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## Unveiling Fraud through the Auditor's Lens: Professional Skepticism, Competence, Time Constraints, and Red Flags

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of professional skepticism, competence, time constraints, and red flags on auditors' ability to detect fraud. The population consisted of auditors working at Public Accounting Firms (KAP) in East Jakarta, with a total of 52 respondents selected using convenience sampling. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires, and multiple linear regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses. The results reveal that professional skepticism has a positive and significant effect on auditors' fraud detection ability. In contrast, competence, time constraints, and red flags show no significant effect. These findings suggest that professional skepticism plays a central role in enhancing fraud detection, while technical competence and fraud indicators require further integration with critical judgment and professional awareness. The study implies that audit firms should prioritize strengthening professional skepticism through training and ethical reinforcement to improve fraud detection effectiveness. However, the study is limited by the small sample size, restricted research scope, and limited variables. Future research is recommended to expand the sample coverage, include additional influencing factors such as auditor independence or organizational support, and adopt mixed-method approaches to provide deeper insights into fraud detection practices.

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh skeptisisme profesional, kompetensi, tekanan anggaran waktu, dan red flags terhadap kemampuan auditor dalam mendeteksi kecurangan. Populasi penelitian adalah auditor Kantor Akuntan Publik (KAP) di Jakarta Timur dengan jumlah sampel 52 responden yang dipilih menggunakan metode convenience sampling. Data primer diperoleh melalui kuesioner terstruktur, sedangkan pengujian hipotesis dilakukan dengan analisis regresi linier berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa skeptisisme profesional berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kemampuan auditor dalam mendeteksi kecurangan. Sebaliknya, kompetensi, tekanan anggaran waktu, dan red flags tidak berpengaruh signifikan. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa skeptisisme profesional memiliki peran sentral dalam mendukung efektivitas deteksi kecurangan, sedangkan kompetensi teknis dan indikator kecurangan perlu dipadukan dengan penilaian kritis serta kesadaran profesional. Implikasi penelitian menunjukkan pentingnya penguatan skeptisisme profesional melalui pelatihan dan pembinaan etika bagi auditor. Penelitian ini memiliki keterbatasan pada ukuran sampel yang kecil, cakupan wilayah yang terbatas, serta variabel independen yang masih sempit. Oleh karena itu, penelitian mendatang disarankan memperluas cakupan sampel, menambahkan variabel lain seperti independensi auditor atau dukungan organisasi, serta menggunakan pendekatan mixed methods untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang lebih mendalam terkait praktik deteksi kecurangan.

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## INTRODUCTION

Public accountants play a crucial role in assisting companies in detecting fraud by providing assurance services in accordance with applicable Auditing Standards (SA). Fraud may occur in various contexts, including corporations, organizations, and government institutions. Therefore, it is imperative to address fraudulent activities promptly through the engagement of auditors to examine the financial statements of both public and private entities (Salsabila & Permatasari, 2023). An example of auditor failure in detecting fraud can be seen in the case of SNP Finance in July 2017. The annual financial statements of PT SNP had been audited by a public accounting firm, KAP Satrio, Bing, Eny, and Partners, which issued an unqualified opinion. However, subsequent investigations by the Financial Services Authority (OJK) revealed that PT SNP had presented financial statements that significantly misrepresented its actual financial condition, leading to substantial losses for various stakeholders.

One of the main reasons for an auditor's failure to detect fraud is the lack of professional skepticism. According to (Anggriawan, 2014), skepticism refers to a critical attitude in evaluating the reliability of statements or evidence obtained. During the audit review process, auditors are expected to maintain sufficient confidence in the information gathered while still carefully assessing the adequacy and appropriateness of the evidence. Furthermore, Rafnes & Primasari (2020) emphasizes that competence is essential in performing audit tasks. Auditor competence is a crucial determinant of audit quality, as it directly influences the auditor's effectiveness in detecting fraudulent activities.

