sciendo

Mapping the Landscape of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with a setting in Corporate Governance Research

Raluca-Andreea ACHIM*
Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania
**Corresponding author, achimraluca19@stud.ase.ro*

Abstract. *In recent years there has been a growing interest in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) topics, as key elements in addressing current economic and social challenges. This article aims to provide insights regarding the evolution of DEI in the context of corporate governance, presenting an analysis of publications' structure and the major themes on the topic. Bibliometric techniques are utilized along with frequency and descriptive statistics. A final sample of 983 scientific publications from the Web of Science database were analyzed. The dynamic of publications is approached by delineating the time frame according to the geographical evolution of literature. Descriptive analysis is used to examine the characteristics of papers, to identify the best documented and the most cited ones. Network analysis projected in VOS viewer is applied to present the scientific collaboration between authors and universities, along with the keyword co-occurrence. The results emphasize that DEI research has increased significantly in the past five years, with a preponderance of publications from developed countries. The papers published in journals are better documented and more cited compared to conference proceedings. Muchmore, most articles emphasize the importance of gender diversity in corporate boards. This study provides a valuable contribution for academia, offering a comprehensive overview of the current state of DEI research, and for businesses by synthesizing information on a salient issue of interest to decision-makers and practitioners. Therefore, this contributes to a more profound understanding of the field and provides guidance for future research.*

Keywords: Diversity, equity, and inclusion, DEI, Corporate governance, Accounting, Bibliometric analysis

Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increasing global prevalence of initiatives promoting diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities, becoming strategic elements within organizations worldwide. Throughout the years, the focus of both regulatory frameworks and academic research has been on the establishment of gender equality, and the alleviation of pay disparities, promoting the transparency of gender representation. In the light of the contemporary globalized world and social movements, it is imperative to acknowledge that diversity encompasses a multifaceted array of dimensions, not only gender equality, but also cultural and socio-economic diversity. Therefore, investors' motivation for ongoing commitment to issues of inclusive culture can be attributed to the influence of social movements fostering companies to establish ambitious DEI targets. However, a survey conducted by Bangemann (2024) to understand European companies' perspectives on DEI reveals that less than 50% of companies have implemented measures for other forms of diversity besides gender diversity. Thus, it is shown that European companies continue to face challenges in creating a more inclusive cultural environment: only 7% of organizations are engaged in substantial development of a diverse and inclusive workplace culture.

Professional bodies, regulators and policy makers are demonstrating an increasing interest in supporting initiatives to promote an integrated culture of DEI. The ongoing expansion of sustainable reporting has also incorporated discussions concerning diversity. The United Nations (2015) has incorporated two Sustainable Development Goals that are explicitly oriented towards

DOI: 10.2478/picbe-2025-0423

promoting DEI initiatives: SDG 5 Gender Equality and SDG 10 Reducing inequality. The European Commission (2023) has also adopted policies to strengthen Europe's commitment to creating an inclusive culture that reflects the heterogenous composition of society. These initiatives cover a wide range of social issues, including gender inequalities, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and other social categories that are considered discriminated against. Hence, the present study focuses on the concept of DEI to indicate the existence of a broad range of human inequalities and attributes, not limited to gender diversity.

This study aims to examine the multifaceted nature of DEI and to understand how these are essential elements within organizational contexts. Contrary to extant research that focuses on systematic literature review, this study goes beyond the narrow focus on the diversity component of the DEI concept, only, encompassing a comprehensive array of dimensions. To answer the five research questions, this study conducts a bibliometric analysis on a sample of 983 articles, to comprehend the current state of knowledge in this area, and to determine the changes made over time. To this end, data was collected through the Web of Science database, and network analysis was conducted using VOS viewer. Considering the emergent stage of research in the aforementioned areas, the database encompasses the main aspects concerning the establishment of an integrated culture in the context of various factors influencing the business environment. Therefore, this approach offers a robust and comprehensive mapping of the extant literature on DEI under three research themes: (i) DEI - corporate governance; (ii) DEI – accounting and audit profession; (iii) DEI- corporate reporting.

Contribution of research is ensured by adopting a perspective that integrates the presence of DEI on corporate boards with the influence that DEI concept exerts on corporate reporting within the accounting and auditing professions. Hence, it addresses a significant gap in the extant literature by including more than one category of diversity and by considering broader organizational issues. This may contribute to the identification of research areas that warrant future investigation, with significant implications for the scientific community and it provides businesses with the necessary support to facilitate the integration of DEI into their strategic initiatives.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The Literature review section covers an overview of the existing literature on DEI and develops the research questions. The Methodology section focuses on the research approach, describing data collection and processing, while the key findings are debated in the Results and discussions section. The Conclusion section provides an overview of the findings, limitations, and perspectives for future research.

