


**ARGUMENT FRAMING, SOURCE CREDIBILITY, AND EMOTIONAL CONDITIONS:
EFFECTS ON ACCOUNTANTS' WHISTLEBLOWING DECISION**

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received 31 January 2023</p> <p>Accepted 10 April 2023</p> <p>Keywords:</p> <p>Argument Framing; Source Credibility; Emotional Conditions; Whistleblowing Decision.</p>	<p>Purpose: This study compared the effect of argument framing (positive-negative), source credibility (high-low), and emotional conditions (good-bad) on accountants' decisions to report fraud.</p> <p>Theoretical framework: No research investigates cognitive and affective factors in influencing accountants' decisions to whistleblowing: (1) how an argument is framed, (2) what extent management and system demonstrate credibility, and (3) whether emotional conditions can distort these two factors. The study aimed at companies that want their employees to play a critical role in preventing fraud in the workplace.</p> <p>Design/methodology/approach: In eight between-subject experiments, accountants faced an ethical dilemma in making a whistleblowing decision that describes a situation from a combination of all three factors (e.g., positive argument framing, low source credibility, and good emotional conditions). The authors used the Mann-Whitney U-test to examine differences in accountants' whistleblowing decisions as the dependent variable.</p> <p>Findings: The results show that argument framing, source credibility, and emotional conditions affect the accountant's whistleblowing decision. It has been empirically proven that positive argument framing increases accountants' consent to act more than negatively framed arguments. High management and system credibility also strengthen accountants rather than low credibility. Finally, good emotions can encourage accountants to act as whistleblowers, while bad emotions can prevent accountants from taking whistleblowing actions.</p> <p>Research, Practical & Social implications: This study reveals that cognitive and affective factors need to be considered by companies related to the successful implementation of anti-fraud policies and whistleblowing systems.</p> <p>Originality/value: This paper has implications for company management in understanding the factors that can strengthen or weaken the actions of employees to report fraud that occurs in the workplace.</p> <p>Doi: https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i4.1230</p>
	

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ENQUADRAMENTO DE ARGUMENTO, CREDIBILIDADE DA FONTE E CONDIÇÕES EMOCIONAIS: EFEITOS NA DECISÃO DE DENÚNCIA DOS CONTADORES

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este estudo comparou o efeito do enquadramento do argumento (positivo-negativo), credibilidade da fonte (alto-baixo) e condições emocionais (bom-ruim) nas decisões dos contadores de relatar fraudes.

Referencial teórico: Nenhuma pesquisa investiga os fatores cognitivos e afetivos que influenciam as decisões dos contadores para a denúncia: (1) como um argumento é enquadrado, (2) até que ponto a administração e o sistema demonstram credibilidade e (3) se as condições emocionais podem distorcer esses dois fatores. O estudo foi direcionado a empresas que desejam que seus funcionários desempenhem um papel crítico na prevenção de fraudes no local de trabalho.

Projeto/metodologia/abordagem: em oito experimentos entre sujeitos, os contadores enfrentaram um dilema ético ao tomar uma decisão de denúncia que descreve uma situação a partir de uma combinação de todos os três fatores (por exemplo, enquadramento de argumento positivo, baixa credibilidade da fonte e boas condições emocionais). Os autores usaram o teste U de Mann-Withney para examinar as diferenças nas decisões de denúncias dos contadores como variável dependente.

Resultados: Os resultados mostram que o enquadramento do argumento, a credibilidade da fonte e as condições emocionais afetam a decisão de denúncia do contador. Foi provado empiricamente que o enquadramento de argumento positivo aumenta o consentimento dos contadores para agir mais do que os argumentos de enquadramento negativo. A alta credibilidade da administração e do sistema também fortalece os contadores, em vez da baixa credibilidade. Finalmente, as boas emoções podem encorajar os contadores a agir como denunciantes, enquanto as emoções ruins podem impedir que os contadores tomem ações de denúncia.

Pesquisa, implicações práticas e sociais: Este estudo revela que os fatores cognitivos e afetivos precisam ser considerados pelas empresas relacionadas à implementação bem-sucedida de políticas antifraude e sistemas de denúncia.

