



The Effect of Ethical Behavior and Social Identity on the Performance of the Auditors by Emphasizing on Role Conflict, Self - Efficacy and Professional Ethical Sensitivities.

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to determine the role of ethical behavior and social identity with emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy, and professional ethics sensitives in auditors on their performance. The present study is an applied study in terms of target and a descriptive study of survey and correlational type in terms of data collection. The statistical population of this study included the auditors of auditing firms, members of the Association of Certified Public Accountants, and certified independent auditors To calculate the number of samples and to take samples 'coceran formulation and the avilable sample methods have been respectively used. This study was conducted in 2020. A number of 300 auditors participated in the present study and answered the questionnaires used in this study. Partial Least Squares (PLS) was used for modelling and testing the hypotheses. The initial results indicated the significant positive effect of ethical behavior and social identity of auditors on their performance. It was found that if we consider role conflict, self-efficacy, and professional ethics sensitivities in evaluating the relationship between auditors' ethical behavior and social identity with their performance, auditors' ethical behavior and social identity still have a significant positive effect on their performance. In addition, the results of this study indicated that self-efficacy and ethical sensitivities have a significant positive effect on the job performance of auditors while role conflict has a significant negative effect on the job performance of auditors.

Keywords:

Ethical behavior, social identity, role conflict, self-efficacy, auditor performance.

1. Introduction

Auditors must consistently spend their time performing their duties professionally. The auditors' ability to cope with specific situations in different and complex environments and judge their quality in these conditions is defined as audit performance (Bonner, 1994). Poor auditors' performance has outcomes for society, the economy, and the business environment.

In the process (issuing audit reports and auditors' comments, which is a kind of judgment), the auditors face many complexities in different conditions of audit tasks. In these different conditions, auditors must consider different types of information and select appropriate audit procedures. The appropriate ability of auditors to cope with these specific conditions in different and complex environments and to judge their quality in these conditions is defined as the audit performance (Banner, 1994).

In Iran, the private audit market or outsourced government audits, such as tax audits of the Article 272 BC, value-added tax audits, and audits of the Social Security Organization are at the beginning of its era. Therefore, there is a possibility of non-observance of ethical behaviors in this field by auditors working in institutions (Khosrowabad and Bani Mahd, 2015).

Among the member organizations of the Iranian association of certified public auditors, over 2012 to 2017, 306 disciplinary cases have been filed against auditors in the society; 172 ones (56%) led to warnings and reprimands, 117 ones (38%) led to the restriction and suspension of the activities of certified public accountants, and 16 ones were violated. The prominent disciplinary cases were due to the non-observance of professional ethics by the employees of the organizations. Therefore, not paying attention to the quality audit and deviating from the principles and rules of professional ethics for the audit organization has costs and risks (Alavi, 2019). According to the report of the Iranian Association of Certified Public Accountants (2009), the suspension of audit firms is increasing. The main reason for these suspensions is the problems of not adhering to the ethical behavior in the profession.

Recent ethical problems of auditors around the world have also led many audit firms to seek ethical credibility among stakeholders who use audited financial statements. These cases show that it is necessary to increase the knowledge of auditors in the field of ethical behavior and social identity of the

profession and to observe its standards in the audit profession due to the recent financial scandals in Iran and the world.

Studies show that the main reasons affecting the performance of audit organizations that have led to their suspension are the failure to observe ethical behavior and pay attention to individual identity versus social identity.

Ethical behavior and social identity are characteristics of a healthy person in any society, including auditors. Based on the social structure and influenced by social relationships, the auditors' social identity reacts to the social structure and causes change, maintenance, and survival (Ismail and Johannes, 2018). The ethical behavior and social identity impact the auditors' personality, abilities, and attitudes and, consequently, improve their performance. According to the results of previous studies, some other factors that may affect the auditors' performance include the conflict of role in the auditors' performance 'professional duties, self-efficacy and auditors' sensitivity to professional ethics and awareness of these factors. The effect of these factors on the auditors' performance will also be important for doing the research (Afifah, Sari, Anugerah, & Sanusi, 2015). If auditors observe the ethical behaviors and professional ethical sensitivities, and have appropriate self-efficacy, immorality and fraud cannot occur. The effect of ethical culture on reducing the quality audit and less reporting of audit time also shows that there is the relationship between ethics and the atmosphere and the auditors' commitment and behavior (Sweeney, Arnold, & Pierce, 2010).

Given the existing ethical problems, and the role conflict among auditors, as well as the role of self-efficacy and ethical sensitivity of auditors on one hand and helping managers of audit organizations to better understand the impact of ethics and social identity in the profession audit, the need for a comprehensive research, which includes all of the above, makes this field even more obvious. Also, the special importance of auditors' performance as an important and influential factor on quality audit, it seems necessary to do the research on the impact of these variables on auditors' performance. Understanding whether auditors' performance is affected by factors such as role conflict, self-efficacy, and the sensitivities of their professional ethics allows the auditors to better

identify and interpret the fields that affect audit performance.

Various studies have been conducted in the field of audit inside Iran. However, there are very few studies on the promotion of ethics and its impact on audit performance. Internal accounting and auditing journals have also not played an effective role in this regard. Therefore, this process should be considered as an important alarm for the research community of the country, which will reduce the quality of audit reports and reduce their performance (Namazi and Rajab Dari, 2018).

In some previous studies, ethical principles, professional or social identity or professional sensitivities have been used to examine the impact of these factors on the audit quality or professional judgment of auditors, but with reviewing and searching the articles published in internal journals, fewer articles have thoroughly examined the impact of factors or criteria of ethical behavior or social identity on auditors' performance. Therefore, studies that show the benefits of moral behavior and adherence to social identity at the individual level are rare.