Literature review

The confluence of socio-cultural transformation and globalization has led to a substantial increase in workforce diversity, forcing organizations to prioritize the diversification of their workforce, fostering inclusion and equal opportunities for enhancing competitiveness, innovation and performance. As organizations began to recognize the benefits of a diverse workforce, they began to develop strategies to promote DEI. Consequently, there has been a substantial increase in the number of organizations prioritizing DEI initiatives as strategic considerations, driven by the need to address the challenges faced by the current economic and social environment (van Bommel et al., 2023). A critical aspect of this endeavor is the establishment of a cultural climate that not only acknowledges the significance of diversity but also engages in proactive actions to support it. Baker et al. (2024) draw attention to the way in which companies include in their reports aspects about how they ensure DEI, but without taking real initiatives to support an inclusive and equitable workspace.

Diversity, equity and inclusion describe the consideration of distinct approaches, but somehow interconnected, of marginalized social identities. Diversity encompasses the multitude of characteristics that define the concept of uniqueness of individuals. Nevertheless, diversity in the context of corporate governance refers to the component of boards of directors that includes both demographic and cognitive elements that help organizations to achieve their goals (Behlau et al., 2023; Backer et al., 2020). Inclusion is described as the implication of all types of social categories in the organizational process (van Bommel et al., 2024). Equity refers to ensuring equal access to all social minorities in the workplace through anti-discrimination practices (Fitzsimmons et al., 2023). These three elements are interconnected, because diversity can't be achieved without ensuring an inclusive climate that promotes equal opportunities.

In response to this societal imperative, government bodies are taking actions to enhance diversity and inclusion of representation on corporate boards (Mumu et al., 2022). This is due to the importance of the board in providing strategic guidance to achieve objectives, optimal allocation of resources, and promoting long-term values (Behlau et al., 2023). To fulfill these responsibilities, it must adapt their strategies to different perspectives. Given the fundamental role of the board in the functioning of an organization, it is necessary to ensure a heterogeneous representation (Sundarasen et al. 2024). Thus, it is intended to guarantee an integrated culture of DEI in the context of corporate governance framework by ensuring the representation of diverse perspectives and expertise.

Given the innovative nature of the concept of DEI in corporate governance, a limited amount of research has focused on conducting a systematic literature review. Despite this, most of this research was limited to presenting only the concept of board diversity. Mumu et al. (2024) examine literature on corporate governance from the gender diversity perspective, while Ghio et al. (2024), Behlau et al. (2023) and Baker et al. (2020) focus on all aspects of board diversity when analyzing the evolution of studies in the field. Sundarasen et al. (2024) also explore the research evolution on board diversity, but in association with ESG reporting. van Bommel et al. (2024) conduct a bibliometric analysis to present the evolution of diversity and inclusion literature. Fitzsimmons et al. (2023) provides an overview of diversity, equity, and inclusion research in international business to address the challenges for global DEI initiatives and social justice.

In the context of exploring the DEI research evolution on corporate governance, five research questions are formulated:

RQ1. How has the research on DEI in corporate governance developed?

RQ2. Which are the main characteristics of DEI in corporate governance research, by type of publication?

RQ3. Which are the most active journals publishing on DEI topics in corporate governance research?

RQ4. Which are the top ten most cited articles on DEI topics and their main contributions?

RQ5. How the research on DEI in corporate governance may be characterized in terms of co-authorship, co-affiliation, and co-occurrence of keywords?

Methodology

This study provides a review of scientific papers published on DEI aiming at analyzing the evolution of research in different regions over time, the main aspects investigated, along with a quantitative overview of the academic landscape, thereby facilitating comprehension of the research trends, geographical and institutional contributions, and collaboration networks. This study applied a bibliometric analysis to analyze the papers that deal with DEI in the accounting literature, exploring the complex structure of scientific collaborations. A descriptive analysis is used to illustrate the characteristics of papers published in this field, aiming to show the main contributions of the most cited articles. The frequency analysis examined the evolution of publications, including information on their type and the region with the most contributions.

