

## THE ROLE OF AUDIT TENURE IN MODERATING AUDIT DELAY FACTORS

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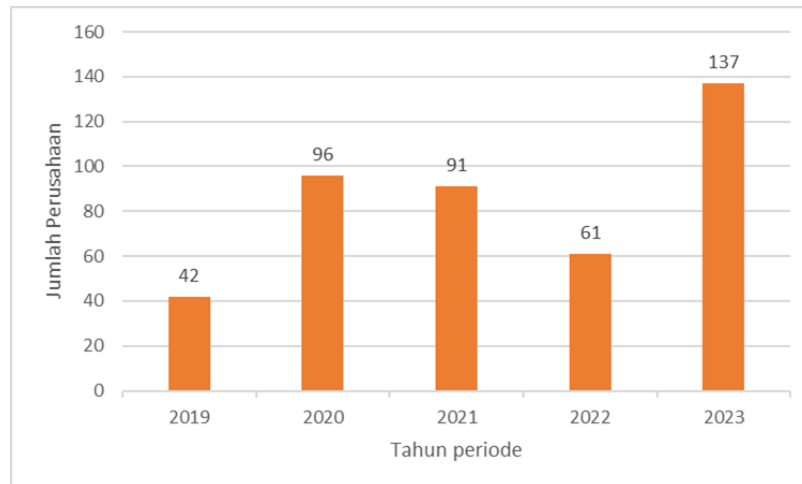
Informasi Naskah	Abstrak
<b>Diterima: 17-06-2025</b> <b>Revisi: 04-07-2025</b> <b>Terbit: 22-09-2025</b> <b>Kata Kunci:</b> Audit Delay, Audit Tenure, Financial Distress, Profitabilitas, Ukuran KAP	Penelitian ini menguji pengaruh financial distress, ukuran KAP, dan profitabilitas terhadap audit delay, dengan audit tenure sebagai variabel pemoderasi, pada perusahaan sektor energi yang terdaftar di Bursa Efek Indonesia (BEI) dari tahun 2019 sampai dengan tahun 2023. Data diperoleh dari laporan keuangan 19 perusahaan sektor energi papan utama selama periode tersebut. Pemilihan sampel dilakukan melalui metode purposive sampling. Analisis data menggunakan IBM SPSS 26 dan pengujian hipotesis dilakukan dengan menggunakan pendekatan moderated regression analysis. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa financial distress dan profitabilitas tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap audit delay, sedangkan ukuran KAP berpengaruh negatif signifikan terhadap audit delay. Selain itu, audit tenure tidak terbukti dapat memoderasi hubungan antara financial distress, ukuran KAP, maupun profitabilitas terhadap audit delay. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada literatur dengan mengeksplorasi peran audit tenure sebagai variabel moderasi pada pengaruh financial distress, ukuran KAP, dan profitabilitas terhadap audit delay, khususnya pada sektor energi yang dikenal memiliki tingkat audit delay yang tinggi. Temuan bahwa ukuran KAP berpengaruh negatif signifikan terhadap audit delay menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan KAP bereputasi tinggi dapat mempercepat proses audit. Oleh karena itu, perusahaan sektor energi disarankan bekerja sama dengan KAP besar guna meningkatkan ketepatan waktu pelaporan keuangan dan memperkuat kepercayaan investor.
<b>Keywords:</b> Audit Delay, Audit Tenure, Financial Distress, KAP Size, Profitability	<b>Abstract</b> <i>This study examines the effect of financial distress, KAP size, and profitability on audit delay, with audit tenure as a moderating variable, in energy sector companies listed on Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX) from 2019 to 2023. Data was obtained from the financial statements of 19 main board energy sector companies during that period. The sample selection was carried out through the purposive sampling method. Data analysis used IBM SPSS 26 and hypothesis testing was carried out using a moderated regression analysis approach. The research findings show that financial distress and profitability have no significant effect on audit delay, while KAP size has a significant negative effect on audit delay. In addition, audit tenure is not proven to be able to moderate the relationship between financial distress, KAP size, or profitability on audit delay. This study contributes to the literature by exploring the role of audit tenure as a moderating variable in the effect of financial distress, KAP size, and profitability on audit delay, especially in the energy sector which is known to have a high level of audit delay. The finding that KAP size has a significant negative effect on audit delay suggests that engaging reputable KAPs can accelerate the audit process. Therefore, energy sector companies are advised to collaborate with large KAPs to improve financial reporting timeliness and enhance investor confidence.</i>

