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In auditor we trust: Forty-four years of research on the auditor-client relationship and future research directions

Abstract

Purpose—This study systematically reviews the auditor-client relationship (ACR) literature spanning 1976 to 2019 to provide future research directions.

Design/Methodology/Approach—The study analysed 140 articles from the Web of Science database, authored by 259 scholars across 28 countries and published in 47 journals. It identified three major research streams to understand the ACR dynamics: auditor tenure, ACR attributes, and auditor-client negotiation.

Findings—Three major findings emerged based on this review. First, few studies examine auditor-client negotiation *relative to* other streams; thus, it offers scope for further research. Second, given that various fields have employed diverse frameworks as theoretical underpinnings in prior studies, continuing this trend can better portray ACR from multiple perspectives. *Finally, despite strong international regulations on ACR aspects, such as auditor independence, tenure, and rotation, implementation in several countries warrants special considerations, specifically on legal enforcement and investor protection, given diverse cultures and country-level institutional environments.*

Originality/value—This study contributes to the synthesis of existing and emerging research streams and provides future research suggestions.

Article classification—Literature Review

1
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3 **Keywords**—Auditor-client relationship; Auditor-client interaction; Auditor-client negotiation;

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6 Literature review; Bibliometric; Content analysis

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9 **JEL Classifications**—M42

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12 **Data Source**—Web of Science database

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Meditari Accountancy Research

1. Introduction

Auditor-client relationship (ACR) studies are well-established in auditing research (see for example, the latest work by Dodgson *et al.*, 2020, Acito *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, the dynamics of ACR have garnered academic (e.g., DeFond and Zhang, 2014, Myers *et al.*, 2003, Gibbins *et al.*, 2010) and policymaker (U.S. House of Representatives, 2002, PCAOB, 2011, IAASB, 2018) attention. Before the fall of Enron, however, ACR received little attention from academics. Nonetheless, a considerable body of works have accumulated over the last 44 years since the first paper on ACR was published in 1976. Twenty ACR papers were published in the pre-Enron era (approximately 0.8 papers per year); it rose to 120 articles in the post-Enron era (approximately 6.3 papers per year or eight times more). After the Sarbanes Oxley Act (SOX Act) prevailed in 2003, interest in the topic grew significantly (see Figure 2). This development may highlight the impact of corporate scandals on the advent of auditing regulations, spurring the auditing profession and several research issues therefrom (Hay, 2015). It may also highlight the importance of investigating auditing and auditor capabilities in detecting scandals and deterring fraudulent acts.

DeFond and Zhang (2014) reviewed archival auditing studies and posited that understanding ACR dynamics in delivering a higher quality audit is a dominant notion in auditing research. However, rather than focus on overarching audit quality, this study aims to understand how the ACR literature portrays the dominant elements of peripheral auditor-client interaction, including whether this interaction engenders audit disputes or conflicts and how these conflicts are resolved among disputing parties. Prior ACR research has explored various contexts, dimensions, models, and theories, much of which is scattered in numerous areas and directions, thus creating an abstracted reality or ‘a black box’. Accordingly, we synthesise the fragmented literature via a systematic, in-depth review, summarising the field’s knowledge. This study systematically

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3 reviews ACR publications to explain the interactions between auditors and their clients and trace
4 the ACR evolution. Thus, the study addresses the following research questions: (1) How has the
5 ACR concept evolved? (2) What are the key research streams in the ACR literature? (3) What are
6 the leading perspectives in the literature in terms of influential journals, centers of excellence,
7 articles, authors, key methods, and theoretical underpinnings, therefore worth reading for future
8 studies? (4) What are the future research directions?
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11 We collected data from 140 ACR publications from the Web of Science (WoS) and applied
12 a systematic literature review [1], coupled with a hybrid approach, by integrating the tenets of
13 content analysis and bibliometric techniques (Massaro *et al.*, 2016, Paul and Criado, 2020). The
14 content analysis critically examines published articles in a qualitative manner, while the
15 bibliometric technique captures the quantitative aspects of the data. We also conducted
16 bibliographic mapping to visualise 44 years of bibliometric results. The technique generates
17 patterns regarding the ACR evolution and intellectual structures therein.
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20 This study contributes to the ACR and auditing literature as follows. First, it offers an
21 overview of the ACR research history. It pinpoints early breakthrough works in the literature and
22 discusses the research evolution. Moreover, it traces the dynamic evolution of the literature over
23 44 years by disaggregating the topic emergence per the critical period. Novice researchers will
24 especially benefit from understanding the main issues and theories of each period. Second, the
25 study employs the bibliographic coupling technique to provide the knowledge base pertinent to
26 ACR and the intellectual structures of the emerging research streams [2]. Intellectual structures
27 serve as a quick reference map to navigate auditing studies. Thus, this study defragments prior
28 studies to understand the auditor-client intricacies more comprehensively.
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Third, the study outlines, structures, and identifies leading journals, institutions, articles, authors, key methods, and theoretical underpinnings for future studies. Identifying top institutions can, for example, proxy for regional trends in ACR research. Moreover, empirical assessments of the most-cited articles and research trends contribute insight into the ACR research environment and invigorate discussions on ACR issues perceived to be essential by academia and how they are related to audit practices. Given globalised ACR regulations, regional circumstances may induce a potential conflict of ACR regulations with local customs and wisdom on human relationships, which gives scope for further investigation.

Underrepresented issues and regions can also stimulate the discussion of whether the ACR concept works as intended in regulation or only works as a ‘simulacra’, a ‘tick-box’ practice to feign compliance but actually conceals the complexity of ACR. Further, this study presents the key methods and theoretical underpinnings of ACR studies. Thus, researchers can benefit from diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives within the field. Finally, findings from the systematic review provide future research directions.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents the data and study design. Section 3 discusses the findings and analyses, including the evolution of ACR studies, emerging research streams, key perspectives in the literature, and directions for future research. Section 4 concludes.

2. Design and data

This study adopts a structured literature review using a hybrid approach that combines content analysis and bibliometric citation techniques (Massaro *et al.*, 2016, Paul and Criado, 2020). Content analysis reviews the selected literature qualitatively to extract and gain insight into the

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3 substantive article content. Thus, we encode the textual material that answers our research
4 questions to relevant and manageable bits of data (Gaur and Kumar, 2018, Weber, 1990).
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8 The bibliometric technique is the quantitative aspect of the study. Bibliometric analysis is
9 considered a new methodological lexicon for reviewing the literature in accounting and auditing
10 fields. Although some researchers remain somewhat sceptical of the utility of bibliometric analysis
11 (Paul and Criado, 2020), its benefit in conducting a structured literature review cannot be
12 underrated [3]. Zupic and Čater (2015) describe bibliometric analysis as a literature review
13 technique that employs statistical and quantitative analyses of published studies. The method has
14 two primary purposes: performance analysis and science mapping. Performance analysis evaluates
15 individual and institutional research and publication performance. Science mapping reveals the
16 structure and dynamics of scientific fields. A crucial benefit of bibliometric analysis is its powerful
17 and efficient quantitative technique in reviewing voluminous studies. It offers a systematic,
18 transparent, and replicable literature review (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017); guides the researcher to
19 the most influential works; maps the research field with less subjective bias (Zupic and Čater,
20 2015); and provides more objective and reliable analyses [4]. Given the exponential growth of
21 academic studies, bibliometric analysis has significantly improved the review quality.
22 Furthermore, this study utilised a cartography analysis or visualisation technique to visualise the
23 evolution and development of the research streams and 44 years of intellectual structure in the
24 ACR field. Accordingly, integrating the content analysis, bibliometric, and visualisation
25 techniques furnished the best way to answer the research questions.
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49 Figure 1 illustrates the methodology in three major steps: (1) defining the research
50 questions, (2) formulating the research design, and (3) analysing the results and interpreting the
51 findings. The research questions (Step 1 in Figure 1) are highlighted in Section 1. We then
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3 developed a research design to answer the research questions. In designing the study, we
4 considered methods to collect and analyse the data (Step 2 in Figure 1). We collected data from
5
6 WoS as the basis for reviewing the ACR literature. WoS is the leading database on academic
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8 studies, comprising a collection of bibliography data. It is widely acknowledged as a reputable
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10 source for accounting and auditing research (Mingers and Leydesdorff, 2015). WoS arguably
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12 provides the best coverage for ACR research from leading scholars based on several criteria: timely
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14 review and publication of papers, a rigorous peer-review process, and broad dissemination through
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16 the Internet and related channels (Merigó and Yang, 2017). However, given its selective nature,
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18 WoS has inherent limitations regarding the number of published articles on auditing topics [5].
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[Figure 1. Methodological approach]

