TEMA
Volume 26 Issue 2

RECEIVED
June 19, 2025
REVISED
July 01, 2025
September 15, 2025
ACCEPTED
December 04, 2025

THE PHENOMENON OF CONVENIENCE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDITORS USING AUDIT TECHNIQUES CONVENTIONAL

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Abstract: Fraud cases continue to rise, particularly in the local government sector, demonstrating the continued weakness of auditors in detecting fraud. This situation raises the urgency of understanding how local auditors select and use fraud detection tools that best align with their competencies. This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method, where data is collected through semi-structured interviews with auditors who have direct experience in examining fraud cases. This study aims to explore the experience of regional auditors in choosing fraud detection tools. The study found that Excel is the most effective tool for finding indications of fraud, and direct evidence is the most effective approach to proving fraud. The findings in this study show that the selection of fraud detection tools is highly dependent on the competence of auditors. This study presents a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews to evaluate the effectiveness of regional auditor fraud detection tools, which have not been discussed much in previous studies. This study provides implications that policymakers and supervisory institutions can optimize auditor competency through training and integrating the use of conventional tools with modern audit technology.

Keywords: Conventional Audit Tools, Fraud, Regional Auditor

INDEXED IN
SINTA - Science and Technology Index
Google Scholar
Garuda

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Cite this as:
Tantini, D., & Nuswantara. D. A. (2025). The Phenomenon of Convenience for Local Government Auditors Using Audit Techniques Conventional. *Tema (Jurnal Tera Ilmu Akuntansi)*, 26(2), pp. 207–219. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21776/tema.26.2.06.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, many cases of accounting fraud are in the public spotlight (DWN and Gewati 2023). In Sunardi and Sania (2023) fraud is broadly defined as certain unlawful actions carried out by individuals or groups, whether they are part of an organization or not, in order to obtain personal or group benefits that adversely affect others. Fraud can occur both in the private sector (Ikbal et al., 2020) and the public sector (Prabowo et al., 2018), including the government (Kiswanto et al., 2020). The occurrence of fraud will result in enormous losses, including reduced organizational productivity, decreased social funds for the community, and reduced partner interest in cooperating (Nursifitri et al., 2023).

According to a 2022 survey by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), Indonesia ranks fourth in the Asia-Pacific region for accounting fraud cases. In addition, based on the results of the ACFE Indonesia survey, government agencies are the most disadvantaged by fraud (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) Indonesia Chapter, 2019). This is because most of the cases revealed by the media are cases that occur in government institutions. According to the KPK website, it is stated that the majority of fraud occurs in ministries or institutions. One example is the case that occurred at the Regional Tax Service Agency (BPPD) of Sidoarjo Regency, which occurred in early 2024, where the Head of the Regional Tax Service Agency (BPPD) was involved in a corruption case in the form of withholding and receiving money to civil servants within the Sidoarjo Regency BPPD. The KPK has received reports of incentive cuts since 2021. During the KPK's arrest operation, a total of Rp 2.7 billion in cash was found.

The corruption case has occurred since 2021, but it can only be revealed in early 2024. It shows the length of time it takes to reveal a case. This indicates that auditor performance still needs improvement. The study's findings show that audit quality affects fraud detection (Umar et al., 2019). This case shows that recent fraud cases are evidence of audit failures that have led to serious consequences (Umar et al., 2019). So that the quality of audits is still often questioned by the public and stakeholders (Sulistyowati & Supriyati, 2015). Audit quality is the ability of the auditor's assessment function to find potential errors and provide recommendations for improvement (Arum & Wahyudi, 2021). Susanto et al. (2019) also found that one cause of low audit quality is auditors' low competence. This is in line with attribution theory where competence is an internal factor of the auditor that affects how auditors act during the audit process to find accounting fraud (Rininda, 2024).