Originalidade/valor: Este trabalho tem implicações para a gestão da empresa na compreensão dos fatores que podem fortalecer ou enfraquecer as ações dos funcionários para denunciar fraudes que ocorrem no ambiente de trabalho.

Palavras-chave: Enquadramento Argumentativo, Credibilidade da Fonte, Condições Emocionais, Decisão de Denúncia.

ARGUMENTACIÓN, CREDIBILIDAD DE LA FUENTE Y CONDICIONES EMOCIONALES: EFECTOS EN LA DECISIÓN DE DENUNCIA DE LOS CONTADORES

RESUMEN

Propósito: Este estudio comparó el efecto del encuadre del argumento (positivo-negativo), la credibilidad de la fuente (alto-bajo) y las condiciones emocionales (bueno-malo) en las decisiones de los contadores de denunciar el fraude.

Marco teórico: ninguna investigación investiga los factores cognitivos y afectivos que influyen en las decisiones de los contadores para denunciar irregularidades: (1) cómo se enmarca un argumento, (2) en qué medida la gerencia y el sistema demuestran credibilidad, y (3) si las condiciones emocionales pueden distorsionar estos dos factores. El estudio estuvo dirigido a empresas que desean que sus empleados desempeñen un papel fundamental en la prevención del fraude en el lugar de trabajo.

Diseño/metodología/enfoque: en ocho experimentos entre sujetos, los contadores enfrentaron un dilema ético al tomar una decisión de denuncia que describe una situación a partir de una combinación de los tres factores (p. ej., encuadre de argumento positivo, baja credibilidad de la fuente y buenas condiciones emocionales). Los autores utilizaron la prueba U de Mann-Withney para examinar las diferencias en las decisiones de denuncia de irregularidades de los contadores como variable dependiente.

Hallazgos: Los resultados muestran que el marco del argumento, la credibilidad de la fuente y las condiciones emocionales afectan la decisión de denuncia del contador. Se ha demostrado empiricamente que el encuadre de argumentos positivos aumenta el consentimiento de los contadores para actuar más que los argumentos enmarcados negativamente. La alta credibilidad de la gestión y del sistema también fortalece a los contadores en lugar de la baja credibilidad. Finalmente, las buenas emociones pueden alentar a los contadores a actuar como denunciantes, mientras que las malas emociones pueden evitar que los contadores tomen medidas de denuncia.

Implicaciones de investigación, prácticas y sociales: este estudio revela que las empresas deben considerar los factores cognitivos y afectivos relacionados con la implementación exitosa de políticas antifraude y sistemas de denuncia.

Originalidad/valor: Este documento tiene implicaciones para la gestión de la empresa en la comprensión de los factores que pueden fortalecer o debilitar las acciones de los empleados para denunciar el fraude que ocurre en el lugar de trabajo.

Palabras clave: Encuadre de Argumentos, Credibilidad de la Fuente, Condiciones Emocionales, Decisión de Denuncia.

INTRODUCTION

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of members of the organization for illegal, immoral actions and practices that violate the provisions of the organization to the public, authorities, or those who can take action against such fraud (Al-Haidar, 2018; Erkmen et al., 2014; Near & Miceli, 1985). Robinson et al. (2012) described whistleblowing as a dilemma or problem in decision-making between willingness or unwillingness to reveal fraud found in organizations.

The whistleblowing issue is still being studied in various countries. Irawanto & Novianti (2020) stated that whistleblowing had become a global concern in the last few decades. Reports from whistleblowers have proven to be more effective in uncovering fraud than other methods, such as internal audits, internal controls, and external audits (Robinson et al., 2012). The results of a fraud survey in 133 countries in the world (ACFE, 2022) stated that 42% of fraud can be detected from whistleblowing actions, and more than half choose to use hotlines as a reporting medium. The survey also proved that from 2012 to 2022, the percentage of system use as reporting media continues to increase along with technological developments. Indonesia, a country that contributes the fourth largest number of fraud cases (12%) in the Asia-Pacific region after Australia (20%), China (17%), and Malaysia (13%), shows that one of the most effective anti-fraud control programs is by providing complaint channel.

