	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Return on Equity (%)	20	3.98	23.61	15.8	5.25
Return on Asset (%)	20	0.52	3.9	2.47	1.01
Government and other agency ownership	20	0	56.8	15.28	24.24
International ownership	20	16.9	100	77.55	32.84
Other local investor ownership	20	0	28.7	7.16	9.35
Audit committee size	20	3	5	3.9	0.55
Audit Committee Financial Expertise	20	2	5	3.85	0.67
Number of non-independent directors	20	1	6	2.85	1.76
Number of independent directors	20	1	9	5.65	2.13

The table shows that the ROE ranges from a minimum of 3.98% to a maximum of 23.61% with an average of 15.80% for the overall sample. The ROA ranges from a minimum of 0.52% to a maximum of 3.9% with an average of 2.47% for the combined sample. Government and other agency ownership among Rwandan listed commercial Banks range from 0.00 % to 56.8%, with an average of 15.28%. International ownership between listed commercial Bank in Rwanda ranges from a minimum of16.9%, a maximum % of 100% and an average of 77.55% another sub variable of ownership is other local investors' ownership with these statistical results ranging from 0.00% to 28.7% with an average of 7.16%. The statistics show that the average share stakes of the Banks in the sample held by international investors comprise 77.55% the more shareholding the more controls. The government and other agency share an average of 15.28% of the total capital of sampled listed commercial banks in Rwanda, which allow the government to implement some of its policies for regulating the economy of the country. Other local investors take an average of 7.16% the lower percentage represent that local investor is not more encouraged to invest in financial services, especially in the Banking sector.

The statistics show that audit committee members comprise 3.9 persons on average and audit committee members with financial expertise has an average of 3.85 Persons, the number of audit committee member determine the audit quality and fulfills audit committee responsibility, and meet standard requirements for going concerned and profit, the role of having more financial expertise in audit committee members indicate that they are aware of reading and analysis of financial matters and proved materials financial decision making in company operation to lead to the profit and wealth of the firm(Profit and Wealth maximization).

Company boards should have an independent majority. An independent majority on the board is more likely to prioritize shareholder interests. It is also likely to promote autonomous decision-making and reduce potential conflicts of interest. In Rwanda, listed commercial banks have an average of 5.65 independent directors and 2.85 non-independent directors. These findings suggest that Rwanda-listed commercial banks adhere to the majority of independent director principles.

4.2 Inferential statistics

4.2.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was carried out to detect any multicollinearity between variables. This analysis was undertaken using the Pearson correlation. This section shows the results of the correlation analysis of the three variables used for corporate governance practices. The correlation is positive between some independent variables

Table 4. 2: Pearson correlation analysis

	Ownership concentration	Audit quality	Board Independence	Financial performance
Ownership concentration	1	0.402	0.574	-0.806
Audit quality	0.402	1	0.65	0.71
Board Independence	0.574	0.65	1	0.88
Financial performance	-0.806	0.71	0.88	1

Table 4.2 shows Pearson's correlation between firm financial performance and corporate governance practices. The correlations are significant and positive between most of the independent variables. Ownership concentration has a negative correlation with financial performance (Pearson's correlation coefficient = -0.806), Audit quality has a positive correlation with financial performance (Pearson's correlation coefficient = 0.71) and Board Independence has a positive correlation with financial performance (Pearson's correlation coefficient = 0.88). Here p-value of corporate governance practices variables is 0.0000 which are less than 0.05 and indicate that result is highly significant. It means that corporate governance practices have a significant impact on financial performance.

4.2.2 Regression Analysis

The previous section presented the results highlighting the descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. This section uses linear regression analysis to test the developed research hypotheses. This study sought to investigate the association between corporate governance practices and firm financial performance. The first model was tested, with corporate governance standards as independent variables and the financial performance of selected listed commercial banks in Rwanda as dependent variables.

The results of the regression research model revealed the corporate governance practices variables of ownership concentration, audit quality and board independence, and financial performance of chosen Rwanda-listed commercial banks from 2017 to 2021.

Based on the results of a linear regression model, the model's outcomes identified the impact of corporate governance standards on financial performance.

Table 4. 3: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	14.757	12.34		1.196	0.443
	Ownership concentration	-1.96	0.3	-0.404	-6.527	0.01
	Audit quality	6.97	0.988	0.873	7.056	0.00
	Board Independence	9.02	0.933	0.616	9.666	0.00

4.2.2.1 Hypothesis testing

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between ownership concentration and the financial performance of listed commercial banks in Rwanda.

