence

An audit work program is a thorough plan specifying the procedures an auditor will execute during an audit engagement. It acts as a road map for auditing, indicating which duties should be performed, in what order, and by whom (Tien & Jose, 2021). Planning and scope, risk assessment and internal control evaluation, substantive testing, analytical techniques, audit documentation, and reporting are the primary phases of the audit work program (Eulerich, Kremin, & Wood, 2019). Internal auditor competence, on the other hand, refers to the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for effective performance (Aidi et al., 2022). Internal auditors play a vital role in giving management and the

board of directors independent assurance regarding the effectiveness of risk management, internal control, and governance systems (Meini et al., 2022). The audit plan often contains a timeline that defines the audit's main milestones and due dates. This ensures the audit is done on schedule and the objectives are met within the allotted time range.

Several studies have examined the favorable impact of audit planning on the audit work program. For instance, Wahyuni (2022) discovered a positive correlation between the quality of the audit work program and the quality of audit planning. Specifically, auditors who participate in more extensive preparation are more likely to establish audit work programs that are more efficient. Aidi et al. (2022) simultaneously evaluated the correlation between audit planning quality and audit outcomes. According to the authors' findings, effective audit planning is positively associated with the likelihood of issuing a modified audit opinion and the possibility of uncovering substantial misstatements.

Similarly, the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) has established a methodology for evaluating the success of internal audits. The framework incorporates audit planning as a crucial element of internal auditor competence, emphasizing the significance of effective planning in ensuring that internal auditors can fulfill their responsibilities effectively (Mwelase & Chummun, 2022). Moreover, Karthaus et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between planning quality and internal audit efforts' efficacy. The authors discovered that good planning correlates favorably with the quality and efficiency of internal audit activities. In general, these studies indicate that effective audit planning is a crucial element of internal auditor competence, as it helps to foster skill growth, independence, communication, and accountability. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H2: There is a positive influence of audit planning on a) audit work program and b) internal auditor competence.

Audit Work Program, Internal Auditor Competence, and Audit Quality

A high-quality audit is distinguished by a comprehensive and impartial study of an organization's financial statements and a rigorous evaluation of the organization's internal controls and risk management processes (Ta & Doan, 2022). To ensure audit quality, auditors must comply with applicable rules and regulations, retain independence, demonstrate professional skepticism, and employ suitable auditing techniques and processes. In addition, the audit process should be meticulously planned and carried out

to ensure that all pertinent risks are thoroughly handled [9]. The audit is done expeditiously and effectively (Asif et al., 2022). Al-ahdal and Hashim (2022) examined the link between audit program quality and audit quality in this context. The authors discovered a favorable correlation between high-quality audit programs and audit quality, as judged by the correctness and dependability of financial statements. Researchers also discovered a favorable correlation between the audit work program's quality and audit planning quality (Budiman, 2021). Specifically, auditors that engage in more comprehensive planning are more likely to establish more efficient audit work schedules, resulting in improved audit quality. As mentioned previously, the Institute of Internal Auditors has created a framework for evaluating the success of internal audits. The framework identifies internal auditor competency as a crucial element of effective internal audits, emphasizing the significance of skills and knowledge in guaranteeing the highest quality audits. Specifically, auditors that participate in more comprehensive preparation are more likely to have greater levels of competence, resulting in improved audit quality (Al-ahdal & Hashim, 2022). The researchers discovered that internal auditor competence positively correlates with audit quality, as measured by the ability to identify and report significant issues (Susanto et al., 2022). The literature suggests that an effective audit work program and internal auditor competence are essential for ensuring high-quality audits, as they promote accuracy, independence, and effective communication. Hence, it is hypothesized that

H3: There is a positive influence of a) audit work program and b) internal auditor competence on audit quality.