We conducted a keyword search using a Boolean function in the WoS database to collect relevant bibliography data (Table 1). The final keywords were in two parts. The first part ('auditor-client' OR 'auditor-auditee' OR 'auditor and client' OR 'auditor and auditee' OR 'audit partners and CFO') captures the parties involved in the audit process. The second part (relationship* OR interact* OR negotiat* OR disput* OR conflict* OR resolution* OR disagreement*) covers the nature of the relationship usually applied in auditing research. Keyword selection is an iterative process to ensure that relevant studies are covered.

[Table 1. Process of selecting the sample from WoS]

The search spanned 1945 to 2020; however, the earliest hit was Blakeney *et al.* (1976), and the latest was Riccardi (2019) [6]. A preliminary search found 150 English documents. We further

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3 reviewed the article types and excluded eight proceedings and two law and operations research
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5 articles. Finally, 140 articles served as the bibliographic data frame for the systematic review.
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8 Next, we analyse the bibliometric data using three software packages: *Bibliometrix* R-
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10 package, HistCite, and VOSviewer (Eck and Waltman, 2010, Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017). This
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12 study employed two primary bibliometric techniques: co-citation analysis and bibliographic
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14 coupling [7] (Table 2).
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17 [Table 2. Methodology and software for data analysis]
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22 A descriptive analysis of the bibliographic data frame included the main information about
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24 the number of journals, authors, type of documents, and publication trends during the given period.
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26 We used *the Bibliometrix* R-package to produce a descriptive bibliometric analysis. Table 3
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28 presents the key terms related to bibliometric data.
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31 [Table 3. Bibliometric key terms]
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36 We then address each of the research questions as follows. First, we apply dynamic co-
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38 citation analysis to understand the ACR evolution. Co-citation analysis is appropriate for mapping
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40 intellectual heritage based on high impact. We visualised the citation network via *the Bibliometrix*
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42 R-package and performed a content analysis to narrate the evolution. Second, we identify key
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44 research streams in the field using bibliographic coupling and visualise them using VOSviewer.
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46 Bibliographic coupling is fitting since it focuses on present and forward-looking activities of the
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48 literature. Third, we identify influential perspectives from authors, articles, journals, institutions,
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50 countries, methods, and theories using content analysis and bibliometric citation analysis in
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52 HistCite. Finally, we provide future research directions.
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3. Findings and analyses

3.1. Descriptive analysis

This study reviews 140 articles on ACR between 1976 and 2019 in 47 journals. Most of the articles were peer-reviewed papers (91.4%) (Table 4). In total, 259 authors wrote 140 studies with an average citation level of 33.81. Most studies were multi-author studies (90%, n=233); only 10% (n=26) were single-authored. Figure 2 shows the yearly publication trends and impacts. ACR publications have been increasing at a rate of 9.13% annually. *Nonetheless, the expansion of WoS to include more accounting and auditing journals after 2004 contributed to the increasing trend* (Merigó and Yang, 2017). The impact was measured using the bibliometric citation measures of total global citations (TGC) and total local citations (TLC). Both TGS and TLC indicate a spring in the 2002–2003 and 2007–2008 periods, when the global financial crisis occurred. Hay (2015) argues that corporate scandals, the global financial crisis of 2008, and the enactment of auditing-related laws profoundly affected the auditing profession, giving rise to many auditing research opportunities.

[Table 4. Main information]

[Figure 2. Publication trend 1976–2019]

3.2. The ACR evolution in the literature

Exploring which work has had the most significant impact on the ACR literature is essential to understanding how the research stream evolved. Figure 3 illustrates the evolution into three periods: (a) a period before the major fraud scandals and ratification of the SOX Act 2002 (1976–2003), (b) a period before the global financial crisis in 2008/2009 (1976–2009), and (c) the study period (1976–2019). The size of the nodes for each layout denotes the *frequency of citations in the*

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3 ACR literature. The larger the node size, the higher the citation and relevance of the reference. The
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5 different colours of each layout represent distinct clusters.
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8 In the first period (Figure 3 [a]), the ACR literature first discussed theories underpinning
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10 ACR, such as from the economic and sociological standpoints (Granovetter, 1985, Cook and
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12 Emerson, 1978, e.g., Blau, 1964), including agency (Chow, 1982) and institutional theories
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14 (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Second, the early discourse on the ACR duration by Levinthal and
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16 Fichman (1988), transitioned to discussions on the concept of auditor independence, thus
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18 promoting higher audit quality (DeAngelo, 1981b, DeAngelo, 1981a, Palmrose, 1991, Francis and
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20 Wilson, 1988, Simunic, 1984) and its consequences on the audit market, audit fees, and non-audit
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22 services (Palmrose, 1986a, Johnson and Lys, 1990, Palmrose, 1986b). Third, the proposed new
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24 perspective of auditor-client interaction is a large negotiation system (Murnighan and Bazerman,
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26 1990). However, as demonstrated in Figure 3 [a], the concepts and research streams within this
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28 period were scarcely interrelated.
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33 In the second period (Figure 3 [b]), the ACR literature emerged into two major research
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35 streams. The first stream addresses auditor tenure, and the second, auditor-client negotiation. Both
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37 streams stem from agency theory and audit market competition (Chow, 1982, Palmrose, 1986a,
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39 Simunic, 1980). Moreover, the interrelation between studies is more lucid than in the first period.
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41 On the second stream, Antle and Nalebuff (1991) posit that financial statements are a joint
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43 statement between auditors and clients. This view provides a background where negotiations occur
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45 when discussing final financial statements. Pruitt and Carnevale (1993) discussed a wider
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47 negotiation context in sociology; however, Gibbins *et al.* (2001) established the initial negotiation
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49 model in the auditing context. Further, broader themes in auditing research have set the scene for
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51 the evolution of negotiation studies, such as auditor judgement and decision making (Trotman,
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2005), the likelihood of client earnings management (Nelson *et al.*, 2002), and the effectiveness of corporate governance (Ng and Tan, 2003, Cohen *et al.*, 2002). Finally, the last period (Figure 3 [c]) asserts the two major research streams in ACR literature: auditor tenure and auditor-client negotiation.

[Figure 3. Dynamic evolution of co-citation network]

3.3. Research streams

We employ 79 most-bibliographically coupled studies, with a minimum number of citations per document of five, to identify emerging ACR research streams (Figure 4). The cluster names follow the content analysis: (1) auditor tenure, (2) ACR attributes, and (3) auditor-client negotiation.

[Figure 4. Research clusters of ACR literature]

3.3.1. Cluster 1: Auditor tenure

The debate on auditor tenure mostly stems from positive and negative arguments on the impact of audit quality. We further elaborate on how the pre- and post-SOX regimes maintain the auditor's independence and affect audit quality. The pre- and post-SOX findings are discussed based on the dataset timeframe, not the year when the study was published.

