

## **Escalating Interest to be Professional Accountants: Indonesia Case**

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*This study uncovers reasons why fresh accounting graduates are reluctant to become a public accountant. Grounded-theory research method is employed. Data are gathered using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions during 2011. The informants are the stakeholders: among others, 4 partners of different public accountant firms, some former public accountants, over than 50 accounting graduates, and some potential future graduates. This study concludes that becoming a public accountant is a calling besides academic and professional competence. Entrepreneurship is also a prerequisite. Should the results of this research be acknowledged, the Indonesian Institute of Certified Public Accountants and higher education institutions must raise public awareness of public accounting roles and business prospects of today and the future.*

**Keywords:** high staff turnover, professional public accounting, raising interest, grounded theory research.

### **1. Introduction**

Public Accountants (PA) play a very important role in the business society. They create and serve the public trust by upholding Good Corporate Governance (GCG) principles (Shill 2008). PA's also have indirect positive contributions towards the economy through Indonesian Capital Market. It is rational to say that a weak PA operating within a stock market will hinder market growth as they lose investor trust.

Even so, the number of graduates who choose a career as a PA seems to remain low. PA population growth cannot parallel the number of accounting graduates.

In 2009 saw 26 new Public Accountants and 24 more people became Public Accountants in 2010. The number of new Public Accountants is less than modest compared to the number of graduates from Professional Accountant Education Institute all over Indonesia; only 0.005%. The percentage will become even more insignificant when compared to the number of university graduates from the last ten years.

The decline in Public Accountant popularity takes place in developed countries as well. Take Australia as an example; the local CPA launched an advertising campaign since 2003 to promote the Public Accountant. The campaign emphasized "the diversity of its membership, inspirational role models and the opportunities and excitement that accounting offers as a career." (Anonymous 2008)

75% of the Public Accountant population in the United States will soon retire, as mentioned by Murphy (2006), CPA, Chairman of AICPA and a partner in Plante & Moran Public Accounting Firm. Recruiting new CPA's has never been an easy task;

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## Sawarjuwono

most CPA's remain in public accounting firms for as long as five to seven years only (Baldiga 2005; Bufe & Murphy 2004; and Murphy 2006). When compared to other countries, the number of public accountants in Indonesia is relatively small.

Foreign accounting firms will reign and dominate the Indonesian market. Therefore any disinterest in becoming a public accountant is a very important issue. The level of labor turnover in public accounting firms makes matters worse (Keller 2009). Some causes are work satisfaction from the amount of compensation they receive, unmet expectations, individual qualifications, work stress, and organizational matters. Those who decide to stay in public accounting firms are generally those who are seeking intellectual challenges (see Lander, Reinstein & Henson 1993; Sutton & Griffin 2004; Adriyanto 2009; Collins & Killough 1989)

### **1.1 Research Focus, Significance and Benefit**

Bearing in mind the aforementioned discussion, this research focuses on two things: to find out why fresh graduates lack interest in becoming a public accountant, and why staff turnover in public accounting firms are high. Both are done by evaluating a public accounting firm's management, gathering perspectives from former public accountants who have switched their careers to a different industry, and the perspectives of fresh graduates.

Different from the work of Jackling and Calero (2006) and Sugahara, Hiramatsu, and Bolland (2007), the research finds the basic causes reluctant are poor information and negative perceptions on public accounting firms. Furthermore, the research also finds that even the basic causes of the high auditor staff turn over are similar to that of Chatzoglou et al. (2011), Spector (1997), Spathis (1999), Dole and Shroeder (2001), and Lander, Reinstein, and Henson (1993), however there are particular influential factors in Indonesia's case: prestige, discipline, and positive work ethos. Finally, the research displays the reason to become a public accountant requires a certain calling. Is the results achieved in this research offers a different contribution to literatures compared to other/similar studies.

By knowing what factors discourage people to become a public accountant, this research will be able to come up with solutions and strategies to encourage the younger generation to become public accountants. The author would also like to contribute by suggesting managerial approaches for Indonesian Institute of Certified public accountants to help reduce staff turnover. By doing so, it is hoped that Indonesia will be able to devoid herself from the rarity of local public accountants, and reduce the number of foreign accounting firms.