Also, with reviewing and searching the internal published articles, no research has been done related to any of the following subjects:

- 1) Factors determining ethical behavior in auditors and the impact of these factors on auditors' performance.
- 2) The effect of ethical behavior and social identity on the performance of auditors simultaneously.
- 3) The effect of role conflict, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics simultaneously on the performance of auditors.
- 4) The effect of ethical behavior with emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and professional ethics sensitivities on auditors' performance.
- 5) The effect of social identity with emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics on the performance of auditors.

Therefore, it was strongly felt the need to examine the factors of ethical behavior and social identity and their impact on auditors' performance with emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and professional ethics sensitivities.

Therefore, this research has a new and innovative subject, and has examined the impact of ethical

behavior and social identity on the auditors' performance with emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and professional ethics sensitivities. Considering that no research has been done on the impact of ethical behavior and social identity on the auditors' performance, emphasizing role conflict, self-efficacy, and sensitivities of professional ethics, this research is new and innovative from the mentioned perspective. In this study, after expressing the theoretical foundations and presenting the research literature review in the study field, it is introduced the research method and after presenting descriptive statistics, it is tested the research hypotheses using the partial least squares (PLS) method. Finally, it is present the results of the research and compare it with the results of the researches conducted in the study field.

2. Literature Review

Ethics is defined as the most basic and important thing that everyone seeks and is the first perception that human beings have of a good life (Banks, 2012). Research into the individuals' immoral behavior (political scandals or commercial fraud) has raised and highlighted growing public concern for companies and communities (Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010). In most studies, either any definition is ignored or the authors argue that the definition of ethical behavior is not sufficient from the perspective of the developed model in their study. According to Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe (2008), if we do not believe that the definition of a moral decision is important, or do not believe that our position is important for that, we are faced with a meaningless definition of moral behavior. If we believe that such a definition is necessary, then we have no choice but to motivate ourselves to understand what the normative basis of these values should be and how "morality" should be measured. Therefore, before examining and measuring moral behavior, we must have a complete definition of it. According to Morales-Sánchez, Orta-Pérez & Rodríguez-Serrano (2019), ethical behavior is defined as the behavior of an individual who is subject to ethical norms of behavior and is generally accepted or judged. This definition is very comprehensive; in fact, there is a gap in the scientific literature regarding the standardization of the concept of moral behavior. According to Lussier (2012), moral behavior is a public issue. Organizations seek honest employees and

are judged on ethics and social responsibility. He considers moral behavior to be principles that have been established around the world and is a kind of responsibility that changes from time to time. When a person behaves morally, it builds trust in their immediate environment. Therefore, by trusting employees, which is created by observing their consistent ethical behaviors, the costs of organizations will reduce.

Every person in every profession and position is required to observe moral standards. Auditors are no exception to this rule and are required to observe professional ethics and professional behaviors in performing their duties (Dewi & Dwiyanti, 2018). Performing unprofessional and immoral behaviors of auditors will reduce the quality audit and will reduce public confidence in the profession audit (Moshashei, Hashemi and Foroughi, 2018). Financial instability in recent years has made it a requirement of auditors to have a professional ethic. With strengthening ethics, it can restore public trust and credibility to the profession audit. Government, professional associations, etc. can play an important role in strengthening the ethical foundations of the profession audit (Dazeh, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to observe ethical standards in the profession accounting regarding the recent financial scandals. The auditor should enforce ethical standards and support the goals of professional norms that are an aspect of professional commitment (Asry & Ginting, 2020). The performance of accountants and auditors is involved in a variety of ways with ethics, ethical leadership, and social responsibility, and their day-to-day decisions in matters such as judging, commenting, division of labor, organizing, and auditing services can be affected by their thoughts, personality, behavior, and ethics. The independent auditors are people who make decisions based on factual, value, and ethical judgments. The choice of a method is made from different methods according to previous decisions, momentary pressures, religious and moral values, traditions and economic and social factors. On the other hand, ethical leadership can improve the behavior and performance of independent auditors by developing ethical standards. In financial and accounting texts, social identity has also been mentioned as an important factor in increasing the performance of auditors. The first classical definition of social identity was expressed by Tajfel et al. (1979) in social identity theory.

Tajfel defines social identity as an individual's knowledge of belonging to a particular social group and the emotional value and importance because of membership in those groups (Tajfel, Turner, Austin, & Worchel, 1979). Social groups, whether large groups or small task-oriented teams, give their members a common identity that determines their identity, what they should believe in, and how they should behave (Hornung, Bandelow, & Vogeler, 2019). Strong social identity expresses the degree of relationship between an identity with fundamental traits and values that exist in an individual (Forehand, Deshpandé, & Reed II, 2002). Considering the social identity theory, it can be said that the power of the auditor's social identity affects his performance; This effect basically depends on the prominence of each identity (Ashforth, Harrison and Corley, 2008; LeBoeuf, Shafir, & Bayuk, 2010). Identity prominence indicates the degree of specificity of an identity or the degree to which it is specific and significant among other identities at a given moment and will be the most prominent identity in an individual's behavior (Forehand, Deshpandé, & Reed II, 2002). Research on social identity theory and organizational identity shows that solid social identity can improve performance by reducing negative biases between employees and employers. Therefore, it can be expected that, due to the high negative biases between auditors and the employer, the appropriate social identity of auditors can reduce these biases and ultimately increase their performance.

