



The Influence of Company Size, Leverage, and Ownership Concentration on Audit Report Lag

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of company size, leverage, and ownership concentration on audit report lag. The research objects used in this study are Property and Real Estate sector companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX) during the period 2020–2024. This study employs a quantitative approach with secondary data sources consisting of audited annual financial statements and annual reports obtained through the official website (www.idx.co.id). The research sample was selected using a purposive sampling method, resulting in 305 observational data from 61 companies. The analytical technique employed was panel data regression analysis using EViews 12. The results show that company size and ownership concentration have a negative and significant effect on audit report lag. These findings indicate that large-scale companies possess operational advantages, and majority shareholders with high ownership concentration exert substantial control over the company, thereby enabling faster completion of the audit report lag. However, leverage does not have a significant effect on audit report lag. This result suggests that the level of corporate debt does not influence the length of the audit report lag, as auditors work in accordance with applicable professional standards.

INTRODUCTION

Financial reports are a crucial instrument for evaluating company performance and supporting business sustainability, with their quality and timeliness significantly influencing investor and creditor assessments of corporate sustainability (Apalowowa et al., 2025). The Financial Services Authority Regulation (POJK) Number 14/POJK.04/2022 mandates that public companies submit their audited annual financial statements within a maximum of three months after the fiscal year-end, ensuring transparency and reliability of financial information for stakeholders. The timeliness of financial reporting is considered a fundamental qualitative characteristic that enhances the usefulness of financial information (Lajmi & Yab, 2021).

The issue of audit report lag is crucial as it relates to a company's transparency. The duration between a company's financial statement closing date and the date of the independent auditor's report indicates the time required to complete the audit process conducted by the independent auditor (Sudjono & Setiawan, 2022). This duration, known as audit report lag, is an essential indicator for measuring the efficiency of a company's financial reporting process. A shorter lag signifies that audited financial information is more quickly available to stakeholders, such as investors and creditors, thereby potentially enhancing the credibility and perceived reliability of the financial statements. A shorter audit report lag acts as a positive signal, suggesting a mature financial reporting process and potentially leading to a more positive market response (Onatuyeh et al., 2024; Waris & Din, 2023).

The property and real estate sector, as one of the primary drivers of the Indonesian economy, requires considerable time for the preparation of audited financial statements due to its distinctive characteristics. This sector possesses unique and complex business processes, such as long-term development projects and fixed asset valuation. This complexity can directly impact audit report lag. Furthermore, the sector is capital-intensive, has fluctuating business cycles, and its financing structure is heavily reliant on long-term debt, thereby creating greater operational complexity (Meirawati et al., 2022; Yolanda & Santoso, 2024).

The phenomenon of this research is the significant variation in audit report lag within the Property and Real Estate sector in Indonesia. Despite operating under the same regulations and facing similar market conditions, these companies demonstrate considerable differences in the time required to complete their audited financial statements. The existence of time variation in audit completion indicates fundamental differences in internal control effectiveness, financial reporting efficiency, corporate governance structures, and resource capabilities among these companies.

This phenomenon becomes particularly compelling during the 2020-2024 period, which encompasses the pandemic and post-pandemic recovery a time when the property and real estate sector was among the most affected by economic uncertainty, fluctuating macroeconomic conditions, and regulatory adjustments regarding reporting deadlines. These observable differences underscore the urgent need to identify and analyze the key factors influencing audit completion speed, as understanding these factors can provide valuable

insights for improving reporting timeliness and strengthening corporate governance practices in the Indonesian capital market.

From the perspective of Signalling Theory, companies have strong motivation to convey positive signals to stakeholders through the timeliness of their audited financial statements. A shorter audit report lag reflects operational efficiency, robust internal control systems, and effective corporate governance, thereby signaling that the company is well-managed and transparent (Meirawati et al., 2022).