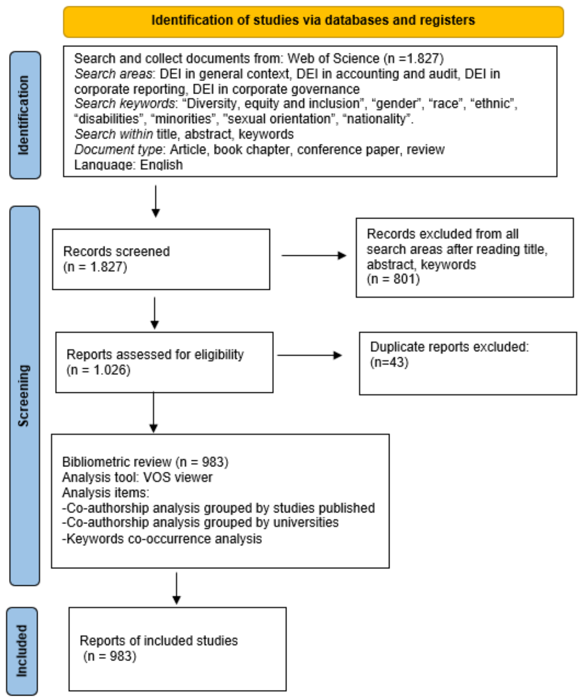

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram Example of figure

Source: Author's own creation.

A bibliometric analysis involves the formulation of a structured review protocol, which describes the methodological steps to be followed. The protocol for conducting this bibliometric analysis was designed according to Ghio et al. (2024), Baker et al. (2020). To outline the research protocol PRISMA procedure was used (Figure 1). Consequently, three main steps have been established. The initial step entailed the identification of the database from which relevant publications would be extracted and the search string used to ensure the relevance of publications. In order to ensure an exhaustive representation of studies in different areas, the Web of Science Core Collection Database was utilized for secondary data collection. The establishment of search terms was based on a comprehensive review of the extant literature and the regulatory framework developed by the European Union and United Nations. The first search includes terms related to DEI and different combinations of the terms used in this context in combination with terms of corporate governance, accounting, audit, reporting, workplace. Then, three different searches were conducted regarding DEI in accordance with corporate governance, accounting and audit profession and corporate reporting. This time the database was expanded to encompass the depth of the concept, including different dimensions of DEI, presented in Figure 1. The search was limited to the WOS categories such as: business, management, finance, economics. This study is not constrained by a particular time frame, as it has been designed to explore the integrated development of this research field. The second stage represents the collection and processing of data. Thus, articles collected were analyzed to determine which were related to the study's scope.

Articles that contained the search terms but without reference to the concept of DEI were excluded. For instance, articles that contained "equity" were predominantly associated with financial research, a problem that was also highlighted by van Bommel et al. (2014) and Fitzsimmons et al. (2023). In the third stage, the analytical framework was established to facilitate the systematic examination and organization of the database. A list of variables was chosen to characterize the publications: title, authors, affiliation, abstract, keywords, publication type and year, cited reference count, times cited. Bibliometric analysis was performed using VOS viewer software to create science mapping through network visualization.

Results and discussions

The longitudinal and geographical evolution of DEI research

The first research question RQ1 addresses the trend of research, examining information about papers published over the years. The evolution of DEI research in the context of corporate governance is determined based on the absolute and relative number of publications per time period in different regions (Table 1). The analysis highlights the emphasis attributed to DEI by researchers affiliated with universities in different regions. The most productive region in terms of the volume of publications is Europe (33.37%), followed by North America (22.69%). Subsequently, 15.86% of studies are from cross-national affiliations and 15.76% from Asia. A limited number of studies are from Australia (7.22%), Africa (3.76%) or South America (1.32%).

Table 1. Papers published by region

Period	Total		Africa	Asia	Australia	Europe	North America	South America	Cross-National
	No. of studies	%							
1993-1999	12	1.22%	-	1	-	2	8	-	1
2000-2009	33	3.36%	1	-	3	10	16	-	3
2010-2019	329	33.47%	14	39	29	149	59	6	33
2020-2025	609	61.95%	22	115	39	167	140	7	119
Total	983	100.00%	37	155	71	328	223	13	156

Source: Authors' own research.