In the study (Umar et al., 2019), competence was divided into four areas: interpersonal skills, standards, internal audit theory and methodology, tools and techniques, and areas of knowledge used by auditors in detecting fraud. Tools and techniques are essential in the process of detecting fraud. In a study conducted by Oyedokun, 2022), it was stated that there are several fraud detection tools that are most popular among professional fraud auditors, some of which are Ratio Analysis, Computer-Aided Audit Techniques (CAAT), and Data Mining. Ratio analysis is the process of determining the relationship between various items in financial statements and also non-financial data (Oyedokun, 2022). Meanwhile, Computer-Aided Audit Techniques (CAAT) are software, tools, and information technology techniques used by auditors in reviewing computerized accounting information systems (Sebiat, 2021). The last is Data Mining, which uses specialized software to identify anomalies, trends, and correlations in large databases to generate results (Han, 2017; Oyedokun, 2022).

Many studies on fraud detection tools have focused on respondents' perceptions of their usefulness and effectiveness (Aboud & Robinson, 2022; Ewa et al., 2020; Oyedokun, 2022). However, most of the studies were conducted in Nigeria and Ireland. There are still a few studies in Indonesia that address the effectiveness of ratio analysis, data mining, and CAAT in detecting fraud, and most of the studies focus only on the influence of these three detection tools on fraud detection, and tend to rely more on a limited quantitative approach in exploring the topics discussed in general (Adiyani & Firmansyah, 2024; Fadilah et al., 2019; Hartini et al.,

2023). Based on the results of the Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) report, East Java is the province with the most corruption cases in Indonesia, with a total loss of IDR 172 (Anandya & Ramadhana, 2024). This fact shows that the performance of regional auditors still needs improvement. Based on this fact, this study wanted to delve into the experiences of regional auditors in selecting fraud detection tools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Attribution Theory

Attribution Theory was introduced by Fritz Heider in 1958. This theory explains how a person understands the reasons behind the behavior of others as well as their own behavior . A person's behavior is influenced by several factors, namely internal factors and external factors. In the context of auditors, internal factors include the auditor's competence and independence. Meanwhile, external factors from the auditor are pressure from superiors, good relations with clients, or the length of the employment relationship with clients (Widyastari et al., 2023; Weiner, 1985; Sari et al., 2019; Rininda, 2024).

This study focuses more on internal auditor factors, namely, auditor competence. The more competencies an auditor has, the higher the quality of the audit, enabling the auditor to quickly and accurately detect fraud. The competencies are divided into four, namely interpersonal skills, tools and techniques, standards, theory, audit methodologies, and fields of knowledge (Kertarajasa et al., 2019; Umar et al., 2019).

Competence

Competency is generally defined as how a person performs an action to achieve an expected goal, given the person's capacity. However, in the world of competency auditing, it is defined as the scope that addresses the knowledge, skills, and attributes auditors must possess to improve audit effectiveness. Competence is crucial for an auditor; the more competent the auditor, the more qualified their insight and experience in conducting audits (Susanto et al., 2019; Ismail et al., 2019).

In this rapidly changing world, with rapid technological advancements, applicable regulations are constantly evolving, and ever-shifting stakeholder expectations require auditors to continuously improve their competencies. Thus, an auditor is required to participate in continuing education training and education, or what is commonly called training. This is supported by the Civil Service Agency Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 8 of 2019, which requires employees, including auditors, to complete at least 20 hours of training each year.

In the Regulation of the Head of the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency Number: PER - 1274/K/JF/2010, it is explained that the definition of Auditor Training is a learning process that is held for auditors in order to improve the ability of Auditors and Prospective Auditors of the Government Internal Supervisory Apparatus (APIP). This Auditor Training is divided into two types, consisting of Auditor Functional Training to obtain a Government Auditor Certificate and Auditor Technical Training for sustainable professional development.

Auditor Functional Training is a training program that an Auditor must complete to meet the competency requirements for a Government Auditor Certificate, which serves as proof that the Auditor is able to carry out supervisory duties. Auditor Functional Training consists of Skilled Auditor Formation Training, Expert Auditor Formation Training, Transfer of Skilled Auditor Position to Expert Auditor Training, Junior Auditor Level Training, Intermediate Auditor Level Training, and Principal Auditor Level Training. An example of this is the Auditor Functional Training. When a person wants to become a Skilled Auditor, they must take part in the Skilled Auditor Formation Training by fulfilling the requirements stipulated in BPKP Regulation No. PER-1274-K-JF-2010.