There are also factors that can directly or indirectly affect the performance of auditors. These factors include role conflict, self-efficacy, and moral sensitivities. The auditor faces a potential conflict of roles in the performance of his duties. Role conflict is caused by a mismatch between the expectations of one person in the organization and the expectations of other people inside or outside the organization (Sani, 2005). The potential impact of role conflict is very sensitive for both the individual and the organization in terms of emotional consequences such as high work pressure, job dissatisfaction and low performance. The auditor's job is such that he inevitably has to work with many people who each have different wants and expectations. This diversity leads to role conflict (Fisher, 2001). Role conflict can lead to inconvenience at work and reduce the auditor's motivation. These conditions have a negative impact on the auditor and reduce the overall auditors' performance (Fanani,

Hanif, & Subroto, 2008). Also, the research done by Arad, Moshashei and Eskandari (2020) indicates that role conflict as a stressor can affect the quality of audit and reduce the performance of auditors. Winidiantari & Widhiyani (2015) claim that role conflict has no effect on the auditor's performance. However, the researches done by Ermawati, Sinarwati, and Edy Sujana (2014) and Aprimulki, Kamaliah, & Safitri (2017) indicate the effect of role conflict on auditor performance. The results of this study support our hypothesis.

The self-efficacy is also considered as a tool for increasing energy, directing and improving endurance (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Self-efficacy is the concept or belief in self-reliance. Self-efficacy can be considered as personal factor that distinguish one person from others and a change in self-efficacy causes a change in behavior, especially in completing tasks and goals (Engko, 2006). People with high levels of self-efficacy make every effort to achieve goals and increase performance (Judge & Bono, 2001). In fact, self-efficacy plays an important role in all jobs, including audit. Hayati (2014) states that five job characteristics are very effective in increasing work motivation: skill, nature of job, job importance, feedback and responsibility. Since in the profession audit, knowledge and experience of human resources are the basis of providing services, the auditor's motivation and talent is considered an important advantage to achieve the goal. Self-efficacy influences the auditor's behavior by creating motivation and self-confidence to overcome and improve performance (Hayati, Charkhabi and Nami, 2013).

Studies show that since the auditors try to prioritize professional interests over personal interests, they are more sensitive to ethical situations to uphold the goals and values of the profession. This allows auditors to be willing to retain their professional members and prevent ethical wrongdoing (Su'un & Hajering, 2020). According to Midyarany (2016), moral sensitivity is the individuals' ability to recognize the moral or spiritual values when making decisions. In addition, Mottaqin (2014) defines moral sensitivity as a process of interpreting situations, a role in which different actions can affect stakeholders, imagine a chain of causal events, and understand that at that there is moral or spirituality issues then (Muttataqin & Yuyetta, 2014).

Sensitivity of auditors' professional ethics is also defined as the ability to recognize the nature of ethics in the situation that auditors must make decisions (Aziza, Salim, & Andi, 2008). Auditors are expected to be more sensitive to the issue of professional ethics in the performance of their professional duties. Auditors must comply with ethical standards and support the goals of the professional norm, which is one aspect of the commitment to work. Their commitment is reflected in their high level of sensitivity to professional ethics. This ethical understanding guides auditors' attitudes, behaviors, and actions to achieve better results. Sensitivity of professional ethics among auditors leads to their attitudes, behaviors and practices in achieving better results, or in other words, can improve the quality of auditors' work and increase their performance (Su'un & Hajering, 2020).

Empirical Literature Review

Nadhiroh & Laksito (2010) found that self-efficacy affects auditors' performance in making auditors' decisions and judgments. Their findings show that people with high self-efficacy have a better mindset and higher motivation, and therefore always strive to achieve goals and increase their performance.

Hayati, Charkhabi, and Nami (2013) found that people with high levels of self-efficacy were less likely to withdraw from academic problems and would instead try to find better solutions. He showed that when the auditors gather the necessary knowledge and more audit skills, they will perform better in preparing audit reports.

Afifa, Sari, Anogra, and Sanusi (2015) examined the impact of role conflict, self-efficacy, and professional ethical sensitivities on auditors' performance. Findings of Afifa et al. showed that role conflict has a negative and significant effect on auditors' performance, while self-efficacy and professional ethics sensitivities have a positive and significant effect on auditors' performance.

Sari & Suryanawa (2016) concluded that role uncertainty affects the auditor's performance. Amilin (2017) examined the effect of role conflict, and role ambiguity by considering emotional intelligence as a moderating component, on auditors' performance and showed that emotional intelligence regarding the role conflict, has a moderating effect on auditor's performance.

In a study, Qal & Sodanian (2019) examined the effect of the relationship between social identity and institutional pressures on audit quality. They showed that normative, coercive and imitative pressures and social identity have a significant positive effect on quality audit.

Hasas Yeganeh and Kazempour (2013) investigated the relationship between auditors' skill level and sensitivity and ethical judgment. The results of this study showed that the ethical sensitivity of skilled auditors is higher compared to the semi-skilled auditors, and when issuing an audit report, they take into account the interests of all stakeholders.

Khosrowabadi and Bani Mahd (2015), in a study on the statistical community of auditors working in the member organizations of the Iranian association of certified public accountant showed that the lower the level of social trust in the profession audit, the more people tend to immoral behavior.

Malanzari and Shams (2016) studied the effect of professional identity and result-oriented mentality on auditors' professional judgment. In this study, social identity theory has been used to determine the effect of the identity of an auditor partner, an internal observer or an inspector on expert judgment. This study also points to the simultaneous effect of consequentialist mentality and social identity on professional judgment.