Audit report lag is influenced by several key factors. Company size reflects the scale of operations and resource availability, where larger firms typically possess superior internal control systems and technological capabilities that facilitate faster audit completion (John et al., 2025). Leverage, which measures a firm's reliance on debt financing, may affect audit complexity and the pressure from creditors for timely reporting (Sudjono & Setiawan, 2022). Meanwhile, ownership concentration represents the extent to which controlling shareholders dominate corporate decision-making, potentially enabling more effective monitoring and accelerating the audit process (Irene & Tjahjono, 2024). Understanding how these factors interact to determine audit report lag is essential for improving financial reporting timeliness and strengthening corporate governance practices.

Several previous studies have examined the effect of company size, leverage, and ownership concentration on audit report lag. These studies show that large companies with extensive resources, companies with high levels of debt, and the control power of majority shareholders are able to resolve audit report lag more quickly (Kalsum et al., 2025; Nouraldeem et al., 2021; Sudjono & Setiawan, 2022). However, several studies have shown that company size, high or low levels of debt, and the control power of shareholder ownership concentration do not determine the speed of audit report lag (Azhar & Challen, 2023; Dehcheshmeh et al., 2025; Maryani & Handayani, 2024). These studies still produce mixed findings and have not yet provided consistent conclusions regarding the effect of company size, leverage, and ownership concentration on audit report lag.

Given the inconsistencies in findings from previous studies and the need for a more contextual understanding, this study aims to examine the determinants of audit report lag. By addressing this gap, this study aims to contribute not only theoretically but also practically. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to analyze the influence of company size, leverage, and ownership concentration on audit report lag in the context of the Indonesian Property and Real Estate sector from 2020 to 2024.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Signalling Theory

Signaling Theory explains that the signaler (company management) provides signals in the form of information reflecting the company's condition that is beneficial and useful for the receiver (investors or stakeholders) in decision-making. In the context of financial reporting, companies are motivated to convey positive signals to external parties through the timeliness of audited

financial reports (Meirawati et al., 2022). A shorter audit report lag indicates efficient operational performance, a strong internal control system, and good corporate governance, thereby increasing investor confidence and potentially increasing company value (Nouraldeen et al., 2021). Signaling Theory provides a framework for understanding how company characteristics, such as company size, leverage, and ownership concentration, affect the company's ability to complete audits on time.

Audit Report Lag

Audit report lag is the time interval in days calculated from the annual financial statement closing date (December 31) to the date of the independent audit report signing by the external auditor (Kartikasari & Mutmainah, 2022). A shorter audit report lag reflects better timeliness in delivering audited financial information, which increases the value of the information for decision-makers (Bhattarai, 2020). Public companies are required to submit their annual audited financial statements no later than 90 days after the end of the fiscal year.

Company Size

Company size refers to the scale at which a business entity carries out its business activities. Company size reflects the company's ability to manage resources to carry out its operational activities (Kasta & Kurniawati, 2025). Large-scale companies generally have specific characteristics such as high transaction volumes, extensive operational networks, and a diverse range of products and services (John et al., 2025).

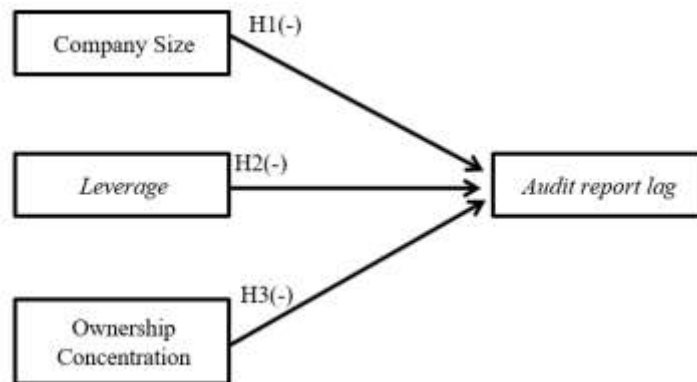
Leverage

Leverage is a financial ratio that measures the extent to which a company uses debt financing for its operations. It indicates the proportion between total debt and total assets or total equity (Chrystalia et al., 2024). High leverage indicates greater reliance on creditor funding, leading to increased financial risk and fixed liabilities (Meirawati et al., 2022). Companies with high leverage face more rigorous scrutiny because auditors need to ensure adequate disclosure of liabilities and compliance with loan covenants (Azhar & Challen, 2023).