The second training, called Auditor Technical Training, is a training that must be followed by auditors in the context of sustainable professional development, where in this training, they will get the technical competency requirements needed to support the implementation of internal government supervision tasks. What is included in the Auditor Technical Training is Investigation Audit, Local Government Performance Audit, Ministry/Institution Performance Audit, Service Procurement Audit (PBJ), Electronic PBJ Audit, Compliance Audit, Regional Original Revenue Management Audit, Regional Property Audit, PBJ Probity Audit, Risk-Based Internal Supervision, Computer-Aided Audit Techniques, and Quality Assurance and Improvement Program.

Fraud

Cheating is an act of fraud and makes it the right thing to take away others' rights. According to the ACFE, fraud is defined as any fraudulent activity intended to gain personal profit. In ACFE, there are three main categories of fraud, namely financial statement fraud, asset misuse, and corruption (Fernandhytia, 2020; Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), 2022). The first fraud is corruption. According to ACFE, corruption is an act in which a perpetrator abuses his power in a business transaction by violating his obligations to his employer to obtain direct or indirect benefits. The results of the 2019 ACFE Indonesia survey stated that corruption is the most common and most detrimental act of fraud in Indonesia. Corruption can be in the form of conflicts of interest, bribery, illegal gratuities, and economic extortion. The second fraud is financial statement fraud, in which the perpetrator deliberately misinterprets information in the company's financial statements. Fraud in financial statements usually reports assets and income that are more than the actual condition (Asset/Income Overstatement) or reports assets and revenues that are lower than actual conditions (Asset/Income Understatement). Asset misuse is the act of fraudsters stealing or misusing company-owned assets. Stolen or misused assets can be money or other assets. Asset misuse can include stealing company cash, presenting data that does not match the facts, making transactions that do not occur, and many other methods.

Fraud Detection

Fraud detection, according to it, is the use of techniques that effectively and efficiently determine whether fraud is in progress or has occurred. The role of auditors in detecting fraud is essential, so they must be competent in carrying out their audit duties. Additionally, auditors should be able to choose the right tools or techniques to efficiently detect fraud (Tuanakotta, 2019).

One of the audit techniques, namely Computer-Aided Audit Techniques (CAAT), is the software, tools, and information technology used by auditors in reviewing computerized accounting information systems. Using CAAT in the audit process will allow auditors to perform tasks that would be impossible or would be very time-consuming if done manually. In addition, by using CAAT, auditors can access the data stored on the client's computer system without relying on the client (Sebiat, 2021; Ahmi et al., 2017).

Many previous studies have discussed CAAT, including one that concluded that although many auditors are aware of the benefits of using CAAT, few of them actually use it and still rely on traditional methods. This study also concludes that knowledge and expertise related to the use of CAAT still need to be improved. In addition, a study from the results shows that CAAT has a positive relationship with fraud detection, which suggests that CAAT can be used for fraud detection. Of the many types of CAAT, it was found that Excel is the most widely used type of CAAT as a tool in detecting (Ahmi et al., 2017; Qureshia & Tazilah, 2015; Dias & Marques, 2018; Widuri & Gautama, 2020).

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research approach with a phenomenological research design. This qualitative research produced descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words from the respondents' views on the phenomenon being studied (Murdiyanto, 2020). Meanwhile, phenomenology is a qualitative research method used to explore and uncover the shared meaning of a phenomenon experienced by a group of individuals in their lives (Murdiyanto, 2020). Using this phenomenological research design, it is possible to describe and interpret a phenomenon experienced by the auditor based on his own experience. The facts in this study prove that the provinces with the most corruption cases in Indonesia prove that the performance of regional auditors still needs to be improved. So that by using phenomenological methods, this study can explore in depth and draw conclusions about the fraud detection tools used and most effective in accordance with the perception of regional auditors.