During the period from 1993 to 1999, the number of researchers who have examined DEI topics is relatively low, with only 12 studies. The research is concentrated in North America, with 8 publications. The probable reason for the predominance of publications in the United States can be attributed to the fact that it was one of the largest developed countries to introduce the Affirmative Action Plan, with the aim to eliminate hiring discriminations. Thus, it can be explained the way studies published in this period focus on gender discrimination in the workplace, highlighting disparities in the accounting and auditing profession. In the period 2000-2009, there has been a variety of studies examining the concept of diversity, not limited to only gender diversity in the accounting profession. This period is marked by the occurrence of a financial crisis that has caused a decrease in confidence in financial institutions and the government's capacity to effectively manage the economy. This has led to a greater focus on examining the impact of board diversity on financial performance. This result is consistent with the findings of van Bommel et al. (2023). The period between 2010-2019 indicates a shift in the geographical distribution of studies, with a growing number of articles published in Europe. There was a significant increase in the development of an integrated workspace that promotes DEI, considering the adoption of SDGs by the United Nations (2015). In the last five years, publishing interest has increased, with the total number of studies being 609, representing 61.95% of the sample. These results can be explained by the adoption of various actions and regulations around the world, like the policies adopted by the European Commission (2023) for fostering diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Characteristics of research on DEI in corporate governance

To respond to the second research question RQ2 a descriptive analysis detailed by publication type is approached to find the most cited and better documented type of publication. A content analysis is conducted to find the significance of the most cited articles and the journal where they are published. The frequency of publication type (Table 2) indicates that the scientific journals represent a distinctive category of publications (941 papers, 95.73%), characterized by their significant impact within the academic field. Studies published in conference proceedings represent only 2.95% (29 papers) of the sample, while those published in book chapter 1.32% (13 papers).

The results of descriptive statistics analysis displayed in Table 2 advances the analysis of research question RQ2, showing a significant difference among publication types. The variables used to define the characteristics refer to the total number of bibliographic references, the number of times a paper is cited in *Web of Science Core Collection* and in *All databases.*

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for papers' characteristics, grouped by publication type

	Publication Type	Valid N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cited reference count	Journal	941	0	675	81.74	41.67
	Conference	29	4	65	28.59	18.11
	Book Chapter	13	0	104	59	31.31
Times cited (WOS Core Collection)	Journal	941	0	1181	26.36	69.61
	Conference	29	0	27	1.72	5.13
	Book Chapter	13	0	11	3.23	3.47
Times cited (All database)	Journal	941	0	1316	29.69	78.35
	Conference	29	0	29	1.82	5.48
	Book Chapter	13	0	11	3.84	4.01

Source: Authors' own research.

The cited reference count provides an overview of the total number of studies cited by the authors in their research. The minimum limit varies between 0 and 4, while the maximum limit ranges between 65 and 675. Most cited references are from scientific journals. This may be explained by the fact that science journals are considered credible sources due to their rigorously, ensuring the validity of the information published.

The number of times publications are cited is analysis to indicate which publication type has the most impactful research in the field. The minimum value is 0 and the maximum varies between 1181 and 1316, depending on the publication type. The minimum value can be explained by the fact that most studies that investigated DEI were published within the past two years. Studies that have been cited most frequently have been published in leading journals, followed by those published in conference proceedings and book chapters.

These findings illustrate an accurate documentation of research published in scientific journals and serve to reinforce the scientific validation of journals within the academic field.

In response to the third research question RQ3, it is further analyzed the ten highest-publishing journals that have published articles related to DEI issues (Table 3). The emphasis on publications based on journals serves to outline the multidisciplinary character of this domain.

Table 3. Top of the most active journals publishing in the field based on the number of citations

Journal	No. of publications	No. of citations
Equality Diversity and Inclusion	47	2882
Journal of Business Ethics	41	3441
Gender in Management	26	1821
Corporate Governance-The International Journal of Business in Society	24	2355
Managerial Auditing Journal	19	1399
Issues in Accounting Education	17	1167
Accounting Organizations and Society	16	1479
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	16	1291
Accounting Auditing & Accountability Journal	15	1229
Critical Perspectives on Accounting	15	1380

Source: Authors' own research.

This analysis shows that the publications are spread across journals in various areas such as ethics, management, corporate governance, economics, accounting. The findings show the correlation between the subject matter and the journal with the highest number of publications, a journal that offers a critical and rigorous exploration of issues related to DEI. Similar results were obtained by van Bommel et al. (2023).

The fourth research question RQ4 was aimed at further presenting the contribution of the most cited articles in the evolution of DEI research. A meta-analysis of the top 10 cited papers was performed, outlying the prominent topics and the methods used. Table 4 presents the top 10 articles ranked by citations.