Ownership Concentration

Ownership concentration refers to the proportion of a company's shares held by a dominant majority shareholder, reflecting the distribution of power within the corporate governance structure. Majority shareholders wield significant power and influence in overseeing management performance, including the preparation of financial statements (Abed et al., 2020). Concentrated ownership can create an effective oversight mechanism, potentially accelerating audit completion because majority shareholders have a strong incentive to ensure an efficient audit process (Irene & Tjahjono, 2024).

Picture 1. Conceptual Framework



Source: Processed research data, 2026

Hypothesis development

Company Size and Audit Report Lag

Larger companies generally have superior internal control systems, more competent human resources, and more advanced technology, which facilitate accurate and timely financial reporting. Based on Signaling Theory, larger companies are able to send a positive signal by completing audits more quickly, reflecting operational efficiency and strong internal controls. This is in line with the research findings of Nouraldeen et al. (2021). Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the larger the company, the shorter the audit report lag.

H1 = Company size has a negative effect on audit report lag

Leverage and Audit Report Lag

Companies with higher levels of debt will complete their audits more quickly due to pressure from creditors, investors, and other stakeholders to promptly publish financial reports to maintain credibility and fulfill reporting obligations to lenders. Companies with sufficient assets are more likely to be able to repay their debt using existing assets. Strong debt repayment capacity will facilitate auditors in completing their audit reports. This is in line with the research findings of Bhattarai (2020). Therefore, it can be hypothesized that higher leverage will reduce the time required for auditors to audit financial statements.

H2 = Leverage has a negative effect on audit report lag.

Ownership Concentration and Audit Report Lag

A strong shareholding structure held by large shareholders allows for faster and more coordinated internal decision-making. Majority shareholders have significant control over the company. They have a direct interest in promptly obtaining information about the audited company's performance. According to signaling theory, concentrated ownership allows large shareholders to pressure management to complete audit reports as quickly as possible, as timely financial reports serve as a positive signal (good news) for investors. This is in line with the research findings of Kalsum et al. (2025). Therefore, it can be hypothesized that high ownership concentration will encourage management and auditors to complete the audit process more quickly, thereby shortening audit report lag.

H3 = Ownership concentration has a negative effect on audit report lag.

METHODOLOGY

Population and sample

In this study, the population consists of 61 companies in the property and real estate sector listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange. The data used are secondary data in the form of audited financial statements and annual reports, which can be accessed through the official website of the Indonesia Stock Exchange (www.idx.co.id).

Table 1. Company Criteria

No	Criteria	Total
1	Property and Real Estate sector companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange during the 2020-2024 period	90
2	Companies excluded because audited financial statements, annual reports, and variable data were incomplete during the 2020-2024 period	29
3	Final sample	61
4	Total observations (61 x 5 years)	305

Source: Processed research data, 2026

Measurement of operational variables

Table 2. Measurement of operational variables

Variables	Variables Definition	Indicator	Scale
Audit Report Lag	Audit report lag is the time required for the auditor to complete the financial statement audit process between the end of the fiscal year and the reporting date stated in the independent auditor's report (Nouraldeen et al., 2021).	$ARL = \text{Independent Audit Report Date} - \text{Fiscal Year Closing Date}$	Ratio
Company Size	Company size refers to the large or small scale of a company in carrying out its business activities (Sunarsih et al., 2021).	$CS = \text{Natural Logarithm (Total Assets)}$	Ratio
Leverage	Leverage is a financial ratio used to assess the extent to which a company relies on debt financing to carry out or finance its operational activities (Sudjono & Setiawan, 2022).	$DAR = \frac{\text{Total Debt}}{\text{Total Assets}}$	Ratio

