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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the association between the CEO characteristics and EM practices of non-financial firms on the Amman Stock Exchange. Based on 1,277 firm-year observations from 2010 to 2018, four characteristics were examined: tenure, age, experience, and ownership. The results show that the EM practices of CEOs were higher in the early years of their service compared with later years. The results also show that CEOs' ownership plays an important role in increasing the magnitude of EM to maximize their compensation. However, the age and expertise of CEOs did not have any role in either increasing or decreasing discretionary accruals levels. This study contributes to the literature by supporting the perspective that CEOs are highly motivated to alter earnings when they start leading their firms, to send positive signals to stakeholders.

Keywords:
tenure, age, experience, ownership, earnings management, Amman Stock Exchange

1. Introduction
Financial reporting aims to reflect the actual financial position of firms, which in turn helps the users of financial statements make their decisions based on relevant information. Financial information, however, can be distorted or manipulated through several accounting treatments exercised by firms' managers to meet specific benchmarks (i.e. meet analysts' forecasts). These treatments are called earnings management (EM), where managers may try to mislead stakeholders regarding the real financial performance of their firms (Deegan, 2014). A firm's chief executive officer (CEO) has the authority to access all relevant information regarding the firm's operations and activities. This superiority of information increases his/her ability to manage earnings. Previous studies have presented three types of incentives where CEOs may have to exercise their discretion over reported earnings. The first is capital market incentives, where managers have an incentive to alter their reported earnings to meet analysts' forecasts, or to maintain performance by increasing report earnings or reversing a decrease in earnings (Gunny, 2010). Second is regulatory and tax incentives, where CEOs may adjust earnings to avoid the costs associated with governmental regulations (Chen & Zhang, 2014). The third type of incentive pertaining to EM is contractual incentives, where CEOs may manipulate earnings to maximise their own compensation (Ali & Zhang, 2015). The contractual incentives motivate the current study to investigate the Jordanian capital market and test whether firms' CEOs engage in EM practices to maximise their own benefits. More interestingly, there are very limited studies worldwide regarding the extent and direction of EM during CEOs' service. Furthermore, there are limited studies that aim to analyse EM behaviour in a developing context like Jordan, given that

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CEO characteristics and earnings management
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ABSTRACT
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This study investigates the association between the CEO characteristics and EM practices of non-financial firms on the Amman Stock Exchange. Based on 1,277 firm-year observations from 2010 to 2018, four characteristics were examined: tenure, age, experience, and ownership. The results show that the EM practices of CEOs were higher in the early years of their service compared with later years. The results also show that CEOs' ownership plays an important role in increasing the magnitude of EM to maximize their compensation. However, the age and expertise of CEOs did not have any role in either increasing or decreasing discretionary accruals levels. This study contributes to the literature by supporting the perspective that CEOs are highly motivated to alter earnings when they start leading their firms, to send positive signals to stakeholders.

1. Introduction

Financial reporting aims to reflect the actual financial position of firms, which in turn helps the users of financial statements make their decisions based on relevant information. Financial information, however, can be distorted or manipulated through several accounting treatments exercised by firms' managers to meet specific benchmarks (i.e. meet analysts' forecasts). These treatments are called earnings management (EM), where managers may try to mislead stakeholders regarding the real financial performance of their firms (Deegan, 2014). A firm's chief executive officer (CEO) has the authority to access all relevant information regarding the firm's operations and activities. This superiority of information increases his/her ability to manage earnings. Previous studies have presented three types of incentives where CEOs may have to exercise their discretion over reported earnings. The first is capital market incentives, where managers have an incentive to alter their reported earnings to meet analysts' forecasts, or to maintain performance by increasing report earnings or reversing a decrease in earnings (Gunny, 2010). Second is regulatory and tax incentives, where CEOs may adjust earnings to avoid the costs associated with governmental regulations (Chen & Zhang, 2014). The third type of incentive pertaining to EM is contractual incentives, where CEOs may manipulate earnings to maximise their own compensation (Ali & Zhang, 2015). The contractual incentives motivate the current study to investigate the Jordanian capital market and test whether firms' CEOs engage in EM practices to maximise their own benefits. More interestingly, there are very limited studies worldwide regarding the extent and direction of EM during CEOs' service. Furthermore, there are limited studies that aim to analyse EM behaviour in a developing context like Jordan, given that