Table 4. Top 10 most cited articles

Title of the paper	Authors	Year	Total citation
Gender Diversity in the Boardroom and Firm Financial Performance	Campbell & Minguez-Vera	2008	1316
The Gender and Ethnic Diversity of US Boards and Board Committees and Firm Financial Performance	Carter et al.	2010	1104
Women Directors on Corporate Boards: From Tokenism to Critical Mass	Torchia et al.	2011	818
Exploring social desirability bias	Chung & Monroe	2003	446
Legislating a Woman's Seat on the Board: Institutional Factors Driving Gender Quotas for Boards of Directors	Terjesen et al.	2015	390
The gender composition of corporate boards: A review and research agenda	Kirsch	2018	336
Does Board Gender Diversity Influence Financial Performance? Evidence from Spain	Reguera-Alvarado et al.	2017	336
The Effects of Women on Corporate Boards on Firm Value, Financial Performance, and Ethical and Social Compliance	Isidro & Sobral	2015	326
Board Diversity and Corporate Social Responsibility: Empirical Evidence from France	Beji et al.	2021	301
Board diversity and its effects on bank performance: An international analysis	Garcia-Meca et al.	2015	280

Source: Authors’ own research.

The ten most cited articles reveal that none of them included the term inclusion or equity in the title. It is noteworthy that DEI research has been mainly focused on the impact of diversity on performance, with particular attention on the inclusion of women on board. Similar results were obtained by van Bommel et al. (2024) and Baker et al. (2020). Kirsch (2018), Reguera-Alvarado et al. (2017), Campbell and Minguez-Vera (2008) sheds light on how the integration of women on corporate boards exerts an impact on financial performance. In addition to the impact that gender diversity has on performance Isidro and Sobral (2015) explore the effects of women on the board on firm value and compliance with ethical and social principles adopted by companies, while Torchia et al. (2011) emphasize the impact on firm innovation. Terjesen et al. (2015) investigate how a country’s institutional environment influences the establishment of board gender quota legislation. Additionally, there have been studies that have examined a broader range of diversity dimensions. Beji et al. (2021) examine the impact of both cognitive (educational level and director’s background) and demographic (gender and age) on corporate social responsibility. Garcia-Meca et al. (2015) included gender and nationality diversity when analyzing the impact on performance of financial institutions. In contrast, Chung and Monroe (2003) investigate the impact of social desirability bias on the accountant’s ethical evaluation in the context of decision-making processes. Researchers consider mixed methods approaches. Quantitative methods are most used (7 of 10 studies) when analyzing DEI aspects to show their impact on different organizational outcomes. However, qualitative methods like content analysis and experimental analysis were used to emphasize gender quotas in different regions (Terjesen et al., 2015), and to study accountants’ perception on diversity aspects (Chung & Monroe, 2003). Kirsch (2018) uses systematic literature review to enrich the understanding of board gender diversity.

Bibliometric analysis

Network analysis of research on DEI examines the scientific collaboration between authors, together with the identification of universities with high influence and the most discussed topics in research. Thus, the purpose of this section is to answer RQ5.

To examine the authors' collaboration in the field of DEI research, the network analysis of co-authorship is conducted. Results are displayed in Figure 2.

The analysis shows six clusters of the authors with the most significant collaborations. The first cluster, the red one, contains 6 authors (Khan, I., Khan, I.U., Khan, S.U., Marwat, J., Suleman, S., Uddin, M. J.). The second cluster is green and is composed of 6 authors (Baker, H. K., Gupta, P., Khan, A., Kumar, S., Pandey, N., Yilmaz, M. K.). The five authors (Ahmed, M. I., Ali, R., Amin, A., Rehman, R. U., Yuan, W.) included in the third cluster are marked with blue. The fourth cluster, highlighted with yellow, is composed of five authors (Al-Mamun, A., Ali, S., Cortese, C., Wright, C., Wright, C. E. F.). The five authors (Elmagrhi, M. H., Fosu, S., Malagila, J., Ntim, C. G., Tunyi, A. A.) included in the fifth cluster are marked with purple, and the last cluster, highlighted with turquoise, is composed of only two authors (Aslam, S., Murtaza, G.). The authors of the generated clusters make significant contributions in the field of DEI related to financial performance, sustainability reporting, financial distress, dividend policy, agency cost, executive pay.