Ownership Concentration	Concentration of ownership is the majority shareholder or the largest shareholder who holds control over all or most of the ownership and business activities of the company (Fayola & Nurbaiti, 2020).	OC = Largest Share Ownership/Total Company Share Value	Ratio
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Source: Processed research data, 2026

Data analysis methods

Data analysis method: panel data regression analysis. This analysis utilizes Eviews 12 software. The tests conducted include:

1. Descriptive statistics.
2. Panel regression model selection (Chow Test, Hausman Test, and Lagrange Multiplier Test).
3. Classical assumption.
4. Regression analysis.
5. Hypothesis testing.

RESEARCH RESULT

Descriptive Statistic

Table 3. Descriptive Statistic Result

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max	Observation
Audit Report Lag	94.92131	23.39423	41.00000	195.0000	305
Company Size	28.59110	1.705878	24.62300	31.96200	305
Leverage	0.353138	0.235828	0.002000	1.541000	305
Ownership Concentration	0.507974	0.212909	0.031000	0.966000	305

Source: Processed research data, 2026

Based on table 3 above, which includes 305 observations. The audit report lag variable has an average value of 94.921 and a standard deviation of 23.394, this shows an even distribution of data, namely the difference between one data and another is not too different. The company size variable has an average value of 28.591 and a standard deviation of 1.706, this shows an even distribution of data, namely the difference between one data and another is not too different. The leverage variable has an average value of 0.353 and a standard deviation of 0.236, this shows an even distribution of data, namely the difference between one data and another is not too different. The ownership concentration variable has an average value of 0.508 and a standard deviation of 0.213, this shows an even distribution of data, namely the difference between one data and another is not too different.

Model Selection

Three regression models are used in panel data analysis to determine which is best. Numerous tests are performed, such as the Chow test, Hausman test, and Langrange multiplier test. The Common Effects Model (CEM), Fixed Effects Model (FEM), Random Effects Model (REM) are the models that are being compared.

Table 4. Model Testing Result

Model Selection Test	Cross Section	Result
Uji Chow	Prob 0.0000 < 0.05	FEM
Uji Hausman	Prob 0.0203 < 0.05	FEM

Source: Processed research data, 2026

Based on Table 4 above, from the results of the chow test and hausman test, the most appropriate panel data regression model to be used in this study is the fixed effect model (FEM).

Classical Assumption

Testing using the Fixed Effects Model (FEM) with the OLS method yielded regression coefficients that satisfy the BLUE criteria. For panel data analyzed via the OLS method, a normality test is not required, given that normality is not fundamentally a prerequisite for the BLUE property (Basuki, 2021). Based on the Central Limit Theorem, a large sample size (greater than 30) causes the data distribution to tend toward normality, meaning that a violation of the normality assumption can be tolerated (Damodar N. Gujarati & Dawn C. Porter, 2009). Therefore, this study used three classic assumption tests, which are as follow:

Table 5. Classical Assumption Test Results

Variables	Multicollinearity		Heteroscedasticity	Autocorrelation
	Correlations		Obs*R-squared	Durbin-Watson
	Lev	Ownconc	Prob. Chi-Square	
Company Size	0.256713	0.029081	0.1736	1.487135
Leverage		0.017063		
Ownership Concentration				

Source: Processed research data, 2026

Table 5 presents the results of the multicollinearity test. All independent variables exhibit correlation coefficients < 0.8, indicating that the independent variable data in this study are free from multicollinearity. The heteroscedasticity test using the Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey method shows a Prob. Chi-Square value for Obs*R-squared of 0.1736 > 0.05, implying that the regression model does not suffer from heteroscedasticity. The autocorrelation test yields a Durbin-Watson value of 1.487135, since this value falls within the range of -2 to +2, it can be concluded that no autocorrelation is present.

