

## NON-FINANCIAL FACTORS IN THE GOING-CONCERN OPINION

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### *Abstract*

*This paper describes the influence of tenure, auditor reputation, disclosure, and the size of the client company on a going concern opinion. Audit opinion issued by the auditor is expected by users of the quality of information, because as the basis for investment decisions. Going-concern audit opinion is an opinion issued by auditors to ascertain whether the company can maintain its existence. Studies on the factors that affect the audit opinion have been carried out both overseas and in Indonesia. The factors used are vary and the results are not conclusive. This study uses 89 sample firms listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange in 2003-2008. Logit regression analysis shows that the tenure, auditor reputation, disclosure has a significant on going-concern opinion while the client company size has no effect on going-concern opinion.*

**Keywords:** *tenure, auditor reputation, disclosure, size, going-concern opinion*

### INTRODUCTION

The factors that encourage the auditors issue a going-concern opinion is important to be note because this opinions can be used as a reference investor related investments. Independent auditors can provide a useful statement about the financial condition of the client. Going-concern audit opinion is an opinion issued by auditors to ascertain whether the company can maintain its existence (IAI, SPAP, 2001).

This paper examines empirically non-financial factors that affect the issuance of going-concern opinion. Non-financial factors tested were tenure, auditor reputation, disclosure, and the size of the company. This studies on the factors that affect the audit opinion have been carried out both overseas

and in Indonesia. The factors used vary and the results are not conclusive.

There are a number of studies reveal that factors associated with going-concern opinion, namely Mutchler (1984, 1986), Menon and Schwartz (1987), Dopuch et al. (1987), Koh (1991), Koh and Tan (1999), Geiger and Raghunandan (2002), Gosh and Moon (2004), Geiger and Rama (2006), Kirkos et al. (2007) and Haron et al. (2009). Research in Indonesia on the going concern has been carried out by Fanny and Saputra (2000), Mayangsari (2003), Komalasari (2004), Santosa and Wedari (2007), and Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008).

Komalasari (2004), Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008) mentioned that the reputation of auditors did not significantly affect the going-concern opinion, whereas according to Geiger

and Rama (2006) affects the reputation of auditor going-concern opinion. Mutchler et al. (1997) found evidence of univariate where big-six auditors tend to issue going concern audit opinions on the companies that experienced financial distress than non-big six auditors. Auditors can provide large-scale audit of a better quality than small auditors, including revealing the going-concern issues. This was also confirmed by studies of Geiger and Rama (2006). Geiger and Rama (2006) examine the differences in audit quality between Big 4 accounting firm and non-Big 4. Results showed that the level of Type I and II errors generated by the Big 4 were lower than non-Big 4. Haron et al. (2009) examined the effect of financial conditions, the type of evidence and disclosure of going-concern opinion. Multivariate regression analysis showed that the financial indicators, the type of evidence and disclosure affected going-concern opinion.

Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008) stated that tenure is not significant, while according to Geiger and Raghunandan (2002), Gosh and Moon (2004), these variables significantly affect the going-concern opinion. Decision of the Chairman of Bapepam and LK No: Kep-310/BL/2008 in Regulation No. VIII.A.2 about the independence of public accountants who provide services in the capital markets, suggests that public accounting firm shall have quality control with a sufficient level of confidence that the public accounting firm or its employees can maintain an independent attitude. But when the relationship between client and accounting firm has been going on for years, clients can be viewed as a source of income for the accounting firm, which potentially can reduce the independence of the accounting firm (Yuvisa et al., 2008).

Haron et al. (2009) found that disclosure affect going-concern opinion. Disclosure of financial statements is very important information for the auditors, for example, disclosure of financial information about the consistent

use of accounting methods in preparing financial statements, company policies, company co-operation with a related party company, as well as events after the balance sheet date in terms of giving an opinion going concern.

Firm size can be seen from the company's financial condition such as the amount of total assets. Santosa and Wedari (2007) found that the size have an effect on going-concern opinion, whereas, Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008) find empirical evidence that company size does not influence the client's opinions issued by auditors.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Going Concern in The Accounting and Auditing**

An underlying assumption of the accounting process will continue as the company reported a going concern. This means that an entity will be able to maintain its business in the long term and will not be liquidated. The financial statements measure the financial position information about an entity and the results of operations. Auditors' report adds a qualitative dimension to the information. Auditors are intermediaries between providers and users of financial statements that report. Within the boundaries of GAAP, it is a burden the auditor to conclude fairness the financial statements. Financial statement users entrust independent auditors to mention the situation of concern to those who have an impact on fairness of presentation of financial statements in conformity with GAAP.