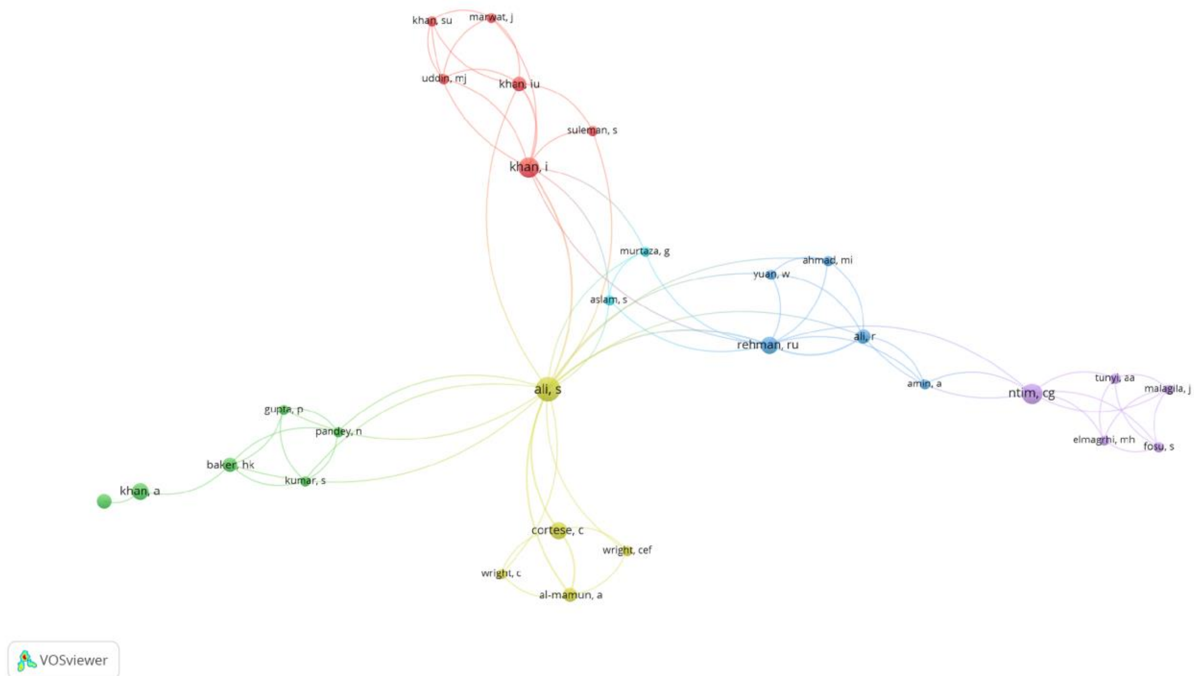

Figure 2. **Co-authorship analysis grouped by studies published**

Source: Author's own creation.

The co-affiliation is further analyzed to demonstrate the collaboration between authors by grouping co-authorship according to the universities to which they are affiliated. The results are shown in Figure 3.

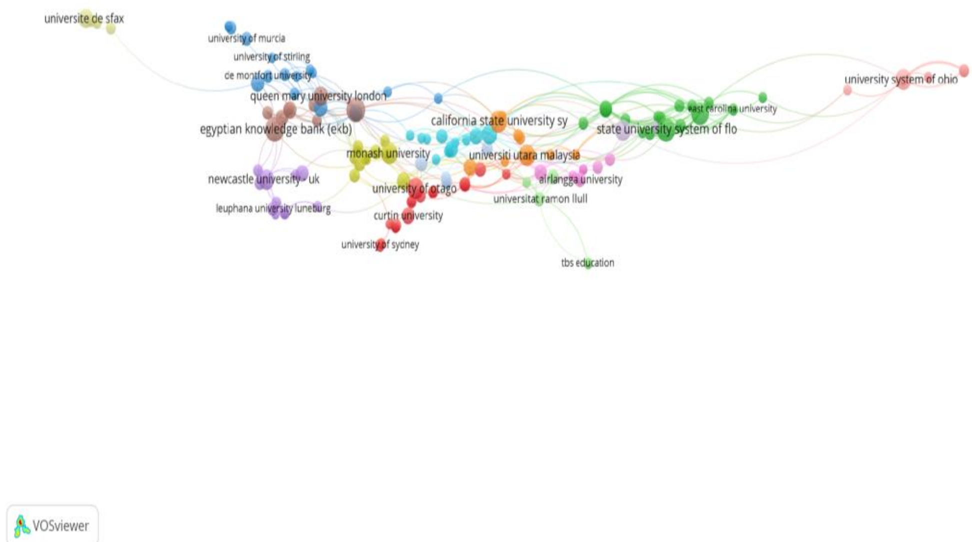

Figure 3. Co-authorship analysis grouped by universities

Source: Author's own creation.

