



THE EFFECT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARACTERISTICS ON FIRM PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM NON-FINANCIAL SECTORS IN OMAN



 Amanuddin Bin Shamsuddin^{1*}

 Ghazi Mohammed Alshahri²

¹Department of Accounting & Finance, Universiti Tenaga Nasional, Malaysia.

Email: amanuddin@uniten.edu.my

²College of Graduate Studies, Universiti Tenaga Nasional, Malaysia.

Email: PM20750@utn.edu.my



(+ Corresponding author)

ABSTRACT

Article History

Received: 23 March 2022

Revised: 12 August 2022

Accepted: 29 August 2022

Published: 16 September 2022

Keywords

Audit committee

Firm performance

Corporate governance

Return on assets

Tobin's Q

Oman.

JEL Classification:

G30; G38; L25; M40; M48.

This study aims to observe the effect of audit committee (AC) characteristics, namely AC size (ACS), AC independence (ACI), and AC meetings (ACM) on two financial performance indicators; return on assets (ROA) and Tobin's Q. This study was conducted on 63 non-financial firms listed on the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) in Oman for the period from 2016 to 2019. Multiple regression techniques have been applied to analyze the data and get empirical results. The findings revealed that two of the three independent variables have an insignificant effect on financial performance, and ACI has a substantial negative effect on Tobin's Q. Based on the findings, it can be implied that the corporate governance mechanism and AC structure in Omani firms need to be improved. Stricter control government authorities may be necessary to ensure that firms appoint AC members who can enhance the firm's performance, and contribute to the country's economic expansion.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the previous works by providing an empirical result of the effect of AC characteristics on the financial performance of non-financial listed firms in Oman. This paper is considered the first study to examine the audit committee characteristics mentioned in the 2016 Omani Corporate Governance Code on performance indicators (ROA and Tobin's Q).

1. INTRODUCTION

Enron, WorldCom and several other companies at the center of financial scandals around the globe are key examples of the inadequate adoption of corporate governance (CG) principles (Aldamen, Duncan, & Kelly, 2012; Arslan & Alqatan, 2020; Shan & Walter, 2016). As a result, many governments have taken steps to adopt new CG legislation and standards, or improve existing ones, to re-establish investors' confidence. In the United States, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act was passed by Congress in July 2002, then, in 2003, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued additional CG rules in order to better oversee and deal with publicly traded companies (De Vlaminc & Sarens, 2015; Shan & Walter, 2016). The new CG rules place a higher focus on the board of directors' and audit committees' effectiveness and managements' independence (Al-Matari, Al-Swidi, & Fadzil, 2014; Aldamen, Duncan, Kelly, Mcnamara, & Nagel, 2012; Kajola, 2008; Persons, 2005). Hence, good CG mechanisms are regarded as essentials for any company's long-term performance and survival in the event of another financial crisis (Wong, Ganesan, Pitchay, Haron, & Hendayani, 2020).

According to Wild (1996), the role of the audit committee (AC) is one of the most important CG instruments in ensuring accurate financial information that will boost openness and promote business integrity. This is because the AC is responsible for selecting, reviewing and agreeing the accounting policies adopted by a firm. Furthermore, the AC also has a tendency to influence a firm's financial reporting approach, level of disclosure, and compliance to standard practice (Amer, Ragab, & Shehata, 2014). Should the ACs play their roles effectively, it will allow the public to prudently evaluate the market performance of firms.

In the financial literature, agency theory has become a common approach. In reality, this theory is about balancing the objectives of a firm's managers and owners, and it is believed that the benefits of the firm's owners and management are conflicting (Fama & Jensen, 1983). When there is an agency conflict between managers and shareholders (owners), management may make decisions or actions that are not in the best interests of the shareholders (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). In such a case, the AC plays a vital role in resolving the disagreement by eliminating information asymmetry (Klein, 2002).

Consequently, the improvements in AC procedures, structure, and focus on enhancing and monitoring top management actions would improve firm performance based on agency theory (Madawaki & Amran, 2013; McDaniel, Martin, & Maines, 2002). This boosts the firm's market worth by contributing to the quality of its performance (Ghabayen, 2012; Wild, 1996). Accordingly, AC functions may be the most effective instrument for reducing the risks and ambiguities that come with today's business climate. Similarly, the position of the AC and their actions in the firm can attract potential investors and reduce a firm's business risk (Ghabayen, 2012). Moreover, an effective AC is expected to solve agency conflicts and therefore improve the financial reporting quality. Consequently, that leads to the improvement of corporate performance along with stronger relations between companies and their stakeholders and investment companies (Kanukuntla & Rao, 2012).

