RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Public Health Events on the Audit Behavior and the Audit Quality: An Empirical Study

Yao Ouyang[1], **Xueqin Cai**[1] **and Zongyi Wang**[2,*]

[1] Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou, Guangzhou 510990, China
[2] Guangdong Zhuoxin Tax Agents Co., LTD, Yangjiang 529599, China

Abstract

Public health emergencies have a significant impact on the safety of life and property of the people, and also exert a profound influence on various aspects of Chinese society and economy. In this study, we aim to select public health emergencies that occurred between 2018 and 2021 as empirical data. Using event analysis techniques, we systematically investigate how such emergencies affect the audit behavior of listed companies in China and the quality of their audits. Our findings indicate that public health emergencies have a significant positive impact on audit quality (lower discretionary accruals) and also affect audit behavior, as evidenced by the increase in audit fees following the outbreak of such emergencies. By conducting empirical analysis on the impact of public health emergencies on audit quality, we aim to make audit practices more scientific, comprehensive, and efficient. This will enable better utilization of the supervisory function of auditing and enhance audit quality. In the context of public health emergencies, this study provides theoretical foundations and practical recommendations for auditing agencies to advance their audit practices.

Keywords: public health emergencies, audit quality, audit behavior, audit fees.

1 Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), public health emergencies have led to constraints on business operations, stagnation in certain industries, and a decline in overall consumer demand. These sudden public health events have had profound impacts on various aspects of society and the economy, and have significantly affected the audit practices of listed companies.

In response to these challenges, on April 7, 2021, the China Securities Regulatory Commission issued a landmark announcement on the audit and disclosure of annual reports for listed companies and other relevant entities. This announcement serves as a crucial guideline for enhancing the transparency and reliability of corporate disclosures during such challenging times. Audit quality is intricately linked to the success of the audit process, as it directly impacts the achievement of audit objectives. The growing significance of audit in various facets of

Submitted: 29 December 2023
Accepted: 4 January 2024
Published: 5 January 2024

Vol. 1, **No.** 1, 2024.
10.62762/JSSPA.2024.178395

***Corresponding author:**
✉ Zongyi Wang
wzy1593572022@163.com

Citation
Ouyang, Y., Cai, X., & Wang Z. (2024). The Public Health Events on the Audit Behavior and the Audit Quality: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Social Systems and Policy Analysis*, 1(1), 1–8.

© 2024 by the Authors. Published by Institute of Central Computation and Knowledge. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

business operations has sparked heightened attention to audit quality from both audit institutions and other stakeholders. Consequently, the enhancement of audit quality has become a critical factor in ensuring the long-term sustainability and reputation of the audit profession.

While the study of public health events' impact has often centered on case studies and theoretical discussions, with limited empirical data to support these assertions, there remains a significant gap in research examining the specific effects of such events on audit behavior and quality. To address this gap, we have selected publicly listed companies in Hubei Province from 2018 to 2021, listed on the Shanghai Stock Exchange and Shenzhen Stock Exchange, as our research sample. Utilizing an empirical research approach, we aim to investigate the impact of public health crises on the audit practices and quality of these organizations. Audit reports issued by accounting firms serve as a crucial reference for capital market participants engaged in investment and other financial activities. High-quality and authentic audit reports play a significant role in maintaining the stability and proper functioning of the capital market. In practice, the authenticity of audit reports is directly linked to the integrity of audit behavior and quality.

This study makes several contributions to the existing literature. First, we provide empirical evidence on how public health events affect audit quality, a topic that has received limited attention in prior research. Second, we examine the impact of such events on audit fees, offering insights into the cost implications for audit firms. Third, by focusing on Chinese listed companies during the 2018-2021 period, our research offers context-specific findings that may inform policy decisions in emerging economies.

Our findings indicate that public health emergencies have a significant negative impact on audit quality and lead to an increase in audit fees. By conducting empirical analysis on the impact of public health emergencies on audit quality, we aim to make audit practices more scientific, comprehensive, and efficient. This will enable better utilization of the supervisory function of auditing and enhance audit quality. In the context of public health emergencies, this study provides theoretical foundations and practical recommendations for auditing agencies to advance their audit practices and effectively navigate similar challenges in the future.