Most studies argue for mandatory auditor rotation in the pre-SOX regime. They suggest that longer auditor tenure is associated with higher audit quality. Thus, a shorter ACR tenure is likely to deteriorate audit quality. Various indicators, such as increased conservative earnings and earnings quality (Jenkins and Velury, 2008, Ghosh and Moon, 2005), less extreme income-increasing and -decreasing accruals (Myers *et al.*, 2003, Chen *et al.*, 2008), and the auditor's likelihood of detecting client bankruptcy by issuing modified audit opinions (Geiger and Raghunandan, 2002) **infer higher audit quality**. On the contrary, pre-SOX regime research suggests

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3 that mandatory auditor rotation promotes the reduction of fraudulent reporting (Carcello and Nagy,
4 2004), auditor's waiver of audit adjustments (Joe *et al.*, 2011), and the propensity to issue a going-
5 concern opinion (Ye *et al.*, 2011).
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10 In an attempt to reconcile the debate, Davis *et al.* (2009) argue that short- and long-term
11 auditor tenure is associated with the increased use of discretionary accruals to meet or beat earnings
12 forecasts in the pre-SOX period; however, the results disappear in the post-SOX regime. Davis *et*
13 *al.* (2009) provide supporting evidence for arguments by proponents and opponents of mandatory
14 rotation in the pre-SOX period. Further, in the post-SOX era, Singer and Zhang (2018) argue that
15 a longer audit firm tenure leads to less timely discovery and correction of misstatements, which is
16 consistent with the negative effect of long auditor tenure on audit quality. The negative association
17 is mainly present in the first 10 years of the audit engagement.
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29 3.3.2. Cluster 2: ACR attributes

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31 Attributes play an imperative role in ACR and affect overall audit quality. Their effect can be
32 directly observed from the final audit adjustments agreed upon by both parties. Trompeter (1994)
33 examines the association between audit partners' compensation and audit adjustments. He finds
34 that partners with compensation more closely tied to client retention are less likely to require
35 downward adjustments to income, suggesting that partners' compensation can compromise their
36 audit judgements. Although auditors attempt to strengthen social bonds with clients to gain their
37 trust (Rennie *et al.*, 2010), strengthening social bonds by forming a close relationship facilitates
38 the client acquisition process that threatens the auditors' independence, even when partner or firm
39 tenure is short. Bauer (2015) and Svanberg and Ohman (2015) support this argument. They find
40 that auditors who identify more strongly with their clients (e.g., shared values) are more likely to
41 agree with the client's preferred accounting treatment and reduced audit quality.
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3 Other ACR attributes related to intrapersonal and interpersonal contexts have been heavily
4 discussed. These include ethnicity (Berglund and Eshleman, 2019), leadership (Svanberg *et al.*,
5 2017), social bond, trust, and commitment (e.g., Kuenzel and Krolikowska, 2008, Kerler and
6 Killough, 2009, Aschauer *et al.*, 2017), reputation (Donelson *et al.*, 2019), and communication
7 between auditors and their clients (Kachelmeier, 2018, Saiewitz, 2018). Table 8 summarises the
8 various attributes and their relation to the theoretical perspective.
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18 *3.3.3. Cluster 3: Auditor-client negotiation*

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20 The third research cluster in the ACR literature regards the auditor-client negotiation. Auditor-
21 client negotiation research initially aimed to understand auditor-client interactions (Antle and
22 Nalebuff, 1991, Beattie *et al.*, 2000, Kleinman and Palmon, 2000). Within the audit process
23 context, the auditor and the client work to reconcile conflicting views that require bargaining and
24 a strategy to resolve conflicts. Prior studies show that negotiation mainly occurs near the end of
25 the audit process (Bennett *et al.*, 2015, Gibbins *et al.*, 2007).
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34 Gibbins *et al.* (2001) developed a basic auditor-client negotiation model comprising six
35 major elements: antecedents, accounting issues, negotiation processes, accounting outcomes,
36 consequences, and context [8]. Two principal strategies in auditor-client negotiation are discussed:
37 distributive and integrative. A distributive negotiation strategy usually results in a 'distributive'
38 outcome where only one or neither party 'wins'. It comprises three types of strategies: contending,
39 conceding, and compromising. Integrative negotiation strategies attempt to provide a 'win-win'
40 solution to mutually benefit both parties (Gibbins *et al.*, 2010). This strategy comprises two types:
41 problem-solving and expanding the agenda. Prior studies have shown that distributive strategies
42 are the most popular (Gibbins *et al.*, 2007, Gibbins *et al.*, 2001, Kulset and Stuart, 2018).
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3 The corpus of the auditor-client negotiation literature mainly investigates the contextual
4 features that affect negotiation strategies and the impact on negotiation outcomes. These contextual
5 features include external conditions, such as deadline pressures, auditor rotation, and clients'
6 corporate governance (e.g., Bennett *et al.*, 2015, Wang and Tuttle, 2009, Beattie *et al.*, 2014, Salleh
7 and Stewart, 2012); the intrapersonal context, such as cognitive characteristics, gender, and norms
8 (Kleinman *et al.*, 2014, e.g., Jones *et al.*, 2019, Sun *et al.*, 2015); and parties' capabilities in the
9 negotiation, such as role, rank and audit experience, negotiation experience, and skills (e.g., Fu *et*
10 *al.*, 2011, Kulset and Stuart, 2018, McCracken *et al.*, 2008).
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22 **3.4. Key aspects of the ACR literature**

23 *3.4.1. Influential journals*

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25 Table 5 summarises the top 15 journals on ACR per their productivity and influence. *Auditing: A*
26 *Journal of Practice & Theory* (AJPT) is the most productive ACR journal, publishing more than
27 a fifth of ACR studies. It is followed by *The Accounting Review* (TAR) [9]. *Contemporary*
28 *Accounting Research* (CAR) ranks third. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, and *Journal of*
29 *Accounting Research* are fourth and fifth, respectively, and *Managerial Auditing Journal* is sixth.
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39 Figure 5 details the most productive and impactful journals in ACR literature [10].
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41 [Table 5. Ranking of 15 most productive and influential journals]

42 [Figure 5. Journal productivity and impact on ACR]

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52 Several leading institutions in the field are regarded as 'centres of excellence' in prior ACR
53 studies (Table 6). *The University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign* has produced the highest
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3 number of ACR studies with eight articles and is the most influential institution with the highest
4 TGC (560, rank 1). *The University of Alberta* is the most impactful institution in the ACR field
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6 with the highest TLC (109, rank 6). Such results are relevant for researchers and institutions
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8 seeking collaboration or job employment. Most leading institutions are located in the U.S.,
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10 followed by Canada, Australia, and Singapore. The U.S. has a long tradition of promoting and
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12 developing accounting and auditing research (Merigó and Yang, 2017). Further, the dominance of
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14 U.S.-based affiliations is deeply rooted in the association of audit practice and research with
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16 significant corporate scandals and major institutional events (Andrikopoulos *et al.*, 2016).
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22 [Table 6. Ranking of 10 centres of excellence in the ACR field]
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24 3.4.3. Influential articles and authors

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26 The ACR is unique and generally does not exist between other professionals and their clients
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28 because the audit service is primarily essential to parties outside the auditor-client system (e.g.,
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30 shareholders, creditors, and government agencies). Thus, the ACR literature affects (and is
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32 affected by) other research streams within the auditing discipline. Table 6 provides the 10 most
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34 influential articles in the literature, most of which contribute to auditor tenure and auditor-client
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36 negotiation streams. Although Gibbins *et al.* (2001) contributed the most relevant study, Myers *et*
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38 *al.* (2003) garnered most citations globally (see Table 7) due to its strong connection to other study
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40 streams (e.g., auditor tenure, audit rotation, earnings quality, and audit quality). Thus, it has a broad
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42 influence on other studies and is among the most influential articles in the literature.
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48 [Table 7. Ranking of top 10 articles in the ACR literature]
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50 3.4.4. Key research methods

