

# Accounting Standards and Quality of Financial Statements: A Case Study of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo

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## ABSTRACT

This research examines the application of accounting standards and their impact on the quality of financial statements at Tirta Binangun Company, Kulon Progo. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through interviews and analyzed descriptively. The study focused on employees from the company's finance department as respondents. Financial statements represent the financial condition of a company over a specific period, providing insights into its performance through various reports such as balance sheets, income statements, cash flow statements, and statements of changes in equity. These reports serve as tools for communicating financial information to stakeholders. In Indonesia, Financial Accounting Standards (SAK) are developed by the Financial Accounting Standards Board under the Indonesian Accountants Association. These standards establish guidelines for preparing, recording, and presenting financial data to ensure uniformity and clarity for users. The findings of the study indicate that the implementation of accounting standards significantly influences the quality of the company's financial reports. This conclusion is supported by data obtained from interviews with respondents. Through adherence to SAK, Tirta Binangun Company ensures that its financial statements are comprehensible, consistent, and reliable, thereby meeting the needs of various stakeholders.

Keywords: Accounting Standards, Financial Statement Quality, PDAM Tirta Binangun Company

## INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and increasingly intense business competition, the quality of a company's financial statements has become critical for both external and internal stakeholders (Norkamsiah, 2016). Almumtahanah (2019) emphasizes that companies are obligated to manage their finances in accordance with prevailing regulations and standards. Financial management includes planning, budgeting, implementation, record-keeping, reporting, accountability, and auditing processes. High-quality financial statements provide relevant, accurate, and timely information, which in turn aids stakeholders in making informed decisions.

As economic entities, companies bear significant responsibility for managing their finances prudently and accountably. This responsibility is exemplified in the preparation of comprehensive and transparent financial statements. Companies are also obligated to ensure proper financial management and commitment in its execution. The preparation and presentation of financial statements aim to promote transparency and accountability in financial control. These statements must be prepared meticulously, clearly, and measurably. Financial statements are not merely administrative documents but serve as a manifestation of accountability for all organizational activities and the entrusted use of funds.

The effective application of corporate accounting standards leads to high-quality financial statements. Companies must maintain the accuracy and adherence of financial statements to accounting standards to ensure reliability and conformity. This is critical, as the information presented in financial statements forms the foundation for corporate decision-making (Maryanto, 2019).

Kusumawardani (2019) highlights that high-quality financial statements reflect a company's level of accountability and transparency. The consistent application of accounting standards aligned with generally accepted accounting principles is a vital factor influencing the quality of financial statements. Amri Nur F. (2023) adds that accounting standards provide clear guidelines on how financial information should be presented, including disclosures regarding assets, liabilities, equity, revenues, and expenses.

Despite the intention of accounting standards to enhance transparency and the quality of financial information, debates persist about the extent to which these standards actually impact the quality of corporate financial statements (Ananda Rusydi & Fadhli Muhammad, 2018). Some studies suggest that consistent implementation of accounting standards improves financial statement quality by providing more reliable, accurate, and relevant information (Suwardjono, 2017). However, factors such as subjective interpretation, the complexity of standards, and flexible accounting policy choices may negatively affect financial statement quality.

Research on the impact of accounting standard implementation on the quality of corporate financial statements is therefore essential. This study seeks to clarify the relationship between accounting standard application and financial statement quality, as well as to identify factors influencing this relationship. It focuses on analyzing the implementation of accounting standards and their effect on financial statement quality through a case study of Tirta Binangun Company in Kulon Progo.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

## Financial Accounting Standards for Non-Publicly Accountable Entities (SAK ETAP)

In 2009, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (DSAK) issued the Financial Accounting Standards for Non-Publicly Accountable Entities (SAK ETAP), which became effective on January 1, 2011 (IAI, 2018). This standard applies to entities without significant public accountability and those preparing general-purpose financial statements for external users (DSAK, 2024).