In recent years, developed and developing countries have worked hard to implement and update CG practices frequently, as they believe it is important in improving the capital market's competitiveness and enticing domestic and foreign investors. This situation thus encouraged Oman, which is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), to take proactive steps among other members to adopt the first Corporate Governance Code in 2001, which governs the operations of corporations. Then, in 2004, the code became mandatory and should be followed by all companies listed on the Muscat Securities Market (MSM). The Omani CG Code is used as a framework for the board of director's structure and its purpose, AC characteristics, internal control, external auditors, CG reports, related party transactions, and executive management. In 2015, the Omani Capital Market Authority (CMA) announced the most recent version of the CG Code, which took effect in 2016 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2016).

Even though Oman has taken several steps in governance, similar to other GCC countries, it has general civil law that has characteristics such as inadequate investor protection, an inefficient financial industry, and significant insider ownership concentration (Al-Malkawi, Pillai, & Bhatti, 2014). Furthermore, the quality of accountancy and auditing in the country could be jeopardized by socio-economic and cultural factors, as this country, like others in the GCC, is characterized by a strong hierarchical social structure, the significance of kinship, and the nature of personal interactions (Baatwah, Salleh, & Ahmad, 2018). Along the same line, Al-Matari and Mgamal (2019) state that companies in Oman are less open about publicly available information, mainly when it comes to inadequate internal controls and unskilled directors, and directors have been accused of fraud in some cases.

CG concerns are the main issues that have affected several corporations in the country, such as Omani National Investment Company Holding and National Rice Mills, along with smaller companies that have needed government assistance to stand up again (Al-Matari, 2020; Baydoun, Maguire, Ryan, & Willett, 2012; Elghuweel, Ntim, Opong, & Avison, 2017). As a result, the relation between firms' performance and AC features has been largely ignored, even though little is known about the subject. Additionally, in the GCC countries, and particularly in Oman, research material on the effect of an AC's attributes and business performance is still scarce. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand how the audit committee size (ACS), audit committee independence (ACI), and audit committee

meetings (ACM) affect the performance of non-financial firms listed on the MSM in Oman since the adoption of the latest update of the CG Code in 2016 until the 2019 fiscal year.

There are numerous methods for determining the effectiveness of an AC. This research considers that AC effectiveness is impacted by its attributes or characteristics, namely size, independence, and frequency of meetings. According to [Al Ani and Mohammed \(2015\)](#) and [Hussain, Hussain, and Awais \(2015\)](#) concerning firm performance, CG and ACs are very limited in GCC countries, including Oman. Therefore, the findings from this study are expected to benefit the Oman government, its regulatory policies, and potential investors. Furthermore, this study is significant and distinct from other research since it considers the most recent ([Omani Capital Market Authority \(OCMA\), 2016](#)), which has not been taken into account in prior studies with regard to AC characteristics and firms' financial performance.

This paper includes a brief review on previous literature, hypothesis development and adoption of research methodology, discussion of findings and results, conclusion, and the limitations of the research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The financial crises affecting large global corporations over the last decade, which resulted in a loss of investor trust, enforced the policymakers and governments around the world to review their policies and implement new legislation to ensure good governance and efficient business operations ([Bronzetti, Veltri, & Mazzotta, 2016](#); [Christensen, Kent, & Stewart, 2010](#)).

In relation to that, CG has received more attention as a method for defending investors' rights and confirming suitable management procedures. The AC is one of the most significant elements of CG ([Böhren & Strøm, 2010](#); [Jackling & Johl, 2009](#)). An AC plays a major function in the adoption of CG principles and the growth of a company's value. In accordance with CG principles, the AC should be independent and carry out their duties with due care and proficiency ([Heenetigala & Armstrong, 2011](#)). According to [Al-Hussain and Johnson \(2009\)](#) and [Elghuweel et al. \(2017\)](#), consecutive crises of poor governance and inefficient public and private firms have compounded concerns and problems with firms' performance and accountability. This emphasizes the need for an independent AC that is functional and knowledgeable.

Furthermore, AC attributes or characteristics have a substantial impact on firm performance. The study by [Amer et al. \(2014\)](#) indicates that an efficient AC will increase stakeholders' expectations, improve the firm's financial statements, and influence the firm's overall performance. In addition, [Bronson, Carcello, Hollingsworth, and Neal \(2009\)](#) claim that the quality of financial reporting is based on an active AC that is competent, committed, knowledgeable, and independent. Moreover, [Contessotto and Moroney \(2014\)](#) suggested that a successful AC will enhance the integrity of a firm's financial statements and minimize inherent risk by increasing reporting quality.