The issue of whistleblowing actions and the complaint system is also being studied in Indonesia. This issue has received attention from the Indonesian government and support from professional accounting organizations. Through the National Committee on Governance Policy (KNKG, 2008), the government has issued guidelines for reporting violations since 2008, urging companies to create a whistleblowing system for stakeholders. Government support also manifested in Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning the protection of witnesses and victims, which includes protection for those who act as whistleblowers. The Indonesian Association of Accountants, the most substantial accounting professional organization in Indonesia, also provided guidelines for an accountant's code of ethics in which it discusses how to deal with findings of non-compliance in the work environment, one of which is by taking whistleblowing actions (IAI, 2020).

This attention has played an essential role in the actions of accountants and the whistleblowing system in uncovering fraud. According Seifert et al. (2010), a number of fraud cases that have occurred over the last decade can be found by accountants, in the form of non-compliance with company regulations, bribery, tax evasion, or other fraud related to accounting and finance. Latan et al. (2018) also supported that the duties of accountants who are directly related to evidence of transactions and the process of preparing financial reports should be able to assist management in detecting irregularities that can be detrimental to the company. With access to accounting information and adequate knowledge, accountants are expected not to remain silent when they discover fraud (Brown et al., 2016). Accountants are also expected to utilize complaint channels such as the whistleblowing system.

The whistleblowing problem has not been answered clearly by previous researchers because they have not paid attention to how accountants' decision-making can be persuaded, so it creates confidence to act to report fraud. This assumption refers to the argument from Porto et al. (2022) which revealed that decision-making can be influenced by social persuasion. In this study, persuasion creates a situation where the accountant is in a condition following the expected goals. The reluctance of accountants to whistleblowing can become a willingness in line with this persuasion process.

This research refers to several previous studies investigating the importance of persuading individuals to act as whistleblowers. Young (2017) provided empirical evidence about the effect of persuasive messages on changing employee attitudes toward whistleblowing. The results of his research show that positively framed messages can be effective in triggering changes in attitudes toward whistleblowing. Petty & Briñol (2012) stated that persuasion's effect is determined by a message framed and the credibility of the message sender. Messages from sources that can be trusted will cause a more significant change in attitude in the recipient of the message when compared to a message from a source that does not have credibility. In addition to the message being framed and the messenger's credibility, emotion can also influence persuasion. Petty & Briñol (2015) explained that emotional conditions could affect attitudes and persuasion to act. Good or bad emotions can lead individuals to like or dislike and feel more confident or doubtful about their thoughts. So, according to this explanation, this study wants to investigate the extent to which argument framing is presented positively and negatively, high and low source credibility, and good and bad for individual emotional conditions towards employee whistleblowing decisions, especially accountants.

The first factor is positive and negative considerations regarding whistleblowing actions. Individuals tend not to whistleblow because they consider losses (such as threats of retaliation from perpetrators) that have a more significant impact than the possible benefits (Oelrich, 2019). On the other hand, Chen et al. (2012) stated that individuals would be encouraged to carry out whistleblowing when the action is considered an obligation. If not carried out, they will receive sanctions. These results differ with Brink et al. (2013), which proves that internal whistleblowing can be encouraged by rewards. Thus, there are still differences in considering the positive and negative impacts of whistleblowing, which can create a dilemma for accountants to report fraud. If many accountants remain silent, then fraud will continue because not much is revealed.

The second factor that can influence accountants to act as whistleblowers is the credibility of sources from top management and the systems designed by the company. Darjoko (2019) states that top management's preference in supporting employees to behave ethically is urgently needed. The tone at the top as the party making the policy should show an example of preventing fraud, especially encouraging employees to report irregularities that occur in the company. In fact, not all top management shows good credibility, even though the company has created a code of ethics and an anti-fraud policy. Besides that, the credibility of the source can also be seen from the whistleblowing system implemented in the company. A credible whistleblowing system, among other things, provides anonymous reporting, reporting data protection, easy access, and there is a follow-up on reporting (WhistleB, 2014). The problem that arises is that not all WBS owned by the company include this information. Sumantri (2014) argued that using WBS in Indonesia is ineffective because it needs to provide certainty of protection and clarity of reporting mechanisms so that it impacts not many employees willing to report fraud, primarily through the whistleblowing system.

