



Jurnal Akuntansi Keuangan dan Bisnis

Politeknik Caltex Riau

<https://jurnal.pcr.ac.id/index.php/jakb/>

| e- ISSN : (Online) | p- ISSN : (Print)

## THE EFFECT OF PROFITABILITY AND COMPANY SIZE ON AUDIT DELAY WITH AUDITOR REPUTATION AS A MODERATION FOR BANKING COMPANIES

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Volume : 18

Nomor : 1

Halaman : 127

Pekanbaru, 31 Mei 2025

Tanggal Masuk :

11 Mei 2025

Tanggal Revisi :

19 Mei 2025

Tanggal Diterima :

12 Juni 2025

### Keywords :

*profitability; company size; audit delay; auditor reputation*

Mengutip ini sebagai:

Salimah, A.P., Rusmanah, E., Hardiyanto, A.T., (2025). The effect of profitability and company size on audit delay with auditor reputation as a moderation for banking companies. *Jurnal Akuntansi Keuangan dan Bisnis*, 18(1), 127-136

### Abstrak

**Tujuan Utama** – Penelitian ini menguji pengaruh profitabilitas dan ukuran perusahaan terhadap audit delay dengan reputasi auditor sebagai variabel moderasi pada perusahaan perbankan yang terdaftar di Bursa Efek Indonesia tahun 2020–2024.

**Metode** – Penelitian kuantitatif ini menggunakan analisis regresi berganda dan regresi moderasi dengan 135 observasi.

**Temuan Utama** – Profitabilitas dan ukuran perusahaan berpengaruh signifikan dalam mengurangi audit delay. Reputasi auditor juga terbukti memoderasi hubungan profitabilitas terhadap audit delay.

**Implikasi Teori dan Kebijakan** – Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pentingnya kinerja keuangan dan reputasi auditor dalam meningkatkan ketepatan waktu pelaporan audit.

**Kebaruan Penelitian** – Studi ini mengintegrasikan profitabilitas, ukuran perusahaan, dan reputasi auditor dalam konteks perusahaan perbankan di Indonesia.

### Abstract

**Main Objective** – This study examines the effect of profitability and firm size on audit delay, with auditor reputation as a moderating variable, in banking companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange during 2020–2024.

**Method** – This quantitative study employs multiple regression and moderated regression analysis using 135 observations.

**Main Findings** – Profitability and firm size significantly reduce audit delay. Auditor reputation

is also proven to moderate the relationship between profitability and audit delay.

**Theoretical and Policy Implications** – The findings highlight the importance of financial performance and auditor reputation in improving the timeliness of audit reporting.

**Research Novelty** – This study integrates profitability, firm size, and auditor reputation within the context of banking companies in Indonesia.

## Introduction

Financial statements are created using accounting cycle methods to gather information and document the company's operations. These statements are accessible to all parties who may have an interest in the company's financial data or operations (Dharma et al., 2024). The purpose of reporting financial statements is to provide information that is beneficial for the company's internal and external interests.

Companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange must submit their audited annual financial statements within a specified timeframe. These statements must be audited by independent auditors and submitted on time. However, certain companies continue to experience delays in submitting audited financial statements, despite the existence of legal sanctions for delayed submissions. Hence, an audit delay occurs when a timely submission is delayed.

Audit delay refers to the time taken to finalize audited financial statements after the end of the company's fiscal year. Data from the Indonesia Stock Exchange indicate fluctuations in the number of companies experiencing such delays: 88 companies in 2020, increasing to 91 in 2021, decreasing to 61 in 2022, and then rising significantly to 129 in 2023. Based on the explanation above that a firm received worth is strongly correlated with the timely submission of financial statements; these delays in financial reporting potentially erode investor trust.

To preserve market efficiency, investor confidence, and openness, audited financial statements must be submitted on time. However, audit delays continue to occur among companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange, with delayed submissions fluctuating significantly in recent years. Such delays may reflect concerns about a company's

financial health and negatively affect stock prices in the capital market. Despite existing regulations and penalties, many firms fail to meet reporting deadlines, raising questions about the underlying factors contributing to audit delays. Among these, profitability and company size are influential and require further empirical investigation to confirm their impact.