To follow these arguments, the rest of the paper will be organised as follows. First of all, the paper will discuss the theoretical background regarding the current findings on the reluctantcy to be a PA and high staff turnover rate problems. Secondly, it will discuss the particular research methodology, hence a grounded theory, that will enable to uncover actual condition of public accounting firms. Thirdly, it provides the discussion regarding the arguments of not to be a PA, the high rate of the staff turnover, and those who become a PA. Finaly this research conveys argument to hold the conclusion and its limitations.

## 2. Literature Review

Considering the role and importance public accounting firms have: supporting stock market development, upholding GCG principles, openness, and serving the public trust, it is sad to know that such firms have very low regeneration rates.

Some research have been conducted, among others Jackling and Calero (2006), Chatzoglou et al. (2011), Spathis (1999), and Dole and Shroeder (2001). They found typical causes that make graduate accountants' reluctant to become a professional accountant. However, these studies were conducted on positivism view, therefore the results show only the surface and the general problems.

For example, Fresh graduates from the department of accounting are reluctant to become public accountants as they have limited knowledge on what a public accountant really is. This perspective is supported by empirical results that state the following: a student's perception towards an accountant's scope of work, relevant professional knowledge, intrinsic interest towards the discipline, and job satisfaction of their studies, are primary factors that influence their interest (Jackling and Calero 2006). Extensive measures must be taken to encourage students to work in a field relevant to their academic discipline. Perspectives also need to be straightened, and awareness needs to be raised so that graduates do not have the wrong perception towards the world of public accounting. Doing so may secure the regeneration rates of public accounting firms.

Lander, Reinstein and Henson (1993) mention that public accounting firms have a retention rate of only 85%. Staff turnover is still very high. The cause of this varies: from low job satisfaction, work load and compensation, work stress, unfulfilled expectations, and pressures from high professional demands.

A number of research, Chatzoglou et al. (2011), Spector (1997), Spathis (1999), and Dole and Shroeder (2001), indicate staff turnover is caused by low job satisfaction. Chatzoglou et al. (2011) also added that if job satisfaction is met, public accounting firm commitment and sustainability will certainly improve. On the contrary, unmet job satisfaction will result in turnovers and absenteeism.

Lander, Reinstein and Henson (1993) added two factors that cause unmet job satisfaction: low compensation rates (Gullapalli 2005) and unmet expectations (Sutton and Griffin 2004). This condition is caused by the disparity between individual expectations and the reality of things (Cluskey Jr. and Vaux 1997). Adriyanto (2009) mentions that professional mismatches often occur in public accounting firms, particularly for auditors working on taxation.

Similarly, Collins and Killough (1989) saw work stress as the main drive of staff turnover. Work stress in public accounting firms can be caused by extended work hours and tight deadlines ( Merx 2004), or conflicts between work and family.

The afore mentioned factors are considered to be the main influencing factors that contribute to the reluctance of accounting graduates to become public accountants, and the staff turnover rates in public accounting firms.

## Sawarjuwono

Accordingly, this study is intended to uncover the underlying reasons beyond those similar factors by going deeper into the roots of the argument in Indonesia's case. A certain research methodology, hence a grounded research, is required to dig into the phenomenon and uncover the truth.

### 3. Methodology

This research employs a Grounded Theory approach as did by Wasserman, Clair, and Wilson (2009). Grounded theory research does not place emphasis on specific technical aspects, rather it moves towards an epistemic frame of mind. During the research process, which has done in 2011, the researcher will follow the natural process their sources have been through. The result from this process will be an understanding of a situation from the informants' point of view. Following such logic, the theoretical background will be used to comprehend real-world situation. The final result is a synthesis of the experiences and comprehension of the data sources.

This research begins by tracing back and collecting experiences and ideas from decision makers, in this case The Accountant and Appraiser Supervisory Center. This institution is considered to be the one that understands the development of public accountants and their firms in Indonesia. Any decisions made by the institution will be crucial to the focus of this research.

Afterwards, this study will look into some public accounting firm managers, their partners, hence 4 people, over than 15 former auditors, and over than 50 accounting graduates. To do so, in-depth interviews was employed (Spradley 1979 pp 78-131; Berg 2004, pp. 78-80) in combination with long-distance interviews through social media and other telecommunication means. The interviews were carried out on office management and former employees. Social media interview was focused on students and fresh graduates.

Accounting firms' management were interviewed focus on decisions made during their career, management obsession, compensation, work load distribution, issues that may cause occupational stress, colleague-auditor relationship, and other possible factors that may encourage staff to leave the office.