Alifari, Vakilifard and Bani Mahd (2017), investigated the moderating role of social identity in the relationship between the perception of social responsibility of business units and the accountants' job attitude. The results showed that understanding the social responsibility of business units has a significant effect on job satisfaction. The relationship between the perception of social responsibility of business units and organizational commitment has also been confirmed.

Ahmadi et al. (2019) in their study entitled "Modeling Structures Affecting the Professional Ethics of Audit Using Structural-Interpretive Modeling from The Perspective of Audit Experts" showed that the most basic structures affecting the professional ethics of audit, the competition structure in the audit market, type and the power of corporate governance, whether the client is private or non-private, are the size of the client organization.

Ghaffari et al. (2020) investigated the effect of goal orientation, self-efficacy and work complexity on

auditors' judgmental performance. They showed that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and audit judgment performance. The results also showed that self-efficacy does not moderate the relationship between learning goal orientation with the audit judgment performance and orientation performance orientation with audit judgment performance. According to the concepts and theoretical foundations of the research, the subject and variables of the research, the hypotheses of this study are defined as follows.

- 1) The ethical behavior of auditors has a positive and significant relationship with the performance of auditors.
- 2) The social identity of auditors has a positive and significant relationship with the performance of auditors.
- 3) Role conflict has a negative and significant relationship with the auditors' performance.
- 4) Self-efficacy has a positive and significant relationship with the performance of auditors.
- 5) Sensitivities of professional ethics have a positive and significant relationship with the performance of auditors.
- 6) Ethical behavior in auditors with an emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics, has a significant impact on auditors' performance.
- 7) Social identity has a significant effect on auditors' performance by emphasizing role conflict, self-efficacy, and sensitivities of professional ethics.

Conceptual Model of Research

The conceptual model has been presented in Figure 1 and shows the results of the test of research hypotheses, based on the research done by Ismail and Johannes (2018).

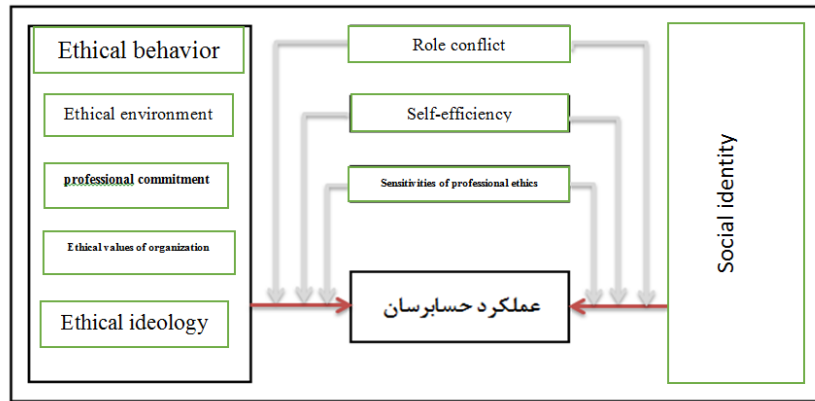


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of research (Ismail and Johannes, 2018)

3. Methodology

The present research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-survey in terms of nature and method of data collection; it has been done using a questionnaire. The measurement scale in the questionnaire was Likert and SPSS and Smart PLS software were used for statistical analysis of the questionnaire. The statistical population of this study includes formal auditors working individually or working in member organizations of the Iranian association of certified public accountant. According to the latest report of the Supreme Council of the Society of Certified Public Accountants of Iran (2019), the number of professional auditors working in member audit organizations is equal to 9030 people. Based on Cochran's formula in selecting the number of samples, 368 people were

selected as the sample size and using the available sampling method, a questionnaire was sent to them. Among the submitted questionnaires, 300 people from the selected sample participated in this research and answered the research questionnaires. In this study, the books, articles and resources on the subject of research and interviews with experts and employees in the profession audit, as well as searching articles on the site Science Direct and Elsevier were used to collect data. In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's alpha method and SPSS software. The content validity is confirmed since the conceptual model of the research arises from the research literature review and reflects the experts' opinions. The questionnaires in Table (1) were used to test the hypotheses.

Table 1. Questionnaires used in the research

questionnaire	References	Main scale (Likert)
Auditor performance	(McNeels et al. 1978)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 5 = agree)
Ethical Behavior (Ethical Environment, Professional Commitment, Ethical Values, and Ethical Ideology)	(Victor and Cullen, 1988)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 5 = agree)
	(Clockman and Henning, 2000)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 5 = agree)
	(Hunt and Whittle 1986)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 7 = agree)
	(Forrest, 1980)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 9 = agree)
social Identity	(Saffarinia and Roshan, 2011)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 5 = agree)
Role conflict	(Fanani et al. 2008)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 5 = agree)
Sensitivities of professional ethics	(Kazempour et al. 2013)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 7 = agree)
self-efficacy	(Chen et al. 2001)	5-point method (1 = disagree and 5 = agree)

4. Findings

Before presenting the test results of the hypotheses, first it is examined the descriptive statistics of the data and then evaluate the obtained models through the partial least squares method. Finally, it is presented the

research findings in detail and the test results of the hypotheses. Summary of respondents' information based on their demographic frequency is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic frequency table of the respondents to the questionnaire