Further, timely submission of audited financial statements is important, specifically for the banking industry, due to the sector's critical role in maintaining financial system stability, public trust, and regulatory compliance. Thus, this study focuses on companies in the banking sub-sector listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange during the 2020–2024. Notably, in 2023, three banking companies—PT Bank Amar Indonesia Tbk, PT Bank KB Bukopin Tbk, and PT Bank Jtrust Indonesia Tbk—experienced delays in submitting their financial statements. This contrasts with the years 2020, 2021, and 2022, during which no companies in the banking sub-sector reported such delays. Differences between this study and previous studies lie in the selection of the company population and the timeframe analyzed. Additionally, the study employs auditor reputation as a moderating variable. Therefore, this research is to examine and see the effect of profitability and company size on audit delay in banking companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange. In addition, this research seeks to see the relationship of variables with the reputation of the auditor as a moderation variable.

## Literature Review

### Agency Theory

According to Jensen and Meckling, (1976), as cited in Vidiанти & Yohanes (2023), agency theory explains the relationship between the principal and the agent or company management, involving two or more parties. The principal delegates authority and assigns responsibilities to the agent, who is tasked with managing operations and reporting company performance. This relationship is characterized by a separation of ownership, held by investors, and control, exercised by managers, and is intended to address potential conflicts of interest. Such conflicts may arise when one party does not act in alignment with

the interests of the other. Companies that experience prolonged audit delays or fail to submit their financial statements on time may or delay undermine shareholder confidence and diminish the perceived reliability of corporate information.

Watts, Ross L. and Zimmerman (1986) emphasize that agency costs arise from monitoring and bonding expenditures intended to align the agent's behavior with the principal's interests, especially in publicly listed firms. Further, DeFond and Zhang (2014) argue that high-quality and timely financial reporting serves as a key mechanism to mitigate information asymmetry between managers and external stakeholders. Delayed audit reports reduce transparency and may be perceived as signals of poor governance or financial distress. In the banking sector, where public trust and regulatory compliance are vital, such delays can significantly erode shareholder confidence and diminish the perceived reliability of corporate disclosures.

#### **Audit Delay**

Audit delay refers to the late submission of audited financial statement information by an independent auditor. It represents the time interval needed by the auditor to complete the audit process, measured from the company's fiscal year-end (book closing date) to the date the official audit report is issued (Vidianti & Yohanes, 2023). This delay is calculated based on the number of days between the book closing date and the audit report date. There are several factors that affect audit delay, including profitability and company size.

#### **Profitability**

Profitability refers to a company's ability to generate earnings or profits, which can serve as a foundation for business development (Oktrivina & Azizah, 2022). It reflects the company's capacity to produce profit using its available resources, including sales, cash, capital, workforce, and operational branches. Several financial ratios are used to assess profitability, one of which is Return on Assets (ROA). ROA measures a company's net income in relation to its total assets, indicating how efficiently assets are used to generate profits. A higher ROA suggests a greater level of profitability relative to the assets employed

(Olivia et al., 2022). According to agency theory, when a company demonstrates high profitability, it aligns with the expectations of shareholders, thereby enhancing investor confidence. ROA is formulated as follows:

$$\text{ROA} = \frac{\text{Profit After Tax}}{\text{Total Assets}} \times 100\%$$

#### **Company Size**

Company size refers to the scale of a business, which can be assessed in various ways, such as total assets, market capitalization, and other financial indicators (Rahmadhani & Anggono, 2023). According to agency theory, larger companies tend to have more structured and effective control systems, which are essential for shareholders or investors in monitoring managerial performance. In this study, company size is measured using total assets, reflecting the overall resources owned by the company (Putra et al., 2023). Well-established internal control systems in large companies can facilitate the audit process, making it easier for auditors to review financial statements. Furthermore, large firms typically have sufficient resources to afford audit services that may expedite the audit process (Br. Ginting et al., 2024). Company size is measured as follows:

$$\text{Company Size} = \ln(\text{Total Assets})$$

#### **Auditor Reputation**

In this study, the auditor's reputation refers to the reputation of a public accounting firm (KAP). KAP is a business entity that operates under a valid license and is established in accordance with legal regulations. Law No. 5 of 2011 governs the role and functions of public accountants and public accounting firms. To indicate the auditor's reputation, this study used the Big Four KAP.