Informants were middle-class and national-class public accounting firms. They were considered as places where employees had equal opportunity to become a partner. Firms that faced situations discussed as one of the research focuses were also approached. Focused-Group Discussions (FGDs) (Krueger 1988, pp. 49-122; Puchta and Potter 2004) were arranged whenever the firms had multiple partners, and/or auditors. Former auditors were tracked down using snowball sampling (Petersen and Valdez 2005), tracing their whereabouts from former workmates and acquaintance.

Fresh graduates come from state and private universities all over Indonesia. The questions forwarded to them were: whether they were willing to become a public accountant, their current views on the profession, the prospects of becoming a public accountant, etc.

## Sawarjuwono

Information gathered will be grouped into two categories: factors that affect the population's decision to become a public accountant, and responses in relation to the level of staff turnover in public accounting firms. The information were then evaluated using theoretical framework established from the literary research. Conclusions were drawn following the grounded theory pattern (Wasserman, Clair and Wilson 2009).

Employing grounded theory approach, this research has uncovered an underrepresented aspect: why fresh graduates and accountants are reluctant to become professional public accountants. Furthermore, these results display typical Indonesian characteristics in the public accounting phenomenon. Therefore, this research is of significant contribution to literatures.

### 4. Results of the Study

Analysis has uncovered issues related to the reluctance to becoming a public accountant and the level of staff turnover in public accounting firms. Part A will discuss why graduates are reluctant in becoming public accountants, while part B will discuss the cause of high staff turnover rates.

#### 4.1 Becoming a Public Accountant

There are a few considerations in becoming a public accountant; how much is known about public accountants, the general perception on a public accountant's scope of work, and some, generally negative assumptions: public accountants require high professional and personal standards; public accountants experience high work stress due to tight deadlines; working long hours; unsatisfactory remuneration and compensation levels; facing an uncertain future.

Firstly, limited knowledge and perception towards a public accountant's scope of work caused fresh graduates to underestimate the line of work. Other than "the big four" public accounting firms, informants tend to judge the firm's office space and the number of employees. The office spaces were far from glamorous, thus creating a negative image: an unpleasant work atmosphere and uncertainty, thus causing pessimism among the informants. Sekarini, an informant mentions:

*"...most of their offices are located in shop-houses or in distant residential establishments...they don't have too many employees...and they're surrounded by piles of documents..."*

This sort of opinion reflects a shallow understanding of a public accountant, and creates a negative mental image. Sugahara, Hiramatsu and Bolland (2007) state that students do not choose to become public accountants due to this negative perception. In a student's mind, a public accountant's work is structured, repetitive, according to standard operating procedures (SOP), demanding high precision, therefore rigid, monotonic, boring, and introverse.

The outcome of an FGD with alumnae from the department of accounting in Jakarta indicated that students are not interested in becoming a public accountant. One of the causes is the lack of insight and understanding of the world of the public

## Sawarjuwono

accountant. During their studies, they rarely see their professors practicing as public accountants. Some lecturers deliver class material on public accounting works, but they rarely explain or deliver examples of real public accounting works. This may be caused by the fact that most of the professors and lecturers do not have public accounting backgrounds; they cannot explain how working as a public accountant is. Another informant, Putra, mentioned:

*“...all I know is, accountants are close to accounting and auditing. The professors say so...they rarely talk about work...let alone what we might become (after we graduate)...”*

It is clear from the statements above that informants are poorly informed about public accountants. Some consider that being a public accountant means working with documents, unaware of the complexity and challenges of being a real public accountant. The lack of information can be blamed for causing their reluctance.

There is also an assumption that being a public accountant requires higher academic and personal standards compared to other lines of work. This causes graduates who consider themselves average students, to feel under-qualified to become a public accountant. GPA also affects a student's preference in deciding what they want to do after graduating; the higher the GPA, the higher their preference to become a public accountant (Blank, Siegel and Rigsby 1991; see also: Diadone 1991). Informants are aware that some CPAs require candidates to pass through a series of tests and interviews, and then undergo a probation period. The ability to pass all of those steps describe the qualities one must assume to become a certified public accountant. Hizkia expresses her understanding as follows:

*“we are required to have a specific set of skills and a certain competency; auditing skills, tax;...language and communication skills...be able to handle clients...have high work ethos, and be able to work in a team,...and then comes the probation period...evaluation...if we don't fit the bill, then we won't become full-time employees”*

Some CPAs do have high requirements (Arlinghouse 2007; Allen and Woodland 2010). A public accountant requires a complex set of skills (accounting, auditing, and sometimes require a knowledge of taxation systems), thus requiring a certain level of standards (James and Hill 2009). Such prerequisites cause fresh graduates to think twice before becoming a public accountant.