As the board of directors' representative, the AC is a constituted body accountable for overseeing a company's financial reporting and informing executives via a report about its findings in order to make decisions ([Ghabayen, 2012](#)). The committee is supposed to provide vital information and interact with the company's board of directors. Likewise, the committee is responsible for liaising with internal and external auditors, along with supporting the board in ensuring that any audit-related issues are adequately resolved ([Al-Matari, Al-Swidi, Fadzil, & Al-Matari, 2012](#)).

2.1. Audit Committee Size and Firm Performance

There is still considerable ambiguity concerning the suitable size of an AC in several CG studies. According to [Davidson, Goodwin-Stewart, and Kent \(2005\)](#) and [Spira \(2003\)](#), the size of an AC in the United Kingdom and the United States is typically three to five members. In order to make the AC more creative and functional, it should be given sufficient authority and comprise members who are independent and knowledgeable about financial issues ([Mohiuddin & Karbhari, 2010](#)). According to the agency theory, a board should be comprised of a small number of

people in order to improve board communication and coordination. Agency theory assumes that excessively large boards have decreased coordination and have communication issues, which will certainly raise agency costs (Kholeif, 2008). Hillman and Dalziel (2003), who are proponents of agency theory, argued that a bigger AC would minimize the monitoring process and result in poor firm performance. Moreover, according to Vafeas (1999), a larger AC has a detrimental influence on a firm's performance.

It can be seen from the above discussion that prior studies on AC size and CG produced mixed results. Alqatamin (2018) highlighted that AC efficiency improves when its size increases since it has more resources and professionals with wider knowledge to oversee internal financial activities and control firm reporting. Furthermore, bigger committees would normally comprise members with different characteristics and perform better (Al-Matari, Al-Swidi, & Fadzil, 2014). In their analysis of 228 non-financial firms traded on the Amman Stock Exchange in 2015 and 2016, Zraiq and Fadzil (2018) found a positive relation among AC size, ROA and EPS, but the result was strong with EPS only. In Sri Lanka, Danoshana and Ravivathani (2013) conducted a study on 25 financial institutions from 2008 to 2012. They found that AC size has a positive effect on firm performance indicators, ROA and ROE. The same findings have been illustrated by Al-Matari and Al-Matari (2012) and Nuryanah and Islam (2015).

A study by Detthamrong, Chancharat, and Vithessonthi (2017) on non-financial firms in Thailand over a period from 2001 to 2014, found that AC size and large firms have an inverse impact on ROA and ROE. Their finding matches the argument by Aldamen et al. (2012), who stated that a limited AC size with a high level of experience in financial matters is more effective in encouraging financial performance. Also, according to Bouaine and Hrichi (2019), the size of the AC hurts the financial performance of publicly traded French companies, as evaluated by ROA, due to the rise in the AC professional fees. The same result was also found by Amer et al. (2014), who came to the conclusion that AC size has a significant negative connection with both ROA and Tobin's Q.

On the other hand, Herdjiono and Sari (2017) found that the ROA, as a performance indicator, was not affected by the size of the AC of 39 companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange during the four years from 2011 to 2014, in which the average number of members on an AC was three. In addition, research by Darko, Aribi, and Uzonwanne (2015) on a five-year examination of 20 companies listed on the Ghana Stock Market from 2008 to 2012, concluded that there is no significant association between AC size and performance indicators of ROA, ROE, or Tobin's Q. Moreover, a non-significant relation was established by Al-Matari, Hanim, Fadzil, and Al-Swidi (2014) and Ghabayen (2012) and Reddy, Locke, and Scrimgeour (2010). In Oman, listed companies are required to appoint at least three AC members, and at least one member should be an expert in financial issues. This is consistent with the requirement of the Cadbury Commission (Cadbury, 1992).

Based on the foregoing discussion with regard to the size of an AC and firm performance, this study posits the first hypothesis:

H1: The size of the audit committee (ACS) has a significant positive effect on the financial performance of non-financial listed companies in Oman.

2.2. Audit Committee Independence and Firm Performance

Jensen and Meckling (1976) claimed that the goal of the agency concept is to emphasize the concerns of splitting ownership and control in the company. In order to meet the difference between ownership and management, independent directors should be nominated by the shareholders to monitor executives and protect shareholder value (Fama & Jensen, 1983). The independence of the AC is a critical component because they have no personal or financial connections to a company's operations. In addition, independent ACs are effective at managing and monitoring (Hsu & Petchsakulwong, 2010). Basiru and Nur (2015) view that an AC that comprises a large number of independent members is more efficient in providing oversight due to its capability of fighting managerial influence.

