

**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRACTICES AND OPERATIONAL
PERFORMANCE OF CHRISTIAN BASED ORGANIZATIONS: A CASE OF
COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL UGANDA (CIU) KAMPALA DISTRICT**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my original work and has not been submitted to any institution of learning.

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APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my mother who advised, supported and mentored me throughout my education up to university level. Above all, I thank the Almighty God for guidance and provision towards completion of this dissertation.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBOs: - Christian Based Organizations

CEO: - Chief Executive Officer

CIU: - Compassion International Uganda

CVI: - Content Validity Index

FPO: - Faith Based Organizations

NPM: - New Public Management

SPSS: - Statistical Package for Social Scientists

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the effects of corporate governance practices on the operational performance of Christian Based Organizations based on a case of Compassion International Uganda (CIU), Kampala district. The study was guided by three objectives: to establish the relationship between board accountability and operational performance, to examine whether leadership collaboration influences operational performance and to assess the how board empowerment influences operational performance in Compassion International Uganda. The research was carried out using cross-sectional research design. –A mixed methods approach was used. Both simple random and purposive sampling methods were used to generate a sample of 44 respondents that were involved in the study. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview guide administered on the board members, top management and support staff of Compassion International Uganda. Correlation results show that board accountability and operational performance are significantly and positively related ($r = .551, p < .05$), leadership collaboration and operational performance are significantly related ($r = .613, p < .05$), board empowerment and operational performance are significantly related ($r = .456, p < .05$). The regression results showed that leadership collaboration has the most effect on operational performance in CIU given a higher Adjusted R Square = .371 compared to that of board accountability and board empowerment with Adjusted R Square = .314 and Adjusted R Square = .194 respectively. This means CIU's corporate governance practices have a statistically significant positive relationship with operational performance since all p values were below the alpha of 0.05 and as such the null hypothesis was rejected. The study recommended that members in Compassion International Uganda should keenly consider the corporate governance practices such as board accountability, leadership collaboration and board empowerment. The study also recommended the need to sanction Christian Based Organizations that do not adhere to transparency and disclosure requirements that are critical tenets of effective board governance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study and conceptual framework.

This case study analyzed Corporate Governance practices (board accountability, stakeholder participation, leadership collaboration and board empowerment) and their effects on operational performance of Christian Based Organizations. A corporate governance system is a framework that enables organizations to manage their affairs. It establishes relationships between the various stakeholder groups and the company's directors. It also addresses the rights of creditors, employees, and minority owners. A good corporate governance system helps organizations achieve their goals (Muriithi, 2016). Good corporate governance ensures that the actions of the company are carried out in a manner that is consistent with their objectives.

Christian-based Organizations (CBOs) are vital to developing countries, such as Uganda, as they are a major contributor to the nation's socio-economy development (Senkanjako & Nsubuga, 2023; Barr, Fafchamps, & Owens, 2013). They need to function properly in order to be successful. Needle (2010) noted that many of these organizations are not well-understood and have inadequate governance structures. The concept of governance structures provides a glimpse into what Christian-based organizations will

look like in the future. Even if they borrow from the world of knowledge and truth, they should still adopt corporate procedures (Perkins, 2013).

This study therefore aimed at assessing the effects of corporate governance practices (board accountability, leadership collaboration and board empowerment) on the operational performance of Christian Based Organizations (CBOs) giving Compassion International Uganda as the case study.

1.1 Background of the study

It has been argued that the concept of corporate governance started in North America (Cheffins, 2011; Wells, 2010). Due to the increasing number of companies in the country, the US government started to focus on making sure that the directors are independent from the management. This has also led to the establishment of audit committees (Mees, 2015). The concept of agency theory and control was initially adopted by American economic theorists. However, during the 1980s, the business environment became more deregulated and stricter. This led to the emergence of various corporate governance reforms in the UK. One of these was the establishment of the Corporate Governance Code following the collapse of the Bank of Credit & Commerce International (Mees, 2015).

Over the years, various studies have been conducted on the effects of corporate governance on an organization's performance (Charas, 2015). These studies were mainly focused on the agency theory, and they have shown that improving the effectiveness of an organization's board of directors can help improve its performance. However, it has not been easy to measure the link between corporate governance and an

organization's performance. Halbouni and Hassan (2013) claimed that the importance of corporate governance is diminished if it does not affect an organization's performance. A similar study conducted by Katchova and Enlow (2013) stated that the perceptions of managers and investors about an organization's performance are related to financial success.

Due to the various financial scandals that have occurred over the past few years, various regulations and standards such as the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) have been enacted to enhance the transparency of financial reporting. In the US, the various financial scandals that occurred in 2002 such as the Enron and World.com cases led to the enactment of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. This legislation aimed to improve the corporate governance of companies (the Sarbanes & Oxley, 2002).

In Africa, although corporate governance has been used in various countries, it was mainly adopted in public organizations in Africa in 2000 due to the practices of the New Public Management movement (Tricker & Tricker, 2012). This movement's adherents believed that managers should be appointed to oversee the operations of public institutions. Corporate governance has gained popularity in non-profit organizations in Africa due to its ability to promote good governance and prevent poor practices from taking root. According to Minow and Monks (2014), the increasing number of people demanding accountability and transparency in all aspects of human endeavors has contributed to the growing popularity of this framework.

Due to the increasing number of international agencies and governments funding Christian-based organizations, they have become more scrutinized globally (Hall, 2012). This has led to various scandals involving the abuse of children by members of the Pentecostal churches and tele-evangelists. To address this issue, a researcher conducted a study on the corporate governance framework of Christian-based organizations. The objective of the study was to find out how it can help improve the operational performance of these organizations.

Uganda has been following and adopting the trend of other developing countries in its efforts to improve corporate governance (Tumuheki, 2021; Musaali, 2010). It has enacted various laws that have been designed to promote the proper management of public corporations and financial institutions. Some of these include the Financial Institutions Act 2004, the Capital Market Authority Act 2011, and the Companies Act 2012.

Studies have shown that there is a link between the performance of an organization and its corporate governance (Jones, 2015; Claessens and Yurtoglu, 2012; Sanda et al, 2011; Waduge, 2011, John & Senbet, 2008). These studies also indicated that improving corporate governance can help boost the performance of an organization. They then came up with recommendations on how to improve corporate governance. Unfortunately, these studies only looked into the operations of public corporations and not those of Christian-based entities. This means that the researcher was not able to study the impact of corporate governance on the operations of these organizations. Christian-based organizations are typically grass-roots groups that are active both

locally and globally. Their funding comes from individual donations, and they are also eligible for international or state grants. This terminology is commonly used in various settings, such as government, non-governmental, and inter-governmental organizations. It is therefore important that these organizations follow proper corporate governance practices.

These Christian organizations follow a set of beliefs or values based on a certain faith. They also carry out their missions through social values that are related to that faith (Dawson 2014). These are not religious organizations, and the faith they are related to does not have to be regarded as such. Huyser and Dougherty (2018) claim that the term "Christian-based organization" is more inclusive than "religious organization," as it also refers to non-congregationist beliefs.

The global, regional and national trends observed above motivated the researcher to study corporate governance and how they affect the operational performance of CBOs, with the aim of developing a framework for corporate governance best practice in CBOs in Uganda. This would go a long way in improving corporate governance and enhance improved operational performance of CBOs in Uganda.

1.2 Statement problem

Effective corporate governance practices should ideally lead to improved operational performance through better decision-making, transparency, and strategic oversight (Tricker, 2019). Despite efforts by CBOs, including the establishment of structured boards and adoption of leadership training programs, many still face operational performance challenges (Muleya & Chikozho, 2021).

For instance, CIU Annual performance reports (2021-2023) show a decline in efficiency, with project implementation timelines increasing from an average of 6 months in 2021 to 9 months by 2023, representing a 50% delay in execution. Furthermore, CIU Monitoring and Evaluation Unit report (2023) showed that effectiveness also dropped, as evidenced by a reduction in the percentage of targeted beneficiaries reached—from 87% in 2021 to just 43% in 2023, indicating gaps in outreach and service delivery. Similarly, quality of services has been compromised, with beneficiary satisfaction ratings falling from 78% in 2021 to 54% in 2023, due to inconsistent follow-up, poor coordination, and limited board engagement (CIU Annual performance report, 2023). If the problem of poor operational performance at Compassion International Uganda remains unsolved, it may lead to reduced donor confidence, diminished impact on beneficiary communities, and eventual decline in organizational sustainability and relevance.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of research was to assess the effects of corporate governance practices (board accountability, leadership collaboration and board empowerment) on the operational performance of Christian Based Organizations; a case of Compassion International Uganda (CIU), Kampala district.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- i. To establish the influence of board accountability on operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.

- ii. To examine how leadership collaboration influences operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.
- iii. To assess the how board empowerment influences operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.

1.5 Research questions

- i. What is the relationship between board accountability and operational performance in Compassion International Uganda?
- ii. Does leadership collaboration influence operational performance in Compassion International Uganda?
- iii. What influence does board empowerment have on operational performance in Compassion International Uganda?

1.6 Hypothesis of the study

H₁: There is a significant relationship between board accountability and operational performance.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between board empowerment and operational performance.

1.7 Scope of the study

1.7.1 Content scope

The study focused on assess the effects of corporate governance practices on the operational performance of Christian Based Organizations; It specifically focused on; establishing the relationship between board accountability and operational performance, examining the relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance, documenting the relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance and assessing the relationship between board empowerment and operational performance.

1.7.2 Time scope

The study covered a period of two years from 1st January 2021 to 1st January 2023. This period was chosen because it helped in ascertaining the level of operational performance in Compassion International Uganda in relation to corporate governance practices.

1.7.3 Geographical scope

This study was carried out in Compassion International Uganda (CIU) located on Compassion Tower, Plot 8A3 Baskerville Ave, Kampala, Uganda. This organization was chosen because it is one of the CBOs that have tried to incorporate corporate governance practices in the bid to improve their operational performance.

1.8 Justification of the study

Other studies such as (John & Senbet, 2008; Jones, 2015; Sanda et al, 2011; Waduge, 2011, Claessens and Yurtoglu, 2012) have shown that the performance of corporate

governance can improve the operations of organizations. However, these studies were not focused on Christian-based organizations. Instead, they focused on the operations of public and private corporations. In response, the authors of these studies suggested ways on how to improve corporate governance.