Going-concern audit opinion is an opinion issued by auditors to ascertain whether the company can maintain its existence (SPAP, 2001). In 1988, the Auditing Standard Board (ASB) issued Statement on Auditing Standard (SAS) No. 59: The auditor's consideration of an entity's ability to continue as a going

concern, which require auditors to evaluate whether there is substantial doubt about the ability of the client company to continue as a going concern. SAS asked the auditor to accumulate and evaluate evidence to determine whether the going concern status is questionable. If auditor finds a reason for doubt the sustainability of a company based testing, so he/she considers the issuance of going-concern opinion. Because auditors are not looking for such evidence, the acquisition of information in the normal pattern analysis of the audit would encourage consideration the possibility of spending going-concern opinion. The decision making in uncertainty condition through two stages processes. The first stage is to identify the characteristics of the company as a potential recipient of going-concern opinion. The second stage is to produce a final opinion in the selection analysis.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

### 2.1. Auditor Reputation

Auditor reputation is indicated by the size of audit firm. Auditors are responsible for providing high quality information that is useful for decision making. Reputable auditors likely will issue a going-concern audit opinion if there are problems concerning the client's going concern. DeAngelo (1981) have theoretically analyzed the relationship between audit quality and accounting firm size. He argued that large auditors will have more clients and the total fee will be allocated among its clients. Furthermore, he also argued that large auditors are more independent, and therefore, will provide a higher quality of audits.

Krishnan and Schauer (2000) classify public accounting firm small and big as follows: (1) is a big accounting firm included in the big six accounting firm, and (2) a small accounting firm is not included in the big six accounting firm. Choi et al. (2007) stated that the big accounting firm is a firm that has a big international names (including the big four

auditors) where a large accounting firm audits provide a higher quality than the small firm which has no reputation. This is supported also by Lennox (1999), Li et al. (2005), and Francis and Yu (2009) From the description above, hypotheses is formulated as follows:

H1: Auditor reputation affects auditors issued a going concern opinion by the auditors.

### 2.2. Tenure

Tenure is the length of auditor-client relationship measured by the number of years (Geigher and Raghunandan 2002). When auditors have long term relationships with clients, this will encourage a greater understanding of clients' financial condition and therefore they will tend to detect a problem of going concern.

Regulation of the Minister of Finance No. 17/PMK.01/2008 about public accountant's services mentioned that the provision of general audit on the financial statements of an entity made by the accounting firm at the latest six consecutive fiscal year by a public accountant and a maximum of three consecutive fiscal year succession. Accounting firm and public accountants can receive reaudit services after one year did not audit client.

The study of factors associated with duration of the assignment relationship between public accountant with a client (tenure) has been used by previous researchers including: Sinason et al. (2001), Geiger and Raghunandan (2002), Gosh and Moon (2004), Carcello and Nagy (2004), Jackson et al. (2007), Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008) and Yuvisa I et al. (2008).

Sinason et al. (2001) examine duration of the audit relationship with a client and the factors influencing auditor tenure. Research variables used are: size of accounting firm, size of company clients, client growth, corporate risk, unqualified audit opinion and auditor switching. The result states that auditor tenure does not affect the auditor in giving unquali-

fied opinion on the consolidated financial clients. Januarti and Fitriani (2008) states that tenure has no effect on auditor's going-concern opinion.

Geiger and Raghunandan (2002) examined regarding auditor tenure and audit reporting failures. In their study, they used multivariate analysis to examine the relationship between audit opinion issued when prior to bankruptcy and duration of audit relationships. Their research shows that significant audit reporting failures occurred in the early years of contact with clients than auditors when auditors have provided services for the long term. Gosh and Moon (2004) find empirical evidence that auditor tenure significantly affect the improvement of audit quality. Therefore, the hypothesis is presented as follows:

H2: Tenure affects the issuance of going concern opinion by the auditor.

### 2.3. Disclosure

Krishnan and Zhang (2005) argued that adequate disclosure of financial statements can reduce litigation risk. In their study, they found evidence that companies which make disclosures in accordance with the standards of disclosure tend to receive a clean opinion. Gaganis and Pasiouras (2007) found evidence that companies that disclose accounting information less likely to receive unqualified opinions from external auditors. Based on the description can be proposed research hypotheses as follows:

H3: Disclosure affects going-concern opinion issued by auditors.

### 2.4. Company Size

Firm size can be seen from the company's financial condition such as the amount of total assets. Krishnan and Schauer (2000) argue that, the bigger companies in the audit, the auditors provided audit quality is also getting

bigger. Ballesta and Garcia (2005) argue that, the big companies have better management in managing the company and their ability to produce quality financial statements than small firms. In studies of qualified audit opinions received by a public company in Spain, they find empirical evidence that, the trend of companies that received qualified audit opinion is a company in financial trouble, while well-managed company and presenting financial statements in accordance with the quality in terms of the actual state of the company, tend to receive a clean opinion from auditors. Santosa and Wedari (2007) found that the size (size of company) have an effect on going-concern opinion, whereas Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008) found empirical evidence that the client company size has no effect on going-concern opinion issued by auditors. Subsequently the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H4: Firm size affects the issuance of going-concern opinion by the auditors.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### 1. Research Sample

The research sample is selected using purposive sampling approach. The purpose for this method is to obtain a representative sample. The criteria used in making sample are as follows:

1. Companies listed on the Jakarta Stock Exchange from 2003 to 2008 and issued financial reports from 2003 to 2008.
2. There are notes to the financial statements of the company.
3. There are reports of independent auditors on the financial statements of the company.