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52 Table 8 presents the key research methods in ACR studies per the three research clusters identified
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54 in Figure 4. Most ACR studies apply quantitative methods, representing 74% of 140 articles.
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3 Archival studies (34.7%, n=48) accounted for the majority of the quantitative methods, followed
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5 by experiment (23%, n=32) and survey (12.8%, n=18) methods. Audit tenure studies mostly use
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7 the archival method, arguably due to data availability. Negotiation articles mostly use experiments
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9 and survey methods to investigate the behavioural and experiential aspects of auditor-client
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11 negotiation. Studies on ACR attributes have applied various methods.
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15 **[Table 8. Key methods]**
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17 Of the 140 articles, qualitative studies accounted for only 7% (n=10). The case study
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19 method is most popular in ACR qualitative research (2.8%, n=4), followed by interviews, critical
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21 papers, and document analysis (three, two, and one article, respectively). Auditor tenure studies
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23 appear to gain no benefit from qualitative methods; only one study employs document analysis for
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25 qualitative research. The unpopularity of qualitative and mixed methods in the ACR literature is
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27 unsurprising. The ease of data gathering and the long tradition of the quantitative school of thought
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29 in auditing and accounting research (Lee and Humphrey, 2006) may contribute to the popularity
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31 (unpopularity) of quantitative studies (qualitative and mixed methods).
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36 *3.4.5. Key theoretical underpinnings*
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38 Table 9 illustrates diverse theoretical frameworks from various fields, such as economics and
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40 finance, psychology, sociology, marketing, education, and information systems in ACR studies.
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42 We classify these theories based on the research clusters identified in Figure 4 and categorise them
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44 based on the issue associated with each cluster (we code it as keywords). In this way, we show that
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46 a similar issue/topic within a cluster can be portrayed from different theoretical lenses.
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50 Of the 140 articles, only 50.7% (n=71) discussed the theory they employed. The rest
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52 (49.3%, n=69) did not specifically mention the theory underpinning their studies, perhaps due to
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54 the tradition of forming hypotheses arguments based primarily on previous auditing studies. This
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3 situation is salient, especially in archival studies (Myers *et al.*, 2003, Heninger, 2001, Whisenant
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5 *et al.*, 2003, Tanyi and Roland, 2017, Joe *et al.*, 2011, e.g., Chan *et al.*, 2016).
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9 [Table 9. Theoretical underpinnings]

10 Panel A of Table 9 presents the theory underpinning auditor tenure in the ACR literature.
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12 We identify nine (6.4%) articles mentioning theories in this cluster. Prior early-period studies draw
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14 from the *exchange theory* to examine auditor tenure (see Levinthal and Fichman, 1988, Seabright
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16 *et al.*, 1992). Two studies utilise normative accounting theories, such as *stakeholders' theory* and
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18 *lending credibility theory*, to investigate issues of corporate social responsibility and auditor
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20 independence associated with auditor tenure (Duc *et al.*, 2019, Brooks *et al.*, 2019). Ye *et al.*
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22 (2011) borrow from the marketing field's *relationship theory* to explain how alumni affiliation is
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24 associated with auditor tenure.
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29 Panel B of Table 9 lists the theoretical frameworks utilised to explain ACR attributes; most
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31 draw from economics, psychology, and sociology. Classic *low-balling* and *contracting theories*
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33 are employed to explain audit fees, auditor's compensation, and disclosures (Desir *et al.*, 2014,
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35 Grant *et al.*, 2018, Trompeter, 1994, Omer *et al.*, 2012). Psychology theories explain some ACR
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37 attribute issues regarding pressures, audit tender or selection, and fraud incentive (Lord, 1992,
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39 Chang and Stone, 2019, Zimbelman, 1997). Sociology theories (*institutional, social presence,*
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41 *sociological inclination,* and *social learning theories*) are predominantly applied to explain issues
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43 regarding audit market, communication between auditors and clients, ethnicity, and performance
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45 improvement (Ma'ayan and Carmeli, 2016, Berglund and Eshleman, 2019, Kachelmeier, 2018,
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47 Saiewitz, 2018, Han, 2000).
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52 Panel C of Table 9 presents theories used in auditor-client negotiation studies, dominated
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54 by psychology and sociology theories. Psychology theories explain various behavioural aspects in
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3 a negotiation, while the negotiation literature is rooted in sociology. The *dual concern theory* is
4 dominant in investigating auditor-client negotiation, explaining conflicts, disputes, or inflexible
5 positions (Goodwin, 2002, Gibbins *et al.*, 2010, Awadallah, 2018).
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9 10 11 **3.5. Future research directions**

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13 Research on ACR has been maturing rapidly and been viewed from multiple perspectives. From
14 our review, however, we argue that some areas need further exploration to improve our
15 understanding of the complexity of ACR, especially when involving different contextual features.
16 We utilised a four-step methodology to provide recommendations for future research. First, we
17 identified the latest three-year-articles covered in the bibliometric citation analysis. Second, we
18 performed a content analysis of these articles to determine future research directions. Third, we
19 converted the identified directions into research questions. Finally, we verified and excluded
20 questions that have been addressed. The procedure resulted in five potential research agendas, as
21 discussed below.
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33 34 35 **3.5.1. ACR and social ties**

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37 One ‘classical’ topic that warrants future research is the ACR and homophily principle, which
38 states that social actors with similar backgrounds and traits are attracted to each other and form
39 network ties (McPherson *et al.*, 2001, Guan *et al.*, 2016). Social network analysis using network
40 data or big data can be utilised to identify attributes that contribute to network emergence in certain
41 social settings (Lusher *et al.*, 2013). Future studies can explore factors that develop social bonding,
42 such as similarities in political party affiliations or political ideologies, culture, religious views,
43 and common non-professional interests.
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54 Future research may also identify the impact of social bonding in areas where auditors’
55 integrity is potentially compromised, such as [reporting deficiencies in internal controls over](#)
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3 financial reporting (Naiker and Sharma, 2009) and the transparency of key audit matters presented
4 in audit reports. Given that the interaction between clients and auditors with social ties is not
5 publicly observable, the channels by which ties influence audit quality is unclear (Baumann and
6 Ratzinger-Sakel, 2020). Thus, directly investigating the interaction dynamics via a case study or
7 participant observation to complement an experimental study, such as Bhattacharjee and Brown
8 (2017), is an interesting avenue for future research.

17 3.5.2. ACR and reputation

19 This stream focuses on studies that explore the impact of alleged client misconduct, auditor
20 deficiencies (e.g., poor audit quality), or negligence of due care on firm reputation or the auditor
21 (Donelson *et al.*, 2019, Rothenberg, 2020). Future studies can examine areas outside accounting-
22 related litigation as measures of reputational damage and the impact of salient misconduct by
23 auditors (e.g., employment-related litigation) or clients (e.g., corporate social responsibility,
24 environmental, social, and governance risks due to bribery, or environmental or labour law
25 violations) on audit firm reputation. However, future studies may also examine whether the
26 reputation capital of those charged with corporate governance (e.g., board reputation) will result
27 in a demand for high audit effort and quality (Fredriksson *et al.*, 2020), thus supporting audit firms'
28 reputation.