In addition, given the significant role that Christian-based organizations play in various sectors, including healthcare, education, social services, and charity, it is crucial to examine the effectiveness of their governance practices. Identifying best practices and areas for improvement can benefit not only these organizations but also their stakeholders, including employees, beneficiaries, donors, and the broader community.

1.9 Significance of the study

This study may be useful to Christian Based Organizations like Compassion International Uganda (CIU) in developing best corporate governance practices that CBOs can adopt so as to improve their overall operational performance.

The study can help contribute to the operations and effectiveness of Christian-based entities such as CIU by providing relevant practices and guidance. Doing so can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of these organizations and ensure proper utilization of their funds. It can also serve as a valuable tool for policymakers and the government in identifying gaps and developing strategies to address these issues, particularly through legislation and policy development.

The study will also contribute to the existing literature on the subject of corporate governance and the operations of Christian-based organizations. It can help researchers develop related research questions.

Finally, once the research is finalized, it may help in giving a clear insight on how best the management of Christian Based Organizations like Compassion International Uganda (CIU) can best incorporate corporate governance practices so as to ensure that they achieve improved operational performance.

1.10 Conceptual framework

This shows the relationship between technological innovations (IV) and business efficiency (DV).

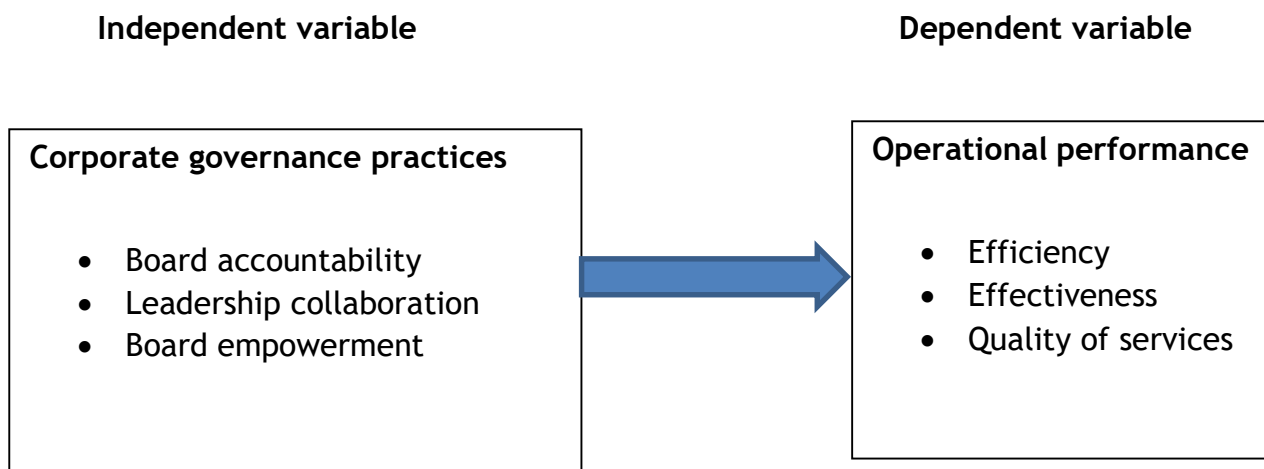


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: Adapted from Mwaura (2018); Asiimwe (2015) and modified by the researcher.

The conceptual framework reflects two variables, namely corporate governance practices as the independent variable and operational performance as the dependent variable. In other words, it's conceptualized that operational performance depends on corporate governance practices.

In the current study, the dimensions of corporate governance practices include board accountability, leadership collaboration and board empowerment can lead to a direct

impact on operational performance by affecting dimensions such as efficiency, effectiveness and quality of services.

1.11 Definition of key terms

Corporate Governance: According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), corporate governance is defined as a system of rules, practices, and processes by which a company is directed and controlled. Corporate governance involves balancing the interests of a company's many stakeholders, such as shareholders, management, customers, suppliers, financiers, government, and the community (OECD, 2015).

Operational Performance: Operational performance refers to the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization's day-to-day activities in achieving its objectives. It includes metrics such as productivity, quality, customer satisfaction, and financial performance (Becker et al., 2010).

Christian Based Organizations: Christian based organizations (CBOs) are non-profit organizations that are inspired by Christian values and beliefs. CBOs may engage in activities such as social services, community development, education, and advocacy, and their activities are often guided by religious principles (Lyon & Cameron, 2004).

Board Accountability: Board accountability refers to the responsibility of the board of directors to ensure that the organization is fulfilling its mission and acting in the best interest of its stakeholders. This includes overseeing the organization's finances, monitoring the performance of management, and ensuring that the organization complies with relevant laws and regulations (Chartered Governance Institute, 2021).

Leadership Collaboration: Leadership collaboration refers to the process of working together between leaders within an organization to achieve common goals. Effective collaboration involves clear communication, shared decision-making, and a focus on shared objectives (Schoorman et al., 2014).

Board Empowerment: Board empowerment refers to the degree to which the board of directors has the authority and resources necessary to fulfill its oversight and strategic responsibilities. Empowered boards are able to set the organization's strategic direction, monitor management's performance, and hold management accountable for their actions (Chartered Governance Institute, 2021).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses and reviews related research and literature published in journals, previous dissertations, textbooks, and authors' articles related to the research topic and its variables so as to give an insight of the study hence a better understanding to the readers of the research work. It would be reasonable to first review the more comprehensive literature on corporate governance theories, practices and operational performance.

2.1 Theoretical review

2.1.1 Agency theory

Over the years, various models and theories have been developed to explain the vexing problem of operational performance. In this section, we briefly assess one of the performance theories to examine the operational performance in Christian Based Organizations. From a performance perspective, a widely used theory is the Agency Theory (Oliver E. Williamson, 1970s). The agency theory suggests that the performance of an organization is influenced by the relationship between the principals (owners or shareholders) and agents (managers or employees) who are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization (Eisenhardt, 1989). In this theory, the principals delegate decision-making authority to the agents, who then act on behalf of the principals to achieve the organization's goals.

In the context of corporate governance, the agency theory explains corporate governance by focusing on the relationship between the principals (shareholders) and agents (managers) of a corporation (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). The theory suggests that the agents are not always aligned with the goals of the principals and may pursue their own self-interest, which can lead to agency costs. According to Jensen and Meckling (1976), agency costs arise due to conflicts of interest between the principals and agents. The agency theory suggests that the performance of the corporation can be improved by designing governance mechanisms that align the incentives of the agents with the goals of the principals.

Corporate governance mechanisms such as board of directors, executive compensation, and monitoring systems are put in place to reduce agency costs by ensuring that the agents act in the best interest of the principals (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). The board of directors is responsible for overseeing the activities of the management and ensuring that they act in the best interests of the shareholders. Executive compensation is designed to align the interests of the managers with those of the shareholders by linking the managers' compensation to the performance of the company.

2.2 Corporate Governance

Corporate governance refers to the mechanisms and structures through which a company is directed and controlled. It encompasses the processes, policies, and principles that guide the decision-making of a company's management team and its board of directors, ensuring accountability, transparency, and fairness in the way the company operates. The aim of corporate governance is to promote long-term sustainable growth of the company, while protecting the interests of its stakeholders,

including shareholders, customers, employees, suppliers, and the wider community (OCED, 2015).

The importance of corporate governance is increasingly recognized, as it has a direct impact on a company's performance, reputation, and ability to attract investment. Companies that practice good corporate governance are more likely to have higher valuations, lower risk profiles, and better access to capital markets. Conversely, poor corporate governance practices can lead to financial scandals, reputational damage, and loss of investor confidence (Clarke, 2017).

Corporate governance involves several key elements, including the composition and structure of the board of directors, the role and responsibilities of the CEO and senior executives, the alignment of incentives and performance metrics, the management of risks and opportunities, and the communication and engagement with stakeholders (Gibson, 2018). The board of directors plays a central role in corporate governance, providing oversight and guidance to the company's management team, setting strategic objectives, and ensuring compliance with legal and ethical standards. The CEO and senior executives are responsible for implementing the board's directives and managing the day-to-day operations of the company.

Effective corporate governance requires a culture of integrity, transparency, and ethical behavior throughout the organization. This involves promoting a strong code of conduct, encouraging whistleblowing and reporting of misconduct, and ensuring that all employees understand and adhere to the company's values and principles. Companies that prioritize corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability also

tend to have better corporate governance practices, as they are more likely to take a long-term view of their impact on the environment, society, and the economy (Mallin, 2017).

2.3 Operational performance

Operational performance refers to the ability of an organization to efficiently and effectively produce goods and services that meet or exceed the expectations of its customers, while minimizing costs and maximizing profits (Jacobs & Chase, 2018). It encompasses all aspects of the organization's operations, from the design and planning of products and services to the procurement of inputs, the production process, and the delivery and post-sale support. Operational performance is critical to the success of an organization, as it directly impacts its competitiveness, profitability, and long-term sustainability.

Effective operational performance requires a focus on several key areas, including quality, speed, flexibility, and innovation (Slack, Chambers & Johnston, 2016). Quality refers to the extent to which the organization's products and services meet or exceed the expectations of its customers, while minimizing defects, errors, and waste. Speed refers to the ability of the organization to deliver its products and services quickly and efficiently, while minimizing lead times and cycle times. Flexibility refers to the ability of the organization to respond to changes in customer demand, market conditions, and technology, while maintaining its core competencies and capabilities. Innovation refers to the ability of the organization to develop new products, services, and processes that create value for its customers and enhance its competitive position.

Operational performance can be measured using various metrics, such as productivity, efficiency, quality, cycle time, delivery performance, and customer satisfaction (Meredith & Shafer, 2017). These metrics provide insights into the performance of different aspects of the organization's operations, allowing managers to identify areas of improvement and develop strategies for enhancing performance. For example, measuring productivity can help managers identify opportunities to improve the efficiency of the production process, while measuring customer satisfaction can provide insights into the quality of the organization's products and services.

2.4 Christian Based Organizations

Christian-based organizations have been a significant aspect of the social welfare landscape since the colonial era, and they continue to play a critical role in providing social services to various populations. These organizations, which are motivated by their faith and beliefs, operate in various sectors, including healthcare, education, and poverty alleviation. According to Scott and Dikkers (2017), Christian-based organizations have always been an essential part of the American welfare system, with many of them playing a vital role in creating public policies and shaping social welfare agendas.

One of the primary reasons Christian-based organizations are a significant player in the social welfare system is due to their emphasis on charity and compassion. According to Lerner (2016), Christian-based organizations have a long history of serving vulnerable populations, which is based on their understanding of the Christian doctrine of love and service to others. Many Christian-based organizations operate on the principle of charity

and emphasize the importance of giving back to the community. As a result, they often provide services to those in need, regardless of their religious affiliation or background.

