International Financial Reporting Standards and Earnings Management: A Global Research Landscape Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study provides a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of global scholarly research on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) adoption and earnings management (EM) using data retrieved from the Scopus database spanning 2005 to 2025. A total of 398 publications were analyzed using tools such as biblioMagika®, VOSviewer, and OpenRefine to examine publication trends, citation performance, thematic evolution, and collaborative networks. The analysis revealed a growing academic interest, with a citation per paper average of 20.10 and an h-index of 46, indicating strong and sustained scholarly impact. Most research contributions emerged from the domains of Business, Accounting, and Economics, though interdisciplinary links with Social Sciences, Environmental Studies, and Decision Sciences were also evident. Highly cited works were clustered around themes such as the quality of financial reporting, real and accrual-based earnings management, regulatory enforcement, and IFRS's impact across jurisdictions. Prominent authors like Jeanjean, Stolowy, and Christensen, along with key journals such as the European Accounting Review and Journal of Accounting and Public Policy, were identified as intellectual anchors in the field. Network visualizations of citations, co-authorship, and keyword co-occurrence revealed a maturing research structure with increasing global collaboration and conceptual diversification. The findings highlight that while the IFRS-EM literature has developed significantly, opportunities remain to explore underrepresented regions, embrace emerging topics like sustainability reporting and digital governance, and foster cross-disciplinary integration. This bibliometric review contributes to mapping the intellectual landscape and offers critical direction for future research trajectories in financial reporting and earnings quality scholarship.

Keywords: IFRS; Earnings Management; Bibliometric Analysis; Scopus; VOSviewer

INTRODUCTION

The adoption of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) represents a pivotal advancement in global financial reporting, intended to improve the transparency, comparability, and quality of financial statements across jurisdictions. More than 140 countries have either adopted or converged with IFRS, motivated by the belief that harmonized accounting standards can reduce financial misreporting and curb opportunistic practices such as earnings management (Zéghal, Chtourou, & Sellami, 2011). Earnings management is broadly defined as the deliberate manipulation of financial reporting by managers to achieve specific outcomes, often for personal or strategic gain (Capkun, Collins, & Jeanjean, 2012).

While advocates argue that IFRS enhances disclosure quality and constrains managerial discretion, thereby reducing the scope for earnings manipulation (Baig & Khan, 2016; Rudra & Bhattacharjee, 2012), empirical findings remain mixed. In environments where regulatory oversight and enforcement are weak, IFRS implementation alone may be insufficient to deter manipulative accounting behaviors (Gbadebo, 2023; Hasan, Hossain, Rekabder, Molla, & Ashif, 2022). In such contexts, the expected benefits of IFRS may be undermined by institutional fragility. Moreover, recent studies emphasize that the effectiveness of IFRS in improving earnings quality is contingent upon a variety of contextual factors, including governance mechanisms,

managerial ability, external audit strength, and market monitoring (Fuad, Juliarto, Prasetyo, & Fahlevi, 2022; Almaharmeh, Liu, & Iskandrani, 2024; Hakim, Rahayu, & Endri, 2022). These moderating variables complicate the IFRS and earnings management relationship and account for the divergent results observed across countries and sectors.

In light of this fragmented and expanding body of research, a bibliometric analysis provides a systematic, replicable, and quantitative approach to map scholarly activity in the field. Such an approach allows for the identification of intellectual foundations, influential authors and institutions, thematic evolution, and knowledge gaps. Accordingly, this study aims to conduct a global bibliometric review of the IFRS, earnings management nexus. It draws upon indexed publications from reputable databases to explore how this field has evolved over time, with particular attention to accrual-based and real earnings management, as well as the implications of specific standards such as IFRS 9, IFRS 15, and IFRS 16.

This study aims to map the intellectual landscape of research on the nexus between International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) adoption and earnings management (EM) through a comprehensive bibliometric analysis. Given the growing but fragmented body of literature on how IFRS influences both accrual-based and real earnings management across various jurisdictions, this study seeks to synthesize existing knowledge, identify thematic trends, and uncover emerging research trajectories in the field.

The central research questions guiding this inquiry are:

a) What are the key studies and ideas that have shaped research on IFRS and earnings management?

b) How has the focus of research on IFRS and earnings management changed over time?

c) Which researchers, universities, and countries are leading and influencing this field?

d) What are the latest trends, theories, and global collaborations in IFRS and earnings management research?