43 3.5.3. Negotiation between auditor and client

45 The latest research on auditor-client negotiation focuses on the determinants and negotiation
46 process. Jones *et al.* (2019) investigate the effect of gender on negotiations over audit adjustments
47 and found that female auditors recommend higher audit adjustments than their male counterparts,
48 consistent with women's behaviour toward risk in gender and risk tolerance research. In gender
49 research, there is ample evidence that women are more risk-averse than men. In the audit context,
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3 Breesch and Branson (2009) show that female auditors are more risk-averse and, hence, discover
4 more potential misstatements than male auditors. The difference in risk tolerance suggests that
5 female auditors are less likely to accept clients' explanations and are more likely to propose
6 conservative estimates and audit adjustments. However, little is known of the difference between
7 male and female auditors dealing with and enacting their complex social identities in the context
8 of audit negotiations. Moreover, the constraints faced by female auditors due to the interaction of
9 gender with factors such as politics, religion, and culture, which potentially limit their experience
10 in the audit negotiation process and access to other areas of auditing, are less appealing (Sian *et*
11 *al.*, 2020).

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24 The impact of 'mean' auditor personality traits such as psychopathy, narcissism, and
25 Machiavellianism in audit negotiation also provide ample avenues for future research (Church *et*
26 *al.*, 2020, Hobson *et al.*, 2020). For example, since narcissism may lead to less aggressive financial
27 reports, narcissistic partners are more likely to be targeted for a switch. Therefore, researchers can
28 examine the role of narcissism in auditor-client negotiation and whether it leads to voluntary
29 partner rotation. Studying the potential positive effect of auditor narcissism on the assessment of
30 management estimates also warrants potential research. It is especially important in economic
31 crises or global pandemic (e.g., COVID-19) uncertainties.

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42 Another stream of negotiation research is the negotiation process. Regarding negotiation
43 strategies, more research is needed to study auditors' problem-solving tactics and their impact on
44 resolving accounting disputes (Kulset and Stuart, 2018). Measuring conceding and compromising
45 strategies that gauge auditors' use, rather than their intentions or motivational orientation during
46 the conflict, need clarification. Further, it is essential to investigate the impact of clients'
47 negotiation preferences (reactive vs proactive) on the effectiveness of the negotiation strategies
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3 (Perreault *et al.*, 2017). The dynamics and interdependencies of trust, such as mutual competence
4 trust (trust regarding the ability of the counterpart) and mutual goodwill trust (trust regarding the
5 benevolence and integrity of the counterpart) in auditor-client negotiation (Maresch *et al.*, 2019),
6 are other avenues for future studies.
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13 *3.5.4. Auditor and client communication*

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15 This research stream discusses the mode and process of communication between auditors and
16 clients. Audit inquiry through email can have a different impact than an in-person inquiry to obtain
17 unbiased information from a client (Saiewitz, 2018, Saiewitz and Kida, 2018). Further research is
18 needed to identify additional ways to improve the audit inquiry process and the factors that may
19 affect client responses, such as tone or language errors in written communication. This issue is
20 particularly salient in COVID-19 circumstances, where audit processes occur at a distance.
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29 Research on the communication between auditors and specific client governing bodies
30 (e.g., audit committees, CFOs, and board members) can contribute to the literature. Dramaturgical
31 approaches can portray some social interaction characteristics in the audit communication process
32 to serve multiple accountabilities (Compernelle, 2018). However, other approaches could enhance
33 our understanding of this topic.
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41 *3.5.5. Extended ACR in multiple contexts and perspectives*

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43 The domination of the U.S., Canada, Singapore, and Australia in ACR research may drive future
44 studies in developing countries. Given the derivation of SOX standards into local regulations and
45 the global power of the 'Big 4' and multinational corporations, future research in underrepresented
46 regions can reveal other factors when devising local standards. These contextual factors may
47 enrich theoretical contributions. Even though the U.S. dominates ACR investigations, practical
48 implications of ACR studies cannot necessarily be directly inferred in other contexts. Distinct
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3 social culture, institutional environment, and local wisdom of the person-to-person relationship in
4 non-U.S. regions may interact with the foundational relationships of auditors and their clients.
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6 Therefore, these distinct characteristics are avenues for future research to investigate, understand,
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8 further critique, or even reconceptualise the appropriate ACR.
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12 Future research can also provide different theoretical lenses to study auditor tenure, ACR
13 attributes, and auditor-client negotiation research streams. As proposed by Knechel *et al.* (2020),
14 empirical research to complement auditing from a service perspective can contribute to studies on
15 the idiosyncratic nature of audit engagement, where standardisation of the audit process may not
16 increase audit quality. However, to what extent social power (Daoust and Malsch, 2020) may harm
17 the value of co-creation of the audit service must be investigated.
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28 **4. Conclusion**

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30 This study reviews the last four decades of ACR studies via a structured literature review and
31 combines quantitative bibliometric techniques and qualitative content analysis. Bibliographic data
32 are generated from the WoS database, which reflects the limitation of this review since WoS does
33 not have a specific accounting and auditing section. AJPT, TAR, and CAR are the most influential
34 journals in the field, accounting for a majority of popular and influential ACR papers, most of
35 which are written by U.S. authors. The U.S. dominates the field, followed by Canada, Singapore,
36 and Australia.
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47 Using data visualisation and content analysis with the bibliometric citation analysis, we
48 provide an evolution of ACR studies for the last 44 years. We also identify three major research
49 streams in ACR literature: (1) auditor tenure, (2) ACR attributes, and (3) auditor-client negotiation.
50 The latter remains underexplored and, hence, gives scope for future research. Further, exploring
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3 various theoretical perspectives can better explain the complexity of ACR reality to inform ACR
4 regulations. Moreover, to intensify multiple ACR perspectives, it may be valuable to consider
5 performing a structured literature review by analysing intellectual sources from a specific
6 theoretical perspective. A structured review from a critical perspective, for example, can provide
7 a comprehensive analysis of ACR as a socially constituted phenomenon.
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17 Notes

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20 1. Readers may refer to Massaro *et al.* (2016) for a thorough discussion on the benefit of a
21 structured literature review relative to a traditional literature review. They emphasise that a
22 structured literature review is transparent and replicable, thus minimising researcher bias and
23 subjectivity.
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- 29 2. The knowledge base refers to a set of articles most cited by the current studies. The structure
30 of the knowledge base is the intellectual structure (Zupic and Čater, 2015).
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- 33 3. As advocated by Massaro *et al.* (2016), we employ the ‘leading-edge technology’ of
34 bibliometric analysis in conducting a structured accounting and auditing literature review.
35 Some researchers are sceptical of the bibliometric technique, given that most accounting
36 review papers use a traditional approach. However, novice researchers will especially find the
37 technique to be very helpful in conducting a systematic review.
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- 45 4. Despite being less subjective and more objective, researchers might be more cautious about
46 their subjectivity when selecting the keywords in the database (e.g., WoS or Scopus) to search
47 for the relevant literature. Thus, the iterative process for the selection of keywords is pivotal.
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52 Further discussion pertinent to the iterative process of this study is presented in this section.
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3 5. Accounting is a research field that currently does not have a significant position in WoS, as
4 only 20 journals are included. Before 2004, only eight journals were included (Merigó and
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6 Yang, 2017).
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10 6. Six new articles were published under ACR after the search date of this study (January 27,
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12 2020, see Table 1).
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15 7. Co-citation occurs when two papers are cited together and included in the same reference list.
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17 However, bibliographic coupling transpires when two documents have at least one reference
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19 in common (Vogel and Güttel, 2013, Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017). Thus, a co-citation analysis
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21 seeks a similarity relationship between two cited articles. Meanwhile, bibliographic coupling
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23 measures the association between two citing articles. Readers may refer to Vogel and Güttel
24
25 (2013) for a thorough explanation about co-citation analysis and bibliographic coupling.
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29 8. Readers may refer to Salterio (2012) for further elaboration on the six major elements in the
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31 auditor-client negotiation model and Brown and Wright (2008) for phases in negotiation as an
32
33 alternative model of the auditor-client negotiation.
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36 9. Although AJPT is the most productive, TAR has been the most influential per the average total
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38 local citation per year (TLC/t).
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41 10. The results from Bradford's Law (untabulated) produced by the *Bibliometrix* R-package tool
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43 also reveals similar outputs. AJPT, TAR, and CAR are the most influential journals that
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45 significantly contribute to the ACR literature.
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In Auditor We Trust: 44 Years Research on Auditor-Client Relationship and Future Research Agenda