This study collected primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to research data obtained directly by this study from the main source without intermediaries (Murdiyanto, 2020). The primary data in this study are data obtained from direct interviews with regional auditors. Meanwhile, secondary data refers to research data that is not collected by researchers and is obtained through third parties or recorded by other parties (Murdiyanto, 2020). The use of this secondary data is to reinforce the findings and complement the information from the interview results. Secondary data in this study are news from online media, laws and regulations, online articles, and other written sources.

Data collection in this study also uses interview techniques. Interviews are a data collection technique that involves communication between two parties: researchers (interviewers) and informants (sources) (Murdiyanto, 2020). Interviews in this study were conducted using a semi-structured method. This semi-structured interview falls under the category of in-depth interviews, in which interviews are conducted in depth and detail to elicit detailed information from informants (Sugiyono, 2013).

The selection of informants in this study was purposive. Purposive sampling is a method of selecting samples with certain criteria (Sugiyono,, 2013). The informants in this study have an in-depth understanding of auditing, particularly fraud detection tools, through relevant training or certifications. They are regional auditors in East Java who have previously uncovered fraud cases that led to reported financial losses. Each informant holds a functional position as a regional auditor and has five years of experience working as a government auditor.

The initial interview process involves submitting a letter of permission to conduct a study to a supervisory institution in the region. The head of the institution will then appoint an assigned informant based on the criteria stated in Table 1. Furthermore, after appointing the informant, the institution's head schedules an interview time. Before the interview, the researcher sends a Google Form that the informant must complete. The Google Form is used to assess the informant's willingness to provide data and to determine the informant's profile, including name, most recent education, years of experience as a regional auditor, training completed, certifications held, and current position. The interviews with each informant were conducted on different days. The interview day is selected based on each informant's availability, as they have different schedules. In addition, conducting interviews on different days can maintain informants' independence. Interviewing informants individually and at different times can minimize potential influence among informants, so that the information provided does not affect one another. Then, during the interview, the researcher will ask several questions from the interview guidelines prepared in advance. During the interview, the researcher may also ask questions outside the interview guidelines to probe the informant's answers more deeply. To make it easier to summarize the interview results, the researcher, with the informant's permission in advance, recorded the informant's voice using a mobile

phone and documented the points of information provided by the informant, as well as taking photos with the informant. Interviews were conducted for 30-45 minutes per informant.

Table 1. List of Informants

Informant	Position
Mr. A	Associate Expert Auditor
Mr. B	Young Auditor
Mr. C	Young Auditor

RESULTS

Competence

In the world of auditing, competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and attributes that auditors must possess to enhance audit effectiveness (Rumasukun, 2024). Competence is very crucial and must be possessed by auditors because if auditors are more competent, the auditor's insight and experience in conducting audits will be of higher quality and quality (Susanto et al., 2019); (Ismail et al., 2019).

In this rapidly changing world, with rapid technological advancements, applicable regulations continue to change, and the expectations of these stakeholders continue to grow, requiring auditors to continue to improve their competencies (Rumasukun, 2024). Thus, an auditor is required to participate in continuing education training and education, or what is commonly called training. In local government institutions, there are two types of training, namely leveling training and technical training. The informant explained,

> "In our case, there is such a thing as leveling training. Leveling is according to his competence. For example, I'm a Media Auditor, so if you want to become an Auditor, you'll need to pass the Intermediate Auditor Leveling Training. There is more technical training. This technical training also attacks certain audit techniques. For example, fraud. We are trained on how to detect fraud and conduct investigative audits. or suppose we are more related to the calculation of state losses for us to conduct various trainings, including CAAT."