In the literature, there are several studies that have been conducted to determine the effect of AC independence on firm performance (Alqatamin, 2018; Amer et al., 2014; Arslan, Zaman, Malik, & Mehmood, 2014; Leung,

Richardson, & Jaggi, 2014). The findings derived by Alqatamin (2018) demonstrated a strong and positive association between AC independence and firm performance in Jordan. Hence, the results support the agency theory approach and imply that independent directors perform effective managerial oversight. As a result, profitability improves and the possibility of managers engaging in opportunistic behaviour decreases, resulting in improved performance. In Egypt, Amer et al. (2014) conducted an analysis of the 50 most active Egyptian public listed companies for a nine-year period from 2004 to 2012. They proved a significant positive relation between AC independence and ROA and Tobin's Q; however, the result was not significant for ROE. Moreover, Leung et al. (2014) studied a sample comprising 487 non-financial listed firms on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (HKSE) for 2005 and 2006 and indicated that independent members on a board's committee reflect improvements in ROA and stock return (SR) indicators. Thus, based on the preceding discussions, it can be said that the independence of an AC is contended to improve firm performance because independent members add value and contribute to the committee's ability to monitor and evaluate (Arslan et al., 2014; Yasser, Entebang, & Mansor, 2015).

On the contrary, some researchers claim that the association between AC independence and firm performance is negative, while others argue that the factors are irrelevant. For example, Bansal and Sharma (2016) outlined that AC independence has a negative effect on Tobin's Q due to improper valuation of a firm's assets when there are more independent members on the AC. In addition, based on Bouaine and Hrichi (2019), independent members of the board demand high professional fees, which hurts ROA and ROE. In France, Barka and Legendre (2017) studied 43 companies listed on the Paris Bourse from 2002 to 2006 and concluded that 75% of the firms had fully independent members on their AC, and that a fully independent AC is associated with lower performance measured by ROA and ROE. In emerging economies, such as Nigeria, Kajola (2008) demonstrated that independent AC members have no influence on the ROE based on his research on 20 non-financial companies listed on the Nigerian Stock Market through the period from 2000 to 2006. Meanwhile, Zhou, Owusu-Ansah, and Maggina (2018) found no strong relation between AC independence and ROA due to the application of the new CG code in Greece since any new CG code needs time to have a notable effect on performance. AC independence also did not show an effect on firm performance in countries such as Ghana (Glover-Akpey & Azembila, 2016), Kuwait (Al-Matari. et al., 2014) and Saudi Arabia (Ghabayen, 2012).

Based on the above discussions and findings with regard to AC independence and firm performance, this study posits the following hypothesis:

H2: The independence of an audit committee (ACI) has a significant positive effect on the financial performance of non-financial listed companies in Oman.

2.3. Audit Committee Meeting and Firm Performance

The control function expected from board members has been implemented in the board's frequent meetings (Al-Daoud, Saidin, & Abidin, 2016). Meanwhile, Lipton and Lorsch (1992) argued that the frequency of meetings determines the effectiveness of the board's obligations and responsibilities. Conger (1998) and Oseit and Ntim (2011) proposed that, as decisions released from board meetings are effective in reducing agency costs and conflicts of interest, the frequency of meetings will convert into owners' value maximization. The directors can also analyze and improve current strategy and executive management performance by holding frequent board meetings (Vafeas, 1999). A proactive AC is expected to meet frequently to discuss performance indicators and try to enhance firm efficiency in aspects of management and monitoring (Bansal & Sharma, 2016).

Amer et al. (2014) affirmed that an AC that meets infrequently is considered inactive and less likely to control and evaluate managerial operations effectively. According to the Omani CG regulation, the AC is required to meet a minimum four times per year, and that the majority of the independent members should attend the meetings. The number of AC meetings determines the degree and intensity of AC activity and their dedication to business performance (Menon & Williams, 1994). Furthermore, Abbott, Parker, Peters, and Raghunandan (2003) suggested

that regular AC meetings improves financial accounting processes, which, in turn, improves overall firm performance. In addition, by delivering timely and accurate information to shareholders and investors, frequent AC meetings might assist in reducing asymmetric information and agency issues within a corporation (Al-Mamun, Yasser, Rahman, Wickramasinghe, & Nathan, 2014).