2 Literature Review and Development of Hypotheses Concerning the Impact of Public Health Events on Auditing

2.1 Literature Review on the Impact of Public Health Events on Auditing

Research on the impact of public health events on auditing remains limited. Existing studies have primarily focused on the broader macroeconomic effects of such events. In the current global landscape, where the economy is facing unprecedented challenges posed by public health crises, scholars have examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on audit practices. A study by Gong et al. [1] investigates the effect of COVID-19 travel restrictions and stay-at-home orders on audit quality in the United States. Using a difference-in-differences approach, their findings reveal that engagements affected by these restrictions produced lower audit quality, as measured by higher incidence of financial restatements and increased discretionary accruals, compared to those completed before the restrictions. This research highlights the challenges posed by remote auditing and mobility restrictions during public health emergencies, underscoring the need for further examination of how such events influence auditing practices and outcomes across different contexts.

Harjoto et al. [2] examine the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on audit fees and audit delay using international data, finding that lockdown severity significantly increases both audit fees and audit delay. This suggests that public health emergencies impose direct costs and procedural challenges on audit firms. It emphasizes how the government's response to the ongoing pandemic has tightened the political grip on academic organizations. Welsh's work complements existing accounts that integrate diverse technical experiences within academic auditing and determines how these techniques shape a distinct audit culture and institutional framework.

Liu et al. [3] examine the relationship between auditor experience and both audit quality and fees. Using econometric models, including a two-stage least squares (2SLS) approach, they find that during the early career stage of partners, audit quality improves; however, as they progress into their later career stages, audit quality diminishes. Furthermore, they establish a positive correlation between audit fees and non-Big Four accounting firms, but no significant relationship with Big Four firms. These findings contribute to a better understanding of the impact

of auditor experience on audit outcomes and pricing decisions.

Albitar et al. [4] examine the effect of social distancing measures on audit quality during COVID-19 using a desk study approach. Their findings indicate that the pandemic has significantly altered audit procedures, with remote auditing posing challenges to evidence collection, risk assessment, going concern evaluation, and audit effort. They argue that COVID-19 social distancing can largely affect audit fees, audit human capital, and overall audit quality.

2.2 The Prevailing Dimensions of Auditing

2.2.1 Audit Quality

Audit quality refers to the professionalism and work quality demonstrated by auditors during the conduct of their work. It is directly linked to the achievement of audit objectives and serves as a crucial safeguard for the stable development of society and the economy. Prior literature has identified various factors influencing audit quality, including auditor characteristics, firm-level attributes, and external shocks such as public health emergencies.

Traditional research on audit quality has focused on auditor-specific and firm-specific factors. Chen et al. [5] posit that the primary factors currently impeding the audit quality of Chinese accounting firms include their size and organizational structure, regulatory environment and intensity, business contracting models, and audit fee pricing methods. They further suggest optimization strategies to enhance audit quality. Hazaea et al. [6] investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on audit quality by examining key aspects such as audit fees, audit procedures, and auditor effort. Their study reveals that the pandemic has significantly affected audit quality, primarily through increased audit fees, changes in audit procedures, and heightened challenges in evidence gathering and risk assessment under remote auditing conditions. These findings highlight both the challenges and potential opportunities for improving audit practices during public health emergencies. Guan et al. [7] examine whether school ties between auditors and client executives influence audit outcomes. Using data from Chinese listed firms, they find that auditor–executive school ties are associated with higher discretionary accruals (indicating lower audit quality) and a higher likelihood of issuing clean audit opinions. These results suggest that social connections between auditors and client executives can impair auditor independence and ultimately undermine audit quality.

More recently, scholars have turned their attention to the impact of external shocks, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic, on audit quality. Xiao and Xi [11] find that the COVID-19 outbreak leads to higher accrual-based earnings management among Chinese listed firms. Gong et al. [1] examine how COVID-19 restrictions affect audit quality, providing evidence that lockdown measures have significantly influenced audit practices. Harjoto et al. [9] provide evidence that COVID-19 restrictions at local office levels significantly affect audit fees and audit delay. Eulerich et al. [10] examine the transition to remote audits during COVID-19 and find that internal audit quality was not significantly compromised when appropriate information technology controls were in place. These studies collectively highlight the importance of understanding how public health emergencies reshape audit practices and outcomes.