The explanation from the informant above aligns with the content of the Regulation of the Head of the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency Number: PER-1274/K/JF/2010 concerning Education, Training, and Certification of Government Internal Supervision Auditors. The regulation also explains that auditor training is divided into two, namely Auditor Functional Training and Auditor Technical Training

After knowing the type of auditor training, the next step is to see how the auditor views the implementation of the training. Based on the results of the interviews, it is known that the informants involved have a very high awareness of improving their competence by participating in several trainings, such as Technical Controller Training, Qualified Government Internal Auditor, State Loss Calculation Training, and one Computer-Aided Audit Technique training. The informants also said that the training should be attended by all regional auditors,

> "So this is how it is, if leveling is mandatory. If he is not trained, he cannot occupy the position due to promotion. But if it's technical, because it's limited by budget, we choose. Not all auditors are trained equally. So maybe some of it is related to the investigation, maybe some of it is fraud. So it is indeed played. But there is an obligation that every auditor, every year, there is a minimum of 20 hours."

From the informant's explanation, it is clear that there is a fairly systematic competency development structure for auditors. Leveling training is required for auditors as a main prerequisite to hold certain positions. This shows that training is not just a formality, but an important part of the auditor's career process. Meanwhile, technical training is also mandatory for auditors, but due to budget constraints, auditors cannot simultaneously attend training on the same topic, so there is a rotation system. This technical training is given to auditors selectively, adjusted to the needs of each auditor. Some are chosen to take training related to investigations, some are related to fraud, and there are also auditors who are assigned to take part in training related to the calculation of state losses. By using this rotation system, all auditors have the opportunity to take part in training that can improve their competencies according to their field of work.

From the informant's statement regarding the obligation of auditors to attend training at least 20 hours a year, it proves that continuing education or training is part of the daily life of the auditor profession; they are not only required to work, but also continue to develop themselves to remain competent in this rapid development of the world.

Although the informants involved in the study have undergone various kinds of training, not all of the materials or skills gained can be directly applied during the implementation of the audit task. This is due to several obstacles, such as limited access to the required applications or supporting software, where the application requires quite high costs, as explained by one of the informants.

> "But sometimes, like before, the application we hold is already paid for, so we haven't chosen it yet."

In addition to being hampered by the high cost of using the application, the auditor does not use the application during training because there are no specific regulations that require it. The auditor prefers a tool that is better suited to their abilities.

> "Not yet. We recommend yes, but if you have to use it, don't..... So in our case, it was left to the individual auditors. How is the ability of each auditor to conduct analysis? So some use manuals, some use applications."

Thus, the auditor does not apply all the material that has been obtained from the training because it is constrained by several things, such as the cost of implementing the supporting application that is too high, there are no regulations that require it to be implemented, and the auditor's own consideration not to apply the material. The results of this study are in line with the study by Kustono (2022), which also states that the application of training materials is limited by several factors, such as the high cost of implementation and the lack of regulations that require the implementation of the material.

Audit Techniques

One of the competencies that auditors have is the knowledge of audit techniques. In studies by Adeyanju and Adenikinju (2023) and Ahmi et al. (2017), it was emphasized that the use of the latest technology and tools can make it easier for auditors to perform their audit tasks. However, auditors in the East Java region argue that using only conventional tools is insufficient to carry out their audit tasks, especially in detecting fraud. As one of the informants said, they use a function in Excel as a tool to check the auditee's data.

> "For example, the audit application here in Indonesia still uses applications that have not yet been analyzed. For example, analysis like Statistics is fine, and Excel can. If I could, I

could do it. But the tools remain the way we do. But if you have a dedicated audit app, there isn't. Yes, we search manually, but with the help of excel."

The use of Excel in the audit process is to analyze data from the partner under examination's information system. So, if the auditor gains access to the partner's information system, they can retrieve all data in Excel format, which is then analyzed to determine whether any irregularities exist. If there is a deviation, the auditor will manually confirm it to the party concerned. The statement was supported by the statement of one of the informants,

"But it's also for transactions, yes, the analysis uses it (Excel). But when it comes down to it, it's still manual. Therefore, for us, it may be more accurate. can interact with actors, can obtain comparative data. It's manual."