Audit Work Program and Internal Auditor Competence as Mediators

Based on the literature study and the above considerations, an indirect relationship between audit planning and quality seems plausible. Thus, it is hypothesized that efficient audit planning can indirectly influence audit quality via two underlying mechanisms: (a) the establishment of an effective audit work program and (b) the improvement of internal auditor competence. When auditors engage in effective planning, they are better equipped to identify and evaluate risks and build audit processes tailored to them (Meini et al., 2022). This creates a more efficient audit work schedule, guaranteeing that all pertinent areas are adequately covered and proper procedures are followed. Thus, the establishment of a high-quality audit work program adds to an increase

in audit quality. In addition, effective planning can increase internal auditors' proficiency (Tien & Jose, 2021). This is because planning requires auditors to have an in-depth knowledge of the client's business, industry, and regulatory environment, as well as auditing standards and procedures. This can result in the creation of more knowledgeable and skilled auditors, which improves audit quality.

Researchers have previously examined how audit planning indirectly affects audit quality through the mechanisms of the audit work program and internal auditor competence. Lin and Yen (2022) investigated the connection between audit planning quality, audit work plan, and audit outcomes. The authors discovered that audit planning quality is favorably related to audit work plan quality, which is positively related to audit outcomes. In addition, they discovered a favorable relationship between audit planning quality and internal auditor competency, which indirectly influences audit outcomes. Salleh and Suryanto (2019) investigated the influence of audit planning quality, auditor industry knowledge, and proactive personality on audit performance. The authors discovered that audit planning quality indirectly influences audit performance via the audit work program and that both audit planning quality and the audit work program indirectly influence audit performance via internal auditor competency.

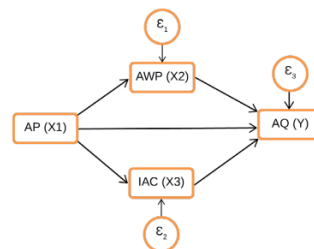
The literature implies that good audit planning indirectly influences audit quality via the mechanisms of the audit work program and internal auditor competency. Specifically, effective audit planning contributes to the development of a high-quality audit work program, which enables auditors to execute the necessary procedures to ensure the accuracy and reliability of financial statements and also contributes to the development of internal auditor competence, resulting in a higher quality audit. It is therefore hypothesized that;

H4: Audit planning indirectly impact audit quality via an underlying mechanism of a) audit work program and b) internal auditor competence.

3. Research Method

The research employed a survey methodology and descriptive-analytic technique. This descriptive strategy's objective was to represent a scenario or occurrence accurately. By this strategy, researchers can evaluate the attitudes or opinions of individuals, organizations, situations, or procedures (Anderson et al., 2021). This form of research is based on data

collected from a population. Survey research is a quantitative method that collects information regarding views, attitudes, behavior, and relationship variables from a representative sample of a community (Miah, Camilleri, & Vu, 2022). Often, questionnaires or interviews constitute the data collection technique. Yet, this strategy is less in-depth than others, and its study outcomes tend to be more generic. In addition, for this study, the investigated population consists of all 44 workers of the Tasikmalaya City Inspectorate, who fall into three categories: structural officials, functional officials, and general officials. In addition, the study included four variables: Audit Planning (AP), Audit Work Program (AWP), Internal Auditor Competence (IAC), and Audit Quality (AQ). All of these factors can be described as follows within the study paradigm:



4. Methodology Data Testing

Validity: This test aims to determine whether or not the measuring device accurately measures the variables of interest. A measuring device with high validity will have a low error rate, leading to accurate and sufficient data collection. The correlation between each statement and the total score is determined using the product moment formula to determine validity.

$$r_{XY} = \frac{n(\sum XY) - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{(n \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2)(n \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2)}}$$

Where:

- r=Correlation coefficient
- X=Total score of each item variable X
- Y=Total score of all variable Y items
- n=Number of respondents

If the analysis reveals that the rcount is greater than the rtable, then the data are valid and can be utilized for hypothesis testing. Alternatively, if the analysis yields rcount < rtable, the data are faulty and cannot be used for hypothesis testing. After determining

the validity of the statements utilized in this study, a reliability test is conducted.