The regression results presented in table 4.6 revealed the negative and significant relationship between ownership concentration and financial performance of selected listed commercial banks in Rwanda (β1= -1.96, P<0.05). The p-value of the ownership concentration coefficient is 0.01 which is less than 0.05. therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and concluded that there is a negative relationship between ownership concentration and financial performance. It means that ownership concentration has a significant negative on financial performance. The negative relationship is consistent with the findings of Ramaswamy (2001) and Orden and Garmendia (2005), who argued that government ownership is inefficient in improving firm performance and is subject to agency problems. Such problems result from the tendency of government bureaucrats/politicians to control the firm concerning their objectives instead of profit maximization. Therefore, it is more likely that government ownership might increase the agency problem and affect the firm performance negatively. This is because the main concern is usually social benefit rather than profit, and the priority for profit maximization is not a necessity for governments. For example, government ownership may consider avoiding unemployment to be more important than increasing the value of company assets; thus, if there was a choice between redundancies within a firm to improve efficiency, the government would be expected to block such measures. Monitoring and agency costs are likely to be greater in larger firms, resulting in a negative impact on performance. Also, because larger firms tend to be more diversified, lower risk premiums

could induce a negative impact on performance.

Ho2: The is no significant relationship between audit quality and the financial performance of listed commercial banks in Rwanda.

The regression results presented in table 4.6 reveal that the audit quality was positive and Significant (β2= 6.97, P<0.05). The p-value of the audit quality coefficient is 0.0000 which is less than 0.05. therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and concluded that there is a relationship between audit quality and financial performance. It means that audit quality has a significant impact on financial performance

The p-value of the board independence coefficient is 0.0000 which is less than 0.05 which shows that result is highly significant. It means that board independence has a significant positive effect on financial performance. This supports the oversight of the financial reporting process, the audit process, the company's system of internal controls, and compliance with laws and regulations and also Audit quality Improves financial practices and reporting, helps to prevent fraud, Develops the internal audit function, and enhance the external audit function those lead to firm performance. Slaheddine (2015) explores the relationship between audit quality and earnings quality. The study measured audit quality using the Big 4 and non-big 4 audit firms' criteria while earnings quality was measured by the predictability power of time series of earnings for firm financial statements audited by one of the Big 4 auditing firms and those audited by non-Big 4 auditing firms. Based on a sample of 4030 firms-year observations in the French and US markets during ten years (2004-2013) and multiple regressions were used as a technique for data analysis, findings show that earnings quality is better when financial statements are audited by one of the Big 4 auditing firms. Nevertheless, the earnings quality of US companies is more associated with audit quality than those of French companies. This study is situated in developed countries where economic activities are more mature than in developing countries and thus creates a vacuum for new research to be conducted.

Rahimi and Amini (2015) examine the relationship between audit quality and profitability in the companies in Tehran's Exchange Market. Auditor size and audit tenure were used to measure audit quality. The study surveyed a total number of 52 companies accepted in Tehran's securities exchange market. Using correlation analysis, findings show that there is a positive and weak relationship between auditor size and auditor's tenure, and profitability ratios. Also, there is a positive but non-significant relationship between profitability and auditor size, while a positive and significant relationship between audit tenure and Profitability was reported.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between board independence and the financial performance of listed commercial banks.

The regression results presented in table 4.6 reveal that the Board independence was positive and Significant (β3= 9.02, P<0.05). The p-value of the board independence coefficient is 0.0000 which is less than 0.05. therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there is a relationship between board independence and financial performance. It means that board independence has a significant positive effect on financial performance. This supports that the majority of independent directors consider the best interests of shareholders first and it also is likely to foster independent decision-making and mitigate conflicts of interest that may arise those lead to an impact on the firm's financial performance.

The board's primary contribution is to develop the company's strategy. exercising proper oversight functions throughout company operations (Zinkin, 2010). Independent directors could provide independent perspectives and actively participate in board debates. They serve as shareholders' representatives on the company's board of directors. As autonomous individuals, they must ensure that their presence and performance are free of any influence from insiders or management. The corporation appoints independent directors to oversee the work of executive directors and top management. As a result, they would seek to maximize shareholder value while pursuing shareholder interests. According to Zinkin (2010), independent directors should consider various aspects that contribute to the proper creation of the firm strategy. They should ask questions about the businesses that the company ventures into, product market segmentation, and the valuable customers within the market segmentation (Fuzi, Rahim, and Tan, 2012). Independent directors with relevant industry backgrounds and wide expertise would be more willing to challenge Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and the management team in board discussions.

Wang and Oliver (2009) mentioned that the company might comply with the required number of independent directors on the board, but several tactics were done to neutralize the powers of such

directors. The executive directors might appoint someone that has had experience in a passive board, irrelevant background, or is without knowledge to challenge the executive powers. Concerning the mixed results of the relationship between independent directors and a firm's performance, Wallison (2006) argued that having independent directors on the board was not for better performance but for better governance. They would represent shareholders in monitoring management and executive directors' efforts to improve the company's performance. As a result, the executive directors would be unable to commit any criminal act in their self-interest.