Another assumption is that a public accountant carries a heavy workload. Informants realize that such workload only appears during certain periods of the year: from November to March. However, the tight deadlines force staff to work overtime. Danziger and Eden (2006) also made similar discoveries. They discovered that a reality shock existed. Accounting graduates lose their interest after having discovered that being a public accountant is very hard work. Graduates who work in small public accounting firms consider their work to be too light, thus shifting their interest to other industries.

## Sawarjuwono

*“According to my friends, it is a very demanding job. Often coming home late in the evening, especially during peak season...since I’m a female, that is something I must consider seriously...”*

Another informant, Asa, mentions:

*“...other than tiring? Well, all jobs are tiring...but a public accountant seems to demand extra effort...I’m a woman...I will consider other things...”*

When it comes to choosing what they want to do, female informants tend to put “public accountant” last on their list of things they want to do. Some informants chose to become public accountants to gather work experience before moving on to other things.

Remuneration and compensation are other things that affect informants’ decisions. It is common that people consider both materialistic and non-materialistic compensation when choosing between jobs. Informants consider that middle-sized or small-sized firms cannot offer them much compensation. As a matter of fact, there are smaller to middle-sized firms compared to large ones (Blokdiik et al. 2006; Neufell 2007).

The final consideration is how prospective are public accountants in the future? Those who feel that becoming a public accountant can provide a secure, and prospective future will consider becoming a public accountant. Especially if they get a chance to work for one of the big four companies. A small group of informants consider their future career as the firms continuity. Forexample, Sekarini expresses as follows:

*“...public accountants have a bright future, since auditor demands will rise along with the development of businesses. Business in all sectors is good these days, not only in developed countries, but also developing countries such as Indonesia. This is an opportunity for accounting graduates to compete to become a reliable auditor.”*

Whilst Wuri, another informant who is currently staff at a public accounting firm mentions:

*“...it’s not a monotonic job. I’d hate to do something that is repetitive. (being a public accountant) gives me the opportunity to develop myself.”*

*“...further my studies, remain a consultant. I will remain in this big four public accounting firm until I receive a scholarship to study abroad or until I’m accepted to work in an accounting firm abroad.”*

Another informant, Rizky, who is also working in a big four company said:

*“There is an annual performance test to determine our promotion...other than that, of course we need endorsement from our superiors to get promoted.”*

## Sawarjuwono

Working facilities also play a role in determining whether people want to become, or to stay as public accountants. Amenities such as a clear career ladder and performance evaluation, remuneration and compensation (insurance, access to learning and self-development, fitness center facilities) that meet employee satisfaction, a relaxed work atmosphere, flexible work hours, and routine group outings. For these, Wuri explains:

*“What I receive as compensation is in proportion to the amount of time and effort I put into my work. Overtime compensation is also good, and I get a chance to learn new things.”*

In contrary, a group of informants who consider being a public accountant as a dead-end-job, especially those who relate the future prospects of a public accountant to their self-development, have different opinions compared to the aforementioned group:

*“I’ve been working for six years, and...well...I guess it is difficult to become a partner in this company. The thought of discussing it never even crossed their minds...”*

Whilst another informant, Ardianto, who has experienced working at small size accounting firm, mentions:

*“The career ladder in smaller public accounting firms is unclear.”*

Therefore, the results of this research discover that there is not much difference to other countries. James and Hill (2009) found that the lack of interest in becoming a public accountant is related to their career orientation. Being a public accountant cannot fulfill their anticipated outcomes. It is even clearer when climbing the career ladder meant becoming a partner at the firm. The chances of becoming a partner is indeed wide open, but not all staff will be able to achieve such a target. Special prerequisites are sought: interpersonal skills, social networking, and creativity (Law 2009) Those who do not possess such skills will consider working in public accounting firms as dead-end jobs.

### 4.2 Auditing Staff Turnover

Analysis show that turnover is caused by five reasons: i) seeking prestigious work experience; ii) seeking more suitable job description and position; iii) seeking better salary; iv) workload; and v) long work hours. These causes are identical to the works of Lander, Reinstein and Henson (1993). In other countries, those five causes are known simply as unmet job satisfaction (Chatzoglou et al. 2011; Spector 1997; Spathis 1999; Dole and Shroeder 2001; Sutton and Griffin 2004; and Cluskey Jr. and Vaux 1997).