Reliability: This test is designed to assess the validity of a questionnaire as an indication of a specific variable or concept. A questionnaire is deemed reliable if participant responses are consistent and constant throughout time (Sulasmi & Dalle, 2022). For interval data, Cronbach's Alpha is applied to evaluate reliability. This requires employing a specific formula to calculate Cronbach's Alpha.

$$\alpha = \left[\frac{k}{k-1} \right] \left[1 - \frac{\sum \sigma_p^2}{\sigma_t^2} \right]$$

Where:

- α=Alpha reliability coefficient
- k=Lots of question items and question items
- ∑σ_p²=Number of item variations
- σ_t²=total variation

The coefficient of reliability of the scale must be tried as high as possible, which is close to Number One (1). The decision rule uses the critical value of Cronbach's Alpha; if the coefficient value is ≥ 0.70, the instrument is declared reliable and can be used for research (Hartanto, Agussani, & Dalle, 2021).

Data Analysis Path Analysis

Path Analysis is used to identify the amount to which the independent variable affects the dependent variable. Path Analysis is an analytical method that investigates the inherent causal linkages between variables by arranging them chronologically and utilizing the path coefficient as a measure of magnitude to evaluate the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Ikhsan et al., 2022).es. These are the steps involved in doing a path analysis:

Developing path charts: Calculating the relation coefficient (r). The correlation coefficient is used to determine the degree of closeness of the relationship between independent and dependent constructs and X2 and is calculated using the following formula:

$$r_{X1Xj} = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^n X_i X_j - \sum_{i=1}^n X_i \sum_{i=1}^n X_j}{\sqrt{(n \sum_{i=1}^n X_i^2 - (\sum_{i=1}^n X_i)^2)(n \sum_{i=1}^n X_j^2 - (\sum_{i=1}^n X_j)^2)}}$$

This correlation coefficient will be large if the relationship between variables is strong. Thus if the relationship between variables is not strong, then the value of r will be small, and the magnitude of this correlation coefficient will be interpreted as follows:

4 Table 1. Guidelines for Interpreting Correlation Coefficient

| Coefficient Interval | Relationship Level |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 0.00–0.200 | Very low |
| 0.21–0.400 | Low |
| 0.41–0.600 | Currently |
| 0.61–0.800 | Strong |
| 0.81–1.000 | Very strong |

Calculating Path Coefficient: The subsequent step involves determining the path coefficient once the correlation coefficient has been calculated. This coefficient provides insight into a particular variable's degree of direct influence on the affected variable. The Pyxi path coefficient (i=1,2,3) uses the following formula:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & \dots & r_{X1Xj} \\ \vdots & 1 & \vdots \\ r_{YX1} & \dots & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \rho_{YX1} \\ \rho_{YX2} \\ \rho_{YX3} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} r_{YX1} \\ r_{YX2} \\ r_{YX3} \end{pmatrix}$$

Where :

ρ_{YXi} =path coefficient xi toY

r_{XiXj} =Correlation coefficient between variable Xi and Xj variable

r_{YXi} =Correlation coefficient between variable Y and Xi variable

The fourth step is calculating the coefficient of determination and the coefficient of residue. The coefficient of determination (R²) represents the combined influence of the independent factors on the dependent variable that the path equation model can explain. As the independent variables gradually account for the diversity of the dependent variable explained by the path equation, the R² value of the path equation approaches 100%. This is the formula for determining the coefficient of determination:

$$R^2 = (\rho_{YX1}, \rho_{YX2}, \rho_{YX3}) \begin{pmatrix} r_{YX1} \\ r_{YX2} \\ r_{YX3} \end{pmatrix}$$

Where:

R² =coefficient of determination

ρ_{YXi} =Path coefficient Xi against Y

r_{YXi} =Correlation coefficient between variable Y and Xi variable

Residual coefficientThe magnitude of the influence of other variables outside the model that are not observed. The formula is:

$$\rho_{eY} = \sqrt{1 - R^2_{YX1X2X3}}$$

Calculating the path coefficient simultaneously and partially: The purpose of simultaneous testing is to see the effect of the independent variables X1, X2, and X3 on the dependent variable Y. The steps needed are:

Statistical hypothesis form

$$H_0 : \rho_{YX1} = \rho_{YX2} = \dots = \rho_{YXk} = 0$$

All the independent variables do not affect the dependent variable.

$$H_1 : \rho_{YX1} = \rho_{YX2} = \dots = \rho_{YXk} \neq 0$$

There are independent variables that affect the dependent variable.

Test statistics used

$$F_{count} = \frac{(n - k - 1)R^2}{k(1 - R^2)}$$

Where:

n=Number of samples

k=Number of independent variables

R²=coefficient of determination

Test criteria: Hypothesis H0 is rejected if $F_{count} > F_{table, n-k-1}$ Or if the p-value (sig) > a, which means that the independent variable jointly affects the dependent variable

Calculating Direct Influence, Indirect Influence, and Total Influence and Significance Level: In establishing the hypothesis, the hypothesis is evaluated to determine a relationship between the investigation variables. The level of significance is set at 5%. This indicates that the probability of the conclusion being true is 95% or the error tolerance is 5%. This significance level is frequently employed in social research since it adequately portrays the link between the researched variables.

Significance Test: To test the significance can be done in two tests, namely:

Partially worn (t-test): To test the partial hypothesis, the test used is the t-test with the following formula:

$$t = \frac{r_{YXi}}{\sqrt{\frac{n-(k+1)}{1-r^2}}}$$

Where:

n= Number of samples

r= Partial correlation value

k= Number of independent variables

The testing t-test has been carried out. The test results are t count compared to the t table with the following conditions:

If $t_{count} > t_{table}$, then H₀ is rejected.

If $t_{count} < t_{table}$, then H₀ is accepted.

Simultaneous wearing (Test f): In the simultaneous test, the statistical test used is the F test. To calculate the value of F manually, you can use the following F formula:

$$F_{count} = \frac{(n - k - 1) R^2}{k(1 - R^2)}$$

Where :

R²=coefficient of determination

K=Number of independent variables

n=Number of samples

The value for F test is seen from the F distribution table with $\alpha=0.05$ and degrees of freedom (k; n-k-1), then F_{count} is compared with F_{table} with the following conditions:

If $F_{count} > F_{table}$, Ho is rejected, and Ha is accepted.

If $F_{count} < F_{table}$, then Ho is accepted, and Ha is rejected.

Conclusion Drawing: Based on the results of the hypothesis analysis above, the author will conduct a quantitative analysis, and the results will conclude whether the previously established hypothesis is accepted.

5. Results Direct Hypothesis Results

Based on the data collected from the questionnaires given to the respondents and the data processed through the SPSS version 25 program, the results of impact size are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Impact Size

| Summary model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. error of the Estimate |
|---------------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 0.803 ^a | 0.645 | 0.618 | 5.79654 |
| 2 | 0.539 ^a | 0.291 | 0.274 | 4.02142 |
| 3 | 0.706 ^a | 0.498 | 0.486 | 3.44780 |

a. b, c. Predictors: (Constants)

Table 3. Coefficient Values

| Model | Coefficients | | | | T | Sig. |
|-------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Unstandardized Coefficients B | Std. error | Standardized Coefficients Beta | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 7.817 | 2.137 | | 3.658 | 0.001 |
| H1 | AP→AQ | 0.577 | 0.117 | 0.673 | 7.22 | 0.000 |
| H2a | AP→AWP | 0.291 | 0.108 | 0.539 | 4.149 | 0.000 |
| H2b | AP→IAC | 0.298 | 0.093 | 0.306 | 6.455 | 0.000 |