Emotional conditions are the third factor that encourages accountants to be willing or not to do whistleblowing. There are differences in research results between Zhang et al. (2009) and Reckers-Sauciuc & Lowe (2010) regarding emotional conditions in whistleblowing decisions. Zhang et al. (2009) stated that employees with good emotions tend to believe that fraud is severe and must be stopped, while Reckers-Sauciuc & Lowe (2010) explained that employees who are experiencing good emotions tend not to like to do whistleblowing. Clements & Shawver (2015) proved that emotions such as relief, satisfaction, and regret can affect accountants' whistleblowing actions. Even deeper, Edwards et al. (2009) showed that anger and guilt can encourage accountants to speak, whereas anticipation in the form of fear and

embarrassment tends to keep accountants silent. Because accountants deal with fraud in different emotional conditions, the decision to act as a whistleblower will also be different. Good or bad emotions can influence accountants in making decisions.

Based on the explanation above, it shows that the three factors (argument framing, source credibility, and emotional state) are predicted to be able to elaborate the persuasion process so that accountants are willing to take whistleblowing action. It is hoped that accountants who occupy positions such as accounting staff, finance, internal auditors, and at a higher level than that can be relied upon to assist companies in uncovering fraud (Hwang et al., 2008). Accountants are not only willing to report fraud to colleagues or superiors directly (Susmanschi, 2012) but are expected to be able to utilize the whistleblowing system as a reporting medium.

This research is different from previous research in several ways. First, no previous research has tested argument framing, source credibility, emotional states, and the interactions between the three variables in terms of their impact on the accountant's decision to act as a whistleblower. This research describes the different situations faced by accountants in terms of how messages are framed positively or negatively, whether sources are credible or not, as well as personal emotional conditions and individual experiences when deciding whether to agree or not to report fraud. Second, the subjects of this study are professional accountants who work as accounting, finance, or internal auditor staff in private or state-owned companies in Indonesia. Most previous research, especially from Indonesia, used students, public employees, or government employees as research subjects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prospect Theory

Prospect theory from Tversky & Kahneman (1981) is a theory that uses two points of reference (gain and loss) as the basis for decision-making. This reference point becomes a person's frame in considering the possibilities in making a decision. This theory describes two main results regarding the effect of framing in the decision-making process, both in terms of advantages and disadvantages. First, someone will take risks (risk-averse) when the decisions taken tend to produce profits, and someone will avoid risks (risk-prone) when the decisions taken tend to produce losses. Second, someone wants to avoid experiencing losses because the possibility of losses will be greater than the gains (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981).

An important implication of prospect theory is to manipulate problem formulation (framing) by changing points of view or reference points to motivate individuals to show behavior that tends to take risks or avoid risks (Irwandi, 2019). Oelrich (2019) described that prospect theory can be applied in economics as a tool for designing whistleblowing policies. Company policies regarding whistleblowing actions are often framed to promote reward or punishment.

Source of Credibility Theory

The source of credibility theory found by Hovland & Weiss (1951) described that individuals are more likely to be persuaded when the communicator or person conveying a communication message shows himself as a credible person. Credibility is trust in some information and its sources (Hovland et al., 1953). Credibility can also be interpreted as an assessment made by individuals about their trust in communicators (O'Keefe, 2002). In an organizational context, a source of credibility is a company that provides expertise or a person deemed competent and trustworthy by the recipient of information to convey a persuasive message (Li, 2013). With trust and credibility, employees can follow advice from these sources.

Previous research has been discussed in the context of accountants' whistleblowing actions. Hunton & Rose (2011) and Guthrie et al. (2012) showed that the auditor's decision-making in utilizing an anonymous or non-anonymous whistleblowing system can be influenced by information from unknown or unknown credible sources. Darjoko (2019) revealed that source credibility can come from top management, which gives preference to policy support regarding fraud disclosure. The research findings described that the asymmetry of responses to fraud can disappear when top management shows a policy preference for substantially disclosing fraud.