Such opinion differs slightly from Rhode, Sorensen and Lawler III (1977). They saw that communication between staff was the cause. They also added that an auditor’s unsatisfactory job performance will result in employment termination. The following passages will discuss auditor staff turnover causes from the partners’ and former staff perspectives.

## Sawarjuwono

The first cause of turnover is the assumption that public accounting firms are places to look for work experience. Such a reason is a typical characteristic to Indonesia. Thus requires comprehensive understanding. Working in a public accounting firm has a degree of prestige as it offers a comprehensive, and extensive experience into the real world of accounting. Former public accounting staffs are identified as people with very high competence. They have great bargaining power when they decide to shift to another workplace. On the one hand, the former staff will be able to achieve better work position and salary. On the other hand, such behavior contributes to staff turnover rate.

Another positive aspect to this behavior is the assumption that auditors who used to work in a public accounting firm are highly disciplined and possess positive work ethos. Working in a public accounting firm means they are used to working hard, and follow SOPs.

Riska, an informant, who is also a junior auditor at a big four company testifies:

*“...my working environment requires me to maintain a high level of discipline and hard work. It has a very positive effect on my personal character.”*

Related to that situation, in his study, Bruno (1995) stated: *“accountants are essential to every single business field in the country, from advertising to zinc mining; and successful accountants have tremendous opportunities in public accounting, in business and industry, and establishing their own business”*. Therefore, having a handful of work experience working in a public accounting firm is what a lot of accounting graduates dream of.

This turnover phenomenon does not seem to present a significant problem to public accounting firms, though, as they happen only to junior staffs, not to those who are already at the top management level.

In this case, Arianto, one of the partner of a national size accounting firm mentions:

*“...at the lower levels, I don't really care if there's high turnover. We just let it slide.”*

Another partner from different accounting firm, Arsono, supports that statement:

*“Generally speaking, accountants who apply for a job at my company are those who are willing to learn and seek experience. Therefore one of the reasons they resign is that they feel they have acquired enough (skill and knowledge-usually after their second or third year working). However, such turnover only takes place on the junior level, not much going on the senior staffs...so, it's not a big problem, since we still have a large number of people who are interested in working for us...enough to replace those resigning.”*

Similar statement is also mentioned by another partner from different accounting firm, Wurangian:

## Sawarjuwono

*“There is nothing we can do to hold staff back (from resigning) because it is their right to expand and find better opportunities. Turnover is quite high at the junior level, but we don’t have a problem with it since there are still plenty of people who are interested in working for us especially after we took advantage of the internet for the recruitment process.”*

Therefore, staff turnover does not present a huge problem for public accounting firms, as long as it happens at the junior staff level only. To anticipate it, the management simply reduced the frequency of intensive training for junior auditors. The idea behind it is to reduce financial loss caused by resigning staff after they acquired new knowledge.

The second cause of staff turnover is to find a more suitable job and position. Not everybody matches the characteristics of a public accountant generally highly disciplined, creative under very strict SOPs, tight schedules, and always up-to-date with current business development. In this case, Arsono claims:

*“At the managerial level, resignation occurs due to job offers from other enterprises, promising better salary and lighter work hours. However, resignation at the managerial level is rare.”*

Efforts in finding a more suitable job is reflected upon someone’s will. Although accounting firm management never differentiated work according to gender, some staffs still consider this a major issue. This is also the reason some people shift from one workplace to another. Stollak, Vandenberg and Resch (2011) discovered that staff with families will always have more to consider.

Such situation can also be found in Indonesia. Those with families will always seek shorter work hours to compensation (Merx 2004). Again, Arsono declares as follows:

*“When accountants settle down and raise families, then the tendency to resign is strong, regardless male or females. The men usually resign due to their wives demanding shorter work hours, while the women resign due to their husbands demanding them to focus on taking care of the family.”*

Three other causes: heavy workload, working long hours, and remuneration and compensation are three most common excuses. Most, if not all public accounting firms experience these reasons. The first two reasons does not take place throughout the year, only during certain periods of time when companies must submit their annual financial audit reports.

