

Professional Accounting Skills Affecting Performance of Accountants in Small and Medium Enterprises

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ABSTRACT

Abstract—The purpose of this research was to study the accounting professional skills affecting efficiency performance of accountants in small and medium enterprises. The sample group consisted of 200 accountants in SMEs located in Bangkok and selected using purposive sampling method. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. The statistics used in the data analysis were frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, including inferential statistics consist of a t-Test, One-way ANOVA and Multiple regression. The results of the study found that the overall accounting professional skills of accountants in SMEs located in Bangkok were at the highest level as well as the overall efficiency performance of accountant in SMEs located in Bangkok was at a high level. In addition, differences in gender, age, and experience of accountants affected the efficiency performance of accountants differently. While differences in education level and average monthly income did not affect the performance of SMEs accountants in Bangkok differently. Moreover, the accounting professional skills that affected efficiency performance of accountants in SMEs were professional in skills, knowledge and ethics which professional skills had the greatest influence, followed by professional in knowledge and ethics with statistically significant level at .05.

Keywords— Performance, Professional accounting skills, Small and medium enterprises

INTRODUCTION

At present, business operations are changing rapidly in every situation. Economically, politically and socially, technological advances and environmental changes have made businesses more competitive. As a result, many organizations have adjusted their operating systems to be efficient. The reorganization included changes in the dwindling workforce of the organization as a result of the economic downturn. Accounting information presented to management must be accurate, reliable and can be used to make timely decisions. If the work of an accountant does not produce the efficiency and effectiveness that the organization wants, it can cause problems and cannot be adjusted in a timely manner. Accountants are therefore part of the organization that helps the management know the performance and financial status of the business to use financial information for planning, operations and budgeting in the future.

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) play an important role as to their contribution to the total productivity and job opportunities. However, most SMEs fail because of a lack of planning, lack of management skills and talent. Moreover, SMEs in the global value chain are more equal as they tend to bear the hardships of large corporations. Therefore, SMEs need More business support and advice due to both economic support and vulnerability to imperfections. Relying on external sources, SMEs are able to obtain the skills and knowledge they need from external service providers. Indeed, activities where SMEs lack internally required resources can be obtained from external service providers, such as knowledge, skills or expertise. and competence (Rodkam et al., 2022). In this context, the transformation of professional accountant services for small business clients is critical (The association of chartered certified accountants, 2013).

Accounting professional skills refer to competence in different categories. It is essential to the proper and effective implementation of professional knowledge, values, ethics and professional concepts including specific skills and interpersonal skills, various knowledge skills, and professional consideration skills. Skills for professional consideration include intellectual skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills, and skills in using information technology (Chatthai, 2020; Thiangtrakul, 2008). An accountant must have knowledge and competence in accounting, based on the level of ability to work and the level of competence to be useful which can be applied in every situation. In addition, the professional ethics of accounting is knowledge, competence and

standards of practice of accountants in confidentiality responsibility to shareholders, individual or juristic person and responsibility towards colleagues, as well as transparency, independence fairness and honesty. There is a positive relationship and impact on performance, quality, cost and time. By adhering to the principles of professionalism have the expertise to practice the profession with full attention and ensuring that professional performance is based on rules standards for work and related academics.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the skills of accounting professions that affect the performance of accountants in SMEs businesses in Bangkok. This is because an accountant's performance is very important to an organization due to accounting is a business's financial resource that shows its performance and financial position. It also helps business owners or executives to control, supervise, and make effective financial planning. The results of this research will be beneficial to the organization. This can be used to formulate strategies and develop tasks for accountants to work effectively to achieve organizational objectives. It can also be used to improve the efficiency of the accounting staff to be effective for the benefit of the organization in the development of professional knowledge, competence, expertise. and changing employees to be more efficient. The purpose of this research was to study differences in accountants' personal factors that affect differences in the performance of accountants and to study professional accounting skills that affect the efficiency of accountants of SMEs in Bangkok.

LITERATURE & THEORY

Accounting professional skills

An accountant is an accounting practitioner and must have knowledge of accounting based on his level of competence and degree of maximization. Therefore, an accountant must have a variety of abilities to extract results in all situations to be used as criteria for determining suitable candidates for a career as an accountant. Accountants must have four areas (Mohamed & Lashine, 2003; Tan & Laswad, 2018).