Time Constraints refers to the deadline imposed by clients on auditors to complete their audit engagements within the predetermined timeframe, typically for the examination of annual financial statements (Eriyanti, et al., 2022). Excessive time pressure may compromise audit quality by reducing the auditor's ability to conduct thorough procedures. In addition, auditors must remain vigilant to the presence of red flags, which indicate unusual conditions or anomalies that deviate from normal circumstances. In other words, red flags serve as warning signals or preliminary indications of possible fraud (Purwanti & Astika, 2017). A sound understanding of red flags, coupled with careful analysis of anomalies, enables auditors to identify indirect evidence of fraud, such as suspicious documents or irregular patterns in financial reporting.

Previous studies have extensively examined factors that influence an auditor's ability to detect fraud, such as professional skepticism, auditor experience, and time pressure (Anggriawan, 2014; Rosiana et al., 2019). However, these studies have not comprehensively considered other critical factors that may strengthen or weaken fraud detection, particularly auditor competence and the role of red flags as early warning signals of irregularities. Most prior research has been limited in scope by focusing primarily on traditional variables, which may not fully capture the multidimensional nature of fraud detection in auditing practices. Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical evidence exploring how competence and the recognition of red flags interact with professional skepticism and time constraints in shaping auditors' effectiveness. This gap highlights the need for a broader analytical framework that integrates both individual attributes and situational indicators in fraud detection.

This study is motivated by the need to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of fraud detection among external auditors. By incorporating auditor competence and red flags as additional variables, this research seeks to extend prior studies and offer a more holistic model that reflects the complexity of audit engagements. The findings are expected to contribute not only to the academic literature on auditing and fraud detection but also to practical improvements in audit quality. Specifically, the study aims to provide insights for audit firms and regulators to strengthen auditor training, enhance awareness of red flags, and mitigate the adverse effects of Time Constraints.



Ultimately, this research aspires to support the development of more effective audit practices that safeguard stakeholders' interests and promote financial reporting integrity.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Agency Theory

The grand theory underpinning this study is Agency Theory, which explains the contractual relationship between principals (owners or shareholders) and agents (management), where the agent is entrusted with decision-making authority on behalf of the principal (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). This relationship creates an inherent risk of information asymmetry, as managers may act in their own interests rather than in the interests of owners. Such conditions provide opportunities for fraud in financial reporting, thereby necessitating the role of external auditors as independent parties to reduce agency costs and ensure the reliability of financial statements. In this context, the auditor's professional skepticism, competence, and responsiveness to red flags are essential attributes to mitigate agency conflicts and protect stakeholder interests (Watts & Zimmerman, 1983).

Furthermore, Theory of Auditing provides the normative foundation for understanding how external auditors should conduct engagements in order to enhance credibility and detect fraud in financial statements. Auditing theory emphasizes that auditors are required to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence, exercise due professional care, and maintain professional skepticism to support their audit opinion (Arens et al., 2017). The presence of factors such as Time Constraints, red flags, and auditor competence reflects real challenges that can influence audit effectiveness. Therefore, by integrating auditing theory with agency theory, this research provides a comprehensive framework to explain how auditors, through their professional judgment and adherence to auditing standards, can detect and prevent fraudulent financial reporting (Tepalagul & Lin, 2015).

### Professional Skepticism on Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud

Professional skepticism is considered a fundamental attribute in the auditing process, as it reflects the auditor's mindset of being consistently alert, questioning, and critically assessing audit evidence. According to Auditing Standards (SA) Section 200, auditors are required to adopt a questioning attitude and remain vigilant to circumstances that may indicate potential misstatements, whether due to fraud or error. This approach ensures that auditors do not merely accept information at face value but instead evaluate the sufficiency and appropriateness of evidence obtained. Prior empirical studies, such as those conducted by Purwanti & Astika (2017) and Eriyanti et al. (2022) provide strong support for the notion that professional skepticism significantly enhances an auditor's ability to detect fraud. By maintaining a skeptical mindset, auditors are more likely to identify inconsistencies, anomalies, or red flags that may indicate fraudulent activities.

Building upon this foundation, it can be argued that higher levels of professional skepticism will positively influence the effectiveness of auditors in fraud detection. Auditors who consistently challenge the validity of audit evidence are better equipped to uncover irregularities and resist pressures that may lead to overlooking fraudulent indicators. This relationship suggests that professional skepticism not only contributes to audit quality but also strengthens public trust in financial reporting. Accordingly, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Professional skepticism has a positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect fraud.