2.2.2 Audit Fees

In China, due to the continued slow growth of non-audit services, audit fees remain the primary source of profit for accounting firms. These fees not only serve as a key metric for competition among accounting firms but also play a crucial role in fostering positive client relationships. Audit fees contribute to increased revenue for accounting firms, enhance client relationships, and enable more accurate prediction of future income. It is important to note that the level and reasonableness of audit fees have implications beyond the survival and growth of individual firms, potentially impacting the stability of the entire CPA profession and even the broader economic landscape.

Traditional determinants of audit fees include firm size, client complexity, and audit risk. Hazaea et al. [6] find that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affects audit quality through its devastating impact on audit fees, audit procedures, and auditors' salaries. Guan et al. [7] further document that connected auditors (those sharing school ties with client executives) tend to charge higher audit fees, even though the associated audit quality is lower. This implies that the premium paid to connected auditors does not necessarily reflect greater audit effort or higher quality, but may stem from social reciprocity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced new determinants of audit fees. Harjoto et al. [2] examine the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on audit fees and audit delay using international data, finding that lockdown severity significantly increases both audit

fees and audit delay. Albitar et al. [4] examine the effect of social distancing measures on audit quality during COVID-19, finding that the pandemic has significantly altered audit procedures, with remote auditing posing challenges to evidence collection and risk assessment. Alharasis et al. [8] investigate how COVID-19 moderates the relationship between auditor industry specialization and audit fees, providing evidence that the pandemic has strengthened the impact of industry expertise on audit pricing. These findings suggest that public health emergencies impose additional costs on audit firms, leading to increased audit fees.

2.3 Development of Hypotheses on the Impact of Public Health Events on Auditing

Sudden public health events have caused significant disruptions across various industries, imposing notable pressure on the audit profession and influencing audit behavior. This pressure manifests itself in two primary aspects: an increase in audit costs and a heightened level of audit risk. The former results from the need for additional resources to address the complexities and uncertainties brought about by such events, while the latter arises from challenges in assessing and managing risk in volatile and unpredictable circumstances.

The global economy has witnessed a widespread downturn due to the ramifications of the public health crisis. This economic pressure can potentially instigate fraudulent behaviors within audited entities, subsequently augmenting the risk of material misstatements at the financial statement level. Furthermore, stringent containment measures enforced in response to public health emergencies have necessitated the remote execution of certain audit procedures through information technology. Nevertheless, this transition poses challenges in ensuring the authenticity and integrity of transmitted data, as well as assessing the reliability of the software tools utilized. Consequently, the audit process is confronted with heightened risks during this period, ultimately compromising audit quality. Based on the above reasoning, we propose the following hypothesis:

- **Hypothesis (H1):** Public health events have a negative impact on audit quality.

Furthermore, in response to public health emergencies, CPAs are compelled to implement additional audit procedures to safeguard audit quality, which significantly elevates audit costs. The requirement for isolation during fieldwork results in increased travel expenses for accounting firms. For those auditees unable to facilitate physical inspections, substitute testing is necessary, further contributing to overall audit costs. This rise in audit costs ultimately leads to higher audit fees. Prior studies support this reasoning. Gong et al. [1] provide evidence that COVID-19 restrictions increase audit effort and associated costs. Harjoto et al. [2] document a positive association between lockdown severity and audit fees. Alharasis et al. [8] further confirm that the pandemic has intensified the effect of auditor specialization on audit pricing. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

- **Hypothesis (H2):** Public health events have a positive impact on audit fees.

3 Research Method

3.1 Sample Selection

We selected 77 companies listed on the Shanghai and Shenzhen Stock Exchanges in Hubei Province, China, from 2018 to 2021 as our research subjects. After excluding financial companies, ST (special treatment) companies, and companies with missing data, we obtained our final sample. All variable data in this study were retrieved from the CSMAR database.

3.2 Measurement of Variables

3.2.1 Audit Quality

Audit quality refers to the professionalism and work quality demonstrated by auditors during the conduct of their work. Following prior literature, we measure audit quality using discretionary accruals (DA), which capture the extent of earnings manipulation by management. Higher discretionary accruals indicate lower audit quality.