## PENDAHULUAN

The Indonesia Stock Exchange notes the rapid growth of the capital market, which encourages companies to be more open about their financial position. This affects the process of submitting financial reports, which must be transparent and timely, to satisfy stakeholders' informational needs, the company adheres to the relevant accounting standards.

OJK Regulation No. 14/POJK.04/2022 mandates companies to submit annual financial

reports within 90 days after fiscal year-end. In this regulation, companies that submit financial statements after the established deadline will be subject to administrative fines. Despite these regulations, some companies still violate them.



**Figure 1. Companies Experiencing Audit Delay**

The graph above illustrates how many companies experienced an audit delay during the period from 2019 to 2023. In 2019, 42 companies experienced an audit delay. This also happened in the following years: 96 companies in 2020, 91 companies in 2021, 61 companies in 2022, and 137 companies in 2023 (IDX, 2019-2023).

According to idx.com, the energy sector still experiences many delays in reporting its financial statements. For example, PT Medco Energi Internasional Tbk and PT Ratu Prabu Energi Tbk received warnings for late publication of audited financial reports (OJK, 2023). A delayed financial report may cause investors to lose faith in the company, which could have a negative effect on the capital market share price because crucial information may not be available.

One cause of delayed financial report submissions is the requirement that independent auditors to conduct a review before the report is released to the public, which is commonly referred to as an "audit delay" (Noormansyah & Munawar, 2024). An audit delay reflects the amount of time between the fiscal year's end (December 31) and when the auditor officially issues their opinion on the financial statements, a greater audit delay indicates that users of financial statements receive more information (Al Faris & Bahri, 2022).

Various factors can influence audit delays. One factor that has the potential to influence audit delays is the financial distress experienced by a company (Rahmah & Machdar, 2024). Financial distress occurs when a company is in an unstable financial situation or under serious financial pressure, this condition usually occurs before a company file for bankruptcy (Parahyta & Herawaty, 2020).

Previous research by Rismayuda & Hamdi (2020) has found a positive significant impacts of financial distress on audit delays, however Karina & Julianto (2022) has found financial distress has negative significant impact in influencing audit delay, while research by Faradista & Stiawan (2022) shows financial distress is not significant in influencing audit delays.

Besides financial distress, KAP size can also cause audit delays. A KAP is a public accounting firm licensed by the Minister of Finance to provide audit services through public accountants. The size of a KAP, whether it is classified as non-Big Four or Big Four, can

determine how quickly the audit process is completed, Big Four KAPs tend to complete audits faster than non-Big Four KAPs (Mulyadi, 2020). However, research by Clarisa & Pangerapan (2019) found that KAP size negatively impacts audit delays in the listed mining sectors on IDX, but research by Putra et al. (2020) KAP size has no significant impact on audit delay.

Profitability measures how effectively a company can generate profits (Fitriana, 2024). A high rate of profitability has been demonstrated to contribute to the reduction in the audit process duration because the company wants to share positive information with the public as soon as possible (Palit & Sibilang, 2022). However, several studies have produced varied findings. For example, research by Arif & Hikmah (2023) found that profitability significantly impacted audit delays for IDX-listed manufacturing companies during 2019–2020. In the other research, Kriestince et al. (2022) reported profitability positively and significantly influences audit delay. Meanwhile, Alpi & Gani (2022) found that profitability had no significant impact on audit delays in IDX-listed pharmaceutical companies during 2019–2020.

Audit tenure describes how long, in years, an auditor or firm is assigned to a client for auditing (Karika & Putri, 2024). While a long tenure is considered to increase the auditor's familiarity with the company, too long of a relationship between the auditor and the auditee will lead to closeness, thereby reducing auditor independence (Effendi & Ulhaq, 2021).