According to Amri Nur F. (2023), SAK ETAP supports small and medium enterprises by providing a framework for preparing appropriate financial reports without the complexities associated with IFRS-based standards. SAK ETAP is specifically designed for entities without significant public accountability. Similarly, Syaiful (2016) described SAK ETAP as a practical solution for non-publicly accountable entities to prepare financial statements for general purposes. Based on these perspectives, SAK ETAP can be concluded as a relevant and reliable standard for financial reporting in non-publicly accountable entities. It aims to simplify application while facilitating access to bank financing. SAK ETAP operates independently and does not adhere to the General Financial Accounting Standards (DSAK, 2024).

# **Characteristics of SAK ETAP**

The characteristics of the Financial Accounting Standards for Entities without Public Accountability (SAK ETAP) can be outlined as follows (Amri Nur F, 2023):

1. Entities without Public Accountability (Entitas Tanpa Akuntabilitas Publik) are entities that:

a) Do not have significant public accountability,

b) Prepare and provide financial statements for public use (general purpose financial statements) to external users.

- 2. Use IFRS guidelines for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).
- 3. SAK ETAP is simplified in several ways, including:
  - a) Fixed assets, intangible assets use acquisition cost.
  - b) Subsidiaries are not consolidated but treated as investments using the equity method.
  - c) Follows the current accounting regulations in use.
- 4. Qualitative characteristics of financial statement information:
  - a) Easy to understand.
  - b) Relevant.
  - c) Material.
  - d) Reliable.
  - e) Substance over form.
  - f) Prudence.
  - g) Complete.
  - h) Comparable.
  - i) Timely.
  - j) Balanced between cost and benefit.
- 5. SAK ETAP does not allow the classification of items in the balance sheet that do not meet the definition of assets or liabilities by disregarding whether these items are the result of applying the "matching concept."
- 6. Offsetting is not allowed between assets and liabilities, or between income and expenses, unless required or permitted by SAK ETAP.

## **Implementation of SAK ETAP in Financial Reporting**

Based on IAI (2018), the application of SAK ETAP in financial reporting can be described as follows (Okpa, 2022):

1. Fair Presentation.

Financial statements must fairly represent the financial position, performance, and cash flows of an entity. This requires truthful depiction of the effects of transactions, events, and conditions in alignment with the definitions and recognition criteria of assets, liabilities, income, and expenses. When specific provisions in SAK ETAP are insufficient for understanding the impacts of certain transactions or conditions, additional disclosures may be required.

- 2. Compliance with SAK ETAP. Entities applying SAK ETAP must provide a clear and complete statement of compliance within the Notes to Financial Statements (Catatan Atas Laporan Keuangan). Partial adherence to SAK ETAP does not qualify as compliance.
- 3. Reporting Frequency Entities must prepare comprehensive financial statements at least annually. If a reporting period is shorter or longer than 12 months, the entity must disclose:

- 1) The fact of the change.
- 2) The reasons for the extended or shortened reporting period.
- 3) The fact that it is not possible to fully compare the amounts in the income statement, statement of changes in equity, income statement and retained earnings, cash flow statement, and accompanying notes to the financial statements.
- 4. Consistent Presentation

Financial statements must be presented and classified consistently across periods, except in the following cases:

- 1) There is a significant change in the nature of the entity, or a change in presentation or regulations is implemented to achieve better presentation in accordance with the standards for selecting and applying accounting policies.
- 2) The ETAP Financial Accounting Standards require a change in agreement. If the rules in the financial statements are altered, the entity must reclassify the comparative amounts. The entity must disclose the following if comparative amounts are reclassified: a) The nature of the reclassification. b) The total amount reclassified for each group of items. c) The rationale for the reclassification.

If it is impractical to reclassify comparative amounts, the entity must disclose: a) The rationale for why total comparative reclassification could not be performed. b) The nature of adjustments made if the comparative amounts were reclassified.

5. Comparative Information

Comparative information must be presented for prior periods unless otherwise stated by SAK ETAP. Narrative and descriptive comparisons should also be included where relevant.