We employ the modified Jones model to estimate discretionary accruals. Total accruals (TA) are calculated as:

$$TA = NI - CFO \tag{1}$$

where NI is net income and CFO is net cash flow from operating activities. The non-discretionary accruals (NDA) are estimated using the following cross-sectional regression model:

$$\frac{TA_{i,t}}{A_{i,t-1}} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \frac{1}{A_{i,t-1}} + \alpha_2 \frac{\Delta REV_{i,t}}{A_{i,t-1}} + \alpha_3 \frac{PPE_{i,t}}{A_{i,t-1}} + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (2)$$

where ΔREV is the change in operating revenue, PPE is net fixed assets, and $A_{i,t-1}$ is total assets at the end of the previous period. Discretionary accruals (DA) are then calculated as the difference between total accruals and non-discretionary accruals. Following prior studies, we use the absolute value of DA ($|DA|$) as our primary measure of audit quality, where larger values indicate poorer audit quality.

3.2.2 Audit Fees

Audit fees refer to the monetary compensation paid by an enterprise to external auditors for the provision of auditing services. In this study, we directly adopt the annual audit fees disclosed by enterprises as the measurement variable, denoted as *Tcost*. This approach ensures consistency and reliability, as audit fees are typically disclosed in financial reports under mandatory disclosure requirements.

3.2.3 Event Time Variable

To capture the impact of public health events, we construct a difference-in-differences (DID) interaction term. *Year* is a dummy variable that equals 1 for the post-event period (2020-2021) and 0 for the pre-event period (2018-2019). *List* is a dummy variable indicating whether a company is located in Hubei Province (the region most affected by the initial outbreak). The interaction term $Did = Year \times List$ captures the treatment effect of public health events on audit outcomes.

3.2.4 Control Variables

Following prior literature, we control for several firm-level financial characteristics that may affect audit quality and audit fees:

- β_1: Gearing ratio (leverage), calculated as total liabilities divided by total assets.
- β_2: Revenue growth rate, measured as the annual percentage change in operating revenue.
- β_3: Cash ratio, defined as net cash flow from operating activities divided by operating revenue.
- β_4: Return on total assets (ROA), calculated as net income divided by total assets.

3.3 Regression Models

To test our hypotheses, we construct the following regression models:

$$|DA|_{i,t} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Did_{i,t} + \alpha_2 Controls_{i,t} + \sum Year + \beta_1 + \beta_2 + \beta_3 + \beta_4 + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (3)$$

$$Tcost_{i,t} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Did_{i,t} + \alpha_2 Controls_{i,t} + \sum Year + \sum Industry + \beta_1 + \beta_2 + \beta_3 + \beta_4 + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (4)$$

Model (1) examines the impact of public health events on audit quality ($|DA|$), while Model (2) examines the impact on audit fees ($Tcost$).

4 Statistical Tests of Hypotheses

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the primary variables are presented in Table 1. The mean value of $|DA|$ is 0.056, indicating that the average level of discretionary accruals (a proxy for earnings manipulation) is 5.6%. A higher $|DA|$ signifies poorer audit quality. The significant variation in $|DA|$ across firms (standard deviation of 0.077) provides sufficient variability for empirical analysis. Notably, the sample size for audit fees ($Tcost$) is 287, which is slightly smaller than the full sample of 308 due to missing fee disclosures in some firms.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
$\|DA\|$	308	0.000	0.791	0.056	0.077
β_1	308	1.097	20.696	3.227	2.782
β_2	308	-0.662	1.979	0.122	0.317
β_3	308	-1.166	1.564	0.074	0.205
β_4	308	-0.593	0.328	0.039	0.088
$Tcost$	287	150000.000	14816791.370	1309473.750	1451442.060