In this research, audit tenure is considered a moderating variable because it has the potential to either weaken or strengthen the relationship between factors affecting audit delays, such as financial distress, KAP size, and profitability. Syifanaya (2021) explains, audit tenure has been shown to moderate the impact of KAP size on audit delay. However, Wijaya et al. (2024) found a similar result, that audit tenure is not significant in moderating the impact of financial distress, profitability, and solvency on audit delay in Indonesia tech companies.

Due to inconsistent test results, researchers are interested in further studies. This study addresses the limitations of previous research, which did not specifically examine the moderating impact of audit tenure on companies in the energy sector, where the risk of reporting delays is relatively high. This study offers novelty by exploring audit tenure as a moderating variable in the relation between financial distress, KAP size, and profitability on audit delay. The focus of this research is on energy companies listed on the IDX over the years 2019 to 2023. It highlights a specific industry and period that has not been widely explored in prior research.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **Signal Theory**

According to signal theory, companies provide signals about their condition. High-quality companies tend to release financial reports promptly, providing positive signals to the public (Purba, 2023). Good news is expected to be conveyed immediately to help users of financial statements make decisions because audit delays can reduce investor confidence (Al Faris & Bahri, 2022). A long audit delay gives investors a negative signal because it is considered bad news, thus affecting a company's share price (Bahri & Amnia, 2020).

### **Agency Theory**

Agency theory outlines the interaction between the principal, who grants authority, and an agent, who is authorized to act on behalf of the principal Purba (2023). According to Maidani & Afriani, 2019, as cited in (Sujati et al., 2024), the principal requires all information from the agent and ensures proper management of the company through audits. However, information asymmetry often occurs in practice, creating agency risk. The audit process can be extended because auditors must verify financial statements more carefully, which increases the possibility of audit delay.

### **Audit Delay**

Audit delay refers to the duration measured from the conclusion of the financial year to the publication of the official financial statements, and it is classified as an audit delay if it surpasses three months (90 days) as per relevant regulations (Astuti et al., 2022). It is also defined as a component that can influence the efficiency of financial reporting. The sooner the report is issued, the better it is for stakeholders (Prianti & Abbas, 2022).

### **Financial Distress**

Financial distress occurs when a company is unable to meet its financial obligations as they mature, primarily due to insufficient cash flow (Rahmah & Machdar, 2024). Companies experiencing such financial difficulties often raise concerns regarding the realibility and accuracy of their financial statements. As a result, auditors are required to perform more thorough and time consuming audit procedures to assess going concern assumptions and detect potential misstatements or irregularities. This additional audit effort typically leads to longer audit durations.

The extended audit process, in turn, contributes to delays in the submission of financial reports. According to (Febriyanti & Purnomo, 2021), auditors tend to spend more time auditing companies in financial distress, which directly impacts the timeliness of financial reporting.

**H1: Financial distress has a positive effect on audit delay.**

### **KAP Size**

Public accounting firms (KAPs) are typically classified into two main categories: Big Four and non-Big Four. The big four consists of the four largest and most prominent global accounting firms-Deloitte, Ernst & Young (EY), KPMG, and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) while firms outside of this group are categorized as non Big Four (Masyta Triana Putri et al., 2021).

KAPs affiliated with the Big Four tend to have a stronger reputation and greater credibility due to their extensive global networks, advanced technological infrastructure, and a larger pool of skilled auditors. These advantages allow Big Four firms to conduct audits more efficiently and with higher quality. As a result, audits performed by big four KAPs often require less time to complete compared to audits performed by non big four KAPs (Foster et al., 2021).

This suggests that the size or classification of KAP particularly being part of the big four can significantly influence the duration of the audit process, and consequently, the timeliness of financial report submission.

**H2: KAP size has negative effects on audit delay**

### **Profitability**

Profitability is a key financial ratio used to assess a company's ability to generate profits from its operations (Gaol & Duha, 2021). Companies that achieve higher levels of profitability are generally in a strong financial position and often seek to signal this success to investors, creditors, and other stakeholders.

According to Kartika, 2013 cited in Arianti (2022), companies with high profit margins tend to disclose their financial statements more promptly. This is because they are incentivized of publicize their favorable financial performance to build investors confidence, attract potential investment, and maintain a positive market perception.