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provides positive future cash flow [25].Another group of researchers focused on CEOs' last year [1,2,3,5,8,15,16,26,27]. [48] and Thanetsunthorn [49] showed that collectivism and uncertainty avoidance facilitates CSR, whereas Lonnou and Serafeim [50] concluded that individualism is related to a high level of CSR. 2009, 22, 783–827. The Effect of Audit Engagement Profitability on Audit Quality: Based on the Per-Rank Audit Hours Data. From a non-routine CEO change sample. Pourciau [15] discovered an earning-decreasing accrual and write-offs not only in the first year but also in the final year of a CEO's departure. [19], who suggested that at the early stage CEOs may not only try to signal their ability by showing short-term performance, but also will have incentives to invest in long-term projects because enduring initial investment can pay off later, which makes it easier for the CEO to achieve excellent performance later in his/her tenure. 1987, 42, 643–661. Corp. According to Xie et al. [38], boards and audit committees with more active and financially knowledgeable members are associated with lower earnings management. In the second year of CEO tenure, CSR declined but was statistically insignificant (columns 2 and 3). Available online: (accessed on 16 September 2019). Amfiteatru Econ. [Google Scholar] [CrossRef][Brickley, J.A.; Linck, J.S.; Coles, J.L. What happens to CEOs after they retire? 2004, 79, 305–328. As expected, we discovered that CSR was decreased around the two periods, the beginning and ending of CSR tenure, and good governance can mitigate this occurrence, which is consistent with what can be inferred from Ali and Zhang [8]. A cross-firm analysis of the impact of corporate governance on the East Asian financial crisis. 2017, 19, 464–476. Horiz. Such behaviors of the new CEO do not align with shareholder interests, implying that a CEO who is newly employed and whose position is not yet secured may lack a long-term perspective that supports shareholder value. [Google Scholar] [CrossRef][Bebchuk, L.; Cohen, A.; Ferrell, A. These results were not consistent with the implication from Ali and Zhang [8] and might be in line with Chen et al. As some variables in Table 1 are not the raw data but the natural logarithm version to enhance data distribution and coefficient interpretation, care should be taken as they do not show the original levels.The correlation matrix in Table 2 shows that there was no significant relationship among CSR, ceoffirst, and ceolast, implying that CSR was not different in the beginning and ending periods of tenure, contrary to our expectation. It is reasonable to assume that only good governance effectively monitors its new agent to act for shareholders from the beginning.Beyond only their early years, a CEO may also show short-termism in his/her last year of tenure due to his/her loss of career concern. In Chen et al.'s [19] test, during their second and third years, CEOs achieved higher CSR scores than the remainder of their tenure. 2014, 28, 297–312. For corporate governance, we employed the characteristics of inside monitoring such as board independence, board meeting frequency, CEO duality, and board diversity. In Ali and Zhang's [8] study, discretionary accruals were higher in the second and third years of CEO tenure compared with other periods, and abnormal discretionary expenses were smaller in the first three years. The limitation of this paper is that we did not thoroughly investigate the moderating effects of governance. 2012, 87, 761–796. 2002, 64, 215–241. Because Korean companies often do not include female directors on the board and the companies that employ female directors on the board commonly do not hire multiple female directors, the original data were already close to dummy variables. 1999, 42, 564–576. However, as early researchers such as Dechow and Sloan [1] and Murphy and Zimmerman [2] did not agree with each other, later studies also failed to find consistent results. Bus. 2018, 25, 1074–1086. For example, in DeAngelo's [14] paper, the new management tends to decrease earnings because the former management is to be blamed and because such a bath allows a big rebound the next year. 2015, 32, 608–638. [19], who argued that CEOs might invest in CSR in their early stage and harvest the benefits in their later years; however, unlike Chen et al. Decis. The negative effect only at the final stage may be in line with Chen et al. CSR is the natural log of KEJl and showed a mean of 4.120. The dangers of dispersal of responsibilities. (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)(7)(8)(9)(10)(11)(12)(13)(14)(15)(16)(17)(18)(19)(1) CSR1(2) ceoffirst10.00810.882(3) ceolast0.010–0.02710.8600.614(4) independent0.0960.1740.09710.0810.0010.076(5) frequency0.063–0.024–0.0270.01510.2520.6600.6220.792(6) ceo\_quality0.153–0.0280.1790.0120.07810.0050.6150.0010.8300.156(7) diversity0.056–0.0130.0300.020–0.073–0.07610.2950.8130.5760.7110.1830.169(8) size0.1540.1440.0180.409–0.053–0.0020.07510.0040.0070.743

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