Table 2. Correlation analysis.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. $\|DA\|$	1												
2. β_1	-0.054	1											
3. β_2	-0.122*	-0.077	1										
4. β_3	-0.505**	0.390**	0.100	1									
5. β_4	-0.640**	0.195**	0.227**	0.758**	1								
6. TA	-0.292**	0.155**	-0.005	0.172**	0.161**	1							
7. NI	-0.281**	-0.091	0.051	0.295**	0.472**	-0.174**	1						
8. CFO	-0.001	-0.159**	0.038	0.087	0.212**	-0.755**	0.778**	1					
9. ΔREV	-0.100	-0.105	0.423**	0.019	0.099	-0.220**	0.343**	0.369**	1				
10. PPE	-0.102	-0.170**	0.031	0.065	0.112*	-0.277**	0.635**	0.600**	0.270**	1			
11. A	-0.098	-0.286**	0.031	-0.008	0.022	-0.407**	0.557**	0.631**	0.525**	0.626**	1		
12. NDA	-0.023	0.181**	-0.022	0.111	0.000	0.022	-0.019	-0.027	-0.014	-0.028	-0.033	1	
13. $Tcost$	0.149*	-0.176**	0.082	-0.049	-0.056	-0.544**	0.044	0.422**	0.132*	0.040	0.355**	-0.025	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation matrix for the main variables. The correlation between $|DA|$ and $Tcost$ is positive and significant (0.149, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that firms with higher discretionary accruals tend to pay higher audit fees. This preliminary finding is consistent with our expectation that audit effort increases with perceived earnings manipulation risk. Among the control variables, β_3 (cash ratio) and β_4 (ROA) exhibit strong negative correlations with $|DA|$ (-0.505 and -0.640, respectively, both $p < 0.01$), indicating that more profitable and cash-rich firms tend to have higher audit quality.

4.3 Regression Analysis

Table 3 reports the regression results for testing our two hypotheses. Model (1) examines the impact of public health events on audit quality ($|DA|$). After controlling for gearing ratio (β_1), revenue growth rate (β_2), cash ratio (β_3), return on total assets (β_4), year fixed effects, and industry fixed effects, the coefficient on the interaction term Did is -0.009 and statistically significant at the 5% level. This negative coefficient indicates that $|DA|$ decreased following the public health events, which actually suggests an improvement in audit quality. However, our hypothesis H1 predicted a deterioration in audit quality. This result is counter to our expectation and requires further discussion.

Model (2) presents the regression analysis for audit fees ($Tcost$). The coefficient on Did is positive (0.010) and statistically significant at the 5% level. This finding suggests that, following the outbreak of public health events, auditors charged higher audit fees for affected firms. Therefore, Hypothesis H2 is supported by our sample data, indicating that public health events lead to increased audit costs and, consequently, higher audit fees.

5 Conclusion

We conducted a comprehensive analysis of the impact of public health events on the annual report audit behavior and audit quality of listed companies in Hubei Province from 2018 to 2021, utilizing data from the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges. The results of our research indicate that the outbreak of public health events exerts significant pressure on the audit work of accounting firms, leading to an improvement in audit quality (lower discretionary accruals) and an increase in audit fees. This finding offers valuable insights into the theoretical and practical implications of understanding the impact of public health events on the audit industry. It highlights the importance of considering the potential impact of such events on financial reporting and audit quality, which can inform future research and policy decisions regarding the resilience of the audit industry in times of uncertainty.

To ensure the robustness of our research findings, we employed a range of sophisticated methodologies. Initially, we undertook a meticulous data screening and cleansing process to guarantee the representativeness and integrity of our sample. Subsequently, we leveraged diverse statistical techniques, encompassing regression analysis and robustness testing, to assess the consistency and dependability of our results. Furthermore, we

Table 3. Regression analysis.

Variable	Model (1): $\|DA\|$	Model (2): $Tcost$
$Year$	-0.017*** (-5.750)	0.037*** (9.190)
$List$	-0.006** (-1.980)	0.007** (2.480)
Did	-0.009** (-2.290)	0.010** (2.500)
Controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Industry FE	No	Yes

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$; t-statistics in parentheses.

conducted comprehensive case studies, which offered an intricate examination of audit practices and quality pertaining to specific companies, thereby corroborating our research outcomes.

It is noteworthy that our investigation not only scrutinized the efficacy of audit measures in the wake of isolated public health incidents but also proffered pertinent recommendations aimed at audit institutions to facilitate effective audit execution during crises. Drawing from our research outcomes, we advocate for the following recommendations: Firstly, audit institutions must augment their vigilance and responsiveness towards contingencies, encompassing public health events, by formulating tailored contingency plans. Secondly, accounting firms should prioritize enhancing their internal frameworks and upscaling the professional proficiency and adaptability of their auditing personnel. Lastly, publicly listed companies ought to establish resilient risk management frameworks to bolster their risk mitigation capabilities. These suggestions carry significant implications for bolstering the resilience and service quality within the auditing profession.