According to Auditing Standards (SA) section 200 defines professional skepticism as "an attitude that includes a mind that is always questioning, alert to conditions that may indicate possible misstatements, whether caused by fraud or error, and an important assessment of audit evidence.



Previous research conducted by Arbaiti (2018) and Indrawati et al. (2019) shows that professional skepticism has a positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect fraud. This is because professional skepticism leads to challenges to audit evidence and evidence that indicates possible fraud and can increase the auditor's ability to find signs of possible fraud. So that the higher the professional skepticism of the auditor, the higher the auditor's ability to detect fraud. Based on the description above, the first hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H1: Professional skepticism has a positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect fraud.

### **Competence on the Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud**

Auditor competence is a key determinant of audit quality and effectiveness in fraud detection. Competence reflects the auditor's ability to integrate technical knowledge, professional judgment, and prior experience into the audit process, thereby enabling more thorough and accurate evaluations (Basmar et al., 2024; Suyono et al., 2025). Competence is typically developed through continuous education, professional training, and accumulated experience, which enhance the auditor's analytical skills and sensitivity to anomalies in financial reporting (Basmar et al., 2024; Al-Dhubaibi, 2020; Setiawan et al., 2023). Prior studies provide empirical evidence that competence significantly improves the auditor's ability to detect fraud, as auditors with higher competence are more capable of identifying complex fraudulent schemes and evaluating the sufficiency and appropriateness of audit evidence (Al-Dhubaibi, 2020; Setiawan et al., 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, competence strengthens the auditor's capacity to exercise professional skepticism and apply rigorous audit procedures, thus improving the likelihood of detecting misstatements caused by fraud. Competent auditors are also more likely to recognize subtle irregularities and red flags that may otherwise be overlooked by less experienced practitioners (Setiawan et al., 2023; Basmar et al., 2024). This implies that competence not only enhances the technical aspects of auditing but also supports ethical and professional responsibilities in safeguarding stakeholder interests. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that auditor competence positively influences the ability to detect fraud. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: Auditor competence has a positive effect on the auditor's ability to detect fraud.

### **Time Constraints on the Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud**

Time constraints is a critical factor influencing the quality and effectiveness of audit procedures. When auditors are constrained by tight deadlines and efficiency demands, their professional judgment and thoroughness in detecting irregularities may be compromised (Raihan & Setiyawati, 2025). Excessive time pressure can increase the risk of overlooking red flags and misstatements, thereby reducing the likelihood of uncovering fraudulent activities. In such circumstances, auditors may prioritize the completion of audit tasks within the allocated time over maintaining the depth and accuracy required for effective fraud detection (Said & Munandar, 2018).

Empirical evidence supports the relationship between Time Constraints and fraud detection capability. Prior studies demonstrate that time constraints not only impair auditors' ability to gather sufficient and appropriate audit evidence but also elevate the risk of audit failures (McDaniel, 1990). Moreover, research indicates that auditors facing higher time constraints are more susceptible to performance-reducing behaviors, such as premature sign-offs or reduced testing, which ultimately diminish their ability to detect fraudulent misstatements (Raihan & Setiyawati, 2025; Svanström, 2016). Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3 : Time constraints affects the auditor's ability to detect fraud.



### Red Flags on the Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud

Red flags are considered early warning signals that may indicate the presence of fraudulent activities or material misstatements within an organization. These indicators often manifest through unusual transactions, irregular accounting practices, or suspicious behavioral patterns of management and employees. The presence of red flags serves as a crucial cue for auditors to intensify their professional skepticism and conduct additional audit procedures to validate the integrity of financial information (Setiawan et al., 2023). As such, auditors' awareness and responsiveness to red flags play a pivotal role in enhancing the likelihood of detecting fraud during the audit process (Watts & Zimmerman, 1983).