4.2.2.2 The summary of hypotheses

Table 4. 4: the summary of hypotheses

Hypothesis	Conclusion	P-value	R-Squared
Ho1: there is no relationship between ownership concentration and financial performance	Rejected	0.01	0.607
Ho2: there is no relationship between audit quality and financial performance	Rejected	0.00000	
Ho3: there is no relationship between board independence and financial performance	Rejected	0.00000	

5.2 Conclusion

This study has been able to achieve its main objective. More specifically, the study has comprehensively investigated the corporate governance practices of listed commercial banks in Rwanda. It has also identified potential obstacles to and enablers of effective corporate governance implementation. Essentially, this study has used Descriptive and inferential statistics to examine the relationship between corporate governance practices and the financial performance of four listed commercial banks in Rwanda as depicted in Chapter 4. The findings of this study are in agreement with the literature identified by different countries' researchers. The results of the regression analysis also indicate the effect of corporate governance on firm performance. This study supports the argument that there is a mixed result regarding the relationship between corporate governance and firm financial performance in Rwanda-listed commercial companies. Consequently, this study will add to the literature on corporate governance practices from the perspective of an emerging economy, and it will also contribute to the development of corporate governance in Rwanda. It is hoped that future researchers will be able to further explore the issues highlighted by this study, implement the developing model of corporate governance and extend the avenues that this study has opened up. The above discussion on the limitations of this study and the possibilities for future research conclude this thesis.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Recommendation

To make strong corporate governance, the study revealed that listed commercial banks' boards of directors as they are key to implementing corporate governance practices need to improve their practices to achieve better banking services leading to profit maximization and wealth maximization. Below are detailed drawn recommendations from the finding of this research:

Boards should regularly carry out evaluations to appraise their performance and assess whether they possess the right mix of background and competencies. To improve board mechanisms and member performance, a rising number of jurisdictions should engage in board training and voluntary board review that fit the demands of their clients. External facilitators can help promote impartiality in board evaluations, especially in large organizations. Unless specific qualifications are necessary, such as for financial organizations, board members may be required to acquire appropriate skills upon appointment. Following that, board members can keep up to date on new laws, regulations, and changing commercial and other risks through in-house training and external courses. Boards should assess if they have the correct balance of background and competencies to avoid groupthink and bring a variety of thinking to board discussions.

Boards should consider appointing an appropriate number of non-executive board members capable of exercising independent judgment to responsibilities where a conflict of interest may exist. Key tasks include overseeing the integrity of financial and non-financial reporting, reviewing related party transactions, nominating board members and key executives, and determining board remuneration. While the board as a whole is often responsible for financial reporting, salary, and nomination, independent non-executive board members can provide extra confidence to market participants that their interests are protected. The board should consider establishing specific committees to consider questions where there is a potential for conflict of interest. These committees should require a minimum number or be composed entirely of non-executive members. In some countries, shareholders have direct responsibility for

nominating and electing non-executive directors to specialized functions

Boards could consider forming specialized committees to assist the complete board in carrying out its tasks, particularly audits, and, depending on the size and risk profile of the company, risk management, and remuneration. When the board establishes committees, their mandate, makeup, and working methods should be clearly defined and published by the board. Boards could consider forming specialized committees to assist the complete board in carrying out its tasks, particularly audits, and, depending on the size and risk profile of the company, risk management, and remuneration. When the board establishes committees, their mandate, makeup, and working methods should be clearly defined and published by the board.

Board members should be able to commit themselves fully to their responsibilities. Serving on too many boards can impair board members' performance. Companies have put a limit on the number of board seats that can be held. Specific limitations may be less important than ensuring that board members have legitimacy and trust in the eyes of shareholders. The disclosure of previous board memberships by shareholders is thus a significant instrument for improving board nominations. The publication of attendance records for individual board members (e.g., if they have missed a significant number of meetings), as well as any additional work done on behalf of the board and the associated remuneration, would further contribute to credibility.

The government must consider both the firms' and its interests to reduce the unfavorable association between the financial performance of the enterprises with which it has shared.

5.3 Areas for Further Studies

There are various potential future areas for additional research and development. To begin, to strengthen the Rwandan banking sector, the Central Bank of Rwanda (BNR) released the regulation on corporate governance for banks, which was published in the official gazette n° 6bis on February 5, 2018. This rule provides corporate governance obligations, specifying roles in the banks' management and operational structures, and reinforcing essential components of risk governance. As a result, it is worthwhile to investigate the impact of corporate governance on financial enterprises. The sample of the study ought to be increased and the results from such an investigation would enhance understanding by providing another perspective on the effect on financial firms. Secondly, further research is needed to investigate the effect of the role of the board of directors on firm performance, particularly to investigate the effect of the level of education, gender, experience, and age of board members on firm performance. This will provide a better understanding of the determinants of board effectiveness for the Rwanda-listed commercial banks. Filling these gaps will lead to a better understanding of board procedures and their impact on business success. Third, it would be interesting to analyze the impact of several board committees other than audit committees on the financial performance of listed commercial banks in Rwanda, such as the Risk Committee, Credit Committee, pay and nominating committees, and IT Committee. Further research into their effects could delve deeper into the impact of each committee on the performance of Rwanda's listed commercial banks.

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