This analysis indicates an increased interest in examining how organizations implement DEI practices and how these practices impact their outcomes. Universities with the most contributions in terms of research collaboration in the field of DEI research are from North America. University of North Carolina stands out with the most significant co-authorship connections, followed by three organizations also from North America. In terms of publications, the University of London boasts 18 publications. These results emphasize that developed countries are the most productive in this field, mostly because of the attention given to fostering an inclusive environment.

The evaluation and visualization of the growing themes can be emphasized based on keywords co-occurrence analysis. Figure 4 shows combinations of keywords that have been widely used when analyzing DEI issues in corporate governance literature.

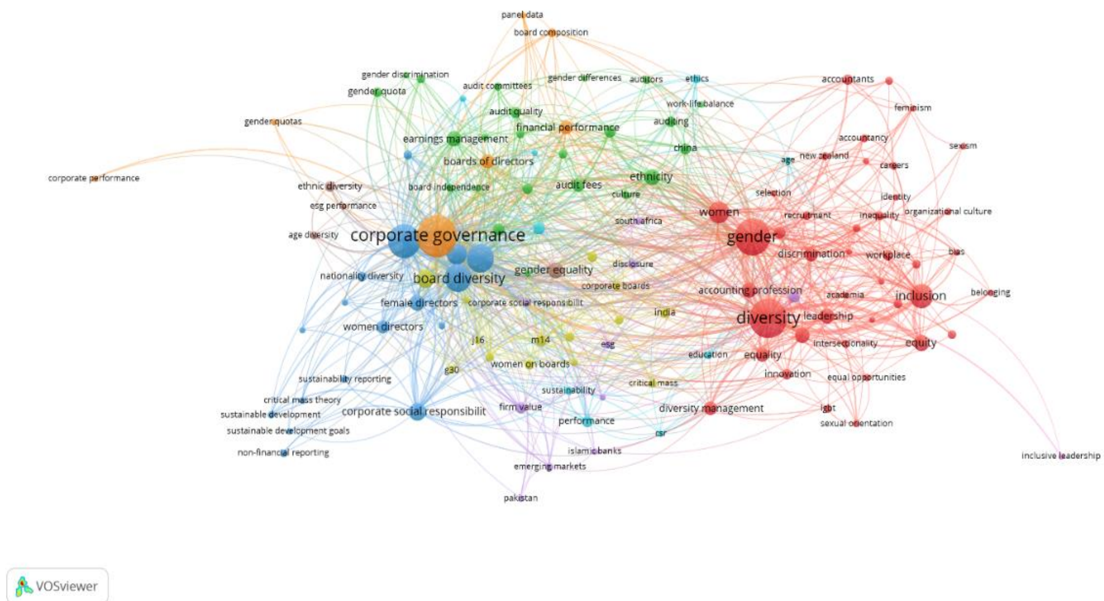

Figure 4. Keywords co-occurrence analysis

Source: Author's own creation.

The analysis of the keywords illustrates the categories of DEI dimensions and the major research topics. This analysis also highlights the interlinkages between the concepts of DEI and the various corporate outcomes that result from the implementation of inclusive initiatives. To ensure the map representativeness, it was established a minimum number of occurrences of 5 and out of 2385 keywords only 127 keywords meet these requirements. The most frequent keywords are corporate governance, diversity, gender, board of directors, board diversity, inclusion, firm performance, women, and equity illustrating the prevailing topic in this area. A thorough examination of the resulting clusters reveals the main research domain in association with DEI: accounting profession, audit practices, corporate reporting, and corporate governance. Gender diversity is the most analyzed demographic dimension, focusing on the challenges women face regarding the progress to senior positions and their impact on corporate outcomes. An examination of the red cluster shows a preference for research that examines gender inequalities, as well as race, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation discrimination among accounting professionals. Most of the research emphasizes a bias against female promotions to the top level, examining the difference between female and male accountants regarding work commitments, career advancement, salary, and credibility. The green cluster shows the associations between audit practices and female leadership. The impact of cultural and ethnic diversity on executive compensation and the auditing process is also discussed. The blue cluster refers to the importance of implementing inclusive practices in corporate governance. A large body of research emphasized the economic benefits of board diversity, with a particular focus on the positive association between gender and cultural diversity and financial performance. Other main outcomes investigated are integrated reporting, sustainability reporting (ESG, CSR), sustainable development goals, firm value, firm innovation. Words that describe DEI related issues are also highlighted: age, education, ethnicity, nationality, LGBT, sexual orientation, discrimination, belonging, equal opportunity. In relation to the theoretical framework, the studies in this field focus on agency theory, institutional theory, critical mass theory, and upper echelons theory. The initial two examine organizational behavior and decision-making, while the subsequent two focus on groups and individuals, with a particular focus on diversity. Diverse groups tend to exercise greater control over decision-making, resulting in lower agency costs and higher profitability. Upper echelon theory and critical mass theory provide an essential theoretical framework for examining the impact of board diversity on ESG disclosure, while institutional theory presents the social and political understanding of organizations' corporate social responsibility practices, including DEI initiatives.