Empirical evidence highlights the significant role of red flags in strengthening auditors' fraud detection capabilities. Prior research demonstrates that the identification of red flags is positively associated with auditors' effectiveness in uncovering fraudulent misstatements, as these signals guide auditors toward higher-risk areas that warrant further scrutiny (Eriyanti et al., 2022; Setiawan et al., 2023). Moreover, studies emphasize that ignoring or failing to recognize red flags increases the probability of audit failure, as potential fraudulent activities may remain undetected (Albrecht et al., 2012). Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4 : Red Flags affect the auditor's ability to detect fraud.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design, which emphasizes the testing of hypotheses through the measurement of variables using numerical data and the application of statistical techniques. Quantitative research enables researchers to objectively examine relationships among variables and validate theoretical propositions (Sekaran & Bougie 2016). The data used in this study are primary data, collected directly from respondents through the distribution of structured questionnaires. Primary data are particularly valuable as they provide first-hand information relevant to the specific variables and objectives under investigation (Sekaran & Bougie 2016).

The population in this study consists of auditors working at Public Accounting Firms (Kantor Akuntan Publik/KAP) in East Jakarta. The sampling technique employed is convenience sampling, which is a non-probability method where respondents are selected based on ease of access, availability, and willingness to participate (Sugiyono, 2017). The criteria for inclusion require that the respondents are auditors with a minimum of one year of professional experience in the East Jakarta regional KAP. To test the hypotheses, this study applies multiple regression analysis, as it allows for the examination of the effect of independent variables (e.g., Professional skepticism, competence, time constraints, red flags) on the dependent variable (auditor's ability to detect fraud). Statistical analysis is conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which facilitates validity testing, reliability testing, classical assumption testing, and hypothesis testing to ensure the robustness of the findings. The regression model for this research shown below:

$$AADF_i = \alpha_i + \beta_1 PS_i + \beta_2 Comp_i + \beta_3 TC_i + \beta_4 RF_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Description

AADF = Auditor's ability to detect fraud

PS = Professional skepticism

Comp = Competence

TC = Time constraints



- RF = Red flags  
 $\alpha$  = Constanta  
 $\beta$  = Regression coefficient  
i = Cross-sectional unit  
 $\epsilon$  = Error

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics provide an overview of the distribution of respondents answers for each research variable. They serve to summarize key characteristics such as the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation values, thereby offering a general picture of the data before proceeding with further statistical analysis. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the main variables of this study, including professional skepticism, competence, time constraints, red flags, and the auditor's ability to detect fraud.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Results

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Professional Skepticism (PS)	52	33	50	42.54	4.604
Competence (Comp)	52	34	45	40.19	2.904
Time Constraints (TC)	52	24	50	33.79	6.030
Red Flags (RF)	52	8	15	12.23	1.592
Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud (AADF)	52	38	60	50.38	5.460

As shown in Table 1, the variable professional skepticism has a mean value of 42.54 with a standard deviation of 4.604, indicating that auditors generally demonstrate a high level of skepticism with moderate variability among responses. The competence variable shows a mean of 40.19, suggesting that respondents perceive themselves as having relatively strong competence, with responses being fairly consistent ( $SD = 2.904$ ). Meanwhile, time constraints records a lower average of 33.79 with a relatively higher variability ( $SD = 6.030$ ), reflecting diverse experiences of auditors in facing time constraints. For the red flags variable, the mean value of 12.23 indicates that auditors moderately recognize the presence of fraud indicators, with limited variation among responses. Lastly, the auditor's ability to detect fraud yields the highest mean of 50.38, supported by a standard deviation of 5.460, demonstrating that respondents generally perceive their ability to detect fraud as strong, though with some variation across the sample.

After presenting the descriptive statistics that provide a general overview of the respondents' perceptions across all research variables, it is necessary to proceed with further analysis to examine the relationships among these variables. While descriptive statistics highlight the central tendency and variability of the data, they do not offer sufficient evidence to confirm the proposed hypotheses. Therefore, to test whether professional skepticism, competence, time constraints, and red flags significantly influence the auditor's ability to detect fraud, multiple regression analysis is employed. The following section presents the results of the regression analysis along with their statistical significance.