Several studies, for instance Alqatamin (2018); Bansal and Sharma (2016) and Hoque, Islam, and Azam (2013), have been carried out to establish the association between AC meetings and firm performance; however, the results are not consistent. As stated by Al-Matari et al. (2014), a company's issues are more apparent when its AC meets more frequently. In addition, more AC meetings offer an additional effective monitoring instrument of financial activities and provide unbiased financial information (Alqatamin, 2018). Bansal and Sharma (2016) suggested that increasing the number of AC meetings helps to identify fraudulent financial activities and reflects the true financial situation to the board of directors by improving other CG instruments. Previous studies have shown different results for the effect of AC meetings on financial performance.

Hoque et al. (2013) found a significant positive effect of AC meetings on ROA and ROE indicators for 118 Australian public listed companies from 1999 to 2007. This effect was reported to be higher for large non-financial firms because they have large investments and a solid market share along with their ability to appoint a big number of directors with financial competence. Furthermore, Glover-Akpey and Azembila (2016) observed a positive effect of the number of AC meetings and firm size (FS) on firm performance in a study of 36 publicly traded companies in Ghana in 2005. Additionally, Naimah and Hamidah (2017) proved that firms make more profit when the AC meets more frequently because the AC monitors accounting procedures, forcing management to provide credible financial information to stakeholders. This result was obtained by testing the effect of the number of annual meetings held by the AC on ROA of all public listed companies in India from 2005 to 2014.

In contrast, Aras (2015) reported that the number of AC meetings had a positive and insignificant influence on ROA and a marginally negative effect on financial leverage, indicating that companies should strive for transparency and credibility in their financial statements. This conclusion was reached after studying 699 non-financial firms from five nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Korea) from 2005 to 2013.

In Belgium, De Vlaminck and Sarens (2015) found a negative and insignificant relation between AC meetings and earnings management using a sample of 60 public listed companies in Belgium for 2008 and 2009 in which the Belgian Code of Corporate Governance recommends at least four AC meetings per year. Meanwhile, the larger companies in Belgium have more AC members, which reflect higher frequencies of AC meetings per year. Moreover, in a ten-year study of 235 public traded companies from Indian non-financial sectors from 2004 to 2013, Bansal and Sharma (2016) concluded that the frequency of AC meetings has an insignificant influence on ROA and a significantly negative influence on ROE, but a significant and positive influence on the performance of a company when assessed on the basis of market capitalization and Tobin's Q.

In addition, the finding by Bouaine and Hrichi (2019) illustrated that the benefits of AC meeting frequency are seen when additional meetings do not incur extra costs, which is based on a view of agency theory. Their empirical study was based on 100 non-financial French public listed companies during the period from 2007 to 2015. The result shows a significant negative effect of the number of AC meetings on ROA and no significant relation with ROE, which means that the number of AC meetings does not exceed the costs and that contradicts the agency theory perspective.

Based on the above discussions and findings with regard to the frequency of AC meetings and firm performance, this study posits the following hypothesis:

H3: The frequency of audit committee meetings (ACM) has a significant positive effect on the financial performance of non-financial listed companies in Oman.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample Selection and Data Collection

There are 114 companies listed on the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) in three different sectors, namely the financial, industry, and service sectors. This study excluded 34 financial firms since these companies are subjected to certain regulations imposed by the Central Bank of Oman. Moreover, these financial firms use a different presentation for their financial statements. The study also eliminated 16 companies with missing information (characteristics) listed after 2016 and had a fiscal year-end other than December 31. As a result, the data for this study provided a sample consisting of 252 observations representing 63 non-financial publicly traded companies. Table 1 shows the selection procedure employed to reach the final sample:

Table 1. Selection sample procedure.

Details	Number of Firms
Total listed companies on the MSM	114
Minus financial companies	(34)
Total non-financial listed companies	79
Minus companies with missing information and listed after 2016	(16)
Final sample	63
Observation period (2016–2019)	4 years
Final number of observations	252

Based on the selected sample, this study gathered the required data from the companies' audited annual reports published on the MSM's website. Thus, this study used secondary data to conduct further analyses in order to answer the three abovementioned hypotheses.

3.2. Measurements of Variables

3.2.1. Dependent Variables

This study used firm performance as the dependent variable. Two performance metrics were employed to assess firm performance: return on assets (ROA) and Tobin's Q. ROA is an indicator that evaluates how successfully a firm's assets are being utilized. As an accounting measurement, ROA can also be influenced by accounting norms and governed by management. It is calculated by dividing net income by total assets (Ahmed & Hamdan, 2015; Darko et al., 2015; Elsayed & Elbardan, 2018; Herdjiono & Sari, 2017; Zhou et al., 2018).