The Big Four KAP refers to the largest and most prominent international accounting firms, which provide professional audit services to both public and private companies. In Indonesia, the Big Four are represented by the following firms (Hidayati & Djamil, 2024):

1. KAP Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (Deloitte), partnered with KAP Satrio Bing Eny, Imelda & Partners.

2. KAP PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), partnered with KAP Tanudiredja, Wibisana, Rintis & Partners / PT Prima Wahana Caraka.
3. KAP Ernst & Young (EY), partnered with KAP Purwantono, Sungkoro & Surja (PSS).
4. KAP Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG), partnered with KAP Siddharta Widjaja & Partners.

### **Research Hypothesis**

#### **The Effect of Profitability on Audit Delay**

Companies with higher profitability are generally motivated to expedite the audit process in order to disseminate favorable performance outcomes to the public, thereby maintaining investor confidence and market reputation. Conversely, firms with lower profitability may experience negative market perceptions, prompting delays in financial reporting due to managerial hesitation or increased auditor scrutiny. Auditors also tend to exercise greater caution when auditing loss-reporting entities, which can lengthen the audit timeline (Melosa & Rohman, 2022).

While several studies, including those by Nugraha et al. (2024), Melosa and Rohman (2022), Hafid et al. (2023), and Icoh et al. (2024), consistently showing that profitability significantly affects audit delay, the literature remains inconclusive. Contradictory findings by Br. Ginting et al. (2024) and Pasaribu and Harahap (2023) report no significant relationship between profitability and audit delay. These inconsistencies indicate a gap in understanding how profitability influences audit timeliness, possibly due to differences in industry context, firm size, or moderating factors not yet fully explored. Based on this theoretical foundation and the conflicting empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Profitability has a significant effect on audit delay

#### **The Effect of Company Size on Audit Delay**

Previous studies by Astuti et al. (2022), Rahmadhani & Anggono (2023), and Gessela & Jefri (2024) have indicated that company size influences audit delay. However, this finding contrasts with the research by Andri & Anisa (2024), which concluded that company

size does not affect audit delay. Large companies generally possess stronger internal controls, ample resources, and advanced information systems, enabling them to prepare financial statements more efficiently. Additionally, due to greater scrutiny from investors and the need to maintain a positive market image, large firms may be more motivated to complete and publish their financial reports promptly. From the explanation above, the hypothesis is formed as follows:

H2: Company size has a significant effect on audit delay

#### **The Auditor Reputation Moderated Profitability and Audit Delay**

According to prior theories and findings by Rante & Simbolon (2022), the reputation of the auditor, as indicated by a Public Accounting Firm (KAP), influences audit delay. Companies with high profitability are generally associated with shorter audit delays. The reputation of an auditor can act as a moderating variable between profitability and audit delay, as supported by the study of Saputra et al. (2024), which found that auditor reputation moderates the relationship between profitability and audit delay. Reputable auditors tend to exercise greater caution and adhere strictly to audit procedures when examining financial statements. A company's financial condition, including profitability, can be assessed through various metrics, one of which is Return on Assets (ROA), which measures profitability based on total assets (Rosalia et al., 2019). From the explanation above, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H3: Auditor reputation moderates the effect of profitability on audit delay

#### **The Auditor Reputation Moderated Company Size and Audit Delay**

Auditors from firms with strong reputations are expected to conduct their work professionally, particularly when auditing large-scale companies. According to research by Icoh et al. (2024), the reputation of the auditor influences audit delay. Large companies are generally able to minimize audit delays due to their well-established internal

systems and controls. The reputation of the auditor can moderate the relationship between company size and audit delay. Large firms typically engage a reputable auditor, which can strengthen the effect of company size on reducing audit delay, positioning auditor reputation as a moderating variable in this relationship. Thus, the hypothesis is formed as follows:

H4: Auditor reputation moderates the effect of company size on audit delay

Further, the conceptual framework of this study can be seen in the figure below.

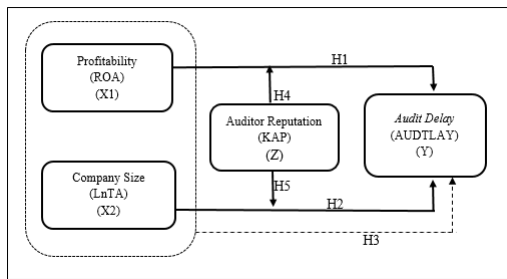


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

**Research Methods**

This study employs a verification approach using the explanatory survey method, supported by quantitative statistical analysis. The data used are secondary data sourced from independent auditor reports, statements of financial position, and comprehensive income statements of banking companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange for 2020–2024. These data were accessed through the official website of the Indonesia Stock Exchange (www.idx.co.id) and examined using multiple regression analysis and moderated regression analysis. Sample structure details can be seen in Table 1.