Affective Events Theory

Affective Events Theory (AET) from Weiss & Cropanzano (1996) is most widely used in studying the influence of emotions and moods on employee attitudes and behavior (Ashton-James & Ashkanasy, 2005; Weiss & Beal, 2005). According Weiss & Cropanzano (1996), individuals would evaluate situations through a two-stage assessment process: primary and secondary. Primary valuation involves judging an event's relevance to personal well-being (loss versus benefit). In contrast, secondary valuation is more complex and involves attributes that depend on the activity and individual capacity to complete it.

Previous research using AET in the context of whistleblowing are Hollings (2013) and Edwards et al. (2009). Hollings (2013) explained that someone who observes fraud at an early stage will show a reaction that is the result of an instant assessment to then process these findings more complexly and make a more in-depth assessment. This assessment can cause adverse emotional reactions, which in turn influence decision-making. Edwards et al. (2009) also discussed the impact of emotional factors on whistleblowing actions. Edwards et al. (2009) incorporated his conception of how a person's anticipated emotions can influence the decision to speak or remain silent. For example, an employee with a high level of anticipation will experience more remorse and self-blame if the employee does not speak up or remain silent.

Hypotheses Development

Prospect theory revealed two points of reference (profits and losses) that frame a person in considering the possibilities in making decisions (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). A number of previous studies have investigated the effects of argument framing on whistleblowing action decisions. Akinkugbe (2018) analyzed the whistleblowing framing of Channels Television and showed that the role of fighting corruption is a frame that is often used in persuading individuals to do whistleblowing. Chen et al. (2012) investigated the impact of financial incentive framing on whistleblowing actions. Negative framing in the form of penalties can increase internal whistleblowing more than positive framing in the form of prizes. Penalties for punishing employees who do not report fraud should represent a more substantial consequence than rewards to reward employees who report fraud. Otherwise, Young (2017) used an argument frame to compose persuasive messages to influence changes in attitudes toward whistleblowing. Young (2017) provided empirical evidence that employees are ready for the positive consequences of whistleblowing; they will assume that it is necessary and then encourage employees to do it more substantially. Otherwise, motivation is only stronger if employees are prepared for the negative consequences of employee complaints. Whistleblowing is considered something harmful to themselves and their families. Based on this description, this study hypothesizes:

H1: Positive argument framing influences the accountant's decision to whistleblowing more than negative argument framing.

Source Credibility Theory put forward by Hovland et al. (1953) stated that message recipients are more likely to be persuaded by credible sources. Messages from credible sources cause a more significant change in attitude in the recipient of the message compared to

messages from sources that do not have credibility. Previous studies investigating the credibility of sources in the context of whistleblowing decisions have yet to be widely carried out. Darjoko & Nahartyo (2017) examined the credibility of sources in processing anonymous or anonymous fraud reports by internal auditors. The study results showed that receiving information related to allegations of fraud originating from anonymity is considered less credible or reliable than information from sources with clear identities. Likewise, Hunton & Rose (2011) examined the same. Audit committee members perceive less credibility and allocate less investigative resources when whistleblower reports are received through anonymous as opposed to non-anonymous channels and when suspected fraud poses a high rather than a low reputation threat. This study suspects that the credibility of top management and the complaint system can influence whistleblowing decisions. Thus, this study hypothesizes:

H2: High source credibility influences the accountant's decision to whistleblowing more than low source credibility.