From this statement, it is clear that auditors use Excel to make it easier to identify fraud by searching for data using its features. Although Excel can easily identify indicators of fraud, the indicators are not necessarily conclusive evidence of fraud; the auditor must prove it first. Regional auditors prefer to prove manually by confirming directly with the party concerned and clarifying to external parties. By confirming directly with the party concerned, the auditor can read their body language and speech, and assess whether the information they convey seems honest or suspicious.

In addition, by directly clarifying to external parties, auditors can obtain comparative data to determine whether the indications of fraud found in Excel match the data in the field. So, Excel can only be used to identify indications of fraud, not to draw conclusions. This statement is in line with the results of a study from Widuri and Gautama (2020), which states that Excel helps auditors give initial signals, and then, to find out if it is fraud or not, they must conduct a direct examination of the parties involved.

Thus, although Excel has been used as a tool in analyzing existing data, in practice, auditors still have to rely on manual methods to get truly accurate results. In this manual way, the auditor can make an assessment and draw conclusions directly on the field conditions.
The following presents the flow of the process in carrying out its supervisory duties, especially in checking and investigating whether the implementation of financial governance is in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations, or if there are still errors.

From Figure 1, it can be seen that, to conduct fraud checks, the auditor must first obtain permission to access the regional device's system and then import the data into the system as an Excel file. Once the data is imported, the auditor analyzes it using Excel features. If there are unusual transactions or signs of fraud in the data, the auditor conducts a field inspection. Then, if the indications of fraud are found to have occurred, the auditor gives the parties involved time to return the state losses to the state treasury. If it is more than 6 months, the party does not return immediately, it will be followed up with criminal charges.

Effectiveness of Using Conventional Audit Tools in the Audit Process

Informants find the use of Excel very effective to help them find indications of fraud. Excel can improve audit performance and shorten auditors' work time.

"So far, it has been very effective, so why can I say it is effective? Because, of course, I can compare what it was like before with what the application was like. How effective during this time we have had to change initially, we don't know where to check what transactions, whether transactions are in this area, whether transactions are for these purchases, we don't know at all, but with that system we can shorten time, not only shorten the time but make it more effective in the way, Yes, we start from the bottom but we already know the potential."

From the informant's statement, it can be seen that the auditor considers the use of Excel to be very effective in detecting fraud based on the auditor's previous experience, where the audit was carried out manually and undirected. Before Excel, auditors lacked clear initial information on which transactions to audit, so the audit process tended to be random and time-consuming. With this Excel file, auditors can identify indicators of fraud from the outset, so they can immediately focus on suspected areas. This can not only increase effectiveness but also save time and improve fraud detection accuracy. The informant not only said that Excel is an effective tool, but also cited the absence of material fraud in East Java Province, as one of the informants said that financial statement fraud almost never occurs.

> "When it comes to financial statement fraud, it almost never happens because we have a review process before the presentation of financial statements, so when it comes to financial statements, before financial statements are issued, auditors, including myself, are the review team to present financial statements that will be examined by the BPK."

In addition, another informant stated that finding fraud in the form of corruption was only one case, so it can be said that corruption is rare in East Java Province.

> "If we talk about corruption, the position is not in an investigative audit or compliance audit but there has been a determination of new suspects, we can't talk about corruption even though okay we have the procurement of 10 tables that come, 8 tables that have not come, not necessarily in the context of corruption, but when there is a request for an investigation, then at that time it has entered the realm of corruption, if they are negligent, is not included in the context of corruption but is included in state administration, so if we talk about corruption, so far I have handled it until I am in the Corruption Court (Corruption Crime) when corruption cases in the processing of education funds are involved."

Informants often only find errors that are only administrative, such as exaggerating project materials at SPJ, exaggerating official travel tickets at SPJ, and exaggerating the number of purchases of goods that do not match the number of goods that arrive.

> "If the administrative nature of accounting governance, I think it has been improved, we already have a good system, which often happens in the implementation of fictitious SPJ, such as the application of volume, then an official trip of three people, in the SPJ of five people."