Another reason Christian-based organizations have a significant impact on social welfare is their ability to mobilize resources and volunteers. As noted by Norris and Inglehart (2019), Christian-based organizations have a vast network of churches and volunteers who are willing to donate their time and resources to help those in need. This network enables these organizations to provide services to a broader population, and in many cases, they can do so more efficiently than government agencies.

Despite these concerns, Christian-based organizations continue to be a vital part of the social welfare system, particularly in developing countries. According to Berman and Kaufmann (2015), Christian-based organizations play a significant role in providing social services in countries with limited government resources. These organizations often operate in rural areas where government services are limited or non-existent, and they provide essential services such as healthcare, education, and poverty alleviation.

2.5 Compassion International Uganda

Compassion International Uganda (CIU) is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting children living in poverty by providing them with access to education, healthcare, and other basic needs. According to CIU (2022), the organization was founded in 1980 with the aim of helping vulnerable children in Uganda. CIU was registered as a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Uganda in 1980 under the name Compassion Uganda. According to CIU (2022), the organization was registered to

"provide a Christian ministry of child development to help children living in poverty become responsible, fulfilled, and godly adults." Since then, the organization has expanded its reach and impact to serve more children and families in Uganda.

At the governance level, CIU is governed by a board of directors, which is responsible for setting the organization's strategic direction and ensuring that it operates within its mission and values. The board comprises both Ugandan and international members who provide guidance and oversight to the organization (CIU, 2022). At the management level, CIU is headed by a Country Director who is responsible for overseeing the organization's operations in Uganda. The Country Director reports to the International Director of Compassion International, who is based in the United States. Under the Country Director, there are various departmental heads responsible for different areas of the organization's operations, such as finance, child sponsorship, and program implementation (CIU, 2022).

At the program level, CIU has various programs and initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of children living in poverty. These programs include child sponsorship, health and hygiene, education, and child protection. Through child sponsorship, CIU provides children with access to basic needs such as food, clothing, and healthcare, as well as educational opportunities. The organization also works with local communities to improve access to clean water and sanitation, and to promote healthy behaviors such as handwashing and proper hygiene (CIU, 2022). CIU's impact on the community has been significant. According to a report by Compassion International (2021), as of 2020, the organization had enrolled over 100,000 children in its child sponsorship program, providing them with access to education, healthcare, and other basic needs. The report

also notes that CIU has helped to improve the overall health and well-being of children in the communities it serves, through initiatives such as health and hygiene education and access to clean water and sanitation.

2.6 Board accountability and operational performance of CBOs

Several recent studies have found a positive relationship between board accountability mechanisms and operational performance. For example, a study by Zhang et al. (2020) found that board independence was positively associated with operational performance, while board size had no significant effect. Similarly, a study by Elsayed et al. (2020) found that board diversity was positively associated with operational performance. These findings suggest that board accountability mechanisms can promote better decision-making and oversight, leading to improved operational performance.

Other studies have examined the role of board characteristics, such as board expertise and experience, in promoting operational performance. For instance, a study by Berrone et al. (2020) found that boards with more industry-specific experience were associated with better operational performance in the banking industry. Another study by Ballestar et al. (2020) found that boards with more financial expertise were associated with better operational performance in the manufacturing industry. These findings suggest that board characteristics beyond independence and size can also play a role in promoting operational performance.

In addition to board characteristics, recent studies have examined the impact of board processes on operational performance. For example, a study by Sharma et al. (2021)

found that board strategic involvement was positively associated with operational performance, while board financial oversight had a negative effect. Similarly, a study by Lee and Kim (2021) found that board risk oversight was positively associated with operational performance, while board remuneration had no significant effect. These findings suggest that the specific processes and activities of the board can impact operational performance.

However, some studies have found mixed or even negative effects of board accountability on operational performance. For instance, a study by Durand et al. (2021) found that board gender diversity had no significant effect on operational performance in French firms. Similarly, a study by Gao and Sorenson (2021) found that CEO duality (where the CEO also serves as board chair) was negatively associated with operational performance. These findings suggest that the relationship between board accountability and operational performance may be complex and context dependent.

2.7 Leadership collaboration and operational performance of CBOs

Several recent studies have highlighted the positive relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance. For example, a study by Li et al. (2020) found that collaborative leadership positively affected operational performance in Chinese manufacturing firms. Similarly, a study by Peiperl et al. (2020) found that collaboration among top executives was positively associated with operational performance in a multinational corporation. These findings suggest that leadership collaboration can enhance decision-making, communication, and coordination, leading to better operational performance.

Other studies have examined the impact of specific types of collaboration on operational performance. For instance, a study by Hamid et al. (2020) found that cross-functional collaboration between IT and business units was positively associated with operational performance in Malaysian firms. Similarly, a study by Song et al. (2021) found that external collaboration with suppliers and customers was positively associated with operational performance in Chinese firms. These findings suggest that different types of collaboration can have varying impacts on operational performance depending on the context.

However, some studies have highlighted the challenges of achieving effective leadership collaboration and its impact on operational performance. For example, a study by Berggren et al. (2020) found that lack of trust among top leaders hindered effective collaboration and negatively impacted operational performance in a Swedish company. Similarly, a study by Oreg et al. (2021) found that conflicting goals and values among top leaders hindered effective collaboration and negatively impacted operational performance in an Israeli company. These findings suggest that effective leadership collaboration requires addressing underlying organizational and cultural factors.

Moreover, recent studies have explored the role of leadership collaboration in facilitating organizational change and innovation. For instance, a study by Zhang et al. (2020) found that collaborative leadership was positively associated with organizational innovation in Chinese manufacturing firms. Similarly, a study by Foss et al. (2021) found that collaboration among top leaders facilitated organizational change in a Danish company. These findings suggest that leadership collaboration can enable organizations

to adapt and respond to changing environments, leading to improved operational performance.

Overall, recent research highlights the importance of leadership collaboration in promoting operational performance, but also the challenges and complexities of achieving effective collaboration. The type of collaboration and the underlying organizational and cultural factors can influence the impact of leadership collaboration on operational performance. Future research could explore the mechanisms through which leadership collaboration impacts operational performance and identify strategies for ensuring effective collaboration in different contexts.

2.8 Board empowerment and operational performance of CBOs

Several recent studies have highlighted the positive relationship between board empowerment and operational performance. For instance, a study by Kim et al. (2021) found that board empowerment, as reflected in the delegation of decision-making authority, positively affected operational performance in Korean firms. Similarly, a study by Ismail et al. (2021) found that board empowerment, as reflected in the extent of board involvement in strategic decision-making, positively affected operational performance in Malaysian firms. These findings suggest that board empowerment can enhance decision-making, resource allocation, and overall organizational performance.

Other studies have focused on the mechanisms through which board empowerment affects operational performance. For example, a study by Yildiz and Demir (2020) found that board empowerment positively affected operational performance through its impact on strategic orientation in Turkish firms. Similarly, a study by Chen et al. (2021)

found that board empowerment positively affected operational performance by promoting innovation in Chinese firms. These findings suggest that board empowerment can influence different aspects of organizational performance and that its impact can be context specific.

However, some studies have highlighted the challenges and limitations of board empowerment and its impact on operational performance. For instance, a study by Liao et al. (2021) found that excessive board empowerment could lead to information overload and hinder effective decision-making in Chinese firms. Similarly, a study by Xie et al. (2020) found that board empowerment could lead to conflicts between the board and management and negatively impact operational performance in Chinese firms. These findings suggest that board empowerment requires appropriate balance and coordination to ensure its positive impact on operational performance.

Moreover, recent studies have explored the role of board empowerment in promoting stakeholder engagement and corporate social responsibility (CSR). For example, a study by Wong et al. (2020) found that board empowerment positively affected CSR performance in Chinese firms. Similarly, a study by Iqbal et al. (2021) found that board empowerment positively affected stakeholder engagement in Pakistani firms. These findings suggest that board empowerment can enable organizations to effectively engage with their stakeholders and contribute to societal goals while enhancing operational performance.

2.9 Summary of literature review

Previous studies, such as those by Zhang et al. (2020) and Elsayed et al. (2020), have shown the positive impact of board independence, diversity, expertise, and strategic involvement on operational performance. However, these studies have primarily focused on general corporate contexts, and there is a lack of research specifically examining these relationships in Christian-based organizations. The study addresses this gap by exploring the unique dynamics of corporate governance mechanisms and their impact on operational performance in Christian organizations.

Furthermore, while the literature has explored the role of board accountability mechanisms, such as independence and diversity, the specific impact of board gender diversity and CEO duality on operational performance has shown mixed results. The study by Durand et al. (2021) found no significant effect of board gender diversity, and Gao and Sorenson (2021) observed a negative association with CEO duality. The research addressed these discrepancies by examining the impact of board gender diversity and CEO duality on operational performance specifically within the context of Christian-based organizations.

Another area that has received limited attention in the literature is the relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance. While studies by Li et al. (2020), Peiperl et al. (2020), Hamid et al. (2020), and Song et al. (2021) have highlighted the positive impact of collaboration on operational performance, there is a lack of research exploring the challenges and complexities of achieving effective leadership collaboration within Christian organizations. The study filled this gap by

examining the factors that hinder or facilitate collaboration among top leaders and how these dynamics influence operational performance in Christian-based organizations.

Additionally, the existing literature has predominantly focused on organizations in various industries and countries, but there is limited research specifically examining the performance of Christian-based organizations. By narrowing the focus to Christian organizations, the study provides insights into the unique challenges, opportunities, and outcomes of corporate governance and leadership collaboration in these contexts.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses the various aspects of the study that were involved in its design and implementation. These include the selection sampling method, the data collection instrument, the validity of the data collection process, and the research population.

3.1 Research design

This study employed a cross-sectional research design to assess the effects of corporate governance practices on the operational performance of Christian Based Organizations. A cross-sectional design involved collecting data at a single point in time to examine the relationships between variables within a specific population (Levin, 2006). This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to gather data from different organizational levels simultaneously, enabling a broad analysis of governance practices and their immediate effects on performance. Since the study sought to establish the current state of governance and its influence on operational outcomes without the need for follow-up, the cross-sectional approach provided a reliable snapshot of the situation at Christian International University (Setia, 2016).