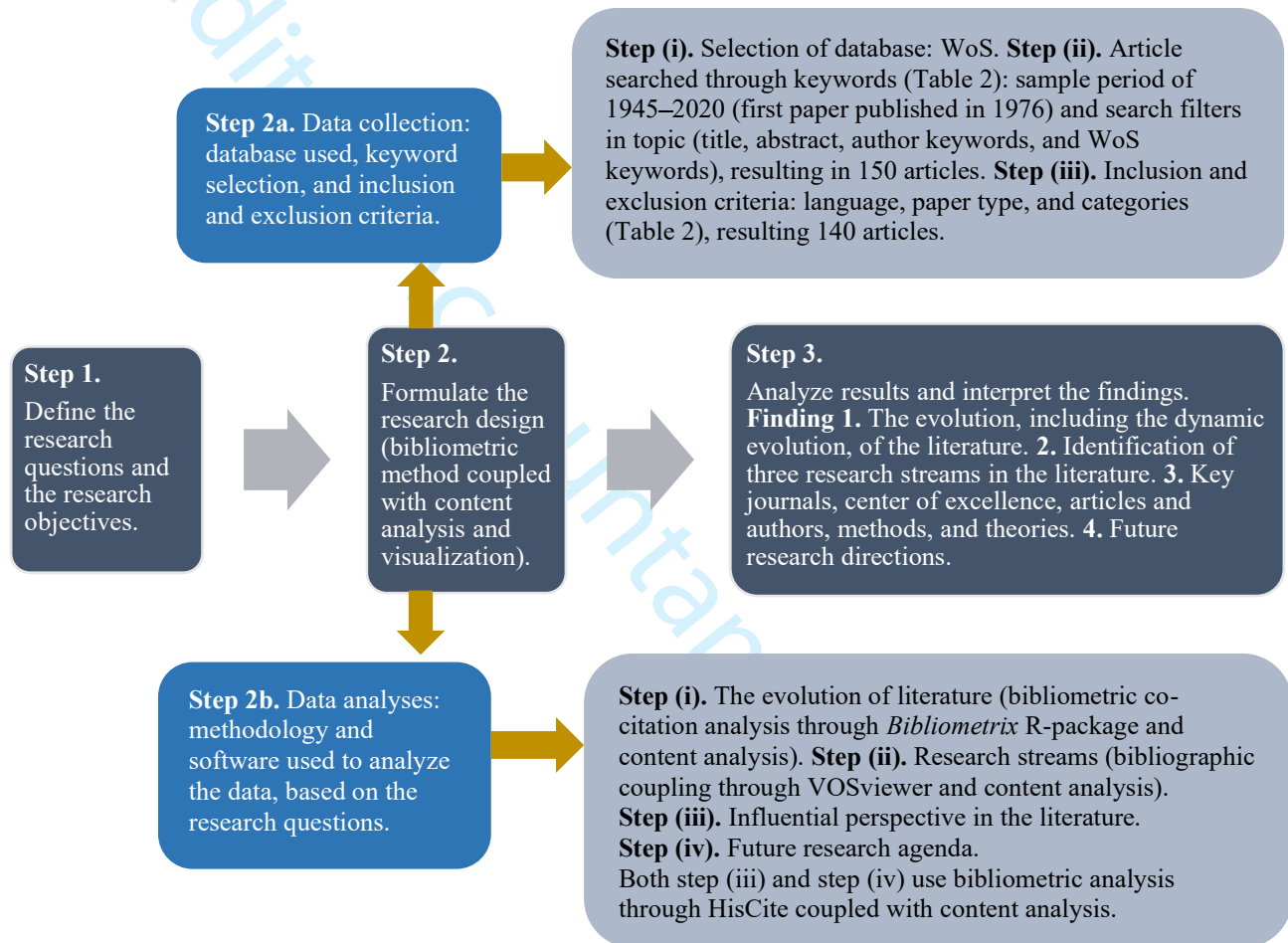
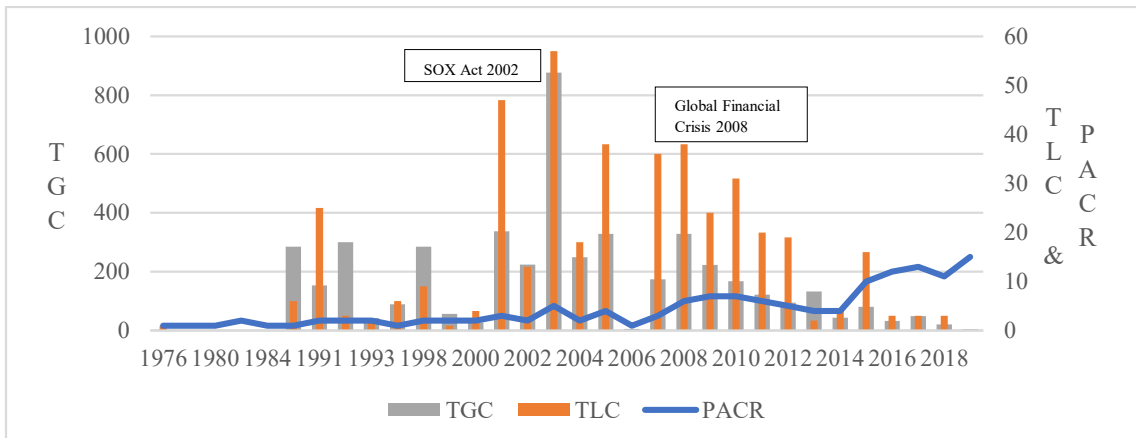


Figure 1. Methodological approach



TGC: total global citation received; TLC: total local citation received; P_{ACR} : number of ACR articles published. Data is processed from HistCite.

Figure 2. Publication trend 1976–2019



Legend: Cluster A.1. ACR theoretical underpinning; A.2. Early concept and consequences of auditor independence and audit quality; and A.3. Early concept of auditor-client interaction as a large negotiation system. Cluster B.1. Auditor tenure and agency theory; and B.2. Auditor-client negotiation. Cluster C.1. Auditor tenure; and C.2. Auditor-client negotiation.