Variable		frequency	percentage
gender	female	67	22/3
	male	233	77/7
Marital status	married	191	63/7
	single	109	36/3
age	Less than 30 years	28	9/3
	31 to 40 years	147	49
	40 to 51 years	84	28
	More than 51 years	41	13/7
education	PhD	100	33/3
	master	134	44/7
	bachelor	66	22
Professional work experience	5 years and less	43	14/3
	6 to 10 years	60	20
	11 to 15 years	68	22/7
	More than 15 years	129	43
Position in the organization	Auditor	44	14/7
	Senior Auditor	20	6/7
	Supervisor	46	15/3
	Senior Supervisor	19	6/3
	copartner	120	40
	manager	51	17
Audit organization size	Single owner	3	1
	small	22	7.3
	medium	146	48/7
	large	129	43
total		300	100

The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test and study of skewness and kurtosis coefficients are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Normality test results (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test)

variable	Test statistics Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Significant value of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test	skewness	kurtosis
Ethical behavior	.159	***	-.109	-.688
The social identity of auditors	.063	***	.147-	.688-
Role conflict	.099	***	-.2	1/3.1-
Self-efficacy	.152	***	.011	1/2.5-
Ethical sensitivities	.11	***	.033-	1/198-
Auditors' profession performance	.079	***	-.048	-.688

As observed in Table 3, since the skewness and kurtosis numbers are not close enough to zero and the significance value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is less than 0.01 for all variables, the hypothesis that the data is normal is not confirmed. Therefore, to test the model and hypotheses, the partial least squares method is used as one of the methods of structural equations. Because in this method, if the validity of the models is confirmed, despite the normality of the data, the results are reliable. In structural equation modeling, two types of relationships can exist between variables. First, the relationships between the latent variables of the model and the explicit variables of the model, and second, the relationships that exist between a latent variable and other latent variables in the model. In structural equations models, to measure the suitability of the questionnaire questions to measure hidden variables, the measurement model or confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model is used in the model fitting process.

Convergent reliability and validity criteria are used to evaluate the fitting of measurement models. Three parameters of internal consistency of items, mixed validity of each construct and the values of extracted variance related to the constructs are evaluated to measure the reliability of the model. T-value associated with each factor loading of the corresponding latent variable markers must be greater than or equal to 1.96 to examine the internal consistency of the items. The results of the item

homogeneity test showed that all items have a factor loading above 0.7 and therefore the internal consistency of the items is confirmed.

Mixed Validity of Each Construct

The results obtained according to the output of PLS show that considering that all the construct of the model are greater than 0.7, the mixed validity of the model is acceptable and this indicates that the second condition of the reliability of model is met. Cronbach's reliability coefficient is greater than 0.6 for all variables. Table 4 shows the results of the mixed validity of each Construct. In the structural equations model, the values of average variance extracted (AVE) related to construct must be more than 0.5 to confirm the model (Tabatabai and Lasani, 2016). The values (AVE) in Table 4 show that the third condition of model reliability is met and the value of extracted variance for each of the construct is more than the acceptable value. Examining the factor loading of each item, it was found that the cross-sectional loading of the model items is acceptable, so that the factor loading of each item on its construct is more than 0.1. Examination the correlation between the latent variables also showed that the model was approved (The results of this test are not provided due to the reduction in the volume of the article. Access to the data of this test can be achieved by contacting the responsible author).

Table 4. Mixed validity of each construct

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	Mixed validity of each construct	values of average variance extracted related to Constructs (AVE)
Ethical behavior	•/۸۰۶	•/۸۶۴	•/۷۲۰
The social identity of auditors	•/۹۳۸	•/۹۴۷	•/۴۸۳
Role conflict	•/۹۶۸	•/۹۷۳	•/۸۳۸
Self-efficiency	•/۹۹۲	•/۹۹۳	•/۹۴۰
Ethical sensitivities	•/۹۸۳	•/۹۸۰	•/۸۳۴
Profession performance of auditors	•/۹۴۱	•/۹۴۸	•/۰۶۷

Tests

In Smart PLS software, t value indicates the significance of the variables impact. The value of t-statistic is in fact the main criterion for confirming or rejecting hypotheses. If this value is greater than 1.64, 1.96 and 2.58, respectively, it is confirmed at the levels of 90, 95 and 99%. Two structural models have been used to test hypotheses 1 to 7. In the first model, only two variables of auditors 'ethical behavior and

auditors' social identity were present. Then, in the second model, the variables of self-efficacy, role conflict and ethical sensitivities were added to the model to examine the effect of two variables: auditors 'ethical behavior and auditors' social identity in the presence of three variables of self-efficacy, role conflict and ethical sensitivities. Figures 2 and 3 show the model of structural equations related to the study of the first and second hypotheses and Figures 4 and 5

show the model of structural equations related to the study of the third to seventh hypotheses. Also, the

value of t-statistic and standard coefficient of variables are presented in Table 5.