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents a critical review of the literature on IFRS, earnings management, and relevant prior bibliometric studies. Section 3 outlines the research methodology, including data sources, bibliometric indicators, and analytical tools employed. Section 4 presents the results of the bibliometric analysis. Section 5 discusses the scholarly and practical implications, as well as thematic clusters and future trajectories. Section 6 concludes with a summary of key findings and recommendations for future research in the IFRS, earnings management domain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between IFRS adoption and earnings management (EM) has been extensively explored, often through an empirical lens. However, this literature is grounded, explicitly or implicitly, in foundational theories such as agency theory, which views EM as a managerial tool to mislead stakeholders for private gain; and institutional theory, which explains how national environments, enforcement regimes, and regulatory norms shape the effectiveness of global standards like IFRS. In some contexts, stewardship theory also emerges, emphasizing managerial integrity and transparency where IFRS adoption aligns with ethical reporting motivations.

Early empirical evidence illustrates the varied influence of IFRS across institutional settings. Zéghal, Chtourou, and Sellami (2011) provided early evidence that mandatory IFRS adoption generally reduces earnings management, although the effect varies across legal regimes. Similarly, Capkun, Collins, and Jeanjean (2012) argued that IFRS alone does not automatically constrain earnings manipulation unless accompanied by strong enforcement mechanisms.

In a seminal cross-country analysis, Jeanjean and Stolowy (2008) found that IFRS adoption did not consistently lead to reductions in earnings management. Their study, covering France, Australia, and the UK, revealed that institutional enforcement, rather than standards alone, was the primary determinant of reporting quality. Supporting this, van Tendeloo and Vanstraelen (2005) compared German GAAP and IFRS adopters and

concluded that voluntary IFRS adoption did not significantly constrain earnings manipulation. These findings align with Christensen et al. (2015), who emphasized that firm-level incentives and national institutions, not merely accounting standards, drive improvements in reporting quality. Other influential works focus on the role of enforcement. Brown, Preiato, and Tarca (2014) introduced an audit and enforcement proxy to quantify differences in regulatory strength across jurisdictions, revealing that enforcement significantly moderates IFRS effectiveness. Similarly, Houqe et al. (2012) found that IFRS adoption enhances earnings quality predominantly in countries with robust investor protection.

From a regional perspective, Liu et al. (2011) examined IFRS adoption in China, a regulated market, and reported modest improvements in accounting quality tied closely to the regulatory environment. In the EU context, Doukakis (2014) distinguished between real and accrual-based earnings management and noted that IFRS adoption had mixed effects on both forms. Likewise, Filip and Raffournier (2014) studied the 2008 financial crisis and observed intensified earnings management across Europe despite IFRS, particularly in weaker enforcement settings. Focusing on European banks, Leventis, Dimitropoulos, and Anandarajan (2011) found evidence of discretionary use of loan loss provisions under IFRS, signaling continued earnings and capital management. Iatridis (2010) broadly concluded that IFRS enhances the quality and informativeness of financial statements, especially in reducing income smoothing. These findings were reinforced by Pelucio-Grecco et al. (2014) who noted significant reductions in earnings manipulation among Brazilian public companies post-IFRS.

Recent studies expand this dialogue into emerging and transitional markets. Rudra and Bhattacharjee (2012) in India and Baig and Khan (2016) in Pakistan confirmed a reduction in earnings management after IFRS implementation, supporting the notion that IFRS may contribute to improved reporting quality even in less mature regulatory environments. In South Africa, Gbadebo (2023) examined Johannesburg Stock Exchange firms and raised doubts about IFRS's universal effectiveness. In Bangladesh, Hasan et al. (2022) identified board characteristics as a moderating factor between IFRS and real earnings management. Fuad et al. (2022) further explored this interplay in Southeast Asia, linking IFRS 16 compliance to corruption and earnings manipulation. In Saudi Arabia, Hashed and Almaqtari (2021) found that strong corporate governance complements IFRS to reduce earnings management, while Garfatta (2021) introduced the CSR dimension as a moderating variable post-IFRS. Selem and Elkholy (2025) focused on Saudi commercial banks, affirming IFRS's positive impact on financial discipline.

Other region-specific studies include Rioui, Rigar, and Grine's (2021) analysis in Morocco, which showed a shift in earnings strategies following IFRS adoption. In Italy, Azzali et al. (2021) linked IFRS to increased audit hours and audit effectiveness, further curbing earnings manipulation. Almaharmeh, Liu, and Iskandrani (2024) extended this inquiry in the UK, showing that IFRS moderates the influence of analyst coverage on real earnings management. In Brazil, Souza, Gonçalves, and Silva (2022) evaluated IFRS 15 and reported that the new revenue recognition standard improved accrual quality. Meanwhile, Nnadi, Keskudee, and Amaewhule (2023) analyzed IFRS 9 in European banks, finding more conservative earnings behavior post-adoption.