Given that timely financial reporting can enhance transparency and reputation, profitable companies are more likely to expedite the audit process and avoid unnecessary delays in reporting.

### **H3: Profitability has negative effects on audit delay**

#### **Audit tenure**

Audit tenure is the duration that an auditor or KAP works with a company, expressed as the number of years of cooperation (Guntara et al., 2020). According to Financial Services Authority Regulation No. 9/POJK.03/2023, public accountants are permitted to engage with a company for a cumulative maximum period of seven years.

#### **Audit Tenure Moderates the Effect of Financial Distress on Audit Delay**

According to previous studies, financial distress can cause delays in the audit process because auditors spend more time ensuring that the company is operating properly and that there are no misstatements in the reporting. Financial distress significantly extends audit delays in mining sector companies due to the high risk and complexity of financial information (Guntara & Wiyanti, 2022). Similar results were observed by Mardjono & Astutie (2022), which stated that companies with distressed financial conditions require a longer audit. Audit tenure is considered capable of moderating financial distress's effect on audit delay significantly. Auditors with too long tenure are considered to better understand the characteristics of client company reports so that their preparation is faster (Fajriyah et al., 2024). However, other findings provide mixed results, such as findings by (Rachmah & Julianto, 2022) finding that audit tenure extends audit delay, possibly due to a decrease in auditor objectivity in long-term relationships. Although there are not many studies that directly examine the function of audit tenure as a moderator in the relation of financial distress and audit delay, a study by (Sawitri & Budiarta, 2018) that examines the moderation of auditor specialization provides preliminary evidence that auditor characteristics can weaken the negative impact of financial distress on audit delay.

### **H4: Audit tenure moderates the effect of financial distress on audit delay**

#### **Audit Tenure Moderates the Effect of KAP Size on Audit Delay**

Reputable Public Accounting Firms (KAPs), particularly those categorized as the Big Four, are known for their high audit quality, professional standards, and extensive resources. These firms are expected to complete audit processes on time, or even faster than their non-Big Four counterparts (Devina & Fidiana, 2020). Their strong organizational structure, access to advanced audit technologies, and well-trained auditors contribute to more efficient audit engagements. Moreover, a long-term relationship between auditors and clients (audit tenure) further supports audit efficiency. According to (Syifanaya, 2021), when auditors have worked with the same client over several periods, they require less time to understand the company's systems, internal controls, and risk profiles. This accumulated knowledge reduces the complexity and time demands of the audit process, even within highly reputable firms.

The combination of a reputable KAP and a long-term audit engagement is therefore expected to minimize audit delay due to both high firm capability and improved auditor familiarity with the client.

### **H5: Audit tenure moderates the effect of KAP size on audit delay**

#### **Audit Tenure Moderates the Effect of Profitability on Audit Delay**

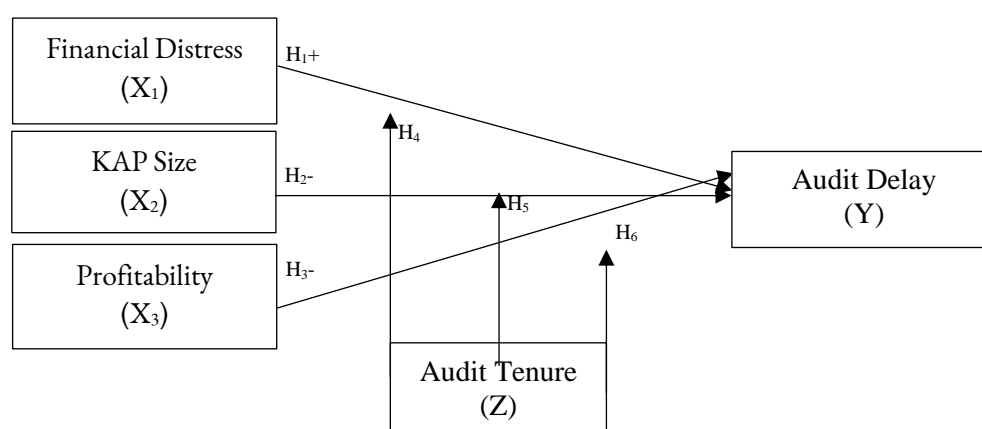
Profitability is a financial ratio used to assess a company's ability to generate profit and indicate its potential for future growth (Astuti et al., 2021). Firms with high profitability

generally have strong incentives to report their financial performance promptly, thereby reducing audit delay. Prompt financial reporting is often viewed as a signal of good performance and transparency to stakeholders.