Affective Event Theory from (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) explained the different effects that can arise from positive and negative moods. Empirical evidence from several studies showed that positive mood effects are more substantial than negative ones. Mittal & Ross (1998) found that decision-makers were more willing to take risks of uncertainty when in a positive mood than in a negative mood. Managers in a positive mood will tend to identify opportunities rather than threats and consequently be optimistic and willing to take risks (Ashkanasy & Ashton-James, 2007). Research on emotional reactions when discovering fraud has been carried out by Edwards et al. (2009) and Zhang et al. (2009). Results of Edwards et al. (2009) research demonstrated that individuals who observe various frauds occurring within the company could elicit adverse emotional reactions in employees (e.g., sadness, anger, and fear). Furthermore, the negative emotions that arise from these events will affect decision-making about how individuals respond. Zhang et al. (2009) found that individuals with positive moods are more moral, more empathetic, and care more about the welfare of others than negative moods. Through this mechanism, a positive mood will tend to increase the expectation of a positive outcome because individuals with a positive mood experience less anxiety. Individuals as bystanders with more positive memories of previous whistleblowing cases will be more likely to blow the whistle or report fraud. Following this explanation, this study hypothesizes:

H3: Good emotional conditions influence the accountant's decision to whistleblowing than bad emotional conditions.

MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

This study used a 2x2x2 between-subject factorial experimental design to have eight experimental schemes (see Table 1). Each participant will get one scheme that is presented randomly. The manipulated variables are independent variables consisting of argument framing (positive vs. negative), source credibility (high vs. low), and emotional conditions (good vs. bad). Whistleblowing decision as the dependent variable is defined as an individual's decision to voluntarily disclose illegal, immoral, or illegal practices to other people or organizations who may be able to follow up (Ponemon, 1994) measured by a Likert scale ranging from a score of 1-strongly disagree to a score 7-strongly agree.

Table 1 – Experiment Design

		Argument Framing				
		Positive		Negative		
		High	Low	High	Low	
Emotional Conditions	Source Credibility	Good	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
	Bad	Group E	Group F	Group G	Group H	

Source: Prepared by the authors (2022)

This research data was collected through an online workshop with a zoom meeting platform. Experimental activities began with the provision of material, then continued with discussion sessions, and ended with filling out the questionnaire. For this reason, the authors created a questionnaire on Google form containing the following sections: (1) willingness of participants to become research subjects, (2) case illustrations describing an individual working as a company accountant who discovered the fraud and obtained some supporting evidence, (3) exposure to manipulation depends on which group (for example, group A, the manipulation given is positive framing, high credibility, and good emotion), (4) manipulation check questions, and (5) decisions about whether to agree or not to act on whistleblowing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The experimental activity was attended by 421 people, totaling 222 people fulfilling the criteria. The criteria for this research sample are employees who work as accounting, finance, and internal auditor staff from private companies or SOE in Indonesia. One hundred eighty-

five participants passed the manipulation (correctly answered all the manipulation check questions), or 83 percent of the total sample who met the criteria. Demographic data and answers to whistleblowing decisions from these 185 participants will be analyzed next.

Table 2 – Demographic Data

	Category	Total	Percentage (%)
Age	Less than 30	40	21.6
	31 - 40	79	42.7
	41 - 50	56	30.3
	More than 50	10	5.4
Gender	Male	121	65.4
	Female	64	34.6
Education	Diploma	13	7.0
	Bachelor	107	57.8
	Master	62	33.5
	Doctor	3	1.6
Work experience	Less than 5 years	32	17.3
	6 - 10 years	43	23.2
	11 - 15 years	54	29.2
	16 - 20 years	31	16.8
	More than 20 years	25	13.5

Source: Prepared by the authors (2022)

Based on the information presented in Table 2, the majority characteristics of the participants were 31 to 40 years old or 41 to 50 years old and were male. More than half of the participants had an undergraduate educational background with work experience between 6 to 10 years or 11 to 15 years.

Table 3 – Descriptive Statistics

Vignettes	N	Min	Max	Mean	StDev
A	24	6	7	6.96	0.204
B	23	5	7	6.52	0.846
C	25	5	7	6.64	0.700
D	23	3	7	6.22	1.166
E	22	1	7	6.00	1.512
F	23	1	7	4.87	1.817
G	21	1	7	5.00	1.673
H	24	1	7	4.63	1.740

Source: Prepared by the authors (2022)

Table 3 shows that each group's data is balanced between 21 to 25 participants. The maximum value of whistleblowing decisions for all schemes lies in a score of 7 (strongly agree). This result indicates that even under different conditions, individuals tend to have a powerful urge to report fraud. However, some participants chose the lowest score (1-strongly disagreed), especially in bad emotional conditions. In contrast to participants who received a good emotional scheme, the lowest score was 3-disagree for code D, 5-agree for codes B and C, and

6-quite agree for code A. These results explain that emotional factors can affect whistleblowing decision-making differently.