Regression Analysis

Table 6. Regression Analysis Result

Variables	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
Constant	1013.945	355.0655	2.855655	0.0047
Company Size	-31.28428	12.50618	-2.501504	0.0130
Leverage	7.402406	19.24297	0.384681	0.7008
Ownership Concentration	-53.51801	26.79521	-1.997297	0.0469
R-squared	0.413626	F-statistic	2.698421	
Adjusted R-squared	0.260342	Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000	

Source: Processed research data, 2026

From the regression analysis result, the following equation is obtained:

$$ARL = 1013.945 - 31.28428SIZE + 7.402406LEV - 53.51801OWNCONC$$

Regression analysis was conducted to examine how company size, leverage, and ownership concentration affect audit report lag. The results indicate that company size ($\beta = -31.28428$, p-value = 0.0130) and ownership concentration ($\beta = -53.51801$, p-value = 0.0469) have a significant negative effect. Conversely, leverage did not show a significant effect ($\beta = 7.402406$, p-value = 0.7008).

Table 7. Research Hypothesis Result

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Company size has a negative and significant effect on audit report lag	Accepted
H2	Leverage has a positive but insignificant effect on audit report lag.	Rejected
H3	Ownership concentration has a negative and significant effect on audit report lag	Accepted

Source: Processed research data, 2026

DISCUSSION

Company Size and Audit Report Lag

Research findings indicate that the larger the company size, the shorter the audit report lag. This can be attributed to the fact that large-scale companies generally possess stronger internal control systems, competent human resources, more advanced technology, and more structured reporting procedures. These factors enable the financial statement preparation process to be carried out accurately and in a timely manner. Furthermore, large companies facilitate a more efficient and scheduled audit process. Auditors also have access to more complete and accurate data, allowing audit procedures to proceed more smoothly.

These research findings align with Signaling Theory, which posits that large companies have a strong incentive to convey positive signals to stakeholders through the timely submission of audited financial reports. The ability to complete

audits quickly reflects the presence of integrated systems, effective internal controls, and strong coordination between management and auditors. Investors respond to this positive signal with increased confidence and investment interest, ultimately driving up firm value. Consequently, large companies consistently exhibit shorter audit report lags compared to small companies, as they possess resource and system advantages that facilitate an accelerated audit process.

The results of this study are supported by prior research conducted by John et al. (2025), Nouraldeen et al. (2021), and Yolanda & Santoso (2024), which indicates that firm size has a negative effect on audit report lag. This suggests that larger firms possess advantages such as stronger internal control systems, sufficient financial resources to hire professional accounting staff and utilize advanced technology, and the ability to pay higher audit fees factors that encourage auditors to work more efficiently without compromising audit quality. Furthermore, large firms face stricter scrutiny from investors, regulators, the government, and the Financial Services Authority, consequently, management is motivated to finalize financial audit reports as quickly as possible to avoid sanctions and preserve the firm's reputation in the capital market.

Leverage and Audit Report Lag

Research findings indicate that a company's debt level does not affect the duration of the audit report lag. Debt levels do not automatically determine the speed of the audit process, as the impact of leverage depends heavily on a company's internal conditions and management's ability to handle financial risks. Independent auditors are required to adhere to the Professional Standards for Public Accountants (SPAP), which mandate the execution of audit procedures based on identified risks regardless of the client's debt level meaning auditors cannot accelerate or prolong the audit process solely due to pressure from creditors.

Although highly indebted companies face more extensive scrutiny such as time-consuming debt verification and checks for compliance with companies with low debt levels still require standard audit procedures that cannot be completed instantly. Consequently, it cannot be concluded that high debt levels cause longer audit processes or that low debt automatically shortens them, as leverage is not the primary factor influencing the duration of audit work.

The results of this study are supported by prior research conducted by Dehcheshmeh et al. (2025) and Nouraldeen et al. (2021), which indicate that leverage has no effect on audit report lag. A company's debt level whether high or low does not influence the time required to complete the audit report, as all public companies are subject to the same obligation to submit audited financial statements within the timeframe stipulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Ownership Concentration and Audit Report Lag

Research findings indicate that higher ownership concentration is associated with a shorter audit report lag. This can be attributed to the fact that majority shareholders possess a direct interest and significant control, enabling them to ensure an efficient audit process and the timely completion of financial statements. Controlling shareholders tend to urge management to finalize financial statements in a disciplined manner and require independent auditors to work efficiently without compromising audit quality. Furthermore, a dominant

ownership structure facilitates faster and more coordinated internal decision-making, as there is no need to await approval from numerous minority shareholders or navigate lengthy authorization processes.

These research results align with Signaling Theory, wherein the largest shareholder holds a direct interest and significant control power to ensure an efficient audit process and the timely finalization of financial statements. Controlling shareholders utilize the submission timing of audited financial statements as a positive signal that the company is well-managed, transparent, and free from significant financial issues. An ownership structure involving major shareholders facilitates faster and more coordinated internal decision-making, as there is no need to await approval from numerous minority shareholders or navigate lengthy bureaucratic channels. Consequently, this structure minimizes obstacles and disagreements in corporate governance, thereby fostering a smoother and more rapid audit process.

These findings are supported by prior research specifically studies conducted by Irene & Tjahjono (2024) and Kalsum et al. (2025) indicating that ownership concentration has a negative effect on audit report lag. This indicates that the higher the percentage of shares owned by the largest shareholder, the faster the company submits its audited financial statements. This condition occurs because majority shareholders or managers who also hold a significant portion of ownership shares tend to demonstrate higher levels of commitment and responsibility toward the company's long-term sustainability and reputation. They actively encourage management and urge independent auditors to complete and report the audited financial statements in a timely manner.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study examines 305 firm-year observations from 61 Indonesian property and real estate companies over the 2020–2024 period. Fixed effects analysis results indicate that company size and ownership concentration significantly shorten audit report lag, whereas leverage has no statistically significant effect. These findings suggest that timely audit completion is supported by organizational resources and active governance oversight, rather than being determined solely by the level of debt in the capital structure. Larger firms appear better able to optimize systems, human resources, documentation, and external examinations to accelerate the audit process. Share ownership concentration appears to strengthen oversight and accountability regarding reporting deadlines.

Companies particularly small scale publicly listed ones need to improve internal control documentation, project accounting integration, financial closing procedures, and pre-audit preparations. Firms with high debt levels should maintain comprehensive, audit ready records of loans and debt covenants. Controlling shareholders need to exercise oversight functions through the board and audit committee while upholding auditor independence and transparency for minority shareholders. Auditors should consider client scale, reporting infrastructure, and ownership governance when allocating resources and planning interim audits. Regulators can complement sanction enforcement by providing

technical guidance and implementing early-warning monitoring for listed companies that repeatedly approach or exceed reporting deadlines.

FURTHER STUDY

This study has several limitations, it focuses exclusively on property and real estate sector companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange during the 2020–2024 period; the adjusted R-squared value is only 26%, meaning 74% of the variance is influenced by variables not examined in this study and the measurement of leverage relies on the DAR proxy, which may not adequately capture the impact of audit report lag.

Therefore, future research is advised to extend the observation period to obtain more reliable results, given that this study utilized only a five-year timeframe. It is also recommended to broaden the sample scope beyond the property and real estate sectors, as other industries may possess characteristics that could influence audit report lag and provide a more comprehensive picture of the situation in Indonesia. Furthermore, future studies should consider incorporating additional variables that play a significant role in influencing audit report lag, such as profitability, audit committee characteristics, family ownership, or others to potentially improve the adjusted R-squared value. Additionally, introducing moderating variables could broaden the scope of the analysis regarding the factors affecting audit report lag. Finally, it is suggested that future research utilize alternative leverage indicators, such as DER, D/C, or Debt-to-EBITDA.

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