Remuneration and compensation are usually the reason found in smaller accounting firms. The absence of health facilities is also something informants consider when shifting work places. Like stated by Ardianto:

*“Compensation should be adjusted to workload. In this case it’s salary, bonus, promotion, etc. The aim is to minimize resigning public accountants because of under-compensation, so that accounting firms do not have to look for new staff every year. This is important for firms outside the big four.”*

## Sawarjuwono

Another informant, Rizky, supports this statement:

*“High salary is a must considering the amount of time at work and occupational pressure.”*

Whilst Asari, a former staff of a smaller accounting firm states:

*“Salary is marginally low.”*

This situation goes both ways: high-income accounting firms will give remuneration according to the amount of money they make. Lower income accounting firms, therefore will give much less (Gullapalli 2005). As long as firms are not paying what their employees are expecting, turnover will remain.

### 4.3 Being a Public Accountant is a “Calling”

Earlier in the discussion, it has been established that only a select number of people will remain as public accountants. Any accounting graduate with experience working at an accounting firm will note: most have left the profession, only a few remained and climbed the career ladder. This goes to show that to make it in this profession, a graduate must possess exceptional qualities, and have an amount of intrinsic interest in professional discipline (Blank, Siegel and Rigsby 1991; Danziger and Eden 2006; Law 2009; and Velayutham and Rahman 2000)

That conclusion is relevant to what Arianto, the partner of national size accounting firm, stated:

*“It is natural selection; only people with quality, competence, and motivation can make it in accounting firms. So, if they only want to learn and gather experience, they will resign by themselves. On the operational level, junior auditors, there is a high turnover...and I don't care.”*

In a separate interview, the same informant said:

*“Becoming a public accountant requires entrepreneurship. Setting up a practice is not just setting up an office, but doing business...not everyone has this. Therefore not everyone can endure being a public accountant.”*

Therefore, regardless of staff turnover, it can be concluded that only certain graduates will possess the will and qualities to become a public accountant. Only those with the aforementioned criterion will be able to perform as public accountants, not just any graduate.

## 5. Conclusion

The above information needs to be understood comprehensively. Within the group of informants, graduates who have no intention of becoming a public accountant share the same opinion. However, they suggest different arguments. These arguments require deeper understanding.

## Sawarjuwono

Public accounting firms can be categorized into several classes; small, medium, and large. Each with different capacities. Informants who are reluctant in becoming a public accountant due to remuneration and compensation, generally speaks of the lower class firms.

Workload, is something that some people are reluctant to face, while others find it as a challenge. Some people work in accounting firms to gain work experience. These people will find workload as a burden. For those who are interested in becoming a public accountant will find workload as a driving factor.

The assumption that public accounting firms are places to garner work experience requires holistic understanding. Such assumption, which leads to staff turnover, can be of benefit to public accounting firms by gradually expanding their social network through their former staff members.

Staff turnover can be of positive or negative meaning. On the plus side, firms can expand their social network. When staff turnover begins to take a negative turn, public accountants and professional organizations must take firm action to uphold the profession.

The most interesting finding is that not everyone can be public accountants. Despite their competence and knowledge of accounting, being a public accountant requires specific qualities. To become a public accountant is a calling.

### 5.1 Loving the Profession

Socializing and raising professional awareness is very important. This is one aspect that most professional organizations and academic institutes generally overlook. A firm , and comprehensive understanding of the professional world will help expand the profession. Just as Blank, Siegel and Rigsby (1991) using grounded theory, this study concludes that a proper socialization will embed professional values into future accounting graduates; socializing the profession can affect future graduates' decision in choosing a profession.

Jeacle (2008) shares a similar perspective. She emphasized on the importance of professional socialization, a process that must be carried out by professional accountants and accounting associations. If this is done, then the profession of public accounting will be much more colorful, thus creating an impressive image for graduates and accounting students alike.

On job trainings are also important to create a better understanding of accounting practices. Through internships, future graduates may become more interested in becoming public accountants (Bruno 1995). Therefore, faculties and public accounting firms need to establish positive collaboration to create this opportunity.

Through the above mentioned process, we can create accounting graduates who truly find interest in the public accounting profession. Every stakeholder in this case, higher education institutions, vocational academies, professional organizations, and public accounting firms need to pay a certain degree of attention to this matter.

## 5.2 Research Limitations and Boundaries

Due to limited time and access, this research was limited only to middle-class and national-level public accounting firms. This research did not involve firms with international collaboration. Although this research has acquired a certain degree of understanding of the object of study, if the research incorporated a broader informant and had involved more accounting forms, with sufficient access and time, this research would have been able to forward a much more comprehensive and specific Indonesian characteristics.

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## Sawarjuwono

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