The study used a mixed approach to conduct its research, which involved the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The latter was chosen because it was more objective and reliable. It allowed the researchers to collect data that were then used to analyze the findings. In addition, it helped them determine the link between the two factors (Haradhan, 2021). The researchers conducted the study in Uganda using a

quantitative research method. They collected data from the members of Compassion International using a variety of questionnaires.

On the other hand, the researchers also used qualitative methods to obtain in-depth information about the organization's management in Uganda. This method was beneficial in providing them with valuable insight into the members' personalities, human behavior, and emotions. According to Ugo and Patrik (2014), the use of qualitative methods allowed the researcher to collect data that can be used to analyze the findings.

3.2 Study area and population

According to the administrators in Compassion International Uganda, the organization has a population of 5 Board Members, 5 top management from Compassion International Uganda who included the Country Director and assistant and 40 support staff.

3.3 Sample Size and Selection

According to Stuart (2016), a sample refers to a section of the population that is participating in the survey. Creswell (2012) noted that a subgroup is a representation of the target population, and findings can be generalized to that group.

Table 1: Distribution of population and sample size

Category	Population	Sample size
Board members	5	4
Top management	5	4
Support staff	40	36
TOTAL	50	44

Source: Primary data, 2023

Taro Yamane's sample calculation formula was used to determine the size of the study's sample.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

“n” is sample size, “N” is population, “e” is error (0.05) or level of confidence 95%

“N” (population) = 50 Board members in Compassion International Uganda (CIU)

$$n = \frac{50}{1 + 50(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{60}{1 + 50(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{50}{1 + 0.125}$$

$$n = \frac{50}{1.125}$$

$$n = 44$$

3.4 Sampling techniques

3.4.1 Purposive sampling

In this study, board members and top management were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling involves intentionally selecting individuals who are most knowledgeable or experienced with the subject under investigation (Palinkas et al., 2015). This method was appropriate because board members and top managers

at Christian Based Organizations are directly involved in corporate governance practices and have firsthand experience with how these practices influence operational performance. By targeting participants who hold strategic decision-making roles, the study ensured that the data collected was relevant, insightful, and aligned with the research objectives.

3.4.2 Simple random sampling

Support staff in this study were selected using the simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling is a probability sampling method where each individual in the population has an equal chance of being chosen (Acharya et al., 2013). This method was appropriate because it helped eliminate selection bias and ensured that every support staff member had an equal opportunity to participate, regardless of their role or department. A list of all support staff at the Christian Based Organization was obtained, and participants were randomly selected using a lottery method. This approach made the sample more representative of the entire support staff population and increased the reliability of the findings by allowing for generalization within that group (Alvi, 2016).

3.5 Data collection method

Questionnaire surveys and interviews were used as data-gathering tools. These methods enabled the researchers to collect information about the organization's operational performance and corporate governance.

3.5.1 Questionnaire Survey

Amin (2005) stated that a survey is a type of self-report study that aims to gather information about a certain topic. It is regarded as suitable because it allows participants to give opinions without prejudice and minimize the effects of shyness. Mchumu (2011) noted that surveys can be used to collect data from a large population in a short amount of time.

3.5.2 Interviews

Desncombe (2008) noted that in most cases, interviews are conducted to elicit information from key informants. These are usually open-ended questions that allow participants to talk about the subject. According to Patton, the objective of the interviews is to provide a wide-ranging view of the data collected. Telephone and face-to-face interviews were conducted. They used semi-structured and structured questions to capture the participants' facial expressions, clarify information, and capture more details (Patton 2001). Besides being beneficial for the study, these types of interviews allow researchers to revisit certain issues that were overlooked in other methods.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The survey was conducted according to a format that was rigid and standardized. It asked the respondents to provide their opinions on certain issues by selecting the answers that best represented their viewpoint (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2005). A structured questionnaire was also used to collect information about the subject. The

results of the survey were then presented to the participants. Likert's format allowed the respondents to select their own answers and provide various responses, making it easier to analyze the data. It had a five-point Likert scale with response choices such as, (5) strongly Agree, (4) Agree, (3) Not sure, (2) Disagree, (1) Strongly Disagree. Questionnaires were then distributed to the members of the board of directors of CIU, in Uganda's Kampala district.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

The objective of the interview guide was to collect information about the participants. It was also designed to maintain consistency since it included various topics that were related to the study's conceptual framework. Top management professionals were interviewed because they were expected to provide their opinions on a wide range of subjects. Ragin (2009) noted that the interview guide was made to help guide the process of conducting interviews. It included various items that can help the interviewers gather more information about the participants. For instance, it was designed to capture the facial expressions of the interviewees. The research conducted interviews with the executives of the organization's council in Uganda.

3.7 Data Quality Control

3.7.1 Validity

The survey's validity was evaluated to determine if the questions were able to capture the intended results. Before the results were analyzed, the researcher's supervisor checked the questions to see if they could capture the desired response. A content validity index was then calculated to determine the validity of the various research

tools. According to Keith, Cohen, and Manion (2007), the researcher used the following formula to determine the validity of the different research tools.

$$\text{Content validity Index (CVI)} = \frac{\text{Relevant items by all judges as suitable}}{\text{Total number of items judged.}}$$

Table 2: Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variables	Content Validity Index	No. of items
Board accountability	0.80	3
Leadership collaboration	0.80	3
Board empowerment	0.81	3

Source: *Primary data*

From the above validity statistics tables above, it can be seen that the total CVI is **0.81**, which indicates a high level of validity for our scale. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the CVI is above the recommended .70 that is (0.81) which implies that the questionnaire is valid and suitable for data collection.

Kent (2001) noted that the questionnaire's CVI was higher than the recommended 0.70, which indicates that it was valid for the purpose of collecting data.

3.7.2 Reliability

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the concept of reliability refers to the degree to which an analysis instrument produces consistent results after repeated trials. The questionnaire's reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha after a pilot study was conducted on 10 individuals. The results of the study were then computed using SPSS.

$$\alpha = \frac{k}{K-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum SDi^2}{\sum SDt^2} \right)$$

Where α = coefficient alpha

$\sum SDi^2$ = sum variance of items

$\sum SDt^2$ = sum variance of scale

The questionnaire's coefficient was 0.79, which is above the suggested .70. This indicates that it was useful for the study's data collection.

Table 3: Reliability Test for Corporate Governance Practices

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.810	.816	3

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 4: Item-Total Statistics for Corporate Governance Practices

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Board Accountability	169.50	134.400	.010	.806
Leadership collaboration	169.70	136.400	.590	.809
Board Empowerment	169.70	140.400	.680	.815
Overall Cronbach Alpha				0.81

Source: Primary data, 2023

From the above reliability statistics concerning corporate governance practices in tables 3 and 4 above, it can see that Cronbach's alpha is 0.81 which indicates a high level of internal consistency for our scale. Furthermore, it should also be noted that

the coefficient is above the recommended .70, which means that the questionnaire was reliable and suitable for data collection.

Table 5: Item-Total Statistics for Operational Performance

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Service delivery	169.30	135.800	.507	.808
Cost reduction	169.30	114.800	.806	.783
Employee engagement	169.30	114.800	.806	.783
Overall Cronbach Alpha				0.791

Source: Primary data, 2023

From the above reliability statistics concerning operational performance in table 5 above, it can be seen that Cronbach's alpha is 0.791, which indicates a high level of internal consistency for our scale. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the coefficient is above the recommended .70 which implies that the questionnaire is reliable and suitable for data collection.

3.8 Procedure of Data Collection

To gain access to the participants, an introduction letter was provided by Uganda Christian University. The researcher was able to collect data without relying on research assistants. He or she personally conducted the survey and did not leave any questionnaires behind.

3.9 Data Analysis

The concept of data analysis refers to the process of breaking down the collected information into manageable and logical categories (Creswell 2009).

3.9.1 Quantitative Analysis

The data collected during the study was coded using the numerals assigned to the responses. The information was then entered into the SPSS editor, and it was edited with double entries. A frequency code sheet was then generated for the various responses by ensuring that the first and second entries were the same. For descriptive analysis, the various measures of central tendency, such as percentages and mean, were computed. Inferential statistics were then used to analyze the data and determine the link between the dependent and the predictor variables. A simple regression procedure was then performed to determine the relationship between the data collected during the study and the respondents.

3.9.2 Qualitative Analysis

Categorization was performed on the data collected during the interviews using the themes explored in the study. Data was then categorized and reported using the content thematic analysis process. Frequency counts were generated by a master sheet, and direct quotes from the informants were also reported under the study's variable and thematic subjects.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The concept of ethics refers to the standards that distinguish right from wrong. These helped to determine what is considered to be acceptable behavior and what is considered to be unacceptable (Devlin, 2006). In order to prevent the fabrication of data, an ethical standard should be followed in research. Conducting ethical activities is also important for collaborative research as it promotes a culture of trust and

accountability among the participating researchers. The mishandling of such issues can affect the integrity of the results of the study (May, 2011).

The survey was conducted to gather information about the respondents' attitudes toward various subjects such as social responsibility, intellectual property, and confidentiality. The survey was well designed, and the participants were asked to participate voluntarily.

No harm was done to the respondents due to the sensitivity nature of the organization's records. In 2000, Cohen and colleagues noted that it is important that participants have the opportunity to decline to participate in a study. This was done through the introduction of the consent form and questionnaire.

According to Denicombe (2018), anonymity was a concern. To address this issue, the participants' names were not requested, and the information would only be used for research. The principle of confidentiality was also ensured, and the data would be kept private. After they participated in the study due to ethical considerations, the respondents were thanked. The researcher then shared the findings with them so that they could benefit the organization that conducted the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

The following chapter summarizes the results of the analysis that was performed on the study's specific objectives.

- i. To establish the relationship between board accountability and operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.
- ii. To examine whether leadership collaboration influences operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.
- iii. To assess the how board empowerment influences operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.

The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to present the results of the survey carried out using questionnaires and interviews with board members and board executives on the Organization's Council from Compassion International Uganda. Therefore, this chapter begins with an account of the survey response rate and psychometric evaluation of the study instruments, followed by presentation of the descriptive statistics. Next is a presentation of the correlation results, and finally, the regression model to test the hypothesized relationships.

4.1 Response rate

A total of 44 questionnaires were issued and all of them were returned as shown in table 6 below in relation to the different categories. The researcher obtained 100%

response rate by ensuring clear and concise communication with participants and in this sent reminders at regular intervals to prompt participants to complete the study.