In summary, the empirical literature strongly supports the notion that IFRS adoption interacts with institutional quality, enforcement strength, governance mechanisms, and managerial incentives, confirming the relevance of both agency and institutional theories. While IFRS adoption has the potential to reduce earnings manipulation, the outcomes are clearly context-dependent. This underscores the need for a bibliometric mapping to systematically explore how these theoretical perspectives have been operationalized, identify research clusters, and guide future investigations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative bibliometric meta-analysis to systematically investigate the global research landscape on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and earnings management (EM). Bibliometric analysis offers a robust, objective, and replicable approach to examining large volumes of academic literature through publication metadata, citation networks, co-authorship patterns, and keyword co-occurrence. This method enables the identification of influential authors, journals, institutions, and thematic clusters, thereby

revealing the intellectual structure and scholarly evolution of the field. Particularly suitable for mature and multidisciplinary domains, bibliometric analysis facilitates the mapping of knowledge development over time and uncovers both established and emerging research trends. By integrating citation-based indicators with network analysis, this study provides critical insights into the productivity, impact, and interconnectivity of IFRS-related scholarship. The findings contribute to the literature by highlighting key contributions, exposing research gaps, and guiding future academic and policy-oriented investigations in international financial reporting.

Data Source and Collection

The bibliographic data were retrieved from the Scopus database, recognized for its comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed literature across disciplines. The search string used was:

TITLE-ABS-KEY ("IFRS") AND ("earnings management") AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar") AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")).

First, duplicate records were identified and removed to avoid any potential bias in the analysis. Next, the titles, abstracts, and keywords of the remaining documents were carefully reviewed to exclude unrelated papers, non-peer-reviewed publications, and those that did not directly address the themes of Big Data Analytics and Accounting Information Systems (Hassan et al., 2023). To ensure data quality and interoperability, OpenRefine and biblioMagika® were used to standardize and harmonize author names, affiliations, countries, and keywords. These tools enabled the detection and correction of inconsistencies, duplicates, and metadata anomalies. For bibliometric visualization, VOSviewer (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010) was utilized to construct co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence networks, facilitating the identification of intellectual structures, collaboration patterns, and thematic clusters in the IFRS and EM research domain. This process resulted in a refined dataset of 398 publications. This study relies exclusively on the Scopus database for data retrieval. While Scopus is comprehensive and widely used in bibliometric research, it may not capture all relevant publications indexed in other databases such as Web of Science, Google Scholar, or specialized repositories.

Data Cleaning and Preparation

The bibliographic data retrieved from Scopus underwent a rigorous data cleaning and harmonization process to ensure the consistency and reliability of the analysis. Two specialized tools, OpenRefine and biblioMagika®, were utilized to address common issues in bibliometric metadata, particularly those related to variations in author names, institutional affiliations, and country designations. OpenRefine was used to identify and cluster inconsistencies through its faceting and reconciliation functions, enabling the standardization of divergent entries for the same entities (Ahmi, 2024). This was crucial in minimizing fragmentation across records and ensuring coherent representation in co-authorship and institutional network maps. Following this, biblioMagika®, an Excel-based bibliometric processing toolkit, was applied to further refine and normalize metadata fields. It facilitated the harmonization of key bibliographic variables and the calculation of core indicators such as citation counts, h-index values, and authorship contributions. Additionally, biblioMagika® prepared the cleaned dataset in a structured format compatible with VOSviewer (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010), which was then used to construct visualizations for co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence networks. Together, these tools enabled a standardized and integrated dataset, forming the basis for a robust bibliometric analysis.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Publication Trends Over Time, Citation Metrics and Subject Area

To assess the scholarly development of IFRS and EM research, this study presents a citation-based performance analysis derived from Scopus-indexed publications. The bibliometric indicators below capture the productivity, impact, and collaborative patterns within the field.

Table 1. Citation Metrics

Main Information	Data
Publication Years	2005 - 2025
Total Publications	398
Citable Year	21
Number of Contributing Authors	1018
Number of Cited Papers	339
Total Citations	7,999
Citation per Paper	20.10
Citation per Cited Paper	23.60
Citation per Year	399.95
Citation per Author	7.86
Author per Paper	2.56
Citation sum within h-Core	7,136
h-index	46
g-index	77
m-index	2.190

Notes: h-index (Hirsch Index): Measures a researcher's productivity and impact. An h-index of h means they have h papers, each cited at least h times.

g-index: A g-index of g means the top g papers have at least g² total citations. It highlights researchers with a few highly influential works.

m-index: It is calculated by dividing the h-index by the number of years since the first publication, allowing fairer comparison between early-career and senior researchers.