#### **Financial Statements**

Government Regulation No. 71 of 2010 defines financial statements as systematically prepared reports on the financial position and transactions of a reporting entity. These statements provide a depiction of the financial condition and capabilities of an entity, such as local governments, and serve as accountability reports to central government.

Financial statements also serve as critical documents containing financial information for both internal and external stakeholders. According to SAK No. 1 of 2015, "financial statements are structured presentations of an entity's financial performance and position" (Wadiyo, 2023).

#### **Relationship Between SAK ETAP Implementation and Financial Statement Quality**

The Financial Accounting Standards for Entities without Public Accountability (SAK ETAP) provide a framework for preparing and presenting financial statements tailored to the specific needs of entities without public accountability. These standards establish principles and guidelines that ensure financial reporting aligns with recognized practices, thus enhancing the credibility and usability of the information provided. Entities that effectively implement SAK ETAP are more likely to produce high-quality financial statements. These statements serve not only internal purposes, such as facilitating informed decision-making and efficient resource management, but also external functions, such as meeting regulatory requirements and fostering trust among stakeholders.

The implementation of SAK ETAP underscores a significant relationship with the quality of financial reporting for entities without public accountability. Proper adherence to these standards ensures that financial statements meet established benchmarks for accuracy, reliability, and transparency. Such attributes are essential for stakeholders who rely on this information to assess the entity's financial health and operational performance. Furthermore,

the guidelines within SAK ETAP promote consistency in financial reporting, which simplifies comparisons over time and enhances the overall clarity of the financial information presented.

By consistently applying SAK ETAP principles, entities demonstrate their commitment to accountability and integrity in financial management. This not only supports internal decision-making processes but also strengthens stakeholder confidence, as high-quality financial reports serve as a testament to the entity's dedication to maintaining transparency and adhering to recognized accounting practices. Ultimately, the proper implementation of SAK ETAP positions entities to achieve operational excellence while maintaining compliance with relevant standards, ensuring that their financial statements effectively serve both internal and external purposes.

## **Conceptual Framework**

Perumda Tirta Binangun, a non-publicly accountable entity (ETAP) operating in the water supply sector, is required to implement SAK ETAP as mandated by IAI in 2009. The application of SAK ETAP is expected to enhance the quality of Perumda Tirta Binangun's financial statements, ensuring that the information provided aligns with the qualitative characteristics of financial reporting.

## METHODOLOGY

This section details the type of research, timeline, location, subjects, objects, and instruments used. The research is a causal-comparative study aiming to identify cause-and-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables (Sugiyono, 2017). This study aims to obtain empirical evidence and measure the impact of accounting standards on the quality of financial statements.

## **Research Design**

The research employs a qualitative method. According to Sugiyono (2017), qualitative research is grounded in post-positivist philosophy, used to observe natural conditions, where the researcher acts as the key instrument. Data collection is conducted through triangulation (a combination of methods), data analysis is descriptive/qualitative, and the findings emphasize meaning over deduction.

## **Operational Definition**

Operational definitions specify the scope of the research objects to be studied, providing practical and concrete definitions for each variable under investigation.

## 1. Quality of Financial Statements.

The quality of financial statements refers to the degree to which the information presented accurately, reliably, relevantly, and comprehensively reflects the true financial condition of a company. This is assessed through interviews with the finance department of Tirta Binangun Company, focusing on indicators such as accuracy, relevance, reliability, comprehensiveness, and interpretability (Mary E. Barth, 2021).

## 2. Accounting Standards

Accounting standards are a set of rules and guidelines used by companies to prepare and present their financial statements. These standards encompass accounting principles, measurement procedures, and disclosure methods to ensure the accuracy, consistency, and comprehensibility of financial statements for stakeholders.

## **Population and Sample**

According to Sugiyono (2017), the population is a general area consisting of subjects or objects with specific qualities chosen for study to draw conclusions. The population in this research consists of employees in the finance department of Tirta Binangun Company, Kulon

Progo Regency. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, meaning the researcher defined specific criteria relevant to the study's objectives to address the research problem effectively.

