JOURNAL OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Vol.2024:01

Firm Characteristics and Earnings Management Practices (EMP): Comparative Analysis in Sub-Saharan Africa

[1]Saheed Akande Shittu, [2]Morufu Oladehinde Oladejo, [3]Folasade Foyeke Peters, [4]Babatunde Williams Amao

[1]Federal Polytechnic Ayede, Oyo State, Nigeria, [2,3]Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) Ogbomoso, Nigeria, [4]Ajayi Crowther University Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria

Email: shittusa1212@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examines the influence of firms' characteristics on accrual and real Earnings Management Practices (EMP). Firm characteristics include Asset Structure (AS), Capital Structure (CS), Dividend Payout Ratio (DPR), Firm Profitability (FP), Free Cash Flow (FCF), and Working Capital (WC). EMP was proxied by Discretionary Accrual (DA) and Real Earnings Management (REM). Two hundred and seventy-nine (279) non-financial listed firms with the data required for the study from 2010 to 2020 were selected from six (6) countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The study found that AS has a negative and significant influence on DA in Kenya and Tanzania. DPR positively and significantly influence DA in Zimbabwe and WC on DA in South Africa. Also, CS has a positive and significant impact on DA in Nigeria and DPR and CS on DA in Ghana. Also, AS and CS have a positive and significant impact on REM in Ghana. However, AS, FCF, DPR, FP, and WC have a negative and significant effect on REM in Nigeria. The study concludes that DA and REM significantly influence firm characteristics in sub-Saharan Africa. This study fills exiting gaps on EMP in Sub-Saharan Africa by considering the effect of firms' characteristics on both DA and REM. The study expands knowledge on the importance of firm characteristics on EMP in sub-Saharan Africa regions where the majority of countries are developing nations and REM has not received adequate attention.

Keywords

Discretionary accrual, firm characteristics, real earnings management, sub-saharan Africa

Introduction

In order to satisfy the expectations of shareholders and other stakeholders, management may occasionally engage in some earnings manipulation actions when a company is unable to accomplish its shareholder value maximization objective (Neeraj *et al.*, 2019). "There is

Submission: 6 March 2024; **Acceptance:** 23 June 2024

substantial evidence that executives engage in Earnings Management Practices (EMP)" (Roychowdhury, 2006; Abner & Ferrer, 2018). According to Okoye and Nwobi (2020), EMP tends to degrade the quality of earnings and grave consequences which may lead to business failure. In other words, the obligation of checking administrative choices falls on the administration framework designed to ensure investors' benefits. Many managers, accountants, and academics in the financial discipline analyze the issue of EMP over the years (Khanh & Thu, 2019; Ogiriki & Iweias, 2020). Firm characteristics are features that relate to firm either within or outside the firm operation, which can affect or be affected by firm operation either positively or harmfully.

This study considered Asset Structure (AS), Capital Structure (CS), Dividend Payout Ratio (DPR), Firm Profitability (FP), Free Cash Flow (FCF), and Working Capital (WC) as firm characteristics. Prior researches on EMP in the study area have focused almost exclusively on the practice of accrual EMP (Nelson & Ntui, 2018; Okoro, & Ihenyen, 2020; Saline, 2020; Shittu *et al.*, 2022). Real Earnings Management Practices (REM) has not been as widely studied as accrual EMP. Lemma *et al.* (2013 cited in Elikalla, 2017) opined that despite the substantial evidence for the presence of REM in firms, EMP academic literature is largely dominated by investigations of accrual EMP. This study therefore filled these research gaps by in the first instance ensuring that variables such as AS, CS, FCF, DPR, FP & WC as firm characteristics are assessed on both accrual EMP and REM. Secondly, the study also considers six (6) countries against previous studies that considered single country analysis and using time series data while those who considered two or three countries made use of pooled ordinary least square, fixed effect and random effect form of data analysis. Lastly, the study considers more than ten years to accommodate large number of observations and use most recent data as an improvement on previous research to assess the effect of firm characteristics on EMP. More so, study contribute to literature by using dynamic approach using GMM. Furthermore, this study will be the first of its kind on firm characteristics and earnings management practices and will relate its findings to the Global Goals, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), across countries in Africa. The United Nations (UN) SDGs adopted them in 2015 as a worldwide call to action to eradicate poverty, social inequality, and economic instability we face today and to ensure that people enjoy peace and prosperity by the year 2030.

Literature Review

Firm Characteristics and Earnings Management Practices

Firm characteristics included in this study are AS to reflect the ability of the company to survive and compete with other companies, CS to reflect financial distress, FCF to indicate ability to generate more future cash flows, DPR to assess how firms managing their dividend without manipulate earnings, firm profitability to reflect whether manager downplay future income in order to boost current earnings, and working capital to reflect how net operating WC relates to cash flow and in turn market value of equity. EMP is is the alteration of firms' reported economic performance outcomes (Shittu & Alagbe, 2023). According to Elkalla (2017), there are three broad techniques used by firms' manager to manage earnings. The first one is accrual EMP by changing estimates and accounting policies while the second one is REM that has direct cash flow consequences on the operation of the organization. The third one is classification shifting EMP such as shifting the classification of core expenses to special items in the financial statement (Shittu *et al.,* 2023). The primary focus of this study is on accrual and real EMP. Limited studies have

been conducted proving that firm characteristics has significant effect on EMP using both accrual EM and REM. Hence, this study is conceptualized; exploring the opportunistic perspective, it aims to assess the effect of firm characteristics (AS, CS, FCF, DPR, FP & WC) on EMP in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study hypotheses are as follows.

H_{01} Firm characteristics does not accrual EMP among NFLF in sub-Saharan Africa.
H_{02} Firm characteristics does not significantly influence real EMP among NFLF in sub-Saharan Africa.

Theoretical Review

This study is based on signaling theory which considers that all economic agents do not share the same information. The theory of signaling was initiated by Spence (1973) and then developed by Ross (1977). A business may compare itself to other businesses or the industry by sending out signals through EMP. In reality, various corporate stakeholders in market economies have a great deal of incomplete information (Kim *et al.,* 2020). With knowledge of the company's expectations and future prospects, managers may use EMP to properly describe the performance of the business and boost reported earnings (Shittu & Amao, 2022). Consequently, a business uses EMP to transmit signals in order to benchmark itself against other businesses or the industry.

Research Method

The *ex-post factor* research design was used in the study. Five hundred and ninety-nine (599) NFLF from six chosen countries make up the study's population as of December 31, 2020. Additionally, two hundred and seventy-nine (279) NFLF (Ghana, 12; Nigeria, 76; Kenya, 26; Tanzania, 7; South Africa, 127; Zimbabwe, 31) having the necessary data from 2010 to 2020 were selected using a purposive sampling technique out of 3,069 observations. The data was obtained from MachameRatios. To explore the impact of company characteristics on DA and REM, the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) estimator was employed.

Table 1. Measurement of Variables

	Variables	Acronymy	Measurement	Sources
	Dependent			
Y_1	Discretionary Accruals	DA	$\frac{\mathbf{TA}}{\mathrm{Ai}_{t-1}} = \alpha_o\left(\frac{1}{Ai_{t-1}}\right) + \alpha_1\left(\frac{\boldsymbol{\Delta REV - RECi_t}}{Ai_{t-1}}\right) + \alpha_2\left(\frac{\boldsymbol{PPEi_t}}{Ai_{t-1}}\right) + \alpha_3\left(\frac{\boldsymbol{ROAit}}{Ai_{t-1}}\right) + \varepsilon it$ Kothari *et al.* (2005) model.	Saline (2020)
Y_2	Real Earnings Management	REM	Abnormal Operating Cash Flow (AOCF)*-1) + Abnormal Production Costs (APC) - Abnormal Discretionary Expenses (ADEX)*-) Roychowdhury (2006) model	Darmawan *et al.* (2019)
	Independent			

X_1	Asset Structure	AS	Non-Current Asset (NCA) ⁄ by Total Asset (TA).	Shittu *et al.* (2023)
X_2	Capital Structure	CS	Non-Current Liabilities (NCL) ⁄ Total Asset (TA).	Shittu and Onifade. (2023)
X_3	Free Cash Flow	FCF	Net Cash Flow from Operation ⁄ Total Liabilities (TL).	Onaolapo and Shittu, (2022)
X_4	Dividend Payout Ratio	DPR	Cash dividend paid ⁄ Profit After Tax (PAT).	Elkalla (2017)
X_5	Firm Profitability	FP	Earnings divided by Total Assets (TA) - Total Current Liabilities (TCL).	Okafor *et al.* (2018)
X_6	Working Capital	WC	Trade receivable ⁄ Total revenue × 365 days.	Ugrin *et al.* (2017)
	Constant	β_0		
	Slope Coefficient	$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5, \beta_6,$		
	Time period	t		
	Error Term	ε		

Source: Authors

The functional form of model to assess effect of firm characteristics on EPM is given as:

$$DA = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ASit + \beta_2 CSit + \beta_3 FCFit + \beta_4 DPRit + \beta_5 FPit + \beta_6 WCit + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

$$REM = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ASit + \beta_2 CSit + \beta_3 FCFit + \beta_4 DPRit + \beta_5 FPit + \beta_6 WCit + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

Results and Discussion

Table 2. Effect of Firm Characteristics on EMP among in Sub Saharan Africa

Variable		**Eastern Region**		**Southern Region**		**Western Region**	
		Kenya	**Tanzania**	**Zimbabwe**	**S. Africa**	**Nigeria**	**Ghana**
C		**-4.050****	**2.871****	**-10.14****	**-138.8****	**0.077****	-0.031
		(0.000)	(0.004)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.976)
AS	**DA**	**-0.002****	**-0.003****	**0.016****	**0.0479****	**0.0012****	-0.0002
		(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.045)	(0.000)	(0.969)
	REM	-0.0011	**-0.020****	-0.0005	**-0.018****	**-0.002****	**0.0153****
		(0.537)	(0.012)	(0.988)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.030)
CS	**DA**	-0.0001	-0.0003	-8.5506	**0.0037****	**18.734****	**0.0099****
		(0.357)	(0.140)	(0.968)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.047)
	REM	**0.0039****	0.0005	**-0.0032****	**0.0003****	**13.01****	**0.0762****
		(0.038)	(0.295)	(0.029)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)
FCF	**DA**	**-0.757****	0.004	**0.9313****	**30.582****	**-0.001****	**-1.119****
		(0.000)	(0.239)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
	REM	**-1.011****	**0.015****	**0.9895****	**--2.13****	**-1.397****	0.7535
		(0.000)	(0.022)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.634)
DPR	**DA**	0.0005	0.004	**-0.0096****	**3.729****	-0.000	**0.0039****
		(0.179)	(0.239)	(0.011)	(0.000)	(0.949)	(0.020)
	REM	1.52	-0.0002	**-0.0174****	**0.0725****	**-0.013****	-0.1361
		(0.129)	(0.997)	(0.017)	(0.000)	(0.002)	(0.173)

FP	**DA**	**0.0027****	**0.0036****	**0.0451****	**0.1184****	**0.009****	**0.0103****
		(0.000)	(0.011)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
	REM	**0.0026****	**-0.015****	0.0007	**0.0248****	**-0.003****	0.0139
		(0.000)	(0.014)	(0.977)	(0.977)	(0.002)	(0.550)
WC	**DA**	**0.0008****	0.0003	-0.023	**-0.017****	**0.003****	-0.0002
		(0.000)	(0.260)	(0.525)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.929)
	REM	0.0017	**8.57****	-0.036	**-0.974****	**-0.009****	-0.0034
		(0.294)	(0.000)	(0.141)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.843)
Wald chi2 Statistic	**DA**	3658.51	9931.12	945.48	6.540	1143.09	192.35
		(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.929)
	REM	62405.34	143.11	1180.50	1.45	5765.78	27.09
		(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.003)
Observation		26	7	31	127	76	12

Note: ** means significant at 5%. *P*-values are in parenthesis
Source: Authors

Discussion of Findings

The negative and significant effect of AS on DA in Kenya and Tanzania submitted that higher AS leads to lower DA in both Kenya and Tanzania. This in line with empirical findings of Elkalla (2017). Similarly, the higher FCF also leads to lower DA in Kenya which corroborate with Emita et al. (2017) while differ from outcome of Alzoubi (2016). However, positive and significant effect of FP suggested that the higher FP in both Kenya and Tanzania leads to higher DA. This support research finding of Sadiq *et al.* (2019) while negate the results of Anabelen *et al.* (2020). More so, higher WC in Kenya also leads to higher DA compared with Tanzania. This is corroborate with the outcome of Ugrin *et al.* (2017) while negate the research findings of Eldiria *et al.* (2020). The coefficients of WC for Tanzania and CS, DPR for Kenya and Tanzania were insignificant. This suggested that there is no significant effects of these firm characteristics on DA. More so, the positive and significant impact of CS and FP on REM in Kenya suggested that the higher CS and FP in Kenya leads to higher REM compared with Tanzania. This is line with empirical findings of Nanik and Nur, (2019) while differ from the work of Saline (2020). Similarly, higher FCF and WC in Tanzania leads to higher REM compared with Kenya. This results is contradict the research findings of Das *et al.* (2018). The coefficients of AS, DPR and WC for Kenya were insignificant. Likewise, coefficients of CS, DPR and WC for Tanzania were insignificant. This suggest that there is no significant effects of these firm characteristics on REM.

In the Southern region, the positive and significant effect of AS, CS and FP submitted that the higher AS, CS and FP in both Zimbabwe and South Africa leads to higher DA. This is aligning with the research findings of (Neeraj *et al.* 2019; Ogiriki & Iweias, 2020). Similarly, the higher FCF and DPR in South Africa leads to higher DA compared with Zimbabwe. This is consistent with the results of Nelson *et al.* (2018). However, higher DPR and WC leads to lower DA in Zimbabwe and South Africa respectively. This corroborate with the results of Ugrin *et al*. (2017). The coefficients of CS and WC for Zimbabwe were insignificant. This suggested that there is no significant effects of these firm characteristics on DA in Zimbabwe. The positive and significant influence of FCF and FP on REM suggested that the higher FCF and FP in Zimbabwe leads to higher REM. This is consistent with the research findings conducted by Khanh and Thu, (2019).

Also in Zimbabwe, the higher CS and DPR leads to lower REM. This is in support of research findings of Owusu *et al.* (2020) while negate the work of Anabelen *et al.* (2020). However, negative and significant effect of AS, FCF and FP on REM submitted that the higher AS, FCF and WC in South Africa leads to lower REM. This is in line with empirical findings carried out by (Elkalla, 2017; Ghaleb *et al.,* 2020). The coefficients of AS, FP and WC for Zimbabwe and FP for South Africa were insignificant. This implies that there is no significant effects of these firm attributes on REM.

In Western region, the positive and significant impact of CS on DA in Nigeria, DPR and CS in Ghana suggested that the higher CS in Nigeria as well as DPR and CS in Ghana leads to higher DA. Furthermore, the higher AS, FP and WC in Nigeria leads to higher DA. These results agree with those earlier studies carried out by (Lastari & Aeni, 2019; Ogiriki & Iweias, 2020). However, negative and significant effect of FCF on DA in Nigeria and Ghana submitted that the higher FCF leads to lower DA in both Nigeria and Ghana. The result support outcome of empirical findings of Emita *et al.* (2017). The coefficients of DPR in Nigeria as well as, AS FCF and WC in Ghana were insignificant. This suggested that there is no significant effects of these firm attributes on DA. The positive and significant effect of AS and CS on REM in Ghana suggested that the higher AS in Ghana leads to higher REM. Similarly, in Nigeria positive and significant influence of CS suggested that the higher CS in Nigeria leads to higher REM which support the work of Das *et al.* (2018). However, negative and significant of AS, FCF, DPR, FP and WC on REM in Nigeria submitted that, the higher AS, FCF, DPR, FP and WC in Nigeria leads to lower REM compared with Ghana. This corroborate with the research findings of (Ghaleb *et al*., 2020; Saline, 2020). The coefficients of FCF, DPR, FP and WC for Ghana were insignificant. This suggested that there is no significant effects of these firm characteristics on REM.

Conclusion

The study concludes that DA and REM significantly influence by firm characteristics in Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA). This study fill exiting gaps on EMP in Sub-Sahara Africa by considering the influence of firms' characteristics on both DA and REM. To the best our knowledge, majority of previous studies have not examined the influence of firm characteristics on both DA and REM. The study expands knowledge on the importance of firm characteristics on EMP in sub-Saharan Africa regions where the majority of countries are developing nations and REM has not received adequate attention. Thus, the study recommends that non-financial listed firms in sub-Saharan Africa should refrain from using larger percentage of their non-current asset as collateral to obtain debt as it has effect on their asset and capital structure which it eventually leads to REM. Also, there should be more monitoring and control mechanism of firm profitability within and outside the firms to protect and promote investors' wealth, as well as economic growth.

Theoretical and Practical Implication of the Study

A number of studies have been conducted on firm characteristics and EMP both in developed and developing countries, but none of these studies considered six (6) attributes of both DA and REM together across six countries as this study, thus particularly in Africa, where we have an unstable economy. Thus, this study will enhance the existing literature by providing additional insights into firm characteristics and EMP in a developing nation. Furthermore, the United Nations adopted the 17 SDGs as a universal call to action to eradicate poverty, social development, and

environmental protection in a sustainable long-term way and ensure a balance of economic growth in 2015, believing that by 2030 all people will enjoy peace and prosperity. Hence, this study has societal and welfare issues due to the fact that the comfortability of the masses depends on the level of economic stability of a nation. If the companies' managers continue to embark on opportunistic REM within an organization, it will definitely affect their operations to be conducted efficiently, which will eventually negatively affect the economic development of that particular country where they are situated. The social-economic implications would have a multiplier effect among stakeholders because the customer will not have trust in the operation of the companies, which will reduce their patronage and probably reduce their earnings, which may reduce returns for shareholders and reduce the provision of social amenities for the community where the company resides. Also, it may cause employee disengagement, which will negatively affect the general public. Likewise, suppliers will be afraid of supplying raw materials to companies again, while lenders will not be sure whether they will be able to get back their money when they lend companies money to improve their operations. Therefore, these are part of the UN's 17 SDGs, particularly Goal (2), No Poverty, Zero Hunger. In a situation where the aforementioned occurred, it would have caused poverty and hunger. Similarly, goal nine, which is industry, innovation, and infrastructure, will be drastically reduced. In addition, sustainable cities and communities, as well as responsible consumption and production, which are goals (11) and (12), respectively, will jeopardize what the UN planned to eradicate before the year 2030.

Limitation and Suggestion for Further Study

The study encounters some difficulty in accessing data of some companies. More so, further research could focus on macro/ country level attributes in SSA rather than only focused on firm characteristics.

References

Abner, R. A., & Ferrer, R. C. (2018). Impact of real earnings management on financial performance and firm value: Evidence from The Philippines. Institute for Global Business Research Conference Proceedings, *2*(1), 36–42.

Alzoubi, E. S., (2016). Audit quality and earnings management: evidence from Jordan, *Journal of Applied Accounting Research, 17* (2), 170-189.

Anabelen, T. P., Younghwan, L. & Jeong, H. K. (2020). Effect of Leverage on Real Earnings Management: *Evidence from Korea. MPDI. 3*(5), 1-20

Darmawan, P. E., Sutrisno, T. & Mardiati, E. (2019). Accrual Earnings Management and Real Earnings Management: Increase or Destroy Firm Value? *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding. 6*(2), 8-19

Das, R. C., Mishra, C. S. & Rajib. P. (2018). Firm-specific Parameters and Earnings Management: A Study in the Indian Context. *Global Business Review* 19(5), 1240–1260

ElDiria, M., Lambrinoudakisb, C., & Alhadab, M. (2020). Corporate governance and earnings management in concentrated markets. *Journal of Business Research, 10*(8), 291–306

Elkalla, T. (2017). An Empirical Investigation of Earnings Management in the MENA Region. *Unpublished Ph.D dissertation. University of the West of England*.

Emita, W. A. Rusmin R. B. Hartadi, J. E., (2017)," The Role of Audit Quality and Culture Influence on Earnings Management in Companies with Excessive Free Cash Flow: Evidence from the Asia-Pacific region ", *International Journal of Accounting & Information Management, 25*(1), 1-37

Ghaleb, B. A. Kamardin, H. & Tabash, M. I. (2020) Family ownership concentration and real earnings management: Empirical evidence from an emerging market, Cogent Economics & Finance, 8:1, 1751488

Khanh, T. & Thu, J. (2019). The effect of financial leverage on real and accrual-based earnings management in Vietnamese firms. *Economics and Sociology, 12*(4), 299-312.

Kim, J. H., Lee, S. H., & Yoo, Y. K. (2020) Real earnings management and the cost of debt capital: international evidence, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Accounting and Economics*, *27*(2), 151-172,

Lastari, N. & Aeni, N. (2019). The Effect of Audit Quality and Earnings Management on Firm Performance. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 3*(7), 36-41

Lemma, T., Negash, M., & Mlilo, M. (2013). Determinants of Earnings Management: Evidence from around the World, *www.ssrn.com*.

Nanik, L., & Nur, A. (2019) *The Effect of Audit Quality and Earnings Management on Firm Performanc.* Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, *3*(77), 36-41

Neeraj, K. S., Amit, K., Nandita, L., Satvik, B., & Tanya, A. (2019). Impact of Corporate Governance on Earnings Management: Large Sample Evidence from India, *Asian Economic and Financial Review*, 9(12), 1335-1345.

Nelson, M. W., & Ntui, P. P. (2018). Corporate governance compliance and accrual earnings management in eastern Africa: Evidence from Kenya and Tanzania, *Managerial Auditing Journal, 33*(2), 171-191.

Ogiriki, T., & Iweias, S. S., (2020). Financial Leverage on Earnings Management of Quoted Manufacturing Firms in Nigeria: *International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration, 6*(4), 7-21

Okafor, T. G., Ezeagba, C. E., & Onyali, C. I. (2018). Effect of Earnings Management on Performance of Corporate Organisation in Nigeria, *International Journal of Business Management and Economic Review*. *1*(3), 88-101

Okoro, E. G. & Ihenyen, C. J. (2020). Does earnings management exert pressure on firms' return on assets and equity? The case of sub-saharan africa. Faculty of economics, university of kragujevac. *22*(3), 207-218

Okoye, E. I., and Nwobi, E. G. (2020). Effect of Earnings Management on Bankruptcy Predicting Model: Evidence from Nigerian Banks. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development, 4*(2), 888-905, *e-ISSN*, 2456-6470.

Onaolapo, A. R. & Shittu, S. A. (2022). Factors Influencing Earnings Management Practices among listed Companies in Nigeria: Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) Approach. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management Review.* 5(1): 207-220. www.ijssmr.org Doi.org/10.37602/IJSSMR.2022.5114

Owusu, A., Zalata, A. M., Omoteso, K., & Elamer, A. A. (2020). Is There a Trade-Off Between Accrual-Based and Real Earnings Management Activities in the Presence of Male Auditors? *Journal of Business Ethics, 18*(11), 386-395

Ross, S., (1977). The determination of capital structure: the incentive signaling approach. *Bell Journal of Economics, 3*(2) 40-49

Roychowdhury, S. (2006). Earnings management through real activities manipulation. *Journal of Accounting and Economics, 42* (3): 335-370.

Sadiq, M., Othman, Z. & Keong, O. C. (2019). A Study of Interaction Effects of Political Influences And Earnings Management on Organisational Performance. *Asian Economic and Financial Review*. *9(*5), 642-653

Saline, O. (2020). Ownership Structure and Earnings Managemet. Evidence from Listed non-financial companies in Kenya. Unpublished MSc. Thesis, School of Business, University of Nairobi.

Shittu, S. A. & Alagbe, E. A. (2023). Nexus between Tax Sheltering and Earnings Management of Listed Non-financial firms in Nigeria. *MPRI-JFRPD, International Journal of Financial Research and Business Development. 2*(1), 249-258, ISSN: 1115-8530

Shittu, S. A. & Amao, B. W. (2022). Firm Attributes and Real Earnings Management in Nigeria. *Fuoye Journal of Accounting and Management 5*(1), 165-179. www.fjam.fuoye.edu.ng; ISSN: 2805-3672 (Print), 2814-1717 (Online)

Shittu, S. A. & Onifade, H. O. (2023). Capital Structure and Earnings Management Practices: Empirical Analysis in Sub-Sahara Africa. *Journal of Finance and Accounting. 11*(5), 155-163. doi: 10.11648/j.jfa.20231105.12

Shittu, S. A., Badmus, A. & Onifade, H. O. (2022). Tax Management and Real Earnings Management in Nigeria. Management Science Review (MSR). *Official Journal of Management Sciences Review, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria. 13*(1), 210-223

Shittu, S. A., Onifade, H. O., Ajibola, K. T., & Aminu, S. O. (2023). Accrual and Real Earnings Management: Firm Value Analysis. Acta Universitatis Bohemiae Meridionalis, *26*(2), DOI 10.32725/acta.2023.009, ISSN 2336-4297 (online)

Spence, M., (1973). Job market signaling. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 87(3):355-374.

Ugrin, J. C., Mason, T. W. & Emuley, A. (2017). Culture's consequence: The relationship between income-increasing earnings management and IAS/IFRS adoption across cultures. Advancing in Accouting. *2*(5); 1-12