Table 6: Response rate

Response Rate	Sample Size	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires returned	44	100.0%
Questionnaires not returned	00	00.0%
Questionnaires issued	44	100.0%

Source: *Primary data*

According to table 6 above a total of 44 (100%) respondents who are board members and board executives on the Organization’s Council from Compassion International Uganda were expected to respond to the questionnaires. The results of the survey were very impressive, with all of the respondents providing a 100% response rate. This was attributed to the fact that they had the necessary time to collect the information. They also used a research assistant, who was constantly in touch with the participants.

4.3 Findings on demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 2: Background information about the respondents

Item	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	24	54.5
	Female	20	45.5
	Total	44	100.0
Age bracket	21-30 years	12	27.3
	31-40 years	15	34.1
	Above 40 years	17	38.6
	Total	44	100.0
Marital status	Single	17	38.6
	Married	23	52.3
	Widowed	4	9.1
	Total	44	100.0
Highest level of education	Primary	7	15.9
	Secondary	16	36.4
	Tertiary	21	47.7
	Total	44	100.0
Occupation	Work with government	10	22.7
	Work with private sector	12	27.3
	Businessperson	17	38.6
	Others	5	11.4
	Total	44	100.0
Period spent as a member	1-5 years	15	34.1
	6-10 years	18	40.9
	Above 10 years	11	25.0
	Total	44	100.0

Source: *Primary data*

Table 7 above shows that 54.5% of the respondents are male, whereas the remaining 45.5% are female. As the samples were randomly selected, it might be concluded that the men were more eager to participate in the study compared to their female counterparts. The inclusion of both male and female respondents was to get different views from the respondents about the topic under study.

The table above shows that 38.6% of the respondents are above 40 years, followed by the age group 31-40 years representing 34.1%, whereas 27.3% of the respondents are between 21-30 years. This implies that the researcher was able to get views from different age groups who usually tend to have different views including views on corporate governance practices and operational performance.

The table above also shows that the majority of respondents represented by 52.3% are married, followed by 38.6% who noted that they are still single, whereas 9.1% of these respondents noted that they are widowed. The inclusion of respondents of different marital statuses helped the researcher to get different views about the topic understudy.

Furthermore, the table above indicates that 47.7% of the respondents have at least attained tertiary education, followed by 36.4% of the respondents who have at least attained secondary level of education, whereas 15.9% of the respondents have at least attained primary level of education. This implies that the board members in Compassion International Uganda (CIU) are well qualified to respond to the questionnaires with ease.

More so, the study revealed that 38.6% of the respondents are business-people, followed by 27.3% who noted that they work with the private sector, followed by 22.7% who noted that they work with the government, whereas the remaining 11.4% noted that they are unemployed.

Finally, the table above also indicates that 40.9% of the respondents have spent 6-10 years as members in Compassion International Uganda (CIU), followed by 34.1% of the respondents have spent 1-5 years as members in Compassion International Uganda (CIU), whereas 25% of the respondents have spent more than 10 years as members in Compassion International Uganda (CIU). This implies that most of the respondents have spent relatively more years as members in Compassion International Uganda (CIU) meaning that they have more knowledge about the subject matter which further helped the researcher in getting valid and reliable information.

4.4 Descriptive findings on board accountability and operational performance

Descriptive analysis of data collected on the influence of board accountability on operational performance in Compassion International Uganda was done by establishing means and standard deviations of scores leading to results indicated in table 8. With mean scores ranging 1-5, interpretation was based on the sub ranges that; 1.00 - 1.79 is very low, 1.80 - 2.59 is low, 2.60 - 3.19 is moderate, 3.20 - 4.19 is high, and 4.20 - 5.00 is very high. While a standard deviation is less than 1. $SD < 1$ was interpreted to mean a cluster of most scores around the mean, and a standard deviation greater than or equal to 1 that is. $SD \geq 1$ to imply a dispersion of most scores away from the mean.

Table 8: Board accountability and operational performance

Item	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
The Board adheres to the relevant regulations while carrying out its responsibilities	44	1	5	3.47	1.5318
The Board provides performance targets to the organization's leadership	44	1	5	1.93	.6267
The Board regularly carries out performance appraisal for the organization's leadership	44	1	5	3.78	1.6838
The Board approves all policies before they are implemented	44	1	5	3.79	1.5953
The Board provides timely feedback to organization's leadership	44	1	5	4.55	1.6315
The organization's leadership regularly submits performance reports to the Board	44	1	5	3.68	1.5311
The Board writes audited financial statements after auditing has been conducted	44	1	5	4.00	1.7411
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation				3.60	

Source: Primary data, 2023

The Board adheres to the relevant regulations while carrying out its responsibilities: The mean value of 3.47 indicates that respondents generally recognize that the Board of Compassion International Uganda operates within the confines of established legal and regulatory frameworks. This suggests that the organization's governance practices are guided by clear institutional and sectoral standards, and the Board is seen as committed to regulatory compliance. Such adherence is a foundational requirement for credible governance, as it builds trust among stakeholders and contributes to institutional stability. This is supported by a key informant response that.

"From what I've observed over the years, the Board takes regulatory matters very seriously. Every major decision they make is grounded in official policies and external guidelines. They often review legal documents, consult the compliance team, and ensure we're aligned with national laws and Compassion International's internal frameworks. It's not just about ticking boxes—they see it as a way of protecting the organization and ensuring long-term sustainability. Their commitment to doing things the right way has set a good example for the rest of the leadership, and it keeps us accountable too."

The Board provides performance targets to the organization's leadership: The mean value 1.93 points to significant concern among respondents about the Board's role in setting clear performance targets. This suggests that the leadership at CIU may be operating without well-defined benchmarks or goals provided by the Board, which can hinder effective planning, accountability, and performance evaluation. Performance targets are essential for guiding managerial focus, aligning departmental goals, and measuring progress, and the lack thereof signals a gap in strategic oversight. This means that there is weakness in governance structure, where the absence of clearly communicated expectations from the Board may result in inefficiencies, misaligned priorities, and underperformance in core organizational functions.

The Board regularly carries out performance appraisal for the organization's leadership: A mean score of 3.78 implies that respondents believe the Board actively engages in assessing the performance of the leadership team. This is an important governance function because performance appraisal enables the Board to evaluate leadership effectiveness, provide constructive feedback, and reinforce accountability. Regular appraisals also allow for the identification of leadership strengths and weaknesses, enabling targeted capacity building. The item suggests that the organization benefits from a governance culture that values ongoing leadership evaluation, which can lead

to better decision-making, improved productivity, and stronger alignment between strategic goals and managerial execution. During an interview, a key informant expressed that.

“Yes, performance appraisals are something the Board takes seriously. They have a system in place where they sit with senior leaders periodically to review what has been achieved and where improvements are needed. These sessions are not just about pointing out mistakes; they are also opportunities to mentor, guide, and support the leadership. The Board uses these reviews to track whether the leadership is meeting its targets and to see how their work aligns with the wider mission of the organization. In fact, some of the improvements we’ve seen in team coordination and planning came after recommendations made during these appraisals. It creates a culture where leaders know they’re accountable but also supported to grow.”

The Board approves all policies before they are implemented: The mean score of 3.79 reflects a perception among respondents that the Board plays an active and necessary role in approving policies before they are enacted. This oversight ensures that policies are aligned with organizational values, legal standards, and operational realities. It also serves as a risk control mechanism, preventing unvetted or inappropriate directives from being introduced into the system. Such approval processes promote institutional consistency and quality assurance. This shows confidence in the governance structure and suggests that policy decisions at CIU are subject to proper scrutiny, which contributes to operational effectiveness and strategic coherence.

The Board provides timely feedback to organization’s leadership: With a mean of 4.55 which reflects a strong agreement among respondents that the Board is prompt and consistent in offering feedback to the leadership. Timely feedback is vital in

organizational governance because it ensures rapid correction of errors, reinforces positive actions, and allows leadership to respond to emerging challenges with informed adjustments. This high score suggests a dynamic and responsive governance system at CIU where communication between the Board and management is not only functional but highly effective. This practice will likely enhance efficiency by reducing the lag in decision-making and promoting continuous improvement in leadership performance. A key informant stated that.

“In our organization, the feedback loop between the Board and the leadership is very active. After every board meeting or review session, the leadership receives clear and immediate guidance on what needs to be done or adjusted. This has helped us avoid delays in implementing key decisions. For example, when there are concerns about project timelines or staff performance, the Board doesn’t wait for formal quarterly meetings to respond—they communicate straight away, often through written memos or direct consultations. This approach helps us stay on track and adapt quickly when issues arise.”

The organization’s leadership regularly submits performance reports to the Board: The mean value of 3.68 indicates that respondents perceive a consistent flow of performance information from the leadership to the Board. Regular reporting is a key aspect of upward accountability, and it empowers the Board to make informed decisions, evaluate progress against targets, and intervene where necessary. The agreement suggests a structured reporting framework is in place, supporting transparency and traceability of operational activities. While the score is favorable, it also leaves room for enhancement, particularly if the quality or depth of reporting varies over time.

The Board writes audited financial statements after auditing has been conducted: This mean score 4.00 indicates that the Board generally fulfills its duty of preparing audited financial statements post-audit. This practice is essential for demonstrating fiscal responsibility and for maintaining the integrity of financial reporting processes. By producing audited statements, the Board enhances stakeholder confidence and ensures compliance with both internal financial policies and external audit standards. This shows that CIU’s Board is actively engaged in safeguarding the organization’s financial health.

4.4.1 Correlation for board accountability and operational performance

The person correlation was run to establish the relationship between board accountability and operational performance, providing insights into how independent board accountability is associated with operational performance.

		Board accountability	Operational performance
Board accountability	Pearson Correlation	1	.551**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	44	44
Operational performance	Pearson Correlation	.551**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	44	44

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2023

From table 9 above, the study findings revealed a moderate correlation coefficient of .551** which is significant at 0.01 level, this was presented by (r (44) = .551, P=0.000). This means that there is a significant relationship between the two variables implying

that enhanced board accountability is associated with operational performance by a mean factor of .551 (55.1%). Based on these results, the study accepts the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between board accountability and operational performance.

4.4.2 Regression analysis for board accountability and operational performance

To ascertain the relationship of the independent variable on the dependent variable, the researcher carried out a regression analysis and the results are shown in table 10 below. The liner regression analysis was done to establish the predictive power of board accountability on operational performance.

Table 10: Model Summary for board accountability and operational performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.551	.328	.314	.19707
a. Predictors: (Constant), Board accountability				

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 10 shows that the adjusted R squared, which is a statistical measure of the variation within a dependent variable, was 0.314, which indicates that there was a 31.4% variation (effect) in operational performance due to a unit change in board accountability. This shows that 31.4% of changes in operational performance are explained by board accountability, the remaining 68.6% were outside the scope of this study.