- Professional knowledge is the knowledge necessary to emphasize the awareness of the services and knowledge required in educational institutions. This is a preliminary preparation and readiness before an accountant career, including knowledge that helps professional accountants have knowledge, general knowledge of business and management, information technology knowledge and knowledge of accounting. This section of knowledge forms the basis of a direct relationship with the accounting profession.

- Professional skills are skills that accountants must possess to qualify as a professional accountant. Due to the increasing expectations of employers of accountants working for the benefit of the organization and society, professional skills are important. The practitioner should have the necessary skills and expertise, including reasoning and critical thinking skills to solve complex situations, interaction skills are able to work with others, and communication and mentoring skills.

- Professional values that a professional accountant must have the intention of performing duties with honesty, fairness, impartiality and independence in accordance with professional standards, ethics, social responsibility awareness of common interests and willing to continually learn.

- Professional ethics which accountants must follow on the basis to conduct for professional accountants. It consists of knowledge, competence, performance standards, confidentiality and responsibility to stakeholders and colleagues, including transparency, independence and honesty. which has a positive correlation with performance.

Efficiency performance

Peterson and Plowman (1989) outlined four elements of the effectiveness of accounting: 1) Workload means that the tasks assigned must meet the expectations of the agency. The amount of work performed is appropriate according to the plans and goals set by the company. There should be planning and time management to achieve the required amount of work. 2) Quality of work means that the producers and users will benefit and be satisfied. The results are accurate, standardized, complete, prompt and beneficial to the organization. 3) Time is the time required for the operation to be in the correct manner according to the principles that are suitable for the job. have developed various techniques to make work more convenient and faster; and 4) costs must be appropriate for the task and method of minimum investment and maximum profit.

METHODS

This research study was a quantitative study by collecting data from the questionnaire with purposive sampling. The researcher used the returned questionnaires to analyze and calculate the results by analyzing the data by statistical methods. The population used in this research was accountants of small and medium enterprises located in Bangkok which cannot determine the exact number of populations. The sample size of this research is 200 accountants in SMEs located in Bangkok.

The questionnaire details are divided into Part 1: General information of the respondents consisting of gender, age, education level, experience in working in accounting, and average monthly income. Part 2: Information about accounting professional skills consisted of questions related to 1) professional knowledge 2) professional skills 3) professional values 4) professional ethics. Part 3: Assessment form on efficiency performance of accountants in SMEs. The questionnaire is rating scale with a total of 9 questionnaires. The score criteria are: 5 = the most opinions, 4 = high opinion, 3 = moderate opinion, 2 = low opinion, 1 = least opinion. Statistics used in data analysis were descriptive statistics to describe the demographic characteristics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, as well as the inferential statistical analysis was used to test research hypotheses by using Pearson correlation coefficient analysis and Multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS

The results of the study found that most of respondents were female, aged 31-40 years, had a bachelor's degree, 10 - 15 years of working experience in accounting and average monthly income between 30,001 - 50,000 baht.

Accounting professional skills overall, it was at the highest level, in which professional ethics has the highest level of opinion followed by professional values, professional knowledge, and professional skills, respectively. As for the overall efficiency performance of accountant in SMEs located in Bangkok was at a high level which the performance in term of speed of work has the highest level of opinion followed by amount of work and quality of work, respectively.

Hypothesis testing

The results of the hypothesis testing on the difference in personal factors affecting the performance of SMEs accountants located in Bangkok differently was found that differences in gender, age, and experience of accountants affected the efficiency performance of SMEs accountants located in Bangkok differently. While differences in education level and average monthly income did not affect the performance of SMEs accountants located in Bangkok differently. The regression analysis of accounting professional skills affecting the efficiency performance of accountants in SMEs found that the aspect of professional skills, professional knowledge, and professional ethics affected the efficiency performance of accountant in v located in Bangkok with statistically significant level at .05, where professional skills had the greatest influence followed by professional knowledge and professional ethics, respectively. Whereas professional values did not affect the efficiency performance of accountant in SMEs located in Bangkok. All variables could be predicted together with statistically significant at $F=54.68.012$, $S.E.=.201$ and could explain the variance in service satisfaction at 53.58 percent.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Conclusion and discussion