Table 3 demonstrates that the direct effect of audit planning on audit quality was 0.577, with a path coefficient of 0.673. A significance level of 0.000 indicates that audit planning influences the Inspectorate's audit work program. In addition, Table 2 demonstrates that the effect of audit planning on the audit work program has a magnitude of 0.291, a path coefficient of 0.539, and a significance level of 0.000, indicating that audit planning has a substantial impact on the audit work program that the Inspectorate will execute. This indicates that the greater the quality of audit planning, the higher the quality of work program implementation. For the audit to be implemented properly and efficiently and benefit those being investigated, it is crucial to prepare an audit beforehand. Path coefficient value of 0.306, determination coefficient of 0.298, and significance level of 0.000 more than 0.005 reveal the influence of audit planning on internal auditor competency. This indicates that audit preparation favors the Competence of the Internal Auditor who will execute the inspection. Thus, audit planning will influence the positioning of the auditors conducting the audit. This demonstrates that audit preparation will determine which auditor is qualified to perform the audit. Hence, proving Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 of the study.

Mediation Hypothesis Results

Based on the results of data processing after testing the data, the following processing results are presented in Table 4

Table 4. Impact Size

| Summary model | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. error of the Estimate |
| 1 | 0.803 ^a | 0.645 | 0.618 | 3.79654 |

a. Predictors: (Constant)

Table 5. Coefficient Values

| Model | Coefficients ^a | | | | t | Sig. |
|-------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Unstandardized Coefficients B | Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients Beta | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.835 | 2.507 | | 1.530 | 0.134 |
| H4a | AP→AWP→AQ | 0.257 | .147 | 0.321 | 7.016 | 0.001 |
| H4b | AP→AC→AQ | 0.320 | .171 | 0.352 | 8.597 | 0.000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Audit Quality, Audit Work Program, Auditors' Competencies

The effect of audit planning on audit quality is 0.577, with a path coefficient of 0.673 and a significance level

of 0.000 in the City of Tasikmalaya inspectorate. This shows that audit planning, audit work programs, and internal auditor competency will determine internal audit quality. Hence, the quality of the audit results will be defined by the level of maturity of the plans that are established and then implemented through an audit work program with the support of competent auditors so that the audit results are of the highest standard. The indirect impact of audit planning on audit quality via work programs is 0.256, with a significance level of 0.001. Similarly, the indirect impact of audit planning on audit quality via internal auditor competence is 0.320 at a significance level of 0.000, demonstrating significant outcomes for H4 a and b.

3. Discussion

According to the study's findings, audit planning has a considerable favorable effect on audit quality, audit work program, and internal auditor competence. The findings indicate that good preparation is vital for ensuring high-quality audits and enhancing the skills of internal auditors. The study discovered that audit planning had a direct, beneficial impact on audit quality. This suggests that appropriate planning can assist internal auditors in identifying potential risks, determining the significance of audit findings, and allocating resources effectively. Thus, audit quality can be enhanced, increasing confidence in the financial accounts (Anugraheni et al., 2022). Also, the study demonstrated that audit planning had a direct favorable effect on the audit work schedule. This shows that good planning assists internal auditors in developing a comprehensive audit work program that addresses all essential audit process components. Internal auditors can so ensure that all audit goals are accomplished and the audit process is executed efficiently and effectively (Cohen et al., 2022).

The study also indicated that audit planning has a direct positive effect on the competency of internal auditors. This suggests that adequate planning assists internal auditors in enhancing their knowledge and abilities, resulting in increased levels of competence. Hence, internal auditors may do their jobs more confidently, and the audit's quality can be improved (Aidi et al., 2022). The study emphasizes the significance of audit planning for enhancing audit quality, audit work plans, and internal auditor competency. These findings have important consequences for internal auditors, audit committees, and other decision-makers who rely on the outcomes of internal audits.