### 2. Operational Definition

The dependent variable is the going-concern opinion given by the auditors. An auditor who concludes that substantial doubt exists with regard to the appropriateness of the

going concern assumption is required to issue an opinion reflecting this; a modified opinion if the company has appropriately disclosed the doubt and risks; and a qualified opinion if the company has not made appropriate disclosures. These are called "going concern" opinions. While clean opinion is the opinion of a firm's auditors that its financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Clean opinion is also called standard opinion or unqualified opinion. The independent variables are:

a) Tenure

The researchers using the scale intervals in accordance with a long relationship with the company's accounting firm.

b) Auditor Reputation

This variable is measured using dummy variables. Where the audit firms are valued based on auditor reputation. Researchers provide 1 if the firm is included in the big four, and 0 if not included in the big four accounting firm.

c) Disclosure

This variable was measured by using an index, where researchers look at the level of disclosure of corporate financial information compared with the amount that should be disclosed by the company in accordance with Bapepam regulations SE-02/PM/2002.

d) Size

Firm size using the natural log of the firm's total assets.

**3. Research Model**

Our empirical model of an auditor's probability of issuing a GC opinion to sample company is based on non financial factors identified to test our hypothesis.

$$GC = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TENURE} + \beta_2 \text{REPUTATION} + \beta_3 \text{DISCLOSURE} + \beta_4 \text{SIZE} + \varepsilon$$

Description:

GC (going-concern opinion): 1 if going-concern opinion, and 0 for clean opinion.

$\alpha$ : Constant

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$ : Regression Coefficients

Tenure: Length of client relationship with the Office of Public Accountants

Reputation: Reputation auditors, one when the big four, and 0 if non big four.

Disclosure: The level of disclosure

Size: Firm size measured by natural log of total assets

$\varepsilon$ : Residual

**4. Analysis Method**

Hypothesis testing using logistic regression to determine the influence of four independent variables of tenure, auditor reputation, disclosure and size to going concern opinion. The testing steps are as follows: (1) data analysis conducted by assessing the feasibility of regression models, (2) analyzing the coefficient of determination (Nagelkerke R Square), (3) analyze the classification power prediction model for each group, and (4) test the regression coefficient.

**ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

**1. Sample Description**

The sample selection was done by purposive sampling, meaning that a certain criteria has been defined to select the sample. Based on the criteria established by the number of samples in this research are as many as 89 companies. Here's a description of the research sample:

**Tabel 1.** Total Sample

Description	Total
Companies that consistently publish financial statements from year 2003 – 2008	126
Companies whose data are incomplete	(37)
<b>Total sample</b>	<b>89</b>

## 2. Company Classification

We conducted an analysis of 89 listed companies in BEI in 2003 until the year 2008. Results of classification based company received an audit opinion from 2003 until the year 2008 are as follows Table 2.

Based on Table 2, we can note that companies that receive going-concern opinion are 80% (2003), 79% (2004), 69% (2005), 52% (2006), 55% (2007), and 55% (2008).

## 4. Hypotheses Testing

### 4.1. Feasibility Regression Model

Table 3 shows that the chi-square value of 33.939, and the significant value of 0.000. This shows that the model is significant statistically able to predict the value of his observations, because the significance value below 0.05.

### 4.2. Coefficient of determination

The table 4. shows the value of Nagelkerke R Square of .085, which means that the variations or differences in the dependent

variable is influenced by the independent variable at 8.5%, rest influenced by other variables not included in the research model.

### 4.3. Analyzing the classification power prediction model for each group.

Table 5 shows that the level of prediction models amounted to 68.2%, which is 93.4% and 21.4% going-concern, non-going concern has been able to be predicted by the model. This means that predictive ability of models with variable, tenure, reputation of auditors, disclosure and client firm size is statistically able to predict at 68.2%.

The test results showed in table 5 from the table, it can be concluded that the predictive ability of regression models the possibility of companies receiving going-concern opinion amounted to 93.4%. A total of 324 companies (93.4%) are predicted to receive a going-concern opinion of a total of 347 companies that received going-concern opinion. Then there are 147 firms (21.4%) are predicted to receive non going-concern opinion from the total of 187 companies that receive non going-

**Table 2.** Classification based on the company's auditor opinion

Audit opinion	Year						Total
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Non going concern	17	19	28	43	40	40	187
Going concern	72	70	61	46	49	49	347
Total	89	89	89	89	89	89	534

**Table 3.** Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	33.939	4	.000
	Block	33.939	4	.000
	Model	33.939	4	.000

**Table 4.** Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	657.658 <sup>a</sup>	.062	.085

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 4 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

concern opinion.