2	Banking Companies that do not report financial statements that have been audited in 2020-2024	-18
3	Companies that do not use the rupiah	-2
<b>Total Sample</b>		<b>27</b>
<b>Research Period (Years)</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>Number of Observations (Total Sample*Research Period)</b>		<b>135</b>

Further, this study involves four key variables: profitability, company size, audit delay, and auditor reputation (see Table 2). Profitability is measured using Return on Assets (ROA), calculated as profit after tax divided by total assets, reflecting the firm's efficiency in generating earnings. Company size is proxied by the natural logarithm of total assets (LnTA) to normalize scale differences across firms. Audit delay is defined as the number of days between the fiscal year-end and the issuance of the independent audit report, indicating the timeliness of financial reporting. Lastly, auditor reputation is classified based on the affiliation of the public accounting firm (KAP), where affiliation with a Big Four firm is coded as 1, and non-Big Four affiliation as 0.

Table 2 Operationalization Variables

Variable	Indicator	Measurement	Scale
Profitability (ROA)	Return on Assets	$\frac{\text{Profit After Tax}}{\text{Total Assets}} \times 100\%$	Ratio
Company Size (LnTA)	Total Assets	Ln (Total Assets)	Ratio
Audit Delay (AUDTLAY)	Independent Audit Report	The length of the completion of the audited financial statements.	Nominal
Auditor Reputation (KAP)	The KAP is affiliated with the Big Four, or KAP is affiliated with non-Big Four	Affiliated Big Four = 1 Affiliated non-Big Four = 0	Nominal

Table 1 Sample Structure

No	Criteria	Amount
1	Banking Companies that are registered in the IDX in 2021-2024	47

**Analysis Method**

The study employs a two-stage data analysis approach consisting of data quality testing and hypothesis testing. Data quality is assessed through classical assumptions to ensure the reliability of the regression models.

Hypothesis testing is conducted using the t-test to determine the significance of individual regression coefficients, the F-test to assess the overall significance of the model, and the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) to evaluate the explanatory power of the independent variables. The analysis utilizes two primary regression techniques. First, multiple linear regression analysis is used to examine the direct effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Second, Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) is applied to assess the interaction effects between the moderating variable and the independent variables in influencing the dependent variable. The multiple regression model used in the study is formulated as follows.

$$AUDTLAY_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 ROA_{it} + \beta_2 LnTA_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \dots\dots\dots Eq1$$

Meanwhile, the moderated regression analysis is tested using the model below.

$$AUDTLAY_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 ROA_{it} + \beta_2 LnTA_{it} + \beta_3 KAP_{it} + \beta_4 ROA_{it} KAP_{it} + \beta_5 LnTA_{it} KAP_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \dots\dots\dots Eq2$$

Information:

- AUDTLAY : Audit delay, time distance, or day between the date of the financial statement closing the book and the date of the Independent Auditor's opinion report.
- $\alpha$  : Constant
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$  : Multiple regression coefficient
- ROA : Company profitability (Return on Assets)
- LnTA : Company size (Total Assets)
- KAP : Auditor reputation
- ROAKAP : Profitability with auditor reputation as a moderation variable
- LnTAKAP : Company size with auditor reputation as a moderation variable
- $\varepsilon$  : Error term
- i : Sector Unit
- t : Time Unit

## Results and Discussion

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
ROA	135	-0.18	0.14	0.0037	0.02730
LnTA	135	22.31	35.23	31.4882	1.84418
AUDTLAY	135	15	330	71.39	38.049

Source: SPSS data processing version 25.

Table 3 explains that the highest value of profitability is 0.14 or 14%, while the lowest value of profitability is -0.18. Increased profitability shows that the higher the company's value and the better the company will reduce the delay. Meanwhile, the maximum value of the company's size is 35.23, while the lowest value of the company's size is 22.31. Variables show that a large company size will reduce the occurrence of audit delay. then finally shows the maximum value of the delay audit of 330 and the minimum value of 15. shows that the longer the audit delay time, the company experiences delays in the delivery of financial statements.