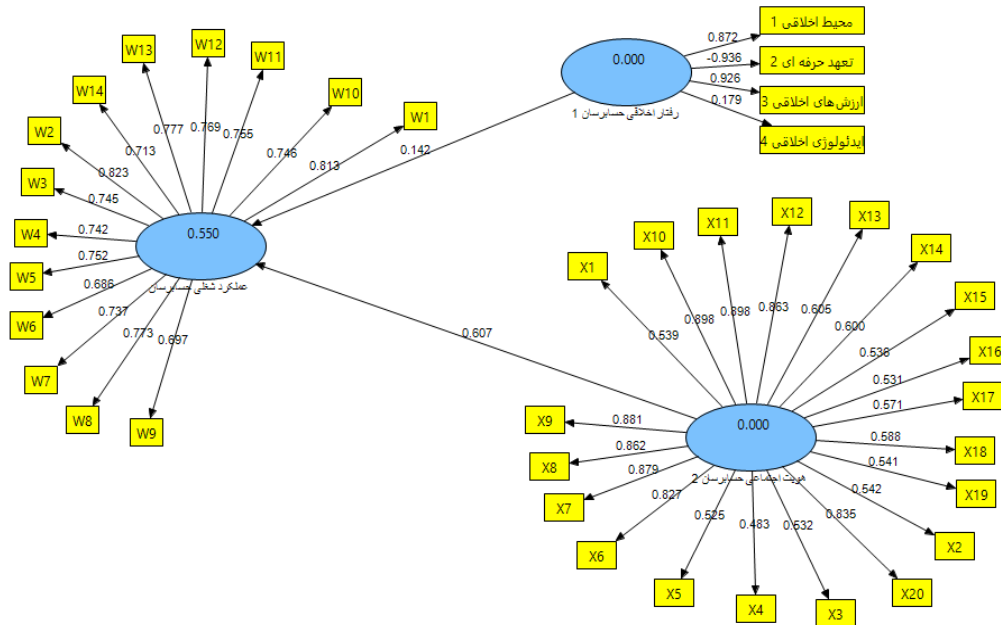


Figure 2. Structural equation model for examining the first and second hypotheses (standardized coefficients)

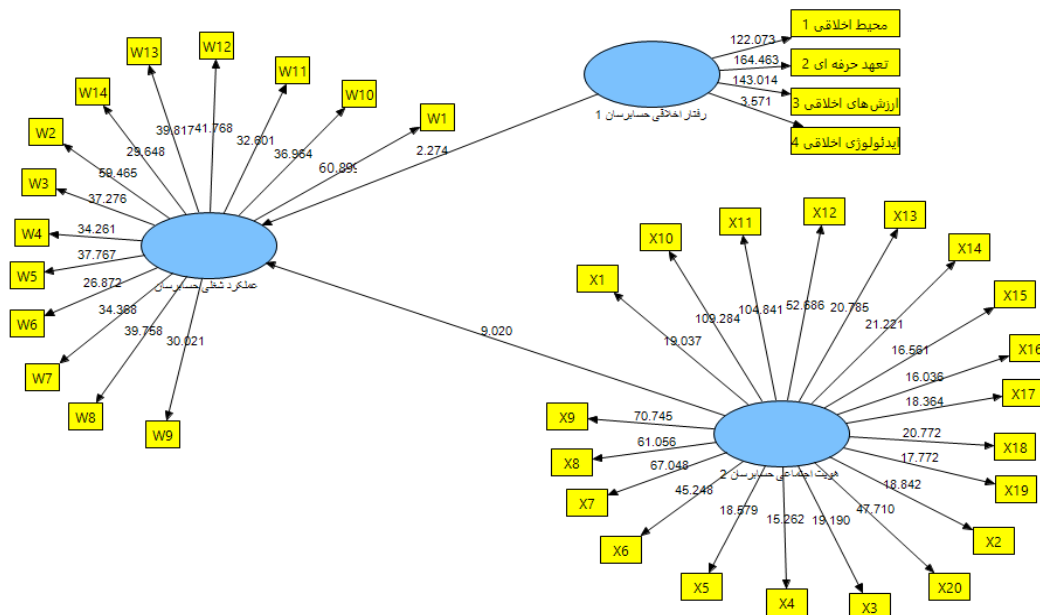


Figure 3. Structural equation model for examining the first and second hypotheses (significance coefficients)

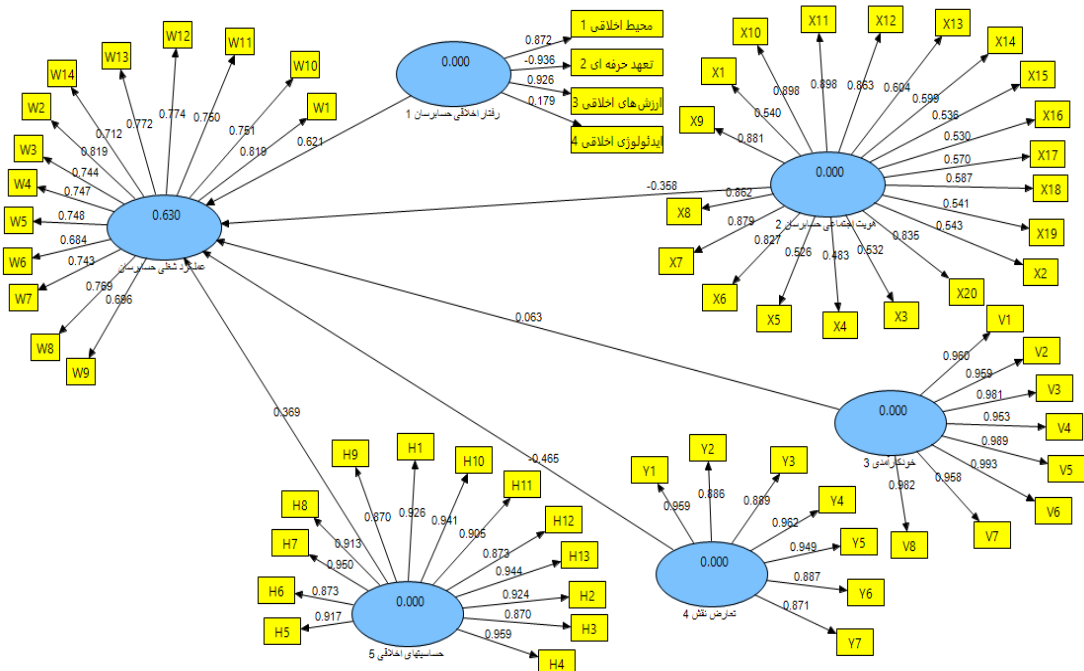


Figure 4. Structural equation model for examining third to fourth hypotheses (standardized coefficients)