## 5. Hypotheses Testing

Table 6 describes the results of analysis using logistic regression.

### 5.1. Testing Hypothesis 1

Testing hypothesis 1 aims to analyze the effect of tenure on the going-concern opinion. Table 6 shows that the probability value (P-value) of tenure variable for 0.012 is smaller than 0005. Therefore, statistically, the hypothesis states that the tenure effect on going-concern opinion is supported. The longer tenure, the less likely company gets a going-concern opinion. These result supports research conducted by Carey and Simnett (2006), Dao et al. (2008), Yuvisa I et al. (2008), but differs with Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008).

Carey and Simnett (2006) in their research on auditor tenure and audit quality of companies in Australia, found evidence that a

long relationship with the client's auditor can affect audit quality. Dao et al. (2008) also found there was evidence of the relationship between auditor tenure on audit quality. In his research on auditor tenure and shareholder ratification of auditors uncovered evidence that a long tenure will affect the quality of audits. Yuvisa I et al. (2008) concluded that the auditors' consent to the treatment desired by the client is influenced by the duration of the period of attachment to the auditor for clients.

### 5.2. Testing Hypothesis 2

Testing hypothesis 2 is to test whether auditor reputation effect on going-concern opinion. Table 6 shows that the probability value (p-value) of 0.012 for auditor reputation variable is smaller than 0.05. Statistically, auditor reputation affects auditors' going-concern opinion. The greater the reputation of the public accountant, the greater the quality of the audit they gives. These results support the research, Lennox (1999), Li et al. (2005),

**Tabel 5.** Classification Table<sup>a</sup>

	Observed	Predicted			
		OPINION		Percentage Correct	
		NON GOING CONCERN	GOING CONCERN		
Step 1	Opinion	NON GOING CONCERN	40	147	21.4
		GOING CONCERN	23	324	93.4
	Overall Percentage				68.2

a. The cut value is .500

**Tabel 6.** Variables in the Equation

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	TENURE	-.120	.048	6.285	1	.012	.887
	REPUTATION	.545	.218	6.276	1	.012	1.725
	DISCLOSURE	.034	.008	16.354	1	.000	1.034
	TOTALASSET	-.048	.118	.166	1	.684	.953
	Constant	-.607	1.253	.235	1	.628	.545

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: TENURE, REPUTATION, DISCLOSURE, TOTALASSET.

Geiger and Rama (2006), but differs with the findings conducted by Fitrianasari Januarti (2008) who found that reputation does not affect the auditors' going-concern opinion.

Lennox (1999) found evidence of an auditor of significantly more likely to give going-concern opinion to the company and give failing to non-clean opinion failing company when compared with a small accounting firm. Li et al. (2005) also found evidence that large firm tends to provide a higher quality than the small firm. Geiger and Rama (2006) also showed that the level of Type I and II errors generated by the Big 4 are lower than non-Big 4

### 5.3. Testing Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis testing was conducted to examine whether the disclosure affect the going-concern opinion. Table 6. shows that disclosure variable p-value of 0.000 is smaller than 0.05. Therefore we can conclude that H3 is supported, statistically. The disclosure, significantly affect the going-concern opinion issued by auditors. This finding supports the results of research Haron et al. (2009) which states that the disclosure affects on going-concern opinion.

### 5.4. Testing Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that the firm size affects on going-concern opinion. Table 6 shows that p-value of this variable for 0.684 is 0.05 greater than. The results of this study indicate that company size does not affect the going-concern opinion given by the auditors. This finding supports the research conducted by Chen et al. (2001), Januarti and Fitrianasari (2008), but different with Wedari and Santosa (2007).

## CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Going-concern audit opinion is an opinion issued by auditors to ascertain whether the

company can maintain its existence (SPAP 2001). The sample consisted of 89 firms from the years 2003-2008. Of the 534 observations, 347 firms received a going-concern opinion and 187 receive non going-concern opinion. Hypothesis testing results indicated that three non-financial variables tested were significant (tenure, reputation, and disclosure) and 1 non-financial variable is not significant (size). The auditors and investor can concern this finding related to audit quality. Auditor as a mediator between users of financial statements and management must be able to give an opinion which can be accounted for by the user information.

This research only tests that are considered non-financial variables affect the going-concern opinion for observations from 2003 to 2008. Further research may be extended to test the financial factors, non-financial factors and market factors that can affect the expected going-concern opinion, and also expanding the research samples.

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