Figure 3. Dynamic evolution of co-citation network

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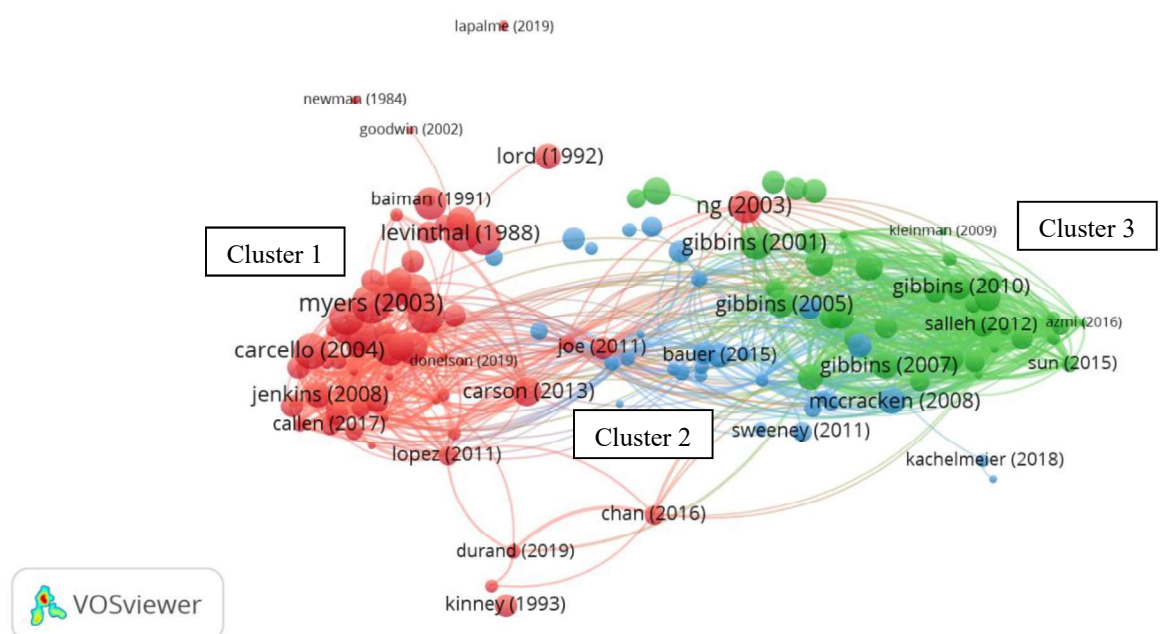


Figure 4. Research clusters of ACR literature

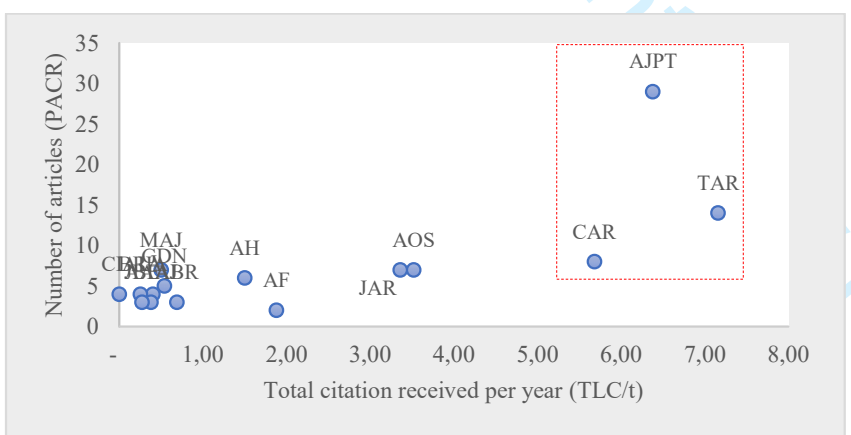


Figure 5. Journal productivity and impact on ACR

In Auditor We Trust: 44 Years Research on Auditor-Client Relationship and Future Research Agenda

Table 1. Process of selecting the sample from WoS

Keywords and filters	Combination words and criteria	# Articles
("auditor-client" OR "auditor-auditee" OR "auditor and client" OR "auditor and auditee" OR "audit partners and CFO")	(relationship* OR interact* OR negotiat* OR disput* OR conflict* OR resolution* OR disagreement*)	150
Search filters	Topic (search keywords in title, abstract, author keywords, and WoS keywords)	150
Period search	1945–2020 (first paper published in 1976 and the latest paper published in 2019)	150
Language	English	150
Paper type	All types, except proceedings	142
Categories	All categories, except Law and Operations research	140

Search: January 27, 2020.

Table 2. Methodology and software for data analysis

Research questions	Content analysis	Bibliometric technique	Bibliometric software
Main information and publication trend	No	Bibliometric citation analysis	<i>Bibliometrix</i> R-package
RQ1. How has the ACR concept evolved?	Yes	Dynamic co-citation analysis and visualization	<i>Bibliometrix</i> R-package
RQ2. What are the key research streams in the ACR literature?	Yes	Bibliographic coupling and visualization	VOSviewer
RQ3. What are the leading perspectives in the literature in terms of influential journals, centers of excellence, articles, authors, key methods, and theoretical underpinnings, therefore worth reading for future studies?	Yes	Bibliometric citation analysis	HistCite
RQ4. What are the future research directions?	Yes	Bibliometric citation analysis	HistCite

Table 3. Bibliometric key terms

Terms	Abbreviation	Definition
Total global citation	TGC	TGC is the number of times an article is cited by any other articles that are available on the WoS database.
Average global citation	TGC/t	TGC/t is the average global citation per year from an article published to the end of the sample of this study.
Total local citation	TLC	TLC is the number of times an article is cited by any other articles in the sample of this study.
Average local citation	TLC/t	TLC/t is the average local citation per year from an article published to the end of the sample of this study
Total number of articles published	P _{ACR}	P _{ACR} is the total number of articles published in the ACR literature.

Table 4. Main information

No	Description	Results	Percentage
1	Journals	47	
2	Average citations per document	33.81	
3	Total authors	259	
	Single-authored documents	26	10%
	Multi-authored documents	233	90%
4	Document type		
	Peer-reviewed	128	91.4%
	Editorial note and discussion	6	4.3%
	Review articles	3	2.1%
	Book review	3	2.1%
	Total documents	140	100.0%

Table 5. Ranking of 15 most productive and influential journals

Rank	Journal	Abbr.	ABS*	P _{ACR}	TLC	TLC/t	TGC	TGC/t
1	Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory	AJPT	3	29	88	6.38	1042	77.49
2	Accounting Review	TAR	4*	14	94	7.16	1146	90.51
3	Contemporary Accounting Research	CAR	4	8	53	5.68	401	38.89
4	Accounting Organizations and Society	AOS	4*	7	38	3.52	267	21.92
5	Journal of Accounting Research	JAR	4*	7	72	3.36	606	31.75
6	Managerial Auditing Journal	MAJ	2	7	1	0.50	5	3.08
7	Accounting Horizons	AH	3	6	13	1.50	72	8.49
8	Group Decision and Negotiation	GDN	2	5	8	0.54	42	2.50
9	International Journal of Auditing	IJA	2	4	2	0.40	15	3.25
10	Behavioral Research in Accounting	BRA	3	4	1	0.25	9	2.25
11	Current Issues in Auditing	CIA	2	4	0	0.00	2	0.40
12	Accounting and Business Research	ABR	3	3	4	0.69	26	4.44
13	Accounting Auditing & Accountability Journal	AAAJ	3	3	3	0.38	23	3.92
14	Journal of Business Ethics	JBE	3	3	3	0.27	43	5.48
15	Accounting and Finance	AF	2	2	15	1.88	60	6.54
	Total			106	(75.7% of 140 articles)			

Table 6. Ranking of 10 centres of excellence in the ACR field

Rank	Institution*	Country	P _{ACR}	% P _{ACR}	TLC	TGC
1	University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign	U.S.	8	5.7	30	560
2	Queen's University	Canada	6	4.3	83	264
3	Nanyang Technological University	Singapore	6	4.3	43	239
4	University of Alabama	U.S.	6	4.3	23	146
5	University of Massachusetts	U.S.	6	4.3	15	139
6	University of Alberta	Canada	5	3.6	109	408
7	Florida International University	U.S.	4	2.9	6	340
8	Boston College	U.S.	4	2.9	29	275
9	University of New South Wales	Australia	4	2.9	17	168
10	University of Arizona	U.S.	4	2.9	1	51

*The institutions are ranked based on P_{ACR}; in the case of equal P_{ACR}, the institutions are ranked based on TGC.