Table 2: Multiple Linear Regression Results

Variabels	Coefficient	t	Sig.
(Constant)	4.138	.569	.572
Professional Skepticism (PS)	0.724	4.643	<,001
Competence (Comp)	0.229	1.161	.251
Time Constraints (TC)	0.032	.299	.766
Red Flags (RF)	0.422	1.062	.294
F Stat = < 0.001			
R <sup>2</sup> = 60,4			
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 57.1			

### Professional Skepticisms and Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud

The regression results shown in Table 2 indicate that professional skepticism has a positive and statistically significant effect on the auditor's ability to detect fraud ( $\beta = 0.724$ ,  $t = 4.643$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This finding suggests that auditors with a higher degree of skepticism are more likely to critically evaluate audit evidence, maintain a questioning mindset, and consequently identify fraudulent activities in financial statements. The magnitude of the coefficient also indicates that professional skepticism is the strongest predictor in the model, underscoring its central role in enhancing fraud detection capability.

This result is consistent with prior studies emphasizing that professional skepticism is a fundamental determinant of audit quality and fraud detection effectiveness. For example, Hurtt (2010) found that auditors who exhibit higher skepticism are better able to detect material misstatements, while Purwanti & Astika (2017) highlighted the importance of skeptical judgment in identifying fraud risk indicators. Thus, this study reaffirms existing evidence that professional skepticism is indispensable in the auditing process. This finding highlights that professional skepticism acts not only as a technical attribute but also as a psychological safeguard against fraud risk. In the context of Indonesian public accounting firms, especially those operating in East Jakarta, the ability to maintain skepticism is crucial given the dynamic and competitive environment auditors face. This suggests that enhancing professional skepticism through continuous training and ethical reinforcement could be a more effective strategy than merely increasing technical competence, particularly in strengthening fraud detection performance.

### Competence and Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud

The regression analysis reveals that auditor competence has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on the ability to detect fraud ( $\beta = 0.229$ ,  $t = 1.161$ ,  $p = 0.251$ ). Although the direction of the relationship aligns with theoretical expectations, suggesting that higher competence should improve auditors' detection ability, the lack of significance implies that competence alone may not be sufficient to ensure fraud detection. Other factors, such as organizational support, audit methodology, or professional skepticism, may mediate the influence of competence on fraud detection outcomes.

This finding contrasts with previous research by Al-Dhubaibi (2020) and Setiawan et al. (2023) who reported that competence significantly enhanced auditors' detection ability. Similarly, Basmar et al. (2024) and Suyono et al. (2025) emphasized that technical knowledge and professional experience are critical in identifying fraudulent misstatements. The discrepancy may stem from contextual factors in this study's sample, such as differences in training intensity, experience levels, or firm-specific audit practices, which could limit the direct impact of competence on fraud detection. The insignificance of



competence in this study may indicate that knowledge and skills, while essential, are not always translated into practical effectiveness without the support of critical attitudes such as skepticism or the awareness of fraud cues. This reflects the possibility that auditors in smaller firms or regional offices rely more on standardized procedures rather than their professional judgment, thereby diluting the direct role of competence in fraud detection. Consequently, the development of competence should not only emphasize technical mastery but also focus on cultivating adaptive judgment and critical evaluation in real audit situations.

### **Time Constraints and Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud**

The results show that time constraints has a negligible and statistically insignificant impact on the auditor's ability to detect fraud ( $\beta = 0.032$ ,  $t = 0.299$ ,  $p = 0.766$ ). This suggests that auditors' detection ability is not directly influenced by the presence of time constraints in this context. While time pressure is often associated with reduced audit quality, the findings here imply that auditors may have developed strategies to manage deadlines without significantly compromising their effectiveness in detecting fraud.

This outcome differs from the findings of Eriyanti et al. (2022) and Rosiana et al. (2019), who observed that time constraints significantly affected auditors' detection capabilities. One possible explanation for this divergence is that the auditors in this study may rely more on professional skepticism or firm-level quality control mechanisms to mitigate the negative consequences of time constraints. As noted by McDaniel (1990) auditors under time pressure may still maintain performance quality if adequate support structures are in place. The insignificance of time constraints in this context suggests that auditors may have already internalized coping mechanisms to balance efficiency and effectiveness under deadline constraints. This could be influenced by institutional practices where firms allocate resources strategically to minimize the adverse impact of time pressure on audit quality. It also implies that while time constraints is theoretically detrimental, in practice, auditors' personal discipline, teamwork, and firm-level quality controls may neutralize its negative effect, thereby maintaining a relatively stable level of fraud detection ability.