4.5: Descriptive findings on leadership collaboration and operational performance

The second objective of the study was to examine how leadership collaboration influences operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.

Table 11: Leadership collaboration and operational performance

Item	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Leaders have maintained effective communication to promote the Church's operational performance	44	1	5	1.82	.9180
There is joint working on a case-by-case basis on all the organization's management issues	44	1	5	3.43	1.6742
There is formalized joint working among various categories of leaders in CIU	44	1	5	1.63	.8514
Some departments in the organization sacrifice some autonomy in order to have a well-managed institution	44	1	5	2.03	1.1505
There is free power sharing among leaders in CIU to promote its performance	44	1	5	3.59	1.8867
Some departments in the organization have merged to create new joint working operations	44	1	5	1.76	1.0347
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation				2.37	

Source: Primary data, 2023

Leaders have maintained effective communication to promote the Church's operational performance: The mean score of 1.82 indicates that the majority of respondents disagree that effective communication is being upheld by CIU leaders to enhance operational performance. Effective communication is the foundation of leadership collaboration, as it ensures that instructions are clear, feedback is received and acted

upon, and everyone is aligned toward organizational objectives. A mean this low implies that communication channels within CIU are either weak, inconsistent, or ineffective. Such a scenario could contribute to misunderstandings among teams, delays in executing tasks, and overall lack of strategic alignment, all of which can significantly undermine performance in a service-driven organization like CIU.

There is joint working on a case-by-case basis on all the organization's management issues: The mean 3.43 shows that respondents generally agree that CIU leaders collaborate on management matters when situations demand, particularly on a case-by-case basis. This finding means that leaders may only work together when problems arise or specific challenges need immediate solutions. Although this kind of situational joint effort is a positive sign, the implication is that such collaboration is not routine or institutionalized. Operational performance may improve in isolated cases where teamwork happens, but the lack of continuous and proactive collaboration can lead to inconsistent implementation of policies, missed opportunities for innovation, and an unstable performance trajectory. It was noted during an interview that.

“Yes, the Board makes it a point to assess our performance regularly. They don't just wait for the end of the year sometimes we go through mid-year reviews, and even informal assessments depending on ongoing projects. During these appraisals, we discuss what targets have been met, areas that need improvement, and how our actions align with strategic goals. It's not about fault-finding, but more about reflection and progress. These sessions help us refocus our energy and feel more accountable for our roles.”

There is formalized joint working among various categories of leaders in CIU: The mean 1.63 clearly shows that formal joint leadership structures or mechanisms are not in

place at CIU. Formalized joint working typically refers to established systems, committees, interdepartmental task forces, or written protocols that guide leadership collaboration. The low means indicates that such formal processes are largely absent. This lack of structured collaboration can lead to fragmentation in leadership, siloed decision-making, and poor integration of efforts across departments. Without structured collaboration, leaders may work independently without synchronizing their actions, which negatively affects the operational harmony, resource use, and service delivery capacity of the organization.

Some departments in the organization sacrifice some autonomy in order to have a well-managed institution: This mean value 2.03 reveals that most respondents do not believe that departments within CIU are willing to give up some level of independence for the benefit of the broader institution. Departmental autonomy can be beneficial for accountability and innovation, but in a collaborative setting, a certain level of compromise is essential to align goals, share resources, and optimize performance across the organization. The fact that departments are perceived to hold tightly to their autonomy suggests that interdepartmental coordination is weak. This has negative implications for operational performance, as it can result in duplication of efforts, inefficiencies in service delivery, and resistance to organization-wide initiatives. In an interview session, it was revealed that.

“Honestly, many departments still operate in silos. Each unit wants to run things its own way, and there’s often resistance when we try to introduce cross-departmental strategies or shared initiatives. Sometimes it feels like everyone is guarding their territory rather than thinking about the bigger picture. This lack of flexibility slows things down, especially when projects require input or

cooperation from multiple teams. We end up duplicating work or pulling in different directions, which makes it harder to achieve consistent results.

There is free power sharing among leaders in CIU to promote its performance: This item scored a mean of 3.59 which indicates that respondents perceive there to be a general openness in sharing authority and decision-making roles among CIU's leaders. Power sharing is a key feature of collaborative leadership and is typically associated with increased engagement, inclusivity, and innovation. When leaders feel empowered and equally responsible, they are more likely to contribute actively to organizational goals. However, while this is a positive result, it also stands in contrast to other items (such as formalized joint working and departmental autonomy), indicating that power may be shared in theory, but not necessarily translated into practical, consistent collaborative practices that drive performance across the board.

Some departments in the organization have merged to create new joint working operations: This item means 1.76 indicates that departmental integration or structural joint operations are almost nonexistent at CIU. Departmental mergers or the creation of new cross-functional teams can be powerful strategies for enhancing efficiency, reducing resource wastage, and ensuring innovation. The low score reflects a rigid structure where departments continue to operate independently. This suggests missed opportunities for synergy, especially in areas where combining efforts could lead to more effective and holistic service delivery. The lack of integration undermines the organization's ability to adapt quickly, streamline processes, and achieve comprehensive operational performance.

4.5.1 Correlation for leadership collaboration and operational performance

The person correlation was run to establish the relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance, providing insights into how independent leadership collaboration is associated with operational performance.

Table 12: Correlations for leadership collaboration and operational performance

		Leadership collaboration	Operational performance
Leadership collaboration	Pearson Correlation	1	.613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	44	44
Operational performance	Pearson Correlation	.613**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	44	44

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2023

From table 12 above, the study findings revealed a positive correlation coefficient of .613** which is significant at 0.01 level, this was presented by $(r(44) = .613, P=0.000)$. This means that enhanced leadership collaboration is associated with operational performance by a mean factor of .613 (61.3%). Based on these results, the study accepts the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance.

4.5.2 Regression analysis for leadership collaboration and operational performance

To ascertain the relationship of the independent variable on the dependent variable, the researcher carried out a regression analysis and the results are shown in table 13 below. The liner regression analysis was done to establish the predictive power of leadership collaboration on operational performance.

Table 13: Model Summary for leadership collaboration and operational performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.613 ^a	.375	.371	.10427
a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership collaboration				

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 13 shows that the adjusted R squared, which is a statistical measure of the variation within a dependent variable, was 0.371, which indicates that there was a 37.1% variation (effect) in operational performance due to a unit change in leadership collaboration. This shows that 37.1% of changes in operational performance are explained by leadership collaboration, the remaining 62.9% are explained by other factors outside the scope of the study.

4.6: Descriptive findings on board empowerment and operational performance

The third objective of the study was to assess the how board empowerment influences operational performance in Compassion International Uganda.

Board members are aware of and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities: The mean 2.28 implies that the majority of respondents do not believe that board members at CIU fully understand their roles and responsibilities. In the context of operational performance, this lack of role clarity can lead to misaligned expectations, inefficient delegation of authority, and poor decision-making. When board members do not have a clear grasp of their governance roles, it limits their ability to contribute constructively to the oversight and strategic guidance required to support performance at the organizational level.

Table 14: Board empowerment and operational performance

Item	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Board members are aware of and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities	44	1	5	2.28	1.0682
New members receive a thorough orientation before attending their first governing board meeting	44	1	5	1.67	.6026
The board has a written policy and budget for its education and development to regularly train and update board members on their governance skills	44	1	5	3.36	1.844
Board members are regularly appraised for their performance and competencies in their governance role	44	1	5	4.29	1.2867
There are governance manuals on duties and responsibilities of the board	44	1	5	1.92	1.2947
The board has the resources and skills required to objectively assess its performance	44	1	5	1.49	.6769
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation				2.50	

Source: Primary data, 2023

During an interview session, a key informant stated that.

“From what I have observed, some board members seem unclear about what exactly they are responsible for. There isn’t always a shared understanding of who should be doing what, and this sometimes causes confusion during meetings. Some members focus too much on day-to-day issues instead of their governance and oversight roles. This makes it hard for the board to provide strong guidance or hold management accountable because their roles are not well-defined or fully understood.”

New members receive a thorough orientation before attending their first governing board meeting: The mean 1.67 indicates that the onboarding and orientation process for new board members is largely absent or ineffective. Without proper orientation, new members are likely to be unprepared for their roles, unaware of organizational expectations, and unable to contribute meaningfully to board meetings. This weakens board cohesion, reduces the speed at which new members become effective, and consequently hampers the board's overall ability to enhance the organization's operational systems.

The board has a written policy and budget for its education and development to regularly train board members on their governance skills: The mean of 3.36 suggests that respondents perceive the board as having a formal mechanism for capacity-building. This indicates that CIU has made provisions for the continuous professional development of its board members. The presence of written policies and budgets for training implies that there is at least a structured effort to empower the board with updated knowledge and skills. Such training is essential in equipping board members to respond to changing governance needs, and it can support stronger operational performance through improved oversight, risk management, and strategy execution. A key informant supported these results by stating that.

“We have clear policies that outline the board’s commitment to ongoing training, and there is a dedicated budget set aside for this purpose. Board members are encouraged to attend workshops and governance seminars regularly. This helps keep us updated on best practices and emerging trends, which is important because governance is always evolving. Although sometimes

scheduling these trainings can be a challenge, the intention and structures for capacity-building are definitely in place.”

Board members are regularly appraised for their performance and competencies in their governance role: The mean value of 4.29 suggests that regular performance appraisals of board members are a well-established and effective practice at CIU. Regular assessments can help identify areas of strength and weakness, align board contributions with organizational goals, and ensure accountability. This practice reflects positively on CIU’s governance culture, as it shows a commitment to continuous improvement, transparency, and leadership accountability, all of which are crucial for driving and sustaining operational performance.

There are governance manuals on duties and responsibilities of the board: The mean 1.92 suggests that governance manuals are either non-existent, inaccessible, or underused at CIU. Governance manuals are essential reference tools that clarify duties, responsibilities, protocols, and standards. Their absence or limited use can lead to inconsistencies in how the board operate, confusion about board expectations, and reduced transparency. This gap in board documentation weakens the institutional memory and restricts the board’s ability to act cohesively and effectively. These results are supported by a key informant who stated that.

“Honestly, there isn’t a comprehensive manual that all board members can refer to when it comes to their duties. Some of us rely on what we were told during induction, but there isn’t a formal, written guide that clearly explains every responsibility or procedure. This sometimes causes confusion, especially for new members who aren’t fully sure about what is expected of them. It also means

that decisions can be inconsistent because everyone interprets their roles differently.”