### Normality Test

The initial test assesses whether the significance value exceeds 0.05; if so, it can be concluded that the data are normally distributed. Normality can be evaluated using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Goodness of Fit test with the Exact Monte Carlo method. As stated by (Pratama & Astuti, 2024), the decision criterion based on the Exact Monte Carlo test involves checking the Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) value—if this value is greater than 0.05, the data are considered to follow a normal distribution. The results of the normality test are that the data is normally distributed, as the value of the Monte Carlo Sig (2-tailed) obtained is greater than 0.007, where this value is greater than 0.05

### Multicollinearity Test

The second test is the multicollinearity test, which is assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values. The criteria for this test are tolerance values greater than 0.100 and VIF values less than 10.00. If the results meet these thresholds, it can be

concluded that there are no symptoms of multicollinearity. The outcomes of the multicollinearity test are that profitability and company size variables each get a VIF value of 1,035 and a tolerance value of 0.966. Then it can be concluded that the results of the multicollinearity test are met because it is in accordance with the test criteria.

**Autocorrelation Test**

The third test is the autocorrelation test. According to (Pratama & Astuti, 2024) This test is used to determine whether there is a correlation between the error terms in the current period (t) and the previous period (t-1) within a multiple linear regression model. The Durbin-Watson (DW) statistic is used for this purpose. As explained by Mutmainah (2014), the test criteria for the Durbin-Watson value are as follows: if the value falls within the range of  $du < DW < 4-du$ , then there is no indication of autocorrelation. However, if  $DW < dl$  or  $DW > 4 - dl$ , autocorrelation is present. In this study, the number of observations (N) is 135, and the number of independent variables (K) is 2 (profitability and company size). Using a significance level of  $\alpha = 5\%$ , the following critical values were obtained from the Durbin-Watson table: DL = 1.688; DU = 1.749; and  $4 - DU = 2.311$ . The Durbin-Watson test result is 1.799, which falls within the range of  $1.749 < 1.799 < 2.311$ . Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no autocorrelation in the regression model.

**Heteroscedasticity Test**

This test is conducted using the Glejser test. According to the criteria, if the significance value (Sig.) is greater than 0.05, it indicates the absence of heteroscedasticity. Conversely, if the Sig. value is less than 0.05, heteroscedasticity is present. In this study, the Glejser test results show a Sig. value of 0.069 for the profitability variable and 0.022 for the company size variable. Since both values are greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that there is no indication of heteroscedasticity in the data.

**Results**

Hypothesis testing is conducted to determine whether each independent variable influences the dependent variable, which in

this case is audit delay. This is assessed using the t-test, where a significance (Sig.) value of less than 0.05 indicates a significant effect on the dependent variable. Based on the data analysis results, it can be concluded that both independent variables significantly affect audit delay. Details of multiple regression results can be seen in **Table 4**. Therefore, it can be concluded that H1 and H2 are accepted.

Table 4 Multiple Regression Results Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	389.204	18.682			20.834	0.000
ROA	-2.001	0.071	-0.807		-28.120	0.000
LnTA	-10.093	0.592	-0.489		-17.041	0.000

Source: SPSS data processing version 25.

Based on Table 4 also the equation of the multiple linear regression test can be seen below.

$$AUDTLAY_{it} = 389.204 - 2.001 ROA_{it} - 10.093 LnTA_{it}$$

The results of the multiple regression equation show that the constant value ( $\alpha$ ) is 389.204, which is positive and indicates that the audit delay variable has a direct relationship with the independent variables. The profitability variable has a coefficient of -2.001, meaning that a decrease in profitability will increase audit delay by 2.001. Higher profitability is associated with a quicker completion of the audit.

Meanwhile, the company size variable has a coefficient of -10.093, also negative, indicating that a decrease in company size leads to an increase in audit delay by 10.093. A larger company size tends to reduce audit delay.