## **Data Collection Techniques**

The research utilized unstructured interviews, a method characterized by open-ended questions and flexible data collection processes. This approach allows researchers to explore topics in depth without adhering to a strict format, focusing instead on essential issues as outlined by Sugiyono (2017). The primary data for this study were obtained directly from original sources, ensuring authenticity and relevance.

In research, data collection is a pivotal step, as the ultimate aim is to gather accurate and meaningful data. Without mastering appropriate data collection techniques, researchers may struggle to obtain reliable information that meets established standards. In this study, interviews served as the primary method of data collection. Interviews are interactions between two individuals, involving a structured exchange of information and ideas through questionand-answer sessions. This method helps build understanding and meaning on specific topics. Researchers often employ interviews during preliminary studies to uncover issues that require deeper exploration or to gain comprehensive insights from respondents. The success of this method relies on self-reported information or, at the very least, personal knowledge and beliefs of the participants.

The unstructured interview format adopted in this study is distinguished by its flexibility and lack of a rigid, detailed guide. Instead, the interview guide consists of general outlines that direct discussions toward key issues. This approach is particularly beneficial for preliminary investigations or when a deeper understanding of the research subject is required. By enabling free-flowing dialogue, unstructured interviews provide the opportunity to uncover nuanced perspectives and rich data that might not emerge in more structured formats.

#### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data collection was conducted through interviews, with the researcher analyzing the data independently. The unstructured interviews provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions, enabling the construction of meaningful insights.

The results of this study were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants in the form of direct observation. Once the data was collected, it was analyzed. The analysis focused on the financial department of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo. The informants in this study were employees from the financial department of the company, linked to several issues or problem identifications. A purposive sampling technique was employed. The interviews were conducted at the Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo office, located at Jl. Masjid Agung No.1, Area Sawah, Wates, Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta 55651.

This study used a qualitative approach to observe the natural condition of applying accounting standards to the quality of financial reports in Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo. The approach aimed to gain understanding and describe complex realities. Qualitative research is a procedure that produces descriptive data in written or spoken words, based on people or behaviors being observed.

The stages of analysis carried out by the researcher included creating an interview question draft, collecting data, and conducting the analysis independently. To evaluate the validity of the information provided by the research informants, the researcher followed these steps:

- 1. Preparing a draft of interview questions based on elements of credibility to be asked of the informants or respondents.
- 2. Validating the instrument with subject matter experts from the Indonesian Accounting Association and Accounting Faculty of Yogyakarta State University.

- 3. Conducting interviews with respondents, specifically Mrs. Sri Mulati, an employee in the financial department of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo.
- 4. Adding documentation as attachments during interviews with the informants.
- 5. Analyzing the results of the conducted interviews.

# **Research Instrument**

The research instrument is a tool used to assess observed natural and social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2017). This study employs interviews as the primary research tool. The indicators used include: Accuracy, Relevance, Reliability, Comprehensiveness, Understanding and interpretation.

The interview instrument must undergo validation. Validation of the interview instrument is conducted to evaluate the appropriateness of the research instrument in interviews. Instrument validation refers to the extent to which qualitative researchers are prepared to conduct research before entering the field. Validation of the researcher as an instrument includes assessing their understanding of qualitative research methods, mastery of knowledge in the field being studied, and readiness to engage with the research subject, both academically and logistically.