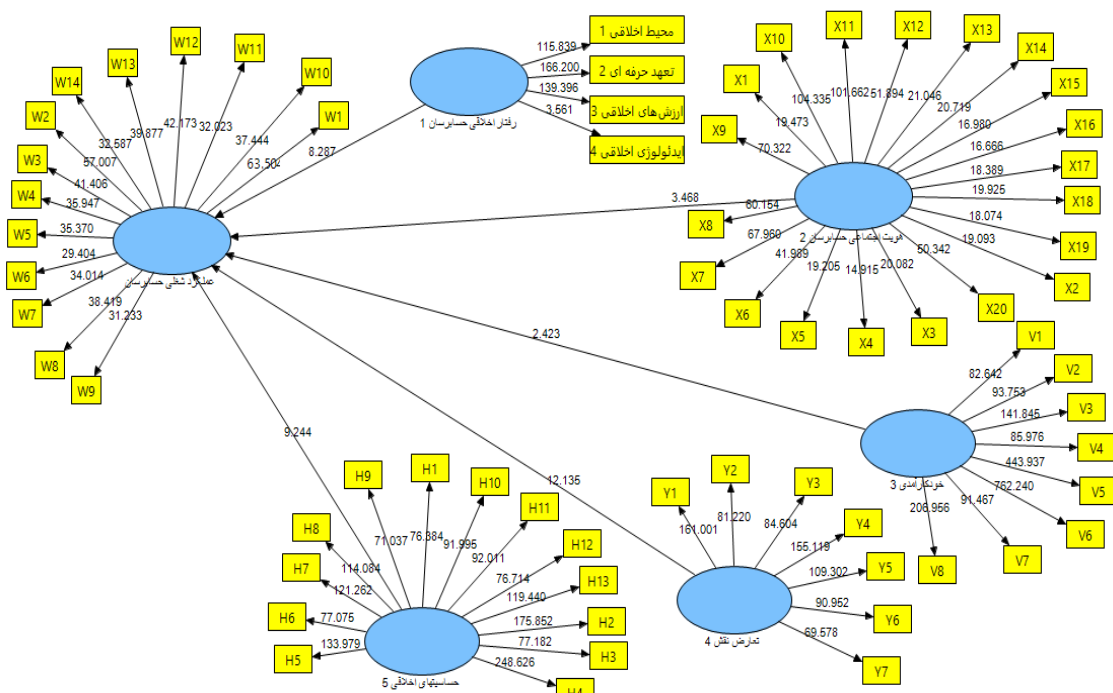


Figure 5. Structural equation model for examining the third to seventh hypotheses (significance coefficients)

In the partial least squares model, at the output of the Smart PLS software algorithm, the criterion R^2 is related to the dependent factors or the same endogenous latent factors in the model. R^2 shows the effect of an exogenous factor on an endogenous factor in the model. For suitability of the fitting model, three values of 0.19 (weak), 0.33 (medium) and 0.67 (strong) are used. According to the results in Table 5, the obtained R^2 is moderate and strong for all the latent factors in the model, and according to the appropriate value of the R^2 criterion, the fitting of the structural model is confirmed.

Quality or validity of the model is determined by share validation index and redundancy validation index. In the structural model, redundancy index is presented with Stone – Geiser Q^2 . The quality and validity of the model, which is determined by the predictive power of the exogenous factor(s), was measured using the Q^2 criterion value at three specified levels: 0.02 (low), 0.15 (medium) and 0.35 (strong). As the results in Table 5 show, these criteria are moderate or strong for all endogenous factors. These results show that exogenous factors (independent) are favorable in predicting the dependent factors and the appropriate fitting of the structural model is confirmed.

The GOF criterion in the output of the partial least squares model in Smart PLS software allows the researcher to check and control the fitting process of the whole part in the structural model after confirming the fitting of the measurement and the structural model. In 2004, the GOF index was presented by Tenenhaus et al. (2004). The GOF index is obtained by multiplying the average of the values of R^2 by the common values, which is the squares average of the loads of each factor. In the first model of this study, the common values of the model are equal to 0.561. The obtained GOF value in the first model of this research is equal to 0.555. The GOF value indicates the proper fitting of the model. In the second model, the common values of the model are equal to 0.717. The obtained GOF value in the second model is equal to 0.672. The value of GOF in the second model also indicates the proper fitting of the model.

Examining the model in Figures 2 and 3 related to the first and second hypotheses and the model in Figures 4 and 5 related to the third to seventh hypotheses, it can be concluded that the research model has a well-fitting. The results in Table 5 show

that the value of all hypotheses is greater than 1.96. On the other hand, the results of Table 5 show that ethical behavior with a coefficient of 0.142 has a positive and significant effect on the auditor's performance. Therefore, the first hypothesis entitled "Auditors' ethical behavior has a positive and significant relationship with auditors' performance" is accepted. Also, the social identity of the auditors with a coefficient of 0.607 has a positive and significant effect on the performance of the auditor. Therefore, the second hypothesis, entitled "Auditors' social identity has a positive and significant relationship with auditors' performance" is accepted.