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Table 1 presents the citation metrics for the study on IFRS adoption and earnings management, reflecting the bibliometric performance of 398 publications from 2005 to 2025. Over 21 citable years, the dataset includes contributions from 1,018 authors, with 339 papers receiving citations. A total of 7,999 citations were recorded, averaging 20.10 citations per paper and 23.60 per cited paper, indicating strong scholarly interest. The field shows consistent impact, as evidenced by a citation rate of 399.95 per year, an h-index of 46, a g-index of 77, and an m-index of 2.190. The citation sum within the h-core (7,136) highlights the influence of key publications. Furthermore, the average of 2.56 authors per paper reflects collaborative research activity. These metrics affirm the field's growing significance and underscore its sustained academic contribution to global discourse on IFRS and earnings management.

Table 2. Top 10 Subject Area

Subject Area	TP	%
Business, Management and Accounting	333	83.67%
Economics, Econometrics and Finance	224	56.28%
Social Sciences	44	11.06%
Decision Sciences	21	5.28%
Arts and Humanities	16	4.02%
Computer Science	12	3.02%
Engineering	7	1.76%
Environmental Science	7	1.76%
Multidisciplinary	6	1.51%
Energy	5	1.26%

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Table 2 displays the top 10 subject areas associated with publications on IFRS adoption and earnings management, highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of the field. The majority of contributions fall within Business, Management and Accounting (83.67%) and Economics, Econometrics and Finance (56.28%), underscoring the study's core relevance to financial reporting and corporate governance. Other areas such as Social Sciences (11.06%) and Decision Sciences (5.28%) reflect the broader societal and strategic dimensions of financial regulation. Fields like Computer Science, Engineering, and Environmental Science, though less represented, suggest emerging intersections with technology, sustainability, and data-driven financial analysis. The presence of Multidisciplinary research (1.51%) further emphasizes the evolving complexity of IFRS-related studies. Overall, the distribution reveals a strong financial orientation, while also pointing to opportunities for expanded engagement across diverse academic domains.

Highly Cited Authors

Examining the most highly cited authors and institutions offers valuable insight into the core contributors shaping the field of IFRS adoption and EM. These influential works highlight key thematic shifts, dominant research priorities, and the evolving global discourse, providing a clear view of where scholarly impact is most concentrated.

Table 3. Top 10 highly cited articles

No.	Author(s)	Title	Source Title	TC	C/Y
1	Jeanjean T.; Stolowy H. (2008)	Do accounting standards matter? An exploratory analysis of earnings management before and after IFRS adoption	Journal of Accounting and Public Policy	370	20.56
2	van Tendeloo B.; Vanstraelen A. (2005)	Earnings management under German GAAP versus IFRS	European Accounting Review	328	15.62

3	Brown P.; Preiato J.; Tarca A. (2014)	Measuring Country Differences in Enforcement of Accounting Standards: An Audit and Enforcement Proxy	Journal of Business Finance and Accounting	256	21.33
4	Christensen H.B.; Lee E.; Walker M.; Zeng C. (2015)	Incentives or Standards: What Determines Accounting Quality Changes around IFRS Adoption?	European Accounting Review	235	21.36
5	Houqe M.N.; van Zijl T.; Dunstan K.; Karim A.K.M.W. (2012)	The Effect of IFRS Adoption and Investor Protection on Earnings Quality Around the World	International Journal of Accounting	197	14.07
6	Chunhui Liu; Yao L.J.; Hu N.; Liu L. (2011)	The impact of ifrs on accounting quality in a regulated market: An empirical study of China	Journal of Accounting, Auditing and Finance	171	11.40
7	Doukakis L.C. (2014)	The effect of mandatory IFRS adoption on real and accrual-based earnings management activities	Journal of Accounting and Public Policy	169	14.08
8	Iatridis G. (2010)	International Financial Reporting Standards and the quality of financial statement information	International Review of Financial Analysis	156	9.75
9	Filip A.; Raffournier B. (2014)	Financial crisis and earnings management: The european evidence	International Journal of Accounting	153	12.75
10	Leventis S.; Dimitropoulos P.E.; Anandarajan A. (2011)	Loan Loss Provisions, Earnings Management and Capital Management under IFRS: The Case of EU Commercial Banks	Journal of Financial Services Research	146	9.73