Audit tenure—defined as the length of the relationship between the auditor and the client—can influence audit quality and efficiency. According to (Ayu Levia Tryana, 2020), longer audit tenure increases the auditor's understanding of the client's business and accounting systems, which can speed up the audit process. Similarly, 'Adna, (2020) supports this view, finding that audit tenure plays a role in strengthening the relationship with audit delay by contributing to audit efficiency.

However, findings from contradict this argument, indicating that audit tenure does not moderate the relationship between profitability and audit delay. This suggests that while audit tenure may independently impact audit delay, it may not necessarily enhance or diminish the influence of profitability on the timeliness of audits (Wijaya et al., 2024)

**H6: Audit tenure moderates the effect of profitability on audit delay**



**Figure 2. Conceptual Framework**

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This present study uses a quantitative research approach with secondary data focused on energy sector companies listed on the Main Board of the Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX) from 2019 to 2023. The energy sector was selected due to its strategic role in supporting national energy security, its significant capital intensity, and its exposure to environmental, regulatory, and ethical challenges. In recent years, the sector has also received increased scrutiny concerning transparency and sustainability reporting. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling method with specific criteria:

**Table 1. Sampling with Purposive Sampling**

No	Description	Total
1.	Number of main board enery sector companies listed on IDX	40
2.	Companies listed after 2019	(10)
3.	Companies whose profitability ratio is in deficit	(11)
	Number of companies studied	19
	Total Data from 2019 - 2023 (19 x 5)	95

Source: Data processed (2025)

**Measurement of Variable**

**Table 2. Variable Indicator**

Variable Type	Variables	Indicator	Source
Independent	Financial Distress	Zmijewski Model: $Z = -4,3 - 4,5x_1 + 5,7x_2 - 0,004x_3$	Goh (2023)
	KAP Size	Dummy: Big Four = 1 Non-Big Four = 0	(Devina & Fidiana, 2020)
	Profitability	$ROA = \frac{Net\ income}{Total\ asset}$	Fitriana (2024)
Dependent	Audit Delay	Audit Report Date – Financial Statement Date	Noormansyah & Munawar (2024)
Moderation	Audit Tenure	Number of years of relationship between KAP	Adna (2019)

Source: Data Processed (2025)

### Analysis Method

This study used multiple linear regression analysis models with the formula:  
 $Audit\ delay = \alpha + \beta_1 Financial\ distress + \beta_2 KAP\ Size + \beta_3 Profitability + \varepsilon$   
 The application used to process data is IBM SPSS version 26. The analysis method uses descriptive statistics, normality test, multicollinearity test, a heteroscedasticity test, autocorrelation test, and adjusted R<sup>2</sup>, which consists of multiple linear regression and moderation regression analysis.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Quantitative Descriptive Analysis

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistic**

		X1	X2	X3	Z	Y
N	Valid	95	95	95	95	95
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		-2.54113	.43	.09985	2.74	80.79
Std. Deviation		1.411031	.498	.074183	1.408	17.557
Minimum		-5.360	0	.006	1	45
Maximum		.400	1	.290	5	120

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)