The above statement concludes that in East Java, material fraud, such as financial statement fraud or corruption, is rare, but only frequent fraud is found, which is only an administrative error, with the consent of informant A stating that

> "If fraud is rare... If the current scam is more than just a scam, just go straight to the administration now. Administrative errors. For example, in setting rates, yes, errors in setting rates, then errors in financial responsibility... So, suppose he is 10 meters, calculated in SPJ is 12 meters. So there is an excess of volume calculation."

However, such administrative errors are not necessarily considered fraud. The administrative error can be said to be a fraud after the auditor carried out several processes, as explained by one of the informants.

"First we communicate with the relevant parties, we communicate that there are indications of fraud, then we also communicate with the leadership, then we give time, a deadline to immediately complete it, ... We give a deadline usually around 2 weeks to complete. Suppose there is an overpayment, yes, we will refund it. Maximum 6 months. If he doesn't return it for 6 months, then he could be criminalized."

In the context of government, there is a mechanism to address administrative errors, namely, the opportunity for the party concerned to return the overpayment within 2 weeks to 6 months. If it is not resolved within the time limit, the administrative error can be treated as fraud and then referred to the criminal stage. However, based on informants' experience, cases like this rarely reach the criminal stage because related parties generally make returns immediately.

"We rarely criminalize.... His crime depends on his fault, yes, but I don't know, I've never had a problem."

That way, it is clear that Excel is a very effective tool for implementing supervisory tasks, with evidence that there is no fraud but only ordinary administrative errors. Administrative errors are not categorized as fraud because the parties involved promptly correct the error by returning the overpayment to the state treasury in full. This action shows that, even though there are irregularities, the settlement has been carried out in accordance with the applicable mechanism, so it does not fall into the criminal realm.