Meanwhile, Tobin's Q is a measure used to evaluate a firm's future return growth predictions ratio. It is calculated as the ratio of a firm's overall market value on the stock market to its total assets in a given year (Darko et al., 2015; Elsayed & Elbardan, 2018; Mishra & Kapil, 2018; Reguera-Alvarado & Bravo, 2017). Previous researchers, for example, Carter, D'Souza, Simkins, and Simpson (2010); Isidro and Sobral (2015) and Liu, Wei, and Xie (2014), who focused on the relation between CG and firm performance, employed ROA or Tobin's Q either alone or in combination as firm performance indices. Therefore, this study employed the same approach to measure firm performance.

3.2.2. Independent Variables

There are three independent variables employed in this study, namely the size of the audit committee (ACS), the independence of the audit committee (ACI) and the frequency of audit committee meeting (ACM).

The size of the audit committee (ACS) is the total number of members serving on the AC who were appointed by the board of directors. This definition was also used by Al-Matari and Al-Matari (2012); Darko et al. (2015) and Herdjiono and Sari (2017). Audit committee independence (ACI) is defined as the total number of independent directors on the audit committee divided by the sum of audit committee members (Baccouche, Hadriche, & Omri,

2013; Kajola, 2008; Leung et al., 2014). Last, the frequency of audit committee meetings (ACM) is defined as the total number of AC meetings held during the financial year (Alqatamin, 2018; Bansal & Sharma, 2016; Hoque et al., 2013).

3.2.3. Control Variables

Other factors can also have an impact on the extent of the relationship between CG and firm performance. In order to control the correlation of this investigation, this study used four firm-specific variables, namely firm size (FS), firm age (FA), firm leverage (FL), and the size of the external auditing company (AS). These variables are used as control variables for this study.

1. Firm Size (FS)

Walker and Petty (1978) classified firms with total assets of \$5 million or less as small firms, while firms with total assets of more than \$5 million are considered large firms. According to Aljifri and Moustafa (2007), the effect of FS on firm performance is varied. Large firms, for example, may be less efficient than small firms because they confront greater government bureaucracy, redundancy, and overall agency difficulties (Sun, Tong, & Tong, 2002). Meanwhile, Kumar (2011) argued that larger firms can utilize their trademark to hire or engage experts and experienced management, take advantage of economies of scale, and hold greater market influence. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that FS does affect firm performance. Azeez (2015) revealed a substantial positive link between firm size and performance. However, Muhammad, Rehman, and Waqas (2016) found no association between FS and firm performance. Since there were mixed results on the effects of FS on firm performance, this study uses the natural logarithm of total assets to calculate firm size, as many others researchers have done (Bennouri, Chtioui, Nagati, & Nekhili, 2018; Campbell & Mínguez-Vera, 2008).

2. Firm Age (FA)

Buallay, Hamdan, and Zureigat (2017) stated that FA has a strong positive impact on ROE and ROA but a relatively insignificant impact on Tobin's Q. The same argument was found by Rashid (2018), who found an insignificant positive effect on ROA but the relation was insignificant and negative with Tobin's Q. According to Ang, Cole, and Lin (2000), older companies are more efficient compared to younger companies, thus indicating that FA influences firm performance. This finding was based on the total number of years since the company was listed on the stock exchange market (Buallay et al., 2017; Mishra & Kapil, 2018; Rashid, 2018).

3. Firm Leverage (FL)

The effect of FL on firm performance is claimed to be mixed. According to Fauzi and Locke (2012); Lama (2012) and Zeitun and Tian (2007), high FL results in improved Tobin's Q or firm market performance. Conversely, some studies demonstrate that high-leverage firms do poorly in the stock market (Jensen, 1986; Olokoyo, 2013), whereas others show that FL has no impact on firm performance (Azeez, 2015). Hence, for the purpose of this study, FL is measured by dividing total liabilities by total assets (Zhou et al., 2018).

4. Auditor Size (AS)

It has been suggested that the size of an external auditor has a progressive effect on business performance. It is argued that large audit firms provide high-quality auditing due to their extensive skills, knowledge, and evaluating capabilities (Al-Ajmi, 2008). Furthermore, according to Afify (2009), the major worldwide auditing firms (the "Big Four" auditors) have the ability to execute audits faster and more precisely to preserve their professional reputation. In line with this notion, Alzharani et al. (2011) disclosed that firm performance improves when a firm is audited by any of big audit firms. Nevertheless, Aljifri and Moustafa (2007) concluded that a non-significant relationship exists between auditor size and business performance. This dummy variable takes the value of 1 when a firm is audited by

one of the Big Four accounting firms (KPMG, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, and PwC); otherwise, it takes the value of 0 (Al-Matari, Al-Matari, & Saif, 2017; Al Ani & Mohammed, 2015; Dewi & Monalisa, 2016).