According to the descriptive statistical analysis results, there are 95 data tested as a sample. Indicators of each variable, namely, the financial distress variable (X1) represented by the Zmijewski model based on Table 3 with a total data (n) of 95, show a mean of -2.54113, standard deviation 1.411031, maximum value 0.400, and minimum value -5.360. KAP size (X2) as measured by a dummy scale (1 = Big Four KAP, 0 = non-Big Four KAP) based on Table 3, with a total data (n) of 95, shows a mean of 0.43, standard deviation 0.498, maximum value 1 and minimum value 0. Profitability variable (X3) as measured by ROA based on Table 3, with a total data (n) of 95, shows a mean of 0.09985 or 9.985%, a standard deviation of 0.074183 or 7.4183%, a maximum value of 0.290 or 29%, minimum value 0.006 or 0.6%. Audit Tenure variables as measured by the number of years between auditors and KAP, based on Table 3 with total data (n) 95, show a mean of 2.74, standard deviation of 1.408, maximum

value 5, minimum value 1. Audit delay variables as measured by the difference in annual financial reporting dates and audited financial reports, based on Table 3 with total data (n) 95, show a mean of 80.79, a standard deviation of 17.557, a maximum value of 120, a minimum value of 45.

### Classic Assumption Test Normality Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		95
Normal Parameters	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	16.32021697
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.053
	Positive	.053
	Negative	-.045
Test Statistic		.053
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200

**Table 4. Normality Test**

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)

The normality test in this study assesses the distribution of the sample. Data with a sig. value of higher than 0.05 is considered good. The normality test uses the non-parametric Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Based on Table 4, the obtained sig. asymp. value is 0.200 > 0.05. It means the data in this study are normal.

### Multicollinearity Test

**Table 5. Multicollinearity Test**

		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Tolerance	VIF
	X1	.779	1.284
	X2	.948	1.055
	X3	.788	1.269
	Z	.914	1.094

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)

Based on Table 5, the tolerance number for financial distress is 0.779 > 0.1 and VIF of 1.284 < 10, the tolerance number for KAP size is 0.948 > 0.1 and VIF of 1.055 < 10, the tolerance number for profitability is 0.788 > 0.1 and VIF 1.269 < 10, the audit tenure variable is 0.914 > 0.1 and VIF 1.094 < 10. Based on the results which show a tolerance number of more than 0.1 and VIF < 10, it is concluded that it does not show indications of multicollinearity.

### Autocorrelation Test

**Table 6. Autocorrelation Test**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.369	.136	.097	16.679	1.779

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)



One way to detect autocorrelation is the DW test, if  $dU < d < 4-dU$  then it means that the data are free of autocorrelation. Based on Table 6 the  $d$  value is 1.779, the  $dU$  value is 1.685 and the  $4-dU$  value is 2.315. This calculation shows a value of  $1.685 (dU) < 1.779 (d) < 2.315 (4-dU)$  thus proving that the sample data is free from indications of autocorrelation

### Heteroscedasticity Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	95.909	4.568		20.994	.000
	X1	2.108	1.382	.169	1.526	.131
	X2	-4.236	3.549	-.120	-1.194	.236
	X3	-32.788	26.127	-.139	-1.255	.213
	Z	-1.703	1.278	-.137	-1.332	.186

**Table 7. Heteroscedasticity Test**

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)

Heteroscedasticity testing uses the Glejser method. Table 7 shows that all independent variable values are significant values  $> 0.05$ , which means that the regression equation model is not indicated to experience heteroscedasticity

### Regression Model Test

**Table 8. Regression Model**

1		Coefficient
	(Constant)	84.772
	X1	6.045
	X2	-5.234
	X3	2.550

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)

Table 8 presents the regression model equation, which is as follows:

$$Y = 84.772 + 6.045X_1 - 5.234X_2 + 2.550X_3 + e$$

According to the regression model equation, it is expressed as shown:

#### Constanta ( $\alpha$ )

The constant ( $\alpha$ ) shown 84.772 indicates that the audit delay is estimated at 84.772 days if financial distress (X1), KAP size (X2), and profitability (X3) are 0.

#### Regression Coefficient from X1

The Financial Distress coefficient (6.045) indicates that each 1 unit increase in the Zmijewski score will increase the audit delay by 6.045 days, assuming the KAP size variable (X2) and profitability (X3) are fixed.

#### Regression Coefficient from X2

The KAP Size coefficient (-5.234) indicates that companies handled by KAP Big Four (code 1) will decrease in audit delay of 5.234 days compared to non-Big Four, assuming financial distress (X1) and profitability (X3) are fixed.