Table 7. Ranking of top 10 articles in the ACR literature

Rank	Author(s)/year/title	Topic	Journal*	TLC	TLC/t	TGC	TGC/t	Findings/Contributions
1	Gibbins et al. (2001) Evidence about auditor-client management negotiation concerning client's financial reporting	Negotiation	JAR (4*)	41	2.16	187	9.84	Develop a model of auditor-client accounting negotiation, using negotiation elements in behavioural literature and accounting contextual features.
2	Antle and Nalebuff (1991) Conservatism and auditor-client negotiation	Negotiation	JAR (4*)	25	0.86	152	5.24	Challenge the common perception that auditors are conservative in auditor-client negotiation setting.
3	Ng and Tan (2003) Effects of authoritative guidance availability and audit committee effectiveness on auditors' judgments in an auditor-client negotiation context	Negotiation	TAR (4*)	25	1.47	121	7.12	Auditors' perceived negotiation outcome is jointly influenced by authoritative guidance availability and audit committee effectiveness.
4	Myers et al. (2003) Exploring the term of the auditor-client relationship and the quality of earnings: A case for mandatory auditor rotation?	Auditor tenure	TAR (4*)	23	1.35	475	27.94	Longer auditor tenure is associated with less extreme income-increasing and income-decreasing accruals.
5	Gibbins, McCracken, and Salterio (2005) Negotiations over accounting issues: The congruency of audit partner and chief financial officer recalls	Negotiation	AJPT (3)	22	1.47	54	3.60	High-level congruency across CFOs and partners in the type of issues negotiated, parties involved in resolving the issue, and elements making up the negotiation process.
6	Gibbins et al. (2007) The chief financial officer's perspective on auditor-client negotiations	Negotiation	CAR (4)	19	1.46	66	5.08	CFOs view the negotiation with auditors as their responsibility to resolve the issue and in a compliance mode. The issue discussed is mostly related to revenue recognition.
7	McCracken et al. (2008) Auditor-client management relationships and roles in negotiating financial reporting	Negotiation	AOS (4*)	17	1.42	57	4.75	The audit partner is the "relationship manager" whose job to make the client management remains "happy."
8	Sanchez, Agoglia, and Hatfield (2007) The effect of auditors' use of a reciprocity-based strategy on auditor-client negotiations	Negotiation	TAR (4*)	17	1.31	54	4.15	Clients are more satisfy and willing to post significant adjustments if the auditor is exposed to the concession approach.
9	Carcello and Nagy (2004) Audit firm tenure and fraudulent financial reporting	Auditor tenure	AJPT (3)	16	1.00	227	14.19	Fraudulent financial reporting is more likely to occur in the first three years of auditor and client relationship, but no support for the long audit tenure.

Rank	Author(s)/year/title	Topic	Journal*	TLC	TLC/t	TGC	TGC/t	Findings/Contributions
10	Salterio (2012) Fifteen years in the trenches: Auditor-client negotiations exposed and explored	Negotiation	AF ^a (2)	15	1.88	37	4.63	Examine the experimental research over the last 15 years and suggest that archival research on audit report delays should be a construct for auditor-client negotiation.

The ranking is based on TLC. In cases of equal TLC, the rank is presented based on TGC. TLC, TLC/t, TGC, TGC/t are compiled from HistCite.

*For abbreviations of journal names, see Table 4. Except for (a) AF: Accounting Horizons, (b) ASQ: Administrative Science Quarterly. Journal ranking in parenthesis is based on the Association of Business School (ABS) Academic Journal Guide 2018.

Table 8. Key methods

Type	Method	# Articles (n, %)			Total
		Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	
Quantitative	Archival	22 (16.0)	25 (18.0)	1 (0.7)	48 (34.7)
	Experiment	-	11 (8.0)	21 (15.0)	32 (23.0)
	Survey	1 (0.7)	9 (6.4)	8 (5.7)	18 (12.8)
	Textual analysis	-	2 (1.4)	-	2 (1.4)
	Meta analysis	-	2 (1.4)	-	2 (1.4)
	Mathematical modelling	-	-	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)
Total quantitative					103 (74.0)
Qualitative	Case study	-	1 (0.7)	3 (2.1)	4 (2.8)
	Semi-structured/in-depth interview	-	3 (2.1)	-	3 (2.1)
	Critical paper	-	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	2 (1.4)
	Document analysis	1 (0.7)	-	-	1 (0.7)
Total qualitative					10 (7.0)
Mixed methods	Interview and experiment	-	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	2 (1.4)
	Archival and interview	1 (0.7)	-	-	1 (0.7)
	Interview and survey	-	1 (0.7)	-	1 (0.7)
Total mixed method					4 (2.8)
Literature review		3 (2.1)	3 (2.1)	4 (2.8)	10 (7.0)
Conceptual paper and commentary		-	12 (8.5)	1 (0.7)	13 (9.2)
Total		28 (20.2)	71 (50.7)	41 (29.1)	140 (100.0)

Table 9. Theoretical underpinnings

Keywords	Theory	# Article
Panel A. Cluster 1: Auditor tenure		
Alumni affiliation	Relationship theory	1
Auditor changes/switching	Organizational change theory	1
	Economic theory	1
	Positive accounting theory	1
Auditor independence	Lending credibility theory	1
Corporate social responsibility	Stakeholders theory	1
Exchange, attachment, dynamic	Exchange theory	2
Stock price risks	Theory of crash risk	1
		9 (6.4% of 140)
Panel B. Cluster 2: ACR attributes		
Accountability, pressures	Psychology behavioral theory	1
Audit fees	Low-balling theory	2
Audit market	Institutional isomorphism theory	1
Audit tender and selection	Role-theory perspective	1
	Communication and psychology theory	1
Auditing education	Theory of learning	1
Auditor compensation	Contracting theory	1
Auditor disclosure	Economic theory	1
	Hogarth's theory on information assimilation	1
Communication	Social presence theory	2
Compliance, surveillance	Foucault's model of centralized surveillance	1
Conflict, defense mechanism	Social system theory	1
	Theory of defense mechanism	1
Contractual relationship	Agency theory	2
	Prospect theory	1
Corporate governance	Moral seduction theory	1
Ethnicity	Sociological inclination theory	1
Fraud incentive, ambiguity	Ambiguity aversion theory	1
Leadership	Transformational theory of leadership	1
Outsourcing	Reduced risk perspective	1
Performance improvement	Social learning theory	1
Pressures	Theory of exchange, Theory of real conflict	1
Reputation	Reputation theory	1
Social bonds, commitment, trust, identification	Theory on commitment and trust	2
	Trust attracting behavior theory	1
	Social identity theory	6
Uncertainty	Theory of decision making under uncertainty	1
		36 (25.7% of 140)
Panel C. Cluster 3: Auditor-client negotiation		
Accountability	Level-of-aspiration theory	1
Audit opinion	Economic game theory	1
Cognitive characteristic	Cognitive theory	1
Communication	Knowledge sharing theory	1
Concession tactic	Reciprocity theory, Anchoring theory	3
	Expectancy violation theory	2
	Norm-violation theory	1
Conflict, dispute, mandatory rotation, client inflexibility	Dual concern theory	3
	Goal-setting theory	1
Corporate governance, audit committee	Prospect theory	1
	Dissonance theory	1
	Cultural efficacy theory	1
	Agency theory and Resource dependency theory	1

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Keywords	Theory	# Article
Deadline pressure	Power dependence theory	1
Gender	Social identity theory	1
Group decision-making	Intra-team decision-making theory	1
Interorganizational negotiation	Theory of evolutionary system design	1
Negotiation model	Dynamic theory	1
Persuasion tactic	Pervasive power of social validation theory	1
Role and relationship	Social positioning theory	1
Simultaneous, sequential, ambiguity	Ambiguity aversion theory	1
Total		26 (18.6% of 140)
		71 (50.7% of 140)