### **Red Flags and Auditor's Ability to Detect Fraud**

The regression output indicates that red flags also show a positive but statistically insignificant effect on the auditor's ability to detect fraud ( $\beta = 0.422$ ,  $t = 1.062$ ,  $p = 0.294$ ). While theoretically, the presence of red flags should alert auditors to potential irregularities, in practice, not all red flags are acted upon with the same degree of urgency. This may suggest that auditors do not always fully integrate red flag indicators into their fraud detection process, potentially due to overreliance on standardized audit procedures or limitations in professional judgment.

These results differ from Eriyanti et al. (2022) as well as Purwanti & Astika (2017), who found that red flags significantly improved auditors' detection of fraud. A potential explanation lies in the auditors' risk assessment practices: while red flags serve as important signals, their effectiveness depends on the auditors' ability to interpret and act upon them. As Hafizhah & Abdurahim (2019) argue, auditors' sensitivity to fraud cues is critical, and without sufficient skepticism or training, the mere presence of red flags may not necessarily enhance fraud detection. The lack of significance of red flags may reveal that the mere presence of fraud indicators is insufficient unless auditors are trained to interpret them appropriately. This suggests that the challenge lies not in the identification of red flags per se but in auditors' sensitivity and professional judgment to connect these cues with broader fraud risk assessments. In other words, red flags function effectively only when combined with professional



skepticism and adequate fraud risk training, which may explain why in this study, their independent influence on fraud detection is not statistically significant.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that professional skepticism is the most critical determinant of auditors' ability to detect fraud, highlighting its role as both a technical and psychological safeguard in the auditing process. The findings reveal that while competence, time constraints, and red flags theoretically contribute to fraud detection, they do not significantly influence auditors' performance in the context of East Jakarta public accounting firms. This suggests that technical expertise and fraud indicators, without the integration of skeptical judgment, are insufficient to ensure effective fraud detection. The results underscore the importance of fostering a questioning mindset, ethical awareness, and vigilance among auditors, as these qualities directly strengthen their ability to identify fraudulent activities. Consequently, audit firms and regulators should prioritize continuous professional development programs that cultivate professional skepticism rather than focusing solely on technical competence. Strengthening this attribute is essential not only to enhance audit quality but also to restore and maintain public trust in financial reporting integrity.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size is relatively small, consisting of only 52 respondents, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to a broader population of auditors in Indonesia. Second, the scope of the research is limited to auditors working in Public Accounting Firms in East Jakarta, thereby excluding auditors from other regions with potentially different audit environments, institutional characteristics, and levels of fraud risk. Third, the independent variables examined, professional skepticism, competence, time constraints, and red flags, are still limited, while other relevant factors such as auditor independence, ethical orientation, audit experience, or organizational support might also influence fraud detection capability. Finally, the study employs a purely quantitative approach using questionnaires, which may not fully capture the depth of behavioral and contextual aspects that influence auditors' judgment in real-world audit settings.

Future studies are encouraged to address these limitations by expanding the sample size and covering auditors from multiple regions to enhance the external validity of the findings. Additional variables, such as independence, ethical climate, auditor experience, and the use of technology-driven audit tools (e.g., data analytics), should be considered to provide a more comprehensive understanding of fraud detection. Researchers may also adopt mixed-method approaches, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or case studies, to capture the nuanced behavioral and organizational dynamics that shape auditors' decision-making. Moreover, cross-country comparative studies could be conducted to explore how institutional, cultural, and regulatory environments moderate the relationship between auditor characteristics and fraud detection effectiveness. Such efforts would enrich the literature and provide practical insights for regulators, professional bodies, and audit firms in strengthening audit quality and fraud prevention mechanisms.

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