### Regression Coefficient from X3

The Profitability coefficient (2.550) indicates that each 1 unit increase in ROA will increase the audit delay by 2.550 days, assuming financial distress (X1) and KAP size (X2) are fixed.

### Hypotesis Test

**Tabel 9. Multiple Linear Regression**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	84.772	2.045		41.453	.000
	X1	6.045	6.058	.199	.998	.326
	X2	-5.234	2.007	-1.999	-2.608	.014
	X3	2.550	2.078	.933	1.227	.229

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)

The partial test results between financial distress on audit delay show a t-count value of  $0.998 < t\text{-table } 1.98118$  and sig. value of  $0.326 > 0.05$ , it means H1 is rejected. Partial test results between KAP size on audit delay show a t-count value of  $-2.608 < -t\text{-table } -1.98118$  and sig. value of  $0.014 < 0.05$ , it means H2 is accepted. Partial test results between profitability (ROA) on audit delay show a t-count value of  $1.227 < t\text{-table } 1.98118$  and sig. value of  $0.229 > 0.05$ , it means H3 is rejected.

### The Effect of Financial Distress on Audit Delay

Based on the research results, audit delay is not significantly influenced by financial distress, as indicated by a significance value  $> 0.05$ , so H1 is rejected. It indicates that companies experiencing financial distress have no significant impact on Audit Delay. On the condition the company's cash flow remains stable to support operational activities, the release schedule of audited financial statements will not be affected, because not all companies experiencing financial difficulties will experience audit delays, this can be minimized through the professionalism of auditors who carry out their duties according to an agreed schedule so that adherence to this schedule helps reduce audit risks that could potentially cause delays in reporting (Ariyani & Rahmaita, 2024)

These results indicate that in the environment of energy sector companies, financial distress is not a significant component in audit delay. This finding is in line with the findings (Faradista & Stiawan, 2022) that financial distress has no significant impact on audit delay.

### The Effect of KAP Size on Audit Delay

Based on the research results, KAP size shows a significant impact on audit delay, which is indicated by a significance value  $< 0.05$ , so H2 is accepted. This means that companies audited by Big Four KAP experience a shorter audit delay.

This finding supports agency theory, which states that owners (principals) choose highly reputable external auditors to reduce information asymmetry and conflicts of interest with managers (agents). Big Four KAP are perceived as more independent and as providing better audit quality, so they are trusted more by stakeholders.

Additionally, this finding aligns with signal theory, which posits that selecting highly reputable auditors, such as the Big Four, shows a positive signal to the market or users of financial statements, indicating the company's quality and transparency. In other words, the

presence of Big Four auditors can increase the perceived credibility of financial statements and encourage more efficient audits. These results align with Clarisa & Pangerapan (2019) findings that KAP size negatively affects audit delay.

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

Based on this research results, the relationship between profitability and audit delays is not significant, as indicated by a value of significance greater than 0.05. Therefore, H3 is rejected. This means that companies with high financial performance do not necessarily complete the audit process faster. The audit process in companies with low or high-profit levels is not significantly different in terms of the procedures or steps applied to the performance report (Saputra et al., 2020). Companies with high and low profits still aim to convey information promptly, consistent with the findings of (Noormansyah & Munawar, 2024)

### **Moderation Regression Test**

**Tabel 10. Moderation Regression Analysis**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	75.466	2.772		27.224	.000
	X1_Z	-.764	3.849	-.099	-.199	.844
	X2_Z	-.327	.323	-.512	-1.012	.319
	X3_Z	-4.452	5.031	-.130	-.885	.383

Source: Secondary Data Processed (2025)

The sig. value of interaction between X1\_Z (Financial Distress) and Audit Tenure has a value of 0.844 > 0.05, It has been determined that the audit tenure moderation variable is incapable of moderating the impact of financial distress on audit delay, which means H1 is rejected. The sig. value of interaction between X2\_Z (KAP Size) and Audit Tenure has a value of 0.319 > 0.05, It has been determined that the audit tenure moderation variable is incapable of moderating the impact of KAP Size on Audit Delay, which means H2 is rejected. The sig. value of interaction between X3\_Z (Profitability) and Audit Tenure has a value of 0.383 > 0.05, It has been determined that the audit tenure moderation variable is incapable of moderating the impact of Profitability on Audit Delay, which means H3 is rejected.