Notes: TC = Total Citations C/Y = average citations per year

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Table 3 demonstrates the top 10 highly cited articles in the domain of IFRS adoption and earnings management, reflecting the most influential scholarly contributions to the field. Jeanjean and Stolowy (2008) lead with 370 citations, offering critical insights into the role of accounting standards in curbing earnings management. Other top-cited works, such as those by van Tendeloo and Vanstraelen (2005), and Christensen et al. (2015), explore the comparative impacts of IFRS versus domestic GAAP and the interplay between standards and incentives. Collectively, these articles address themes such as financial reporting quality, enforcement mechanisms, regulatory environments, and market-specific effects of IFRS. The presence of both global and region-specific studies (e.g., China, EU) underscores the field's broad applicability. Average citation rates exceeding 20 per year in several cases demonstrate sustained academic interest. These works form the intellectual backbone of the field and serve as foundational references for advancing research on IFRS-related financial reporting practices.

Total publications and Citations by Year

Understanding how interest in IFRS and EM research has grown over time can offer helpful insights into the field's development. This section looks at yearly trends in publications and citations to see how scholarly attention and influence have changed across the decades.
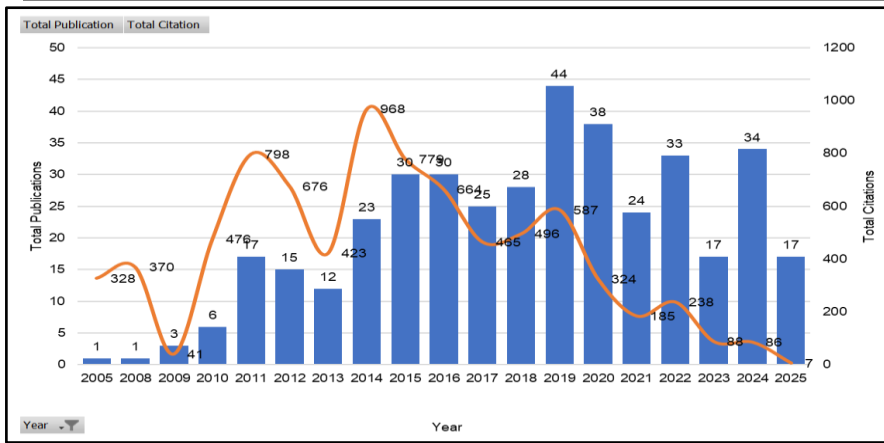
Figure 1. Total Publications and Citations by Year

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Figure 1 illustrates the annual trends in total publications and citations related to IFRS adoption and earnings management from 2005 to 2025. The blue bars represent total publications, which show a steady increase starting from 2010, peaking in 2018 with the highest output the year following widespread implementation of IFRS 15 on revenue recognition. This suggests renewed scholarly interest in response to major standard revisions and maintaining relatively strong levels thereafter. The orange line, indicating total citations, shows fluctuating patterns with notable citation peaks aligning with earlier years of publication activity, particularly between 2012 and 2015. A declining trend in citations is observed in the most recent years, likely due to citation lags common in bibliometric data.

The declining citation trend in recent years may be attributed to normal citation lag and the maturation of earlier foundational studies. Nonetheless, sustained publication levels in recent years indicate continued research engagement. The data highlight the field's evolution and suggest that external regulatory shifts, crises, and standard updates (e.g., IFRS 9, 15, 16) have influenced publication and citation dynamics. There remains strong potential for further impactful contributions that address newer regulatory, governance, and market complexities in financial reporting.

Citation

In bibliometric analysis, citation by author examines how frequently a specific author's works are cited by others, helping to assess the author's scholarly influence, productivity, and contribution to the field. It is commonly used to identify highly influential researchers based on total citations or metrics like the h-index. On the other hand, citation by source focuses on how often articles from a particular journal or publication source are cited. This helps evaluate the prestige and relevance of journals, revealing which outlets are central to a research field. Together, these analyses help map intellectual influence across authors and publication venues.
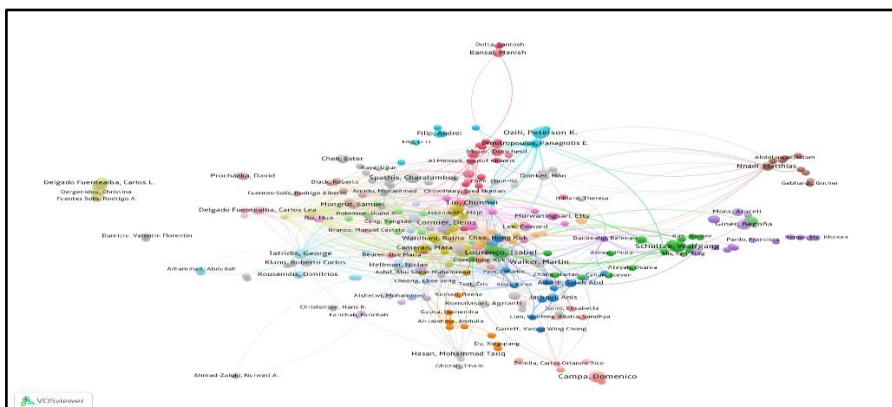