The results of participant responses regarding the decision to act whistleblowing in an average of 8 schemes describe that group A participants who receive positive framing, high credibility, and good emotions show the highest score (6.96) with a standard deviation of 0.204. The further down or towards the following scheme, the average whistleblowing decision decreases. The lowest score was shown by group H participants, who received negative framing, low credibility, and bad emotions, with an average decision to act as a whistleblower of 4.63 with a standard deviation of 1.740. These results indicate that giving positive-negative framing treatment about the consequences of actions from sources with high-low credibility in good-bad individual emotional conditions can make a difference in whistleblowing decision-making.

Test the validity of experimental research data to ensure demographic data does not affect the dependent variable. The results of the analysis of the covariate (ANCOVA) test in Table 4 illustrate that whistleblowing decisions are not influenced by age, gender, education, and work experience. The significance value of the data shows all above 0.05.

Table 4 – Analysis of Covariate Results

Variable	F-value	Sig.
Age	0.353	0.553
Gender	3.710	0.056
Education	0.990	0.321
Work experience	2.646	0.106

Source: Prepared by the authors (2022)

Testing the normality of the research data was carried out using the Shapiro-Wilk Test because the amount of data processed was less than 200. The test results shown in Table 5 conclude that the significance value of the eight schemes is below 0.05, meaning that the data is not normally distributed. Therefore, hypothesis testing uses a non-parametric statistical approach.

Table 5 – Results of Normality Test

Vignettes	Statistics	df	Sig.
A	0.209	24	0.000
B	0.564	23	0.000
C	0.560	25	0.000
D	0.665	23	0.000
E	0.689	22	0.000
F	0.874	23	0.008
G	0.900	21	0.034

H	0.916	24	0.047
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Source: Prepared by the authors (2022)

The results of testing the three hypotheses using the Mann-Whitney U Test can be seen in Table 6. Hypothesis 1 states that positive argument framing more substantially influences whistleblowing actions than this study can support negative argument framing. Empirical evidence shows that the average level of whistleblowing decisions that obtain positive argument framing (101.31) is more significant than those that receive negative argument framing (84.78). The average difference is 16.53 with a significance value of 0.021 (below 0.05), so it can be concluded that hypothesis 1 is accepted. The same results were obtained for testing hypothesis 2. The average level of whistleblowing decisions who received high source credibility (104.05) was more significant than those who received low source credibility (82.06). The average difference is 21.99 with a significance value of 0.002 (below 0.05), so it can be concluded that hypothesis 2 is accepted. Thus a statement of high source credibility has a more substantial influence on whistleblowing action than low source credibility can be proven in this study. Next is testing hypothesis 3 to obtain an average level of whistleblowing decisions in conditions of receiving good emotions (116.77) more significant than those receiving in conditions of bad emotions (67.91). The average difference is 48.86 with a significance value of 0.000 (below 0.05), so it can be concluded that the hypothesis that good emotional conditions influence whistleblowing actions more strongly than bad emotional conditions can be accepted.

Table 6 – Results of Hypotheses Test

Hypotheses	N	Mean rank	Mean Difference	Sig.
H1: Framing positive > framing negatif				
Framing positive (vignettes A,B,E,F)	92	101.31	16.53	0.021
Framing negatif (vignettes C,D,G,H)	93	84.78		
H2: High credibility > low credibility				
High credibility (vignettes A,C,E,G)	92	104.05	21.99	0.002
Low credibility (vignettes B,D,F,H)	93	82.06		
H3: Good emotion > bad emotion				
Good emotion (vignettes A,B,C,D)	95	116.77	48.86	0.000
Bad emotion (vignettes E,F,G,H)	90	67.91		

Note. $\alpha < 0.05$

Source: Prepared by the authors (2022)