The board has the resources and skills required to objectively assess its performance: The mean 1.49 indicates that the board is perceived to lack the tools, financial support, or competencies needed for self-assessment. Objective self-evaluation is a hallmark of strong governance, enabling the board to track its progress, identify governance gaps, and strengthen internal accountability. Without these capacities, CIU’s board may not be able to implement lessons learned, evolve with organizational needs, or effectively drive change, which can hinder operational progress and resilience.

4.6.1 Correlation for board empowerment and operational performance

The person correlation was run to establish the relationship between board empowerment and operational performance, providing insights into how independent board empowerment is associated with operational performance.

		Board empowerment	Operational performance
Board empowerment	Pearson Correlation	1	.456**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	44	44
Operational performance	Pearson Correlation	.456**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	44	44

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2023

From table 15 above, the study findings revealed a weak correlation coefficient of .456** which is significant at 0.01 level, this was presented by (r (44) = .456, P=0.000). This means that there is a significant relationship between the two variables implying that enhanced board empowerment is associated with operational performance by a mean factor of .456 (45.6%). Based on these results, the study accepts the alternative hypothesis, which states that there is a significant relationship between board empowerment and operational performance.

4.6.2 Regression analysis for board empowerment and operational performance

To ascertain the relationship of the independent variable on the dependent variable, the researcher carried out a regression analysis and the results are shown in table 16 below. The liner regression analysis was done to establish the predictive power of board empowerment on operational performance.

Table 16: Model Summary for board empowerment and operational performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.456 ^a	.208	.194	.93494
a. Predictors: (Constant), Board empowerment				

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 16 shows that the adjusted R squared, which is a statistical measure of the variation within a dependent variable, was 0.194, which indicates that there was a 19.4% variation (effect) in operational performance due to a unit change in board empowerment. This shows that 19.4% of changes in operational performance are

explained by board empowerment, the remaining 80.6% were outside the scope of this study.

4.7 Descriptive findings on operational performance

This section presents results on operational performance.

Table 17: Operational performance

Item	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
The costs of operation in the organization have reduced over the years because of proper governance	44	1	5	3.83	1.4841
In the organization, there is flexibility when providing services to organization's members	44	1	5	3.91	1.6282
I feel that the organization's delivery system of services considers social values, especially religious	44	1	5	4.12	1.5836
There is a very high level of membership retention in the organization	44	1	5	4.47	1.5266
The organization provides reliable services to its members	44	1	5	1.37	.6643
Members have a positive perception towards the organization's services	44	1	5	3.83	1.4841
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation				2.50	

Source: Primary data, 2023

The costs of operation in the organization have reduced over the years because of proper governance: The mean value of 3.83 suggests that a significant majority of respondents affirm that proper governance practices at CIU have led to cost reduction

in operations over time. The interpretation here is that there is a perception of financial prudence, better planning, and efficiency mechanisms being instituted within the organization. Cost reduction is a critical element of operational performance, as it frees up resources for reinvestment in core mission activities, allows for improved financial sustainability, and positions the organization to scale up programs or initiatives. Governance may have introduced tighter controls, budgeting discipline, or procurement transparency, all contributing to this perception.

In the organization, there is flexibility when providing services to organization's members: The mean score of 3.91 signifies a strong consensus that CIU is flexible in delivering services. This flexibility may be reflected in responsiveness to member needs, ability to customize services, adaptation to local contexts, or agility during changing operational environments such as emergencies or shifting donor expectations. In terms of operational performance, flexibility is a strategic asset. It allows the organization to retain relevance among its stakeholders, maintain high satisfaction rates, and avoid bureaucratic rigidity that often hampers service delivery. A key informant stated that:

“Our organization understands that the needs of our members can change quickly, especially given the different communities we serve. Because of this, we try to stay flexible in how we offer support whether it’s adjusting the timing of programs, tailoring assistance to cultural practices, or responding quickly when urgent needs arise. This flexibility helps us stay connected and trusted by our members, and it means we don’t get stuck following rigid procedures that might not work in every situation.”

I feel that the organization's delivery system of services considers social values, especially religious: A mean value of 4.12 suggests that respondents largely agree that CIU is culturally and socially aligned with its service environment, particularly in terms of religious values. This alignment indicates that the organization tailors its operations to be sensitive to the moral, spiritual, and ethical expectations of its clients and communities. Operational performance is not just about efficiency and output; it's also about relevance, legitimacy, and social integration.

There is a very high level of membership retention in the organization: A mean of 4.47 indicates that high retention is a direct indicator of positive operational performance because it implies member satisfaction, loyalty, and confidence in the organization's value proposition. Retention also reduces the costs of recruiting new members, stabilizes program delivery, and maintains continuity in project implementation. The strong agreement on this item also complements earlier indicators such as cultural alignment and service flexibility. The high retention levels suggest that these factors are not just appreciated but are effective in ensuring long-term commitment from stakeholders. A key respondent stated that.

“We have noticed that most members stay with us for many years because they trust the work we do and feel valued within the organization. This trust comes from consistent communication, meeting their needs, and respecting their cultural beliefs. When members see that the organization is reliable and responsive, they are more likely to remain engaged. High retention means we don't have to spend a lot of time and resources finding new members, which helps us focus more on delivering quality programs.”

The organization provides reliable services to its members: The mean value 1.37 shows a severe concern among respondents about the reliability of CIU's delivery service. Despite high levels of member retention and agreement on value alignment, this score suggests that services are perceived as inconsistent, unpredictable, or prone to failure. In operational performance terms, reliability is foundational it affects trust, effectiveness, and outcomes. This low score may stem from irregular service schedules, unmet expectations, delays in delivery, lack of follow-through, or breakdowns in communication. Such a low mean threatens to undermine all other positive indicators, as service reliability is often the most visible and critical aspect of performance to beneficiaries.

Members have a positive perception towards the organization's services: A mean value of = 3.83 indicates that most respondents perceive the organization's services positively, despite concerns about service reliability. This positive perception could stem from CIU's reputation, its value-based operations, its engagement strategies, or non-material benefits (such as spiritual growth, community belonging). In performance terms, this suggests that even when operational delivery has gaps, the organization still maintains goodwill among its members.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses the findings of the study and the related conclusions and recommendations that were made based on the findings. These findings are also linked to similar studies that were conducted elsewhere. It provides further research suggestions and recommendations.

5.1 Discussion of results

5.1.1 Board accountability and operational performance of CIU

The inferential statistics under correlation analysis revealed that there was a positive statistically significant relationship between board accountability and operational performance ($r=.551$, $p= .000$). The regression analysis also indicated that board accountability has a positive effect on operational performance (Adjusted R Square= $.314$).

The interview responses reveal that Compassion International Uganda's Board is deeply committed to effective governance practices through regulatory compliance, regular performance appraisals, and timely feedback. Key informants emphasized that the Board consistently refers to legal and institutional guidelines when making decisions, showing a strong culture of accountability and strategic alignment. They also highlighted the Board's structured approach to performance appraisals, which not only assesses leadership outcomes but also offers mentorship and developmental support.

Additionally, the Board maintains an active feedback loop with leadership, ensuring prompt communication and swift adjustments to emerging issues.

The findings of this study align with a growing body of literature that underscores the pivotal role of board accountability in enhancing operational performance in organizations, including institutions of higher learning. Prior studies such as those by Nicholson and Kiel (2018) suggest that boards that uphold transparency, actively monitor management, and ensure strategic alignment tend to drive superior institutional outcomes. In the context of Christian International University (CIU), this relationship may stem from the board's capacity to set clear operational expectations, enforce compliance, and ensure resources are optimally allocated, thereby ensuring a culture of efficiency and goal attainment.

Supporting evidence from research conducted by Cornforth (2020) on nonprofit and educational institutions reinforces this view, indicating that accountable boards contribute to improved decision-making processes and operational oversight. These attributes are essential in dynamic academic environments where responsiveness and agility are required to navigate changing regulatory and academic landscapes. Moreover, effective board accountability often enhances stakeholder trust and institutional credibility, further supporting internal operations through increased cooperation and reduced resistance to change.

However, some scholars have questioned the universal applicability of this positive linkage. For instance, Herman and Renz (2016) argue that in certain contexts, particularly in highly bureaucratic or politically influenced institutions, board

accountability may become symbolic rather than functional. In such settings, performance outcomes may be driven more by external factors or executive leadership than by board oversight. Thus, while the findings from CIU support the predominant view of board accountability as a catalyst for better operational performance, they also suggest the need to examine contextual factors such as institutional culture, leadership autonomy, and external pressures that might mediate or moderate this relationship.

5.1.2 Leadership collaboration and operational performance of CIU

The correlation results revealed that there was a positive statistically significant relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance ($r=.613$, $p=.000$). The regression analysis also indicated that leadership collaboration has a positive effect on operational performance (Adjusted R Square= .371).

Interview responses reveal that while the Board at Compassion International Uganda conducts regular performance assessments of leaders, these appraisals are not solely annual but also include mid-year and informal reviews, tailored to ongoing projects. These sessions focus on evaluating progress against targets, identifying areas for improvement, and aligning actions with the organization's strategic goals. Rather than serving as fault-finding exercises, they are reflective and developmental, helping leaders refocus and ensuring a sense of accountability. However, it was also noted that departments often operate in isolation, with resistance to cross-departmental collaboration and shared initiatives.

The observed positive relationship between leadership collaboration and operational performance at CIU supports existing scholarly perspectives that emphasize the

benefits of shared leadership and coordinated decision-making. Research by Pearce and Conger (2018) emphasizes that collaborative leadership fosters a more inclusive environment where diverse ideas and competencies are pooled together, resulting in more robust and adaptable operational strategies. At CIU, such collaboration likely translates into more coherent strategic planning, smoother interdepartmental coordination, and a stronger alignment between institutional goals and operational execution.

In line with these findings, works by Raelin (2016) and Friedrich et al. (2019) further assert that leadership collaboration enhances communication flows, builds trust, and reduces siloed thinking, all of which are critical for operational efficiency in educational institutions. Particularly in universities, where departments often function semi-autonomously, collaborative leadership ensures that initiatives are harmonized, and redundancies minimized. This collective approach to governance allows for the leveraging of institutional knowledge and shared responsibility, ultimately enhancing institutional resilience and performance outcomes.