Figure 2: Network visualization of the Citation by author

Source: Generated by the author(s) using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014)

Figure 2 presents a citation network visualization of authors contributing to the field of IFRS adoption and earnings management, developed using VOSviewer. The map reveals a complex and structured citation landscape, with color-coded clusters indicating communities of authors who frequently cite one another. Prominent scholars such as Cormier, Denis; Lourenço, Isabel; and Ozili, Peterson K. are centrally positioned, signifying their extensive influence and integrative role across multiple research streams. Their proximity to various clusters suggests high citation frequency and cross-thematic relevance, marking them as pivotal figures in shaping the intellectual development of the field.

Conversely, authors located on the periphery, such as Banerji, Banish and Delgado Fuentetaja, Carlos, reflect emerging contributors or those operating within more specialized or regionally bounded research areas. The visualization underscores both the consolidation of established scholarly networks and the presence of evolving intellectual trajectories. Importantly, it highlights opportunities to enhance inter-cluster collaboration and theoretical convergence across the broader IFRS–EM research landscape.
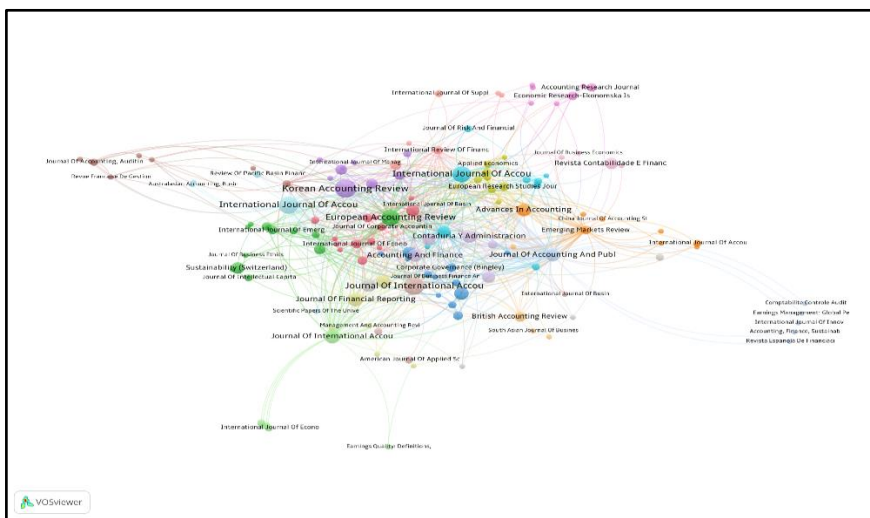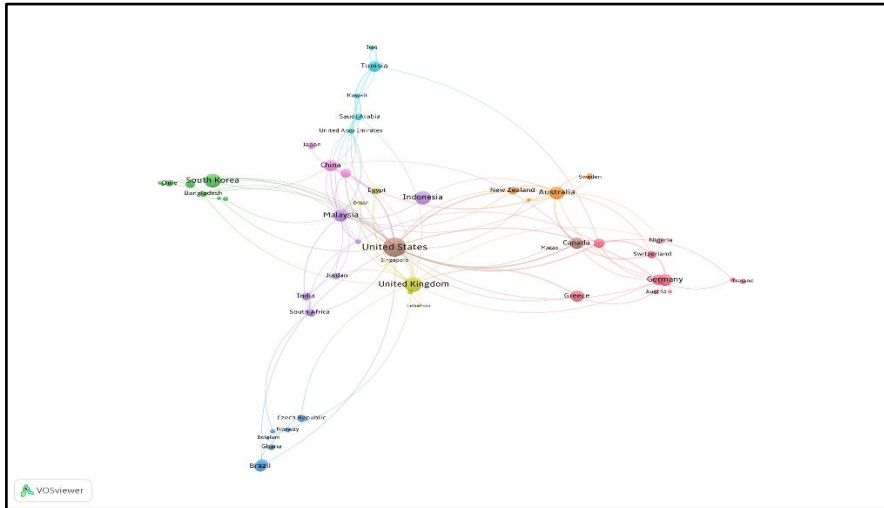