To assess whether auditor reputation acts as a moderating variable between profitability and company size on audit delay, the interaction test results indicate that auditor reputation moderates the relationship between profitability and audit delay. This is supported by the significance value of the interaction term between profitability and auditor reputation, which is 0.000, less than the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, hypothesis H3 is accepted,

indicating that auditor reputation does moderate the effect of profitability on audit delay. Conversely, the regression analysis does not provide evidence that auditor reputation moderates the relationship between company size and audit delay. The significance value for the interaction between company size and auditor reputation is 0.125, which exceeds 0.05. As a result, hypothesis H4 is rejected.

Table 5 Moderated Regression Results  
Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	323.351	39.403		8.206	0.000
ROA	-2.201	0.075	-0.888	-29.232	0.000
LnTA	-8.013	1.263	-0.388	-6.342	0.000
KAP	66.435	44.043	0.875	1.508	0.134
KAPROA	0.862	0.162	0.164	5.316	0.000
KAPLnTA	-2.166	1.404	-0.914	-1.542	0.125

Source: SPSS data processing version 25.

Based on the results of the moderation analysis method in **Table 5** above, the following equation can be derived:

$$\begin{aligned}
 AUDTLAY_{it} = & 323.351 - 2.201 ROA_{it} \\
 & - 8.013 LnTA_{it} \\
 & + 66.435KAP_{it} \\
 & + 0.862 ROA_{it}KAP_{it} \\
 & - 2.166 LnTA_{it}(KAP)_{it}
 \end{aligned}$$

The results of the moderation regression equation show that the constant value ( $\alpha$ ) is 323.351, indicating a positive directional relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The profitability variable has a coefficient of -2.201, signifying a negative relationship, meaning that an increase in profitability will lead to a decrease in audit delay, and vice versa. Similarly, the company size variable has a coefficient of -8.013, also indicating a negative relationship; as company size increases, audit delay tends to decrease, and conversely, smaller company size is associated with longer audit delays.

Meanwhile, the auditor's reputation has two-way effects on audit delay, direct and indirect. As an independent variable, auditor reputation has a coefficient of 66.435, which is positive, indicating a direct effect, which means that higher auditor reputation increases

audit delay. However, as a moderation variable, auditor reputation has an indirect effect. The interaction between auditor reputation and profitability ( $ROA * KAP$ ) yields a coefficient of 0.862, which is positive and significant, suggesting that the auditor reputation amplifies the nexus between these variables. Lastly, the interaction between auditor reputation and company size ( $LnTA * KAP$ ) results in a coefficient of -2.166, which is negative. This implies that when auditor reputation interacts with larger company size, it contributes to a reduction in audit delay. However, the result is insignificant.

## Conclusion

This study examines the influence of profitability and company size on audit delay, while incorporating auditor reputation as a moderating variable. Using data from banking companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange during the 2020–2024 period, the findings reveal that both higher profitability and larger company size are significantly associated with shorter audit delays. These results support agency theory, which posits that well-performing companies are motivated to report financial results promptly to maintain investor trust. The moderation analysis further shows that auditor reputation moderates the relationship between profitability and audit delay, indicating that reputable auditors are more responsive to profitable firms, potentially expediting the audit process. However, auditor reputation does not significantly influence the relationship between company size and audit delay, suggesting that size alone may not alter auditor behavior in the absence of performance signals.

These findings offer several practical implications. For company management, improving financial performance and engaging high-reputation auditors can be effective strategies to reduce audit delays and enhance the credibility of financial reporting. For regulators and stakeholders, the study underpins the importance of promoting auditor quality standards and encouraging transparency in auditor selection. Lastly, this research contributes to the audit timeliness literature by emphasizing the interplay between internal corporate conditions and external auditor characteristics, and by

providing insights for companies aiming to strengthen investor trust through timely financial disclosure.

### Recommendation

Future studies are encouraged to expand the scope of analysis by incorporating additional firm-specific and external variables that may influence audit delay, such as leverage, ownership structure, board characteristics, or the complexity of financial statements. These factors could provide a comprehensive understanding of what drives audit timeliness across different organizational contexts. In addition, future studies could consider exploring alternative moderating variables beyond auditor reputation such as audit tenure (to examine whether long-term auditor relationships affect efficiency), auditor opinion type (to assess whether qualified or unqualified opinions influence delay), and auditor specialization in the industry (to test whether specialized auditors' complete audits faster due to industry familiarity). These might add deeper insights into how auditor-related dynamics and firm-specific characteristics interact to affect audit delay, thereby offering more targeted recommendations for both practitioners and policymakers.

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