Conclusion

This study provides an overview of the evolution of research on DEI topics in corporate governance.

The longitudinal and geographical development analysis shows that research on DEI started in 1963, predominantly in North America with a particular focus on gender and ethical diversity in the accounting and auditing profession, mostly because of the Civil Right Movements (1950-1968). As the financial crisis began to spread, research began to focus on the benefits of board diversity on different organizational outcomes. However, researchers who focus on DEI policies rather than only on diversity have increased exponentially over the past two years. The geographical development provided through science mapping of universities collaboration shows that the research has been conducted primarily in developed countries where DEI legislation is implemented.

The relevance of research in terms of publication characteristics indicates that studies published in top rank scientific journals are better documented and most cited. The collaboration between authors from different countries, affiliated with different universities, emphasizes an increased interest in DEI topics and the validation of research, showing the need of a multicultural approach to understand the complexity of DEI dimensions and the differences in state regulations. The keyword co-occurrence analysis highlights that the most common keywords are representative, illustrating different dimensions of DEI in the context of board of directors.

The contribution of this study may be seen in the fact that it proposes a comprehensive approach of DEI evolution, as compared to extant research that focuses exclusively on the board diversity. It also provides a robust analysis by incorporating three research themes about DEI, not only in corporate governance, but also in the accounting and auditing profession and corporate reporting.

Nevertheless, there are some limitations: the lack of a meta-analysis of more than ten studies, the exclusive use of WoS databases, the lack of a specific time frame. Therefore, future studies may address in-depth content analyses using data from different databases, focusing on a specific time frame or a specific influence on an organization outcome.

Acknowledgement:

This paper was co-financed by the Bucharest University of Economic Studies during the Ph.D. program.

References

Baker, A., Larcker, D. F., McClure, C., Saraph, D. & Watts, E. (2024). Diversity Washing, *Journal of Accounting Research*, 62(5), 1661-1709.

Baker, H.C., Pandey, N., & Haldar, A. (2020). A bibliometric analysis of board diversity: Current status, development, and future research perspectives, *Journal of Business Research*, 108, 232-246.

Bangemann, E. (2024). *EY European DEI Index – Report*, Retrieved from https://www.ey.com/de_de/functional/forms/download/2024/02/ey-european-dei-index

Behlau, H., Wobst, J., & Lueg, R. (2024). Measuring board diversity: A systematic literature review of data sources, constructs, pitfalls, and suggestions for future research, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 31(2), 977–992.

European Commission. (2023). Action Plan 2023-2024 - Fact Sheet on the Diversity and inclusion in the workplace, Retrieved from: https://commission.europa.eu/about/service-standards-and-principles/modernising-european-commission/diversity-and-inclusion_en

Fitzsimmons, S., Özbilgin, M.F., Thomas, D.C., & Nkomo, S. (2023). Equality, diversity, and inclusion in international business: A review and research agenda, *Journal of International Business Studies,* 54, 1402–1422.

Ghio, A., Occhipinti, Z., & Verona, R. (2024). The consideration of diversity in the accounting literature: A systematic literature review. *European Accounting Review*, *33*(5), 1667-1691.

Mumu, J.R., Saona, P., Haque, S., & Azad, A.K. (2021). Gender diversity in corporate governance: a bibliometric analysis and research agenda, *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 37(3), 328-343.

Sundarasen, S., Kumar, R., Tanaraj, K., Alsmady, A. A., & Rajagopalan, U. (2024). From board diversity to disclosure: A comprehensive review on board dynamics and ESG reporting, *Research in Globalization*, 9, 100259.

United Nations. (2015). Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015. Retrieved from: https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda

van Bommel, H.M., Hubers, F., & Maas, K.E.H. (2024). Prominent Themes and Blind Spots in Diversity and Inclusion Literature: A Bibliometric Analysis, *Journal of Business Ethics,* 192, 487–499.