Both audit work plans and internal auditor competence

have a considerable favorable effect on audit quality, according to the study's findings. The study's findings indicate that a well-designed audit work program can improve the audit's quality. This is because an audit work program gives an organized approach to auditing, ensuring that all relevant areas are covered, and all necessary audit processes are executed (Anin et al., 2022). It also aids the auditors in identifying and prioritizing high-risk areas so that they may devote more attention to them during the auditing process. In addition, the study's findings indicate that the competency of internal auditors substantially impacts audit quality. Competent auditors are likelier to possess the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct high-quality audits. In addition, they are more qualified to recognize possible audit issues and apply the proper audit processes to rectify them. To increase the quality of their audits, the findings imply that firms should invest in designing and implementing effective audit work programs and boosting the competency of their internal auditors (Meini et al., 2022; Tien & Jose, 2021).

The investigation found that audit work plans and the competency of internal auditors mediate the association between audit planning and audit quality. It was discovered that the audit work program has a considerable beneficial direct effect on audit quality. This shows that a well-designed audit work program, with precise audit processes and appropriate resource allocation, can directly improve audit quality. In addition, it was discovered that internal auditor competency had a considerable favorable direct effect on audit quality. This shows that competent internal auditors with the knowledge and abilities necessary to conduct audit activities might contribute directly to audit quality. In addition, the data reveal that audit work programs and internal auditor competency mediate the association between audit planning and audit quality. This suggests that audit preparation is a significant element in determining the quality of the audit and that a well-designed audit work program and skilled internal auditors can enhance the quality of the audit. Overall, the findings of this study shed light on the underlying mechanism of audit work programs and internal auditor competency in the relationship between audit planning and audit quality. To increase the quality of audits, our findings imply that audit firms should prioritize building effective audit work programs and enhancing the skills of their internal auditors. In addition, politicians may wish to incorporate these results into regulatory frameworks to improve audit quality.

7. Research Implications Study Implications

The paper provides theoretical evidence that audit planning might, directly and indirectly, affect audit quality. The research emphasizes the significance of audit work programs and internal auditor competency as fundamental mechanisms that mediate the relationship between audit planning and audit quality. The outcomes of this study lend credence to the contingency theory, which argues that the relationship between audit planning, audit work programs, internal auditor competency, and audit quality is context-dependent. The research indicates that auditors should pay special attention to the planning phase of the auditing process, as it can significantly impact audit quality. The report also emphasizes the significance of designing and implementing efficient audit work processes to guarantee that audits are completed thoroughly and methodically. The study highlights the importance of auditors possessing the requisite knowledge and abilities to conduct high-quality audits. In creating their audit strategy, work program, and training programs for internal auditors, audit companies should consider the specific context in which audits occur, according to the study's findings. The report also provides audit regulators and standard-setting bodies with recommendations for developing and refining audit standards that address the relationship between audit planning, audit work programs, internal auditor competency, and audit quality. The study has significant implications for auditors, audit firms, regulators, and standard-setting agencies looking to enhance audit quality and audit process effectiveness.