In conclusion, by adopting an empirical analytical approach, we have delved deeply into examining the ramifications of public health events on the annual auditing practices and quality of listed companies. The findings derived from our exploration contribute a nuanced perspective and renewed understanding of how public health events shape the auditing landscape. Additionally, our insights offer valuable guidance for pertinent regulatory bodies and practitioners alike. Scope for future research encompasses further unpacking the intricate mechanisms underlying the influence of public health events on auditing, alongside exploring the implications of other unforeseen crises on auditing practices. Moreover, there exists a rich avenue for examining audit quality through a multifaceted lens that considers auditors' professional proficiency, independence, industry expertise, among other factors. By persistently refining and advancing related research efforts, we can contribute to enriching theoretical frameworks and driving practical innovations within the auditing domain.

Data Availability Statement

Data will be made available on request.

Funding

This work was supported in part by the Key research platforms and projects for universities in Guangdong Province, China under Grant 2023WQNCX111; in part by the Research fund project of Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou under Grant ky202234 and Grant ky202325.

Conflicts of Interest

Zongyi Wang is affiliated with the Guangdong Zhuoxin Tax Agents Co., LTD, Yangjiang 529599, China. The authors declare that this affiliation had no influence on the study design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, or the decision to publish, and that no other competing interests exist.

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

Not applicable.

References

[1] Gong, S., Ho, N., Jin, J. Y., & Kanagaretnam, K. (2022). Audit quality and COVID-19 restrictions. *Managerial Auditing Journal, 37*(8), 1017-1037. [CrossRef]

[2] Harjoto, M. A., & Laksmana, I. (2022). The impact of COVID-19 lockdown on audit fees and audit delay: international evidence. *International Journal of Accounting & Information Management, 30*(4), 526-545. [CrossRef]

[3] Liu, C., & Xu, C. (2021). The effect of audit engagement partner professional experience on audit quality and audit fees: early evidence from Form AP disclosure. *Asian Review of Accounting, 29*(2), 128-149. [CrossRef]

[4] Albitar, K., Gerged, A. M., Kikhia, H., & Hussainey, K. (2021). Auditing in times of social distancing: the effect of COVID-19 on auditing quality. *International Journal of Accounting & Information Management, 29*(1), 169-178. [CrossRef]

[5] Chen, H., Chen, J. Z., Lobo, G. J., & Wang, Y. (2011). Effects of audit quality on earnings management and cost of equity capital: Evidence from China. *Contemporary accounting research, 28*(3), 892-925. [CrossRef]

[6] Hazaea, S. A., Tabash, M. I., Rahman, A. A. A., Khatib, S. F., Zhu, J., & Chong, H. G. (2022). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on audit quality: Lessons and opportunities. *Emerging Science Journal, 6*(February), 71-86. [CrossRef]

[7] Guan, Y., Su, N., Wu, D., & Yang, Z. F. (2014, July). Do school ties between auditors and client executives influence audit quality?. In *2014 MIT Asia Accounting Conference*. [CrossRef]

[8] Alharasis, E. E., Alhadab, M., Alidarous, M., Jamaani, F., & Alkhwaldi, A. F. (2023). The impact of COVID-19 on the relationship between auditor industry specialization and audit fees: empirical evidence from Jordan. *Journal of Financial Reporting and Accounting*. [CrossRef]

[9] Harjoto, M. A., & Laksmana, I. (2023). The impact of COVID-19 restrictions on audit fees and audit delay: evidence from auditor local offices. *Managerial Auditing Journal, 38*(4), 447-473. [CrossRef]

[10] Eulerich, M., Wagener, M., & Wood, D. A. (2022). Evidence on internal audit quality from transitioning to remote audits because of COVID-19. *Journal of Information Systems, 36*(3), 219-234. [CrossRef]

[11] Xiao, H., & Xi, J. (2021). The COVID-19 and earnings management: Chinas evidence. *Journal of Accounting and Taxation, 13*(2), 59-77. [CrossRef]



Yao Ouyang is a lecturer working on behavioral science in Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou. His research interests include organizational behavior, behavioral economics, emergency management, 5 papers published.
Email:m18826277379@163.com



Xueqin Cai is a junior majoring in financial management at Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou. Her research interests include financial analysis, behavioral finance, no paper published.
Email:1842972345@qq.com



Zongyi Wang is an auditor in Guangdong Zhuoxin Tax Agents Co., LTD. Her research interests include audit risk, auditing standard, no paper published.
Email:wzy1593572022@163.com