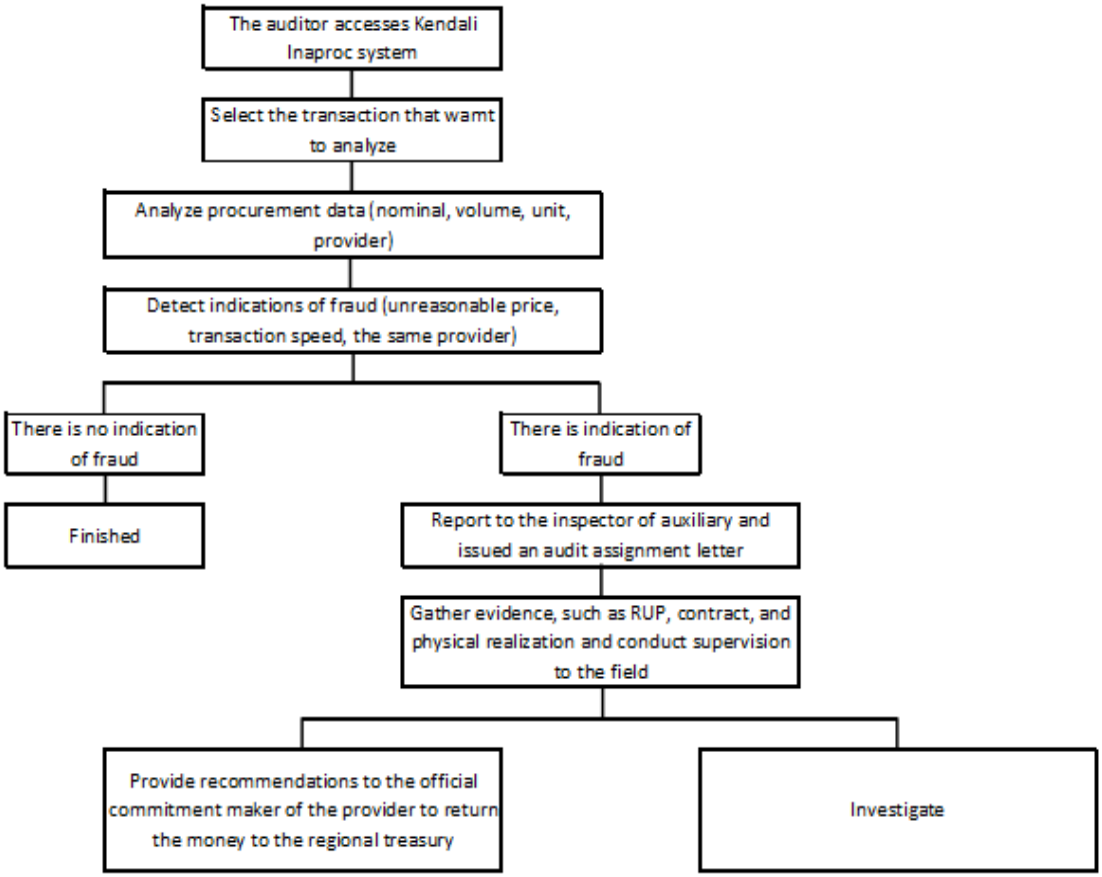

Figure 1. Fraud Detection Flowchart

The implications of these findings suggest that although regional auditors only use conventional audit tools such as Excel, their effectiveness in detecting indications of fraud remains high. This indicates that the success of the audit depends not solely on the sophistication of the technology used, but also on the auditor's ability to interpret the data and verify it directly in the field. This confirms that even with conventional audit tools, the best results can be achieved when used by competent individuals. These findings are in line with those that affirm that if auditors are skilled in using audit tools, such as managing the audit process, organizing and distributing audit information, analyzing audit data, and running audit quality programs, it will increase the effectiveness of the audit process in terms of risk assessment Fraud (Fazlida et al., 2025). An auditor with adequate competence will enhance the effectiveness of audit aids in detecting fraud (Supriadi et al., 2019).

In addition, using Excel provides auditors with convenience and indirectly simplifies decision-making in supervision. The practical implication of these findings is that policymakers can consider optimizing the tools auditors currently use, rather than mandating the use of smart technologies without adequate training and infrastructure support. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of providing training that adapts to auditors' needs, ensuring synergy among competencies, tools, and field conditions.

Appropriately, the results of this study can be used as a reference for local governments in designing effective financial supervision strategies by maximizing the use of Excel. This study also makes a practical contribution to the development of auditor training policies, particularly by providing technical training on the use of audit tools that align with real-world field conditions. In other words, the results of this study not only broaden the theoretical understanding of the effectiveness of audit tools but also offer concrete solutions that can be applied directly to local government financial supervision.

IMPLICATIONS

The implications of this study suggest that the findings may be important for a cause-and-effect explanation. The above conditions indicate that auditors in the regions are more comfortable using conventional audit tools than other, more sophisticated techniques. As with the development of information technology, this study closes with a reflection: Will this convenience remain relevant and reliable in supporting the quality of state financial supervision in the future?

RECOMENDATIONS

Based on the study results, this study recommends that policymakers develop policies that encourage the optimal use of Excel by providing relevant, periodic technical training for auditors. In addition, regional supervisory institutions should set minimum standards for the use of audits, adjusted to auditors' convenience. This study has limitations in its coverage of locations. The study was conducted at a single institution in East Java, so the findings were contextual and not generalizable to similar institutions in other regions. This single focus is intended to gain a deeper understanding, but it should be recognized that the complexity, organizational culture, and internal policies of each agency differ, so the findings in this study do not necessarily fully describe conditions elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study results, it can be concluded that the use of conventional audit tools, such as Excel, is an effective means of supporting the implementation of audits in the East Java region. The informants agreed that Excel can improve auditors' efficiency and effectiveness, especially in searching for data to identify actions that indicate fraud. This effectiveness is reflected in the audit results, which show that no material fraud was found, but only administrative errors. The mistake was also immediately addressed by the parties involved by

returning the overpayment to the state treasury. Thus, the use of Excel not only supports audit quality but also contributes to achieving regional audit goals, namely, the quality assurance of financial governance implementation.

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