8. Limitations and Future Research Directions

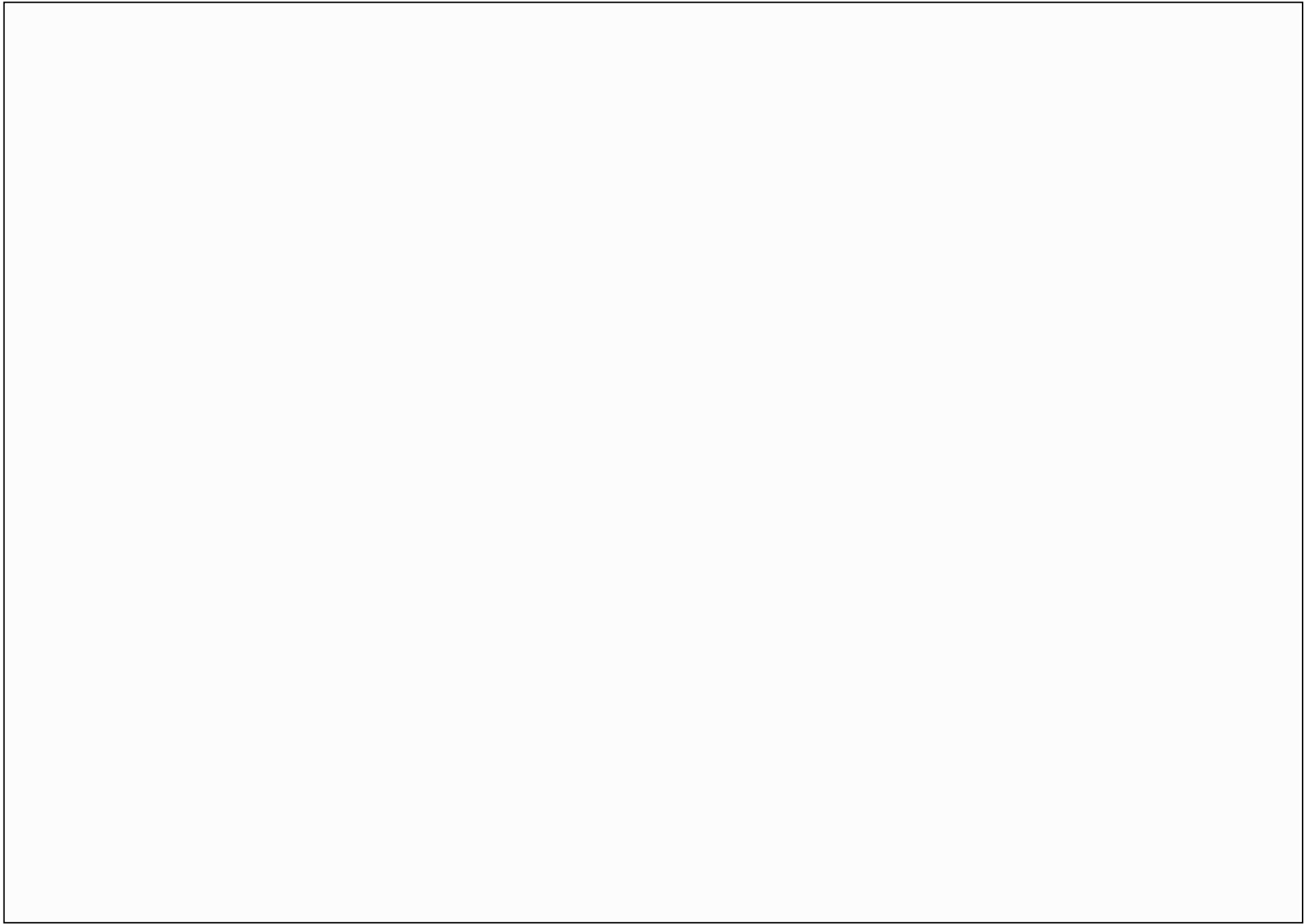
The findings may not apply to external auditors as the study is limited to internal auditors. In addition, the authors employed a cross-sectional design, which hinders the ability to demonstrate causation between factors. They relied on data self-reported by internal auditors, which may be susceptible to response bias. In addition, the study does not address other variables that may affect audit quality, such as auditors' independence, audit fees, and customer characteristics. Lastly, the study is done within a particular industry, which may restrict the applicability of the findings to other industries. Therefore, future studies might use a longitudinal design to establish causation between audit planning, audit work program, internal auditor competency, and audit quality. Future research might also examine the connection between audit planning and audit quality for external auditors

and compare the results to those for internal auditors. Future researchers could also employ objective audit quality metrics, such as error rates or restatements, to corroborate the study's findings. They can also examine the relationship between audit planning, audit work program, internal auditor competency, and audit quality in other industries to establish the generalizability of the results. Future research may study additional elements influencing audit quality and their interaction with audit planning, audit work program, and internal auditor competence.

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