No.	Questions	Score	Category
1.	Does the transaction recording procedure at Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo ensure the accuracy of financial information?	4.5	Appropriate
2.	Do the financial statements of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo consistently provide relevant and useful information for internal and external decision-makers?	4	Appropriate
3.	Does Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo have a strong internal control procedure that has proven effective in validating the reliability of financial information?	4	Appropriate
4.	Do the financial statements of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo comprehensively cover all essential aspects of the company's financial position and operational results?	4	Appropriate
5.	Is the interpretation of financial information at Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo relevant and meaningful for the company's stakeholders?	5	Highly Appropriate
6.	In your opinion, as the person responsible for financial statements at Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo, have the financial statements met the SAK-ETAP accounting standards?	5	Highly Appropriate
7.	Are all components of the financial statements at Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo complete and in accordance with SAK-ETAP?	4,5	Appropriate
8.	Are all items in the balance sheet of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo presented in compliance with SAK-ETAP provisions?	4,5	Appropriate
9.	Are all items in the income statement of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo compliant with SAK-ETAP provisions?	4,5	Appropriate
10.	Are all items in the statement of changes in equity of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo compliant with SAK-ETAP provisions?	4,5	Appropriate
11.	Are all items in the cash flow statement of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo compliant with SAK-ETAP provisions?	4,5	Appropriate
12.	Are the notes to the financial statements of Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo in accordance with SAK-ETAP provisions?	4,5	Appropriate

 Table 1. Instrument Validation

The following are the assessment scores during the instrument validation process. Highly Appropriate (Score: 5), Appropriate (Score: 4), Neutral (Score: 3), Inappropriate (Score: 2), Highly Inappropriate (Score: 1). Based on the assessment by validators, it can be concluded that the proposed interview instrument is deemed suitable. This conclusion is supported by expert evaluations, which categorized the instrument as highly appropriate, appropriate, and neutral. No responses indicated that the interview instrument was unsuitable for use in the context of interviews at Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this research were derived from a combination of detailed interviews with respondents and direct observations. The study focused on the financial department of Tirta Binangun Company, employing a purposive sampling method to select respondents. Interviews were conducted at the company's headquarters, located at Jl. Masjid Agung No. 1, Wates, Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta 55651. By adopting a qualitative research approach, the study aimed to explore the natural implementation of accounting standards and their direct impact on the quality of financial reporting. The process involved structured steps, including the preparation of interview guidelines, data collection, and subsequent analysis conducted by the researcher.

The interview process was meticulously carried out at the Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo office on July 19, 2024, at 2:00 PM WIB. The primary focus was to assess the influence of accounting standards implementation on the company's financial reporting practices. Insights were gathered through direct communication with key personnel in the finance department. The respondent, Ms. Sri Mulati, Head of the Finance Department, provided valuable perspectives on the adherence to and implications of the accounting standards on the company's reporting framework.

## **Compliance with SAK ETAP**

The in-depth interview revealed that the company's financial statements strictly adhere to the SAK ETAP (Standar Akuntansi Keuangan untuk Entitas Tanpa Akuntabilitas Publik) guidelines. This compliance is substantiated by the company's consistent achievement of "Wajar Tanpa Pengecualian (WTP)" or unqualified audit opinions over successive years. The respondent emphasized the importance of maintaining this standard to ensure that financial statements provide relevant and reliable information to stakeholders.

"So yes, I assure you that our company's financial reports comply with SAK ETAP because our audit results consistently show unqualified opinions, ensuring the reports provide relevant information for our users."

## **Internal Control and Reliability**

The respondent highlighted that the company's internal control procedures play a pivotal role in validating the reliability of financial information. These procedures align with the SAK ETAP guidelines and are integrated into the company's Internal Control System (SPI). This comprehensive framework ensures that all aspects of the company's financial position and operational results are effectively address

"As I mentioned earlier, our control procedures follow SAK ETAP guidelines, as proven by favorable audit results and inclusion in the SPI system. Therefore, our financial reports comprehensively cover all aspects of financial position and operational results."

## **Completeness of Financial Statements**

Another significant finding from the interview was the completeness of the company's financial statements. The respondent demonstrated that the financial reports include all essential components mandated by SAK ETAP. These components include the balance sheet, income statement, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement, and notes to the

financial statements. The financial reports are systematically organized and meet the required standards.

"Our company's financial reports are complete and adhere to standards. As proof, you can see that they include the balance sheet, income statement, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement, and notes to the financial statements, all properly organized."

## **Evidence of Adherence**

To ensure the validity of the findings, the respondent provided copies of the financial statements to the researcher. This documentation served as tangible evidence that Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo's financial reporting practices are consistent with the SAK ETAP standards.