Figure 3: Network visualization of the Citation by Sources

Source: Generated by the author(s) using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014)

Figure 3 presents a network visualization of citation relationships among source journals contributing to the literature on IFRS adoption and earnings management. This visualization, developed using VOSviewer, reveals a structured and densely interconnected network, illustrating the intellectual core and thematic dispersion of scholarly communication within the field.

At the center of the map are several highly influential journals, including the Journal of International Accounting, European Accounting Review, Journal of Accounting and Public Policy, and the Journal of Financial Reporting. These sources exhibit high co-citation frequencies and central positioning, suggesting their pivotal role in shaping foundational debates and anchoring the field's academic discourse. The International Journal of Accounting, British Accounting Review, and Advances in Accounting also emerge as prominent nodes, reinforcing the depth and maturity of the literature and their consistent contributions to IFRS-EM scholarship. Color-coded clusters represent distinct citation communities, often corresponding to either methodological orientations, regional focuses, or thematic specializations (e.g., financial reporting quality, institutional context, or corporate governance). The interconnectivity between clusters reflects a healthy degree of cross-referencing, though some cluster boundaries suggest opportunities for further theoretical integration.

Notably, several peripheral journals, such as Sustainability and the Journal of International Capital, indicate growing interdisciplinary engagement. Their presence points to emerging intersections between IFRS and topics such as environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting, capital market dynamics, and digital finance, signaling new frontiers in accounting research., Overall, the visualization underscores the dominance of well-

established accounting and finance journals in disseminating IFRS-related research. Simultaneously, it highlights the potential for citation diversification and cross-disciplinary collaboration, particularly as the field evolves to address complex global reporting challenges. This insight is instrumental for scholars seeking to position their work within high-impact venues and to foster broader intellectual engagement across academic domains.

Co-authorship

Co-authorship analysis reveals the collaborative structure of research in IFRS adoption and earnings management. By examining author networks, and country-level partnerships, this section highlights patterns of scholarly cooperation, knowledge exchange, and the extent of international and interdisciplinary engagement driving the field forward.

Figure 4: Network visualization of the co-authorship analysis by country

Source: Generated by the author(s) using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014)

Figure 4 presents the co-authorship network by country in the field of IFRS adoption and earnings management, constructed using VOSviewer. The visualization illustrates the structure and extent of international scholarly collaboration, with nodes representing countries and links indicating co-authorship strength. The United States and United Kingdom emerge as dominant hubs at the center of the network, demonstrating their leadership roles in driving cross-border research and serving as critical conduits for academic exchange.

These countries exhibit strong collaborative ties with a diverse range of partners, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Germany, and Australia, suggesting a robust framework for both bilateral and multilateral scholarly engagement. The presence of distinct regional clusters, for instance, those involving South Korea, Japan, China, and Bangladesh, indicates concentrated research activity within Asia and reflects increasing regional academic self-sufficiency and thematic cohesion. Peripheral nodes such as South Africa, Czech Republic, and Lebanon indicate growing but less integrated contributions, highlighting emerging scholarly interest and the potential for further integration into global research streams. The overall network structure underscores a mature yet evolving international research community, with clear opportunities for enhancing inclusivity and fostering deeper collaboration with underrepresented and developing economies. Such expansion is essential to enrich the theoretical and contextual diversity of IFRS-related scholarship on a global scale.

Co-occurance

To uncover the conceptual structure of IFRS and earnings management research, a keyword co-occurrence analysis was conducted. This approach helps identify the most frequently associated terms and thematic clusters, offering insight into dominant research areas, emerging trends, and interdisciplinary linkages within literature.
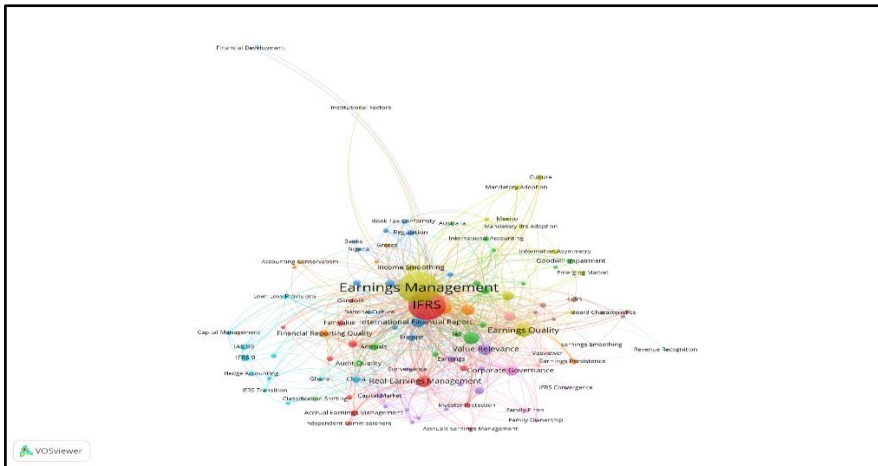
Figure 5. Network visualization of the co-occurance analysis by all keywords

Source: Generated by the author(s) using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014)

Figure 5 presents a keyword co-occurrence network derived from the bibliometric analysis of publications on IFRS adoption and earnings management, visualized using VOSviewer. This mapping illustrates the conceptual structure of the field by identifying clusters of terms that frequently appear together in the literature. Dominating the network are the central keywords "Earnings Management" and "IFRS", confirming their foundational role and thematic centrality in the academic discourse.

Surrounding these core nodes are several densely connected clusters representing major thematic areas. Notable terms such as "Earnings Quality," "Value Relevance," "Corporate Governance," "Audit Quality," and "Financial Reporting Quality" indicate sustained scholarly interest in evaluating the consequences and credibility of IFRS implementation. The emergence of terms like "Real Earnings Management," "IFRS Adoption," and "IFRS Convergence" suggests a shift toward more nuanced, practice-oriented research, particularly in relation to measurement challenges and managerial discretion.

Additionally, the inclusion of interdisciplinary keywords, such as "Institutional Factors," "Financial Development," and "Investor Protection", reflects the field's growing engagement with institutional theory and macroeconomic considerations. This expanding scope signals a maturation of the research domain and highlights opportunities for integrative inquiry that spans accounting, finance, and institutional governance. The network thus serves as a conceptual roadmap, guiding scholars toward underexplored intersections and supporting future research that aligns with evolving regulatory, contextual, and methodological developments in global financial reporting.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Conclusion

This bibliometric review has mapped the intellectual, thematic, and collaborative developments in research on IFRS adoption and earnings management over the past two decades. Based on 398 Scopus-indexed publications, the analysis identifies a growing and increasingly structured body of literature marked by consistent scholarly output, influential contributions, and enhanced international collaboration. Citation and co-citation metrics indicate sustained academic attention and the presence of core intellectual clusters. Co-occurrence analysis reveals prominent themes such as earnings quality, audit quality, and value relevance, alongside emerging interest in institutional factors, financial development, and corporate governance. While the field has been shaped by well-established journals and authors, recent trends show a gradual diversification of contributors and perspectives. However, the geographic and disciplinary concentration of publications suggests opportunities for broader inclusion. Taken together, these findings suggest continued scholarly engagement with IFRS-related issues, while highlighting the potential for expanded cross-border collaboration and deeper contextual inquiry. Future research may benefit from incorporating longitudinal designs, comparative frameworks, and methodological pluralism to address evolving global challenges in financial reporting and earnings management.

Future Research Directions

Future research on IFRS adoption and earnings management can be meaningfully extended through more nuanced bibliometric approaches that capture the dynamic evolution of the field. Longitudinal studies are particularly valuable for tracing thematic and conceptual shifts over time, especially in response to regulatory milestones such as the implementation of IFRS 9, IFRS 15, and IFRS 16. These investigations could offer deeper insights into how scholarly attention evolves alongside changes in international reporting standards and financial governance frameworks.

Geographical and institutional diversity in research also remains an important dimension. Comparative bibliometric analyses across regions, legal origins, or enforcement regimes can uncover contextual disparities in research intensity, thematic focus, and theoretical orientation. Such work would contribute to a more globally inclusive understanding of IFRS-related scholarship and highlight underrepresented academic perspectives.

Furthermore, the application of advanced analytical tools, such as co-word analysis and topic modelling, can help identify latent patterns and emerging research fronts, including those related to sustainability reporting, digitalization, and fintech's intersection with accounting. Enhancing the analysis of global co-authorship networks through dynamic visualizations can further illuminate evolving collaboration structures and the diffusion of knowledge within the IFRS research community.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the publication of this manuscript. No financial, institutional, or personal relationships have influenced the research presented herein.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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