Conversely, some studies challenge the assumption that collaboration always yields positive outcomes. For instance, Denis, Langley, and Sergi (2017) caution that leadership collaboration can sometimes result in delayed decision-making, conflict of interests, and role ambiguity especially where governance structures are weak or hierarchies unclear. In such cases, rather than enhancing performance, collaboration may create inefficiencies. While CIU's case reflects a beneficial impact, these contradictory findings imply that the effectiveness of leadership collaboration depends

on the presence of strong communication mechanisms, clearly defined roles, and a shared institutional vision, without which the potential benefits may not materialize.

5.1.3 Board empowerment and operational performance of CIU

The correlation results revealed that there was a positive statistically significant relationship between board empowerment and operational performance ($r=.456$, $p=.000$). The regression analysis also indicated that board empowerment has a positive effect on operational performance (Adjusted R Square= .194).

Interview responses highlight significant challenges in the governance structure at Compassion International Uganda. Key informants noted that some board members are unclear about their roles, leading to confusion during meetings and a tendency to focus on operational details rather than strategic oversight. Additionally, the absence of a comprehensive governance manual leaves board members without clear guidance on their responsibilities, resulting in inconsistent decision-making. While there is a formal policy and budget for ongoing training—which is seen as a positive step towards capacity-building new members often miss out on effective orientation, limiting their readiness and contribution.

The positive association between board empowerment and operational performance at CIU, reflects a growing consensus in governance literature that empowered boards significantly contribute to institutional effectiveness. Scholars such as Carver (2018) argue that when boards are equipped with clear mandates, access to strategic information, and autonomy to make high-level decisions, they are better positioned to influence operational outcomes positively. At CIU, empowered board members likely

have the authority and competence to steer strategic direction, monitor performance rigorously, and intervene where necessary to enhance efficiency and service delivery.

Supporting this perspective, research by Leblanc and Gillies (2017) highlights that empowered boards foster proactive governance practices, enabling institutions to respond swiftly to emerging challenges and maintain operational stability. In higher education contexts, where institutional goals must be balanced with regulatory requirements and stakeholder expectations, board empowerment ensures that decision-making is timely, informed, and aligned with institutional priorities. Such empowerment may also improve board engagement and accountability, creating a ripple effect across administrative and academic functions that boosts overall performance.

Nevertheless, some scholars express caution regarding board empowerment, especially when it is not accompanied by proper checks and balances. According to Mace (2019), excessively empowered boards risk overstepping operational boundaries, leading to micromanagement or conflicts with executive leadership. This can disrupt organizational coherence and slow down decision-making processes. While the findings from CIU suggest a favorable outcome of board empowerment, they also underscore the importance of balanced governance structures where empowerment is guided by clear roles, mutual respect between governance and management, and adherence to strategic boundaries.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 Board accountability and operational performance

The findings imply that strengthening board accountability mechanisms at CIU is likely to yield tangible improvements in operational performance, provided such accountability is substantive and not merely procedural. The alignment with existing literature highlights the board's strategic influence when empowered to uphold transparency, ensure compliance, and facilitate effective oversight. However, the nuances raised by contrasting studies suggest that the impact of accountability is context-dependent, and its effectiveness hinges on institutional dynamics, governance structures, and the board's capacity to function beyond formal responsibilities.

5.2.2 Leadership collaboration and operational performance

The results imply that leadership collaboration at CIU serves as a strategic asset that enhances operational performance when it is grounded in structured communication, mutual trust, and clearly defined roles. While collaborative leadership can unlock innovation, coherence, and efficiency, its success is contingent upon the institution's ability to manage potential challenges such as decision-making delays or role confusion. Thus, CIU's positive experience with leadership collaboration suggests that when well-executed, it can foster organizational alignment and resilience, but it also highlights the need for deliberate frameworks that support productive collaboration.

5.2.3 Board empowerment and operational performance

The results imply that board empowerment at CIU contributes positively to operational performance when it is exercised within a framework of clear mandates, strategic

alignment, and mutual respect between governance and management. The findings highlight that empowered boards can enhance institutional agility and effectiveness by ensuring proactive decision-making and stronger oversight. However, they also suggest that for empowerment to be beneficial, it must be accompanied by mechanisms that prevent overreach and ensure governance remains strategic rather than operational, thus preserving organizational coherence and ensuring sustainable performance.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the researcher recommends that board members of Compassion International Uganda consider various factors when it comes to their roles and responsibilities. These include the establishment of effective accountability mechanisms and collaborative strategies in the corporate governance practices and the empowerment of their members.

The study revealed that leadership collaboration is vital if the organization wants to achieve better operational performance, therefore there is need for collaboration across all levels of management. This will help in the easy identification of loopholes and provide quick feedback and flexible-timely service delivery.

The researcher recommends that Christian-based organizations should be sanctioned for failing to comply with the disclosure and transparency requirements to the public. This issue is important for investors as it allows them to make informed decisions regarding the operations of these organizations.

More so, the researcher recommends that there is great need for CBOs like Compassion International Uganda to put more pressure on the application of the corporate

governance pillars and especially on-board accountability and empowerment. Ignoring the role of the board can jeopardize all the other tenets of corporate governance in the CBO since it is the oversight and strategic body for the institution.

The board of directors of the CBO needs to be educated on their role and mandate and especially on the supervisory element. All the members of the CBO should also be educated on how to appoint able members of the board so that those appointed are people who understand the essence of corporate governance, which will enhance operational soundness in the CBO.

In addition, the study recommends that there is a need for a majority of board members to be of different expertise to provide some additional skills and perspectives that may not be possible with all boards' members. There is also need for the separation of the positions of chairperson of the board and the CEO.

Additionally, the study recommends that the board executives should have regular and frequent meetings with the other non-executive members of management present which will help in ensuring transparency and achieve operational performance.

Finally, the study recommends that Compassion International Uganda should ensure they have an independent audit committee in place to ensure that they check whether the CBO's internal control systems are adequate and that the CBO complies with all the instituted controls.

5.4 Area for further research

Future research could explore how institutional culture moderates the relationship between board practices (accountability, empowerment, collaboration) and operational performance, particularly in faith-based or private higher education institutions.

A comparative study involving multiple universities both private and public—could provide deeper insights into how board governance practices vary across institutional types and how these differences influence performance outcomes.

Investigating the impact of board composition (diversity in gender, experience, educational background) on operational performance could shed light on the characteristics that enhance board effectiveness in academic institutions.

Long-term studies examining the effect of specific governance reforms on operational performance would provide evidence of sustainability and help determine whether improvements are short-lived or enduring.

Further research could examine the dynamics between board members and university management, focusing on how collaboration, communication, and conflict resolution between the two influence institutional outcomes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

For Board Members in Compassion International Uganda (CIU)

Dear sir/madam,

I am Nakato Dorothy a student at Uganda Christian University conducting research on “the effects of corporate governance practices on the operational performance of Christian Based Organizations (CBOs)”. I will ensure total confidentiality of the information given to me during this research. This research will contribute to the award of my master’s degree in Business Administration, so I humbly ask you for your cooperation. Thank you very much.

Please answer questions by ticking (*/*) and explain where necessary.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND DATA

1. Gender

a) Male

b) Female

2. Age

a) Less than 20 years

b) 21-30 years

c) 31-40 years

c) Above 40 years

3. Marital status

a) Single

b) Married

c) Divorced

d) Others specify.....

4. Highest level of education

- a) Primary b) Secondary
c) Tertiary d) Any other, specify.....

5. Occupation

- a) Student b) Unemployed
c) Work with government d) Work with private sector
e) Business person f) Others specify:.....

6. Period spent as a member in Compassion International Uganda

- a) Less than 1 year b) 1-5 years
c) 6-10 years c) Above 10 years

Note: *In these subsequent sections, use the scale provided to tick in the box of the relevant answer that describes your opinion. NB: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3= Not Sure, 2= Disagree and 1=Strongly disagree.*

SECTION B: CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

	Questions	Responses				
PART 1	Board Accountability	5	4	3	2	1
BA1	The Board adheres to the relevant regulations while carrying out its responsibilities					
BA2	The Board provides performance targets to the organization's leadership					
BA3	The Board regularly carries out performance appraisal for the organization's leadership					
BA4	The Board approves all policies before they are implemented					
BA5	The Board provides timely feedback to organization's leadership					
BA6	The organization's leadership regularly submits performance reports to the Board					
BA7	The Board writes audited financial statements after auditing has been conducted					
PART 2	Leadership Collaboration	5	4	3	2	1
LC1	Leaders in the organization have maintained effective communication to promote the Church's operational performance					
LC2	There is joint working on a case-by-case basis on all the organization's management issues					
LC3	Formalized joint working among various categories of leaders in our organization exists					
LC4	Some departments in the organization sacrifice some autonomy in order to have a well-managed institution					
LC5	There is free power sharing among leaders in the organization to promote its performance					

LC6	Some departments in the organization have even merged to create new joint working operations					
PART 3	Board Empowerment	5	4	3	2	1
BE1	Board members are aware of and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities					
BE2	New members receive a thorough orientation before attending their first governing board meeting					
BE3	The board has a written policy and budget for its education and development to regularly train and update board members on their governance skills					
BE4	Board members are regularly appraised on their performance and competencies in their governance role					
BE5	There are governance manuals on duties and responsibilities of the board					
BE6	The board has the resources and skills required to objectively assess its performance					

SECTION C: OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

No.	Statements	Responses				
		5	4	3	2	1
PART 4	Operational performance in the organization					
OP1	The costs of operation in the organization have reduced over the years because of proper governance					
OP2	In the organization, there is flexibility when providing services to organization's members					
OP3	I feel that the organization's delivery system of services takes into account social values especially religious					
OP4	There is a very high level of membership retention in the organization					
OP5	The organization provides reliable services to its members					

OP6	Members have a positive perception towards the organization's services					
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Thank you very much for your cooperation

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

I am Nakato Dorothy a student at Uganda Christian University conducting research on “the effects of corporate governance practices on the operational performance of Christian Based Organizations (CBOs)”. I will ensure total confidentiality of the information given to me during this research. This research will contribute to the award of my master’s degree in Business Administration, so I humbly ask you for your cooperation. Thank you very much.

- 1) What position do you hold in Compassion International Uganda?
- 2) How long have you been working in that position?
- 3) What do you understand about corporate governance?
- 4) How has board accountability been instrumental in achieving operational performance in your organization?
- 5) How has the collaboration in the leadership of your organization contributed to its overall operational performance?
- 6) How has board empowerment contributed to operational performance in your organization?

Thank you for your cooperation