The results showed that most of them should have professional value skills, professional skills, and professional knowledge. Professional knowledge helps professional accountants to have knowledge, ability to think, judgment or interactions with other people. Including providing learning about information technology as a specific subject in conjunction with other subject content professional skills and professional accountants need to have the intention to perform their duties with integrity, fairness, honesty, and independence by professional standards (Tan & Laswad, 2018). The results of a study on the efficiency performance of accounting staff in SMEs located in Bangkok was found that the respondents gave the most importance to efficient in their performance in the speed of work. This is corresponding to Vroom (1970) has given the meaning an effective person is a person

who intends to perform work to the best of his ability, using tactics or techniques to do his job. Moreover, the research results of Wanwijit & Kongchan (2017) found that punctuality in work was a matter of management planning because an accountant presents financial information to executives to make business decisions. Therefore, accountants must be punctual with their assigned tasks, including the rapid decision making of business accounting information (Mohamed & Lashine, 2003).

According to the results of the hypothesis testing of accounting professional skills and the performance of the SMEs accountants located in Bangkok was found that professional skills, professional knowledge, and professional ethics affected the efficiency performance of accountant in SMEs. This is consistent with the research by Chatthai (2020) found that accounting professional skills in 3 areas affecting the performance of private company accountants in Bangkok is the aspect of professional skills having the greatest influence, followed by professional knowledge and professional ethics. Including Pengphit (2010) studied problems in accounting firms in Bangkok, found that making the most of professional accounting knowledge in the preparation of financial statements can be effective, one must have knowledge in accounting and various aspects, thus affecting the efficiency of work performance. As well as the research of Thiangtrakul (2008) found that applying intelligence skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills and skills in using information technology were a professional guideline to perform properly and effectively under the profession.

Moreover, in terms of professional values, it affected the efficiency of work performance of SMEs accountants in Bangkok. This is corresponding to research results of the Federation of Accounting Professions (2013) that studied the behavior and professional traits that indicate being a professional accountant found that accountants have discipline in their work, such as punctuality, responsibility for assigned tasks, and independence in working was into account accounting ethics to make their operations more efficient. In terms of professional ethics affected the efficiency of the work performance of SMEs accountants in Bangkok. This is consistent with the research results of Sudlapa (2010) studied the ethical factors of the accounting profession that affect the performance of accountants in industrial estates in Ayutthaya province. It was found that professional ethical factors affecting the performance of accountants were positively correlated and impacted on performance in terms of quality, cost and time.

Recommendations and future work

The research study on the efficiency of work performance of SMEs accountants in Bangkok, the researcher has the following suggestions.

From the results of accounting professional skills, the researcher proposed that SMEs should develop knowledge and competence of accountants to meet the standards by providing training for continuous knowledge development and setting a minimum standard of training with a time limit to suit the type, size and business structure. This is because accountant's knowledge is the fundamental factor that supports accountants to perform their duties effectively, so SMEs should pay close attention to the various skill of accountants as well as support and encourage accountants to have the opportunity to develop their knowledge of accounting continually to upgrade the knowledge and competence of accountants to be more efficient.

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing of personal factors and the performance of SMEs accountants in Bangkok, the researcher suggested that if employees want to have career advancement should learn more in order to work out more reliable and efficient. Moreover, an effective accounting work depends on productivity, accounting is the quality of work that is accurate and can be used in decision making. The readiness component of accounting functionality is also critical to concern to success in the field of human resources, tools, modern technology. Therefore, accounting managers should focus on recognizing employees' duties in accounting operations and focusing on the application of technology for efficiency in order to make the accounting performance better, reliable, transparent and acceptable to management who wish to use the financial statements in their decision-making.

Suggestions for future research, the research should study from other areas in different provinces in Thailand in order to compare the results of the study to see if they are consistent or different with the results of this study. In addition, there should be a comparative study of the performance of accounting staff between private companies and government agencies, which will reflect on the issue of performance problems whether there are differences or not.

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