3.3. Data Analyses

In order to complete the data analyses and achieve the research objectives, three statistical methods were utilized in this study, namely descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and multiple regression.

Descriptive statistics is used to both summarize and highlight the variables employed in this research (dependent variables, independent variables and control variables). Next, a statistical correlation analysis was used in order to define the link between variables. As a result, in this research, the degree of correlation between variables was determined using Pearson's correlation matrix. In relation to that, multiple regression was used as an instrument to establish the impact of specific independent variables on firm performance (Paniagua, Rivelles, & Sapena, 2018). Furthermore, this study also applied a multiple regression analysis to estimate the impact of many independent variables on a single predictor. Consequently, multiple regression models were utilized to explore the effect of AC characteristics on the firm performance indicators (ROA and Tobin's Q).

The following is the linear regression model derived for this study:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 ACS + \beta_2 ACI + \beta_3 ACM + \beta_4 FS + \beta_5 FA + \beta_6 FL + \beta_7 AS + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y is the independent variable (either ROA or Tobin's Q).

ACS is the audit committee size, being the total number of members serving on the audit committee.

ACI is audit committee independence, being the percentage of independent directors on the audit committee.

ACM is audit committee meetings, being the number of AC meetings in a year.

FS is firm size, being the natural logarithm of total assets.

FA is firm age, being the total number of years since the company became a publicly traded company.

FL is firm leverage, being the percentage of total liabilities to total assets.

AS is auditor size (with a value of 1 if audited by a Big Four auditor (Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG, and PwC) and 0 otherwise.

ϵ is the error term.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics for all variables used in this research. The table displays the number of observations, the mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ACS	252	2.000	7.000	3.610	0.842
ACI	252	0.000	1.170	0.3593	0.17385
ACM	252	0.000	11.000	4.730	1.369
FS*	252	0.006	349.243	37.245	61.992
FA	252	1.000	22.000	13.69	3.995
FL	252	0.06	2.790	0.4877	0.34367
AS**	252	0	1	0.6071	0.4893
ROA	252	-0.980	0.800	0.0257	0.11007
Tobin's Q	252	0.000	2.450	0.2158	0.40216
Tobin's Q (log)***	252	-2.360	0.390	-1.0845	0.56443

Note: * Firm size is in millions of Omani Riyal (MOR).

** The size of the auditing firm itself can be categorized as Big Four or non-Big Four, and their distribution in the sample is 153 (61%) and 99 (39%), respectively.

*** This is the logarithm applied to Tobin's Q. Tobin's Q has too many values near zero, and after taking the logarithm, its distribution approaches normal.

Table 2 shows that the size of the audit committee (ACS) ranges from two to seven members. This range is in contrast with the recommendations by Carcello and Neal (2000); Davidson et al. (2005) and Spira (2003), who stated that the typical size of an AC is not more than five members. However, based on the Oman Corporate Governance Code 2016, listed companies are required to appoint at least three AC members, and one of them must be an expert in financial matters. Thus, based on the mean of ACS, the majority of non-financial listed firms in Oman complied with the requirement. Nevertheless, further investigation is required to determine whether one of the AC members is an expert in financial matters.

Regarding AC independence (ACI), the result reveals that the majority of the AC members are not independent, recording an average of 0.3593 (that is less than 0.5 or 50%). Based on the literature, there are mixed results on the impact of AC independence on firm performance. Thus, it is interesting to understand the impact of ACI on firm performance in non-financial listed companies in Oman.

Based on the findings regarding the frequency of AC meetings (ACM), as shown in Table 2, the majority of the firms under observation held their AC meetings almost five times per year with some companies holding up to 11 meetings per year. These results are in accordance with the Omani Corporate Governance Code 2016 (Omani Capital Market Authority (OCMA), 2016), which requires ACs to hold at least four meetings every year.

The mean of firm size (FS) is MOR 37.245, which is equal to USD 14.347 million, and it indicates that most Omani firms are considered large in accordance with the firm classification set out by Walker and Petty (1978). The results for firm age (FA) indicate that the age of the firms ranges from one year to 22 years old, with an average age of around 14 years. The findings indicate that most Omani firms are considered young. Meanwhile, the mean for firm leverage (FL) is 0.4877, which is considered 'not high', based on the study by Al-Matari et al. (2014).

The Tobin's Q mean is 0.2158, which is lower than one. This means that the majority of firms' booked assets are worth more than their market value, implying that the market undervalues the firms. In this instance, the firms may be desirable to potential buyers who would rather buy it than start their own identical business. With regard to the size of the auditor (AS), the Big Four firms deliver an audit service for 61% of firms in this study and the rest deal with non-Big Four auditing firms.