"Let me show you, our financial reports. I can also display our audit results to demonstrate that SAK ETAP is indeed implemented in our company reports."

The findings from the qualitative analysis indicate that the adoption of SAK ETAP has a profound and positive effect on the quality of the company's financial reports. By implementing these standards, the company has managed to improve the reliability, relevance, and completeness of its financial data. Reliability is evident through the production of accurate and unbiased information, while relevance ensures that the data provided is valuable for decision-making processes. Moreover, the completeness of financial reports offers a holistic view of the company's financial status, which is essential for stakeholders.

Compliance with SAK ETAP also delivers additional advantages, such as enhancing transparency and accountability in financial management. Transparency ensures that financial data is accessible and easy to comprehend by all relevant parties, whereas accountability reflects the company's commitment to responsibly managing its financial resources. These attributes bolster stakeholder trust, including that of investors, business partners, and regulatory bodies, in the organization.

This conclusion is reinforced by insights gathered during an in-depth interview with Ms. Sri Mulati, Head of the Finance Department at Tirta Binangun Kulon Progo. She highlighted that implementing SAK ETAP not only elevates the quality of financial reporting but also lays a solid groundwork for strategic decision-making. With more reliable and well-structured financial reports, the company can effectively plan and manage its operations. Additionally, adherence to SAK ETAP facilitates the fulfillment of regulatory requirements, thereby strengthening the company's reputation among stakeholders. These findings emphasize that adopting appropriate accounting standards not only enhances the quality of financial reporting but also supports the company's long-term sustainability and success.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study employed a qualitative research method, which proved effective in uncovering comprehensive insights into the application of accounting standards at Tirta Binangun Company, Kulon Progo. Through an in-depth interview with Ms. Sri Mulati, it was revealed that the adoption of SAK ETAPhas greatly enhanced the quality of the company's financial reporting. This adherence reflects the company's commitment to upholding high standards of financial management, underscoring its dedication to accountability and transparency in its operational practices. The findings of this research are strongly supported by the theoretical framework proposed by Almumtahanah (2019), which underscores the critical influence of SAK ETAP on the quality of financial statements. According to Almumtahanah, accounting standards serve as the backbone for structuring financial reports, ensuring their transparency and boosting overall credibility. In the specific context of this study, the implementation of SAK ETAP has been instrumental in improving the reliability and usability of the financial information produced by Tirta Binangun Company. By adhering to these standards, the company ensures that its financial statements are not only accurate and reliable but also relevant to the decision-making needs of various stakeholders.

The study further highlights a positive and significant relationship between the implementation of SAK ETAP and the overall quality of financial reports. This relationship demonstrates that adherence to established accounting standards fosters improved accuracy and consistency in financial reporting, which are crucial for informed decision-making. Additionally, the alignment with SAK ETAP helps the company meet regulatory requirements and strengthens its credibility in the eyes of stakeholders.

Moreover, these findings align with prior research conducted by Khasanah (2022), which similarly concluded that the implementation of SAK ETAP positively impacts the quality of financial statements. Khasanah's research emphasizes that adherence to these standards not only enhances technical precision but also builds stakeholder trust and facilitates compliance with regulatory frameworks. Collectively, the findings from this study and previous research underscore the transformative role of SAK ETAP in fostering transparency, accountability, and reliability in financial reporting, thereby strengthening organizational integrity and stakeholder confidence.

## Based on the above conclusions, the following suggestions are provided:

- 1. Future studies could benefit from utilizing more sophisticated research techniques, such as structural equation modeling (SEM) or panel data analysis, to provide deeper insights and more robust results.
- 2. It would be valuable for future research to consider additional factors that could impact the quality of financial statements, such as corporate governance practices, organizational culture, and macroeconomic variables like inflation rates.
- 3. Researchers could investigate the financial implications of adopting new accounting standards by comparing the costs of preparing financial statements before and after their implementation. This analysis would shed light on whether these new standards lead to an increase or decrease in the costs associated with financial statement preparation.

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