DISCUSSION

The results of this study are the first to show that differences in positive and negative argument framing can impact decision-making to act as a whistleblower. When an individual discovers a case of fraud in a company, then obtains an argument about the profitable consequences of reporting fraud (positive framing). It can result in a higher level of

whistleblowing approval than when an individual obtains an argument that the consequences of a loss will be received due to reporting fraud (negative framing). These findings support the prospect theory of Tversky & Kahneman (1981), which can be used to explain that individuals can consider the advantages and disadvantages of whistleblowing. Following the findings of Young (2017), which provides empirical evidence about how likely employees are to do whistleblowing, it can be determined by how the consequences of actions are framed positively or negatively. If accountants or employees are prepared for the positive consequences of reporting fraud, they would consider whistleblowing needs to be done. Then they will be more strongly motivated to do whistleblowing. Conversely, the incentive is weaker if accountants or employees are prepared with the negative consequences of whistleblowing actions so that it can result in a decrease in their intention to act to report fraud.

This study also found differences in decision-making to acting as a whistleblower due to sources of high and low credibility. Accountants are more likely to agree to report fraud when working for companies with high credibility in management and whistleblowing systems than those with low credibility. These findings can support the application of source credibility theory from Hovland et al. (1953) in whistleblowing decision-making. This theory describes that individuals as recipients of messages can be more persuaded to act as whistleblowers by credible sources than those who are not credible. The results of this study confirm the research of Suh & Shim (2020) and Abdullah et al. (2022). More passionate and proactive managerial efforts, such as setting a 'tone at the top' and implementing practical ethics training, are needed to develop a whistleblowing policy within an organization Suh & Shim (2020). Leadership style and organizational commitment are determinants of accountants' performance, which can also be related to accountant behavior when fraud is discovered Abdullah et al. (2022). This study's findings also support the presentation of WhistleB (2014), which revealed that the whistleblowing system is credible, including disclosing information in the system related to reporting data protection and following up on incoming reports.

Predictions regarding the impact of good and bad emotions from individuals on decision-making to act whistleblowing can be proven empirically by this research. Individuals who find fraud cases in a good emotional conditions can produce a higher level of approval to act as a whistleblower than individuals in a bad emotional conditions. This finding is consistent with the affective events theory from (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), which describes emotional conditions or moods that can affect attitudes and behave differently. This theory is the basis that good or bad emotional conditions can influence whistleblowing decisions, as the findings

of several previous studies revealed that the effects of good mood are more capable of influencing decision-making compared to bad moods (Amabile et al., 2005; Ashkanasy & Ashton-James, 2007; Au et al., 2003; Kuvaas & Kaufmann, 2004; Mittal & Ross, 1998). The results of this study also follow the findings of Edwards et al. (2009), which stated that emotional conditions in the form of anger and guilt can encourage whistleblowing, while fear and shame will encourage employees to remain silent or do nothing.

CONCLUSION

This study involved employees who worked as accounting, finance, and internal audit staff at private or state-owned companies in Indonesia as participants. The experimental results of the eight schemes given to them show that positive argument framing, high source credibility, and good emotions influence whistleblowing decisions more strongly than negative argument framing, low source credibility, and bad emotional conditions. The findings of this study provide empirical evidence for developing several theories (prospect theory, source of credibility theory, and affective event theory), especially in investigating accountants' decision-making related to whistleblowing actions. This research also makes a practical contribution to company management to pay attention to cognitive and affective factors in persuading employees, especially staff closely related to finance, to have the courage to report when they find fraud in the workplace.

The limitations of this study and recommendations for further research include: First, the use of corporate accountants as research subjects can support most of the research hypotheses. However, the study results show that the accountants' whistleblowing decisions tend to agree even though they have been given treatment that allows the accountants to choose to act in disagreement. This result is inseparable from factors that researchers cannot control. Further research can investigate other factors that might influence, such as experiences of discovering fraud, motivation for whistleblowing actions, or the accountant's position in the company. Second, this research scenario uses only one type of fraud and illustrates cases with sufficiently strong and material evidence. These factors can also affect the results that accountants tend to agree to take whistleblowing actions. Therefore, further research can test using more than one fraud case and narrating at different materiality levels.

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