### **Audit Tenure Moderates the Effect of Financial Distress on Audit Delay**

Audit tenure was unable to moderate the impact of financial distress on audit delays. This means the duration of time that an auditor or KAP works with a company has been demonstrated to have no impact on the financial distress of audit delay. According to Guntara & Wiyanti (2022), financial distress significantly increases audit delays in high-risk companies with complex financial information. While audit tenure can theoretically increase efficiency by enabling auditors to better understand their clients (Fajriyah et al., 2024), the results of this study do not support this assumption. One possible explanation for the rejection of this hypothesis is provided by Rahmah & Machdar (2024), who states that excessive audit tenure can reduce auditor independence and extend audit time. While auditor experience is important, it is insufficient to mitigate the impact of financial distress on audit delay.

### **Audit Tenure Moderates the Effect of KAP Size on Audit Delay**

The findings of this research show that audit tenure is unable to moderate the effect of knowledge, attitude, and practice size on audit delay. This suggests that the duration of the

working relationship between the auditor and auditee does not enhance the impact of reputable KAP on audit delay. It is a commonly held view that large KAPs, such as the Big Four, possess sufficient resources, considerable experience, and efficient audit methodologies, enabling them to complete audits expeditiously (Devina & Fidiana, 2020). According to Syifanaya (2021), an auditor who has been employed by the same company for an extended period gains a better understanding of the client and its risks, which can make the audit process faster. However, this study did not find evidence that combining large KAP and long audit tenure can significantly shorten audit delay. Also, working with the same auditor for a long time doesn't always make things more efficient. This is because there might be a risk of complacency, or the auditor might become less critical of their clients. Therefore, although KAP size affects audit delay, audit tenure does not strengthen this.

### **Audit Tenure Moderates the Effect of Profitability on Audit Delay**

The audit tenure has been found to be unable to moderate the impact of profitability on audit delays. This means that, even if the auditor and the company have a long-standing relationship, the audit does not speed up in companies with high profitability. Although it is thought that audit tenure speeds up the audit process by increasing the auditor's understanding of the client's systems and risks, the findings of research by 'Adna (2020) do not support this assumption. This finding aligns with Wijaya et al. (2024) research, which concluded that audit tenure has no impact on moderating profitability on audit delay. This suggests that, even if the auditor and auditee have a long-standing relationship, it is not strong enough to accelerate the audit process in high-profit companies.

### **CONCLUSSION AND SUGESTION**

Audit delay is an important issue in corporate financial reporting, especially in sectors that have complex operations such as energy. The results of this study indicate that financial distress and profitability have no significant effect on audit delay, while KAP size has a significant negative effect. Companies audited by Big Four KAP tend to complete audits faster, indicating that larger audit firms are generally more capable of completing audits in a timely and efficient manner due to better infrastructure and audit processes. The insignificant effect of financial distress and profitability indicates that audit delay is more influenced by structural factors than the company's financial condition. The audit tenure variable as a moderator also did not show a significant effect, indicating that the duration of the auditor-client relationship does not always affect the efficiency of the audit process.

This study empirically demonstrates the importance of proper auditor selection, particularly in strategic sectors such as energy, where the delay in reporting has significant implications for investor confidence and regulatory compliance. From an academic perspective, this study enriches audit delay literature, particularly in developing countries like Indonesia.

The results of the study show that the size of the Public Accounting Firm (KAP) has a significant negative effect on audit delay, indicating that companies that engage large KAPs (such as the Big Four) tend to complete audits more quickly. Therefore, management of companies in the energy sector is advised to consider partnering with reputable KAPs in order to minimize audit delays and improve the timeliness of financial reporting, which in turn can strengthen investor trust and enhance the company's credibility in the public eye.

However, this study has limitations on sector coverage that only focuses on energy

companies listed on the main board as well as relatively limited independent variables. Future research can explore other factors such as audit opinion, financial statement complexity, auditor switching, and internal governance quality to further understand their influence on audit delay (Darmayanti, et.al, 2021).

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