4.1. Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis is used to determine the association and the strength of the association found between two or more variables. This study employed Pearson's correlation to analyze the relationship between the independent variables, (ACS, ACI and ACM), control variables (AS, FS, FA and FL) and dependent variables (ROA and Tobin's Q) of non-financial firms in Oman. This study used Cohen's rule of thumb to explain the magnitude of the relationship (Cohen, 2013).

Table 3. Magnitude of correlation coefficient by Cohen (2013).

Magnitude/Strength of Relationship	Correlation Coefficient
Large	0.500–0.100
Medium	0.300–0.490
Small	0.010–0.290

Table 3 presents the categories for the effect size. Cohen (2013) categorized the strength of relationship into three levels – large, medium, and small – based on the correlation coefficient.

Table 4 shows the correlation results based on Pearson's correlation between variables (independent variables and control variables) and firm performance measures (ROA and Tobin's Q). The figures in parentheses indicate the p-values for the corresponding variables.

The results in Table 4 show that ROA has a significant negative correlation with firm leverage (FL) only at the

0.05 significance level, whereas it shows no significant correlation with the other variables because the p-values are greater than 0.05. With a coefficient value of 0.331, the relationship between firm leverage and ROA is at medium level (Cohen, 2013). The negative sign implies that as the size of the firm increases, the ROA decreases, and vice-versa.

Meanwhile, Tobin's Q has a significant negative correlation with all the listed independent variables and control variables (p-values < 0.05), except for firm age (FA), which shows a significantly positive correlation with Tobin's Q. Based on Cohen's rule of thumb (Cohen, 2013) the degrees of correlations between all variables and Tobin's Q are weak since the correlation coefficient values are less than 0.3 except for firm leverage (which has a medium correlation, with a coefficient value of 0.402).

Table 4. Correlation matrix.

Independent Variables	Correlation Coefficient and (p-value)	
	ROA	Tobin's Q
ACS	-0.037 (0.558)	-0.176* (0.005)
ACI	-0.01 (0.873)	-0.179* (0.004)
ACM	0.031 (0.622)	-0.297* (.000)
AS	0.086 (0.174)	-0.266* (0.000)
FS	0.027 (0.672)	-0.163* (0.010)
FA	-0.113 (0.073)	0.198* (0.002)
FL	-0.331* (0.000)	-0.402* (0.000)

Note: * Significant at alpha = 0.05.

4.2. Regression Analysis

Before the regression models can be run, it is important to ensure that the multiple regression assumptions are met. The main assumptions that have been checked are:

- 1) Non-existence of outliers.
- 2) Normality of errors.
- 3) Homoscedasticity.
- 4) Non-existence of multicollinearity between the independent variables.

The findings are as follows:

Non-existence of outliers: Outliers are cases in the sample that cause biased regression results either overestimated or underestimated. A good indicator for detecting outliers is Cook's distance, which is measured for every case (case = firm in the context of this study). If this indicator is greater than one, then the case is most likely an outlier. Based on the analysis, this study reported a maximum Cook's distance of 0.932 and 0.106 for ROA and Tobin's Q, respectively. Therefore, neither of Cook's distances in this study has exceeded one, which indicates no outliers; hence, the assumption is met for both dependent variables.

Normality of errors: The histogram seems to be the most basic graphical plot, which test normality distribution. According to Das and Imon (2016), the frequency distribution, which plots recorded values against their frequency, indicates whether the distribution is bell-shaped or not. The histograms obtained from the initial analyses are shown below.

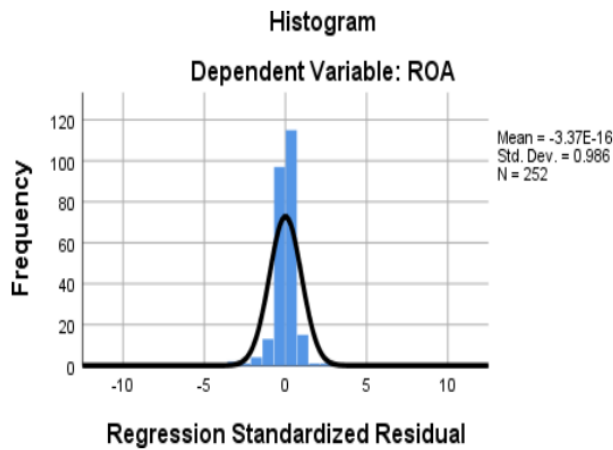


Figure 1. Histogram of ROA.