In the second model, three variables of role conflict, self-efficacy and professional ethics sensitivities are added to the first model to examine and test the third to seventh hypotheses. The results in Table 5 show that the impact factor of the role conflict variable on the auditor's performance is -0.465. Therefore, the third hypothesis entitled "Role conflict has a negative and significant relationship with the performance of auditors" is accepted. Also, the impact factor of the self-efficacy variable on the auditor's performance is equal to 0.063. The fourth hypothesis entitled "Self-efficacy has a positive and significant relationship with the performance of auditors" is accepted. The results also indicate that the impact factor of the variable of ethical sensitivities on the performance of the auditor is equal to 0.369. Based on the coefficient obtained from the ethical sensitivity variable, the fifth hypothesis entitled "professional ethics sensitivities have a positive and significant relationship with the performance of auditors" is accepted.

Table 5 show that the coefficient of effect of ethical behavior with the addition of three variables in the model is equal to 0.621. Therefore, it can be concluded that ethical behavior with an emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics has a positive and significant effect on the performance of the auditor. Accordingly, the sixth hypothesis of the research entitled "Ethical behavior in auditors with an emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics, has a significant effect on the performance of auditors" is accepted.

The results of Table 5 show that the impact factor of social identity variable with the addition of three variables in the model is -0.358. Therefore, it can be

concluded that social identity with an emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics has a negative and significant effect on the performance of the auditor. Accordingly, the seventh hypothesis of the research entitled "Social identity with emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics, has a significant effect on the performance of auditors" is accepted. According to the results, the variables of ethics of auditors and auditors' social identity have a positive and significant effect on auditors' job performance;

this effect continues with the addition of 3 variables of self-efficacy, role conflict and ethical sensitivities, but the difference is that the social identity of auditors has a negative and significant effect on the profession performance of auditors. This suggests that in a state of stability and non-conflict, auditors' social identities lead them well to ethical behaviors and increase performance. Therefore, when auditors are faced with a role conflict, they prioritize personal interests over the interests of the organization and financial reporting stakeholders and reduce the performance.

Table 5. Effects on profession performance variable and structural model quality values

Hypothesis number	Path name	Direct effect (b)	standard error	T-Value	Reject or confirm the hypothesis	(R ²)	CV Red (Q ²)	CV Com
	Profession performance of auditors	-	-	-	-			
1	Auditors 'Ethical Behavior→ Auditors' Profession Performance	0.142	0.063	2.274	confirmed	0.550	0.308	0.560
2	Auditors 'Social Identity→ Auditors' Profession performance	0.607	0.067	9.02	confirmed			
	Auditors' Profession Performance	-	-	-	-			
3	Role Conflict → Auditors' Job Performance	-0.465	0.038	12.135	confirmed			
4	Self-efficacy → Profession performance of auditors	0.063	0.026	2.423	confirmed			
5	Self-efficacy → Profession performance of auditors	0.063	0.026	2.423	confirmed	0.630	0.352	0.560
6	Auditors 'Ethical Behavior→ Auditors' Profession Performance	0.621	0.075	8.287	confirmed			
7	Ethical sensitivities→ Profession performance of auditors	0.369	0.04	9.244	confirmed			

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

In this study, it has been studied the effect of ethical behavior and social identity on auditors' performance with emphasis on role conflict, self-efficacy, and sensitivities of professional ethics on auditors' performance. The statistical population of this study consists of auditors in the member organizations of the Iranian association of certified public accountant; 300 auditors participated in the present study and answered the questionnaires. The partial least squares (PLS) method was used to model and test the hypotheses. The Cronbach's alpha test was performed for all questions of the questionnaire to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire using SPSS software. Based on the results, the alpha coefficient for the Likert scale of all questions of the questionnaire was more than 90%, indicating that all questions of the

research are in line with the research topic and has a very high content coherence. Evaluations also showed that the factor loadings of items, Cronbach's alpha criteria, mixed reliability and convergent validity of factors related to the variables of the research were appropriate in all factors and the models had good reliability and validity. It was further found that the t-value obtained in the relationship between all variables with the auditors' performance at the significance level of 0.01 was greater than 1.96 and therefore the relationship between research variables and the auditors' performance was significant. Preliminary results showed a positive and significant effect of the variables of ethical behavior and social identity of auditors on their performance. It was further found that considering the role conflict variables, self-efficacy and sensitivities of professional ethics in examining the relationship between auditors' ethical behavior and

social identity with their performance, auditors' ethical behavior and social identity still have a positive and significant effect on auditors' performance. Also, the results of this study showed that the variables of self-efficacy and ethical sensitivities have a positive and significant effect on the variable of profession auditors' performance and the variable of role conflict has a negative and significant effect on the variable of profession performance of auditors. The results of the present study showed that the results of the study were consistent with the internal studies of Hassas Yeganeh and Kazempour (2013), Khosrowabadi and Bani Mahd (2015), Mollanazari and Shams (2015); Also, with the results of foreign studies done by Ismail & Yuhanis (2018) and Charkhabi (2013), Afifah, Sari, Anugerah, & Sanusi (2015), Sari & Suryanawa (2016), Amilin (2017), Irvani Kwal and Sudanese (2019). According to the results of testing the hypotheses, it is suggested to the managers of audit organizations to consider issues such as ethical behavior and social identity of auditors in the performance of auditors. It is also suggested to the Audit Standards Development Committee in the Audit Organization to consider issues related to the ethical behavior and conflict of role of auditors when reviewing and developing audit standards. At the end of this study, we would like to thank all those who collected the information, especially the auditors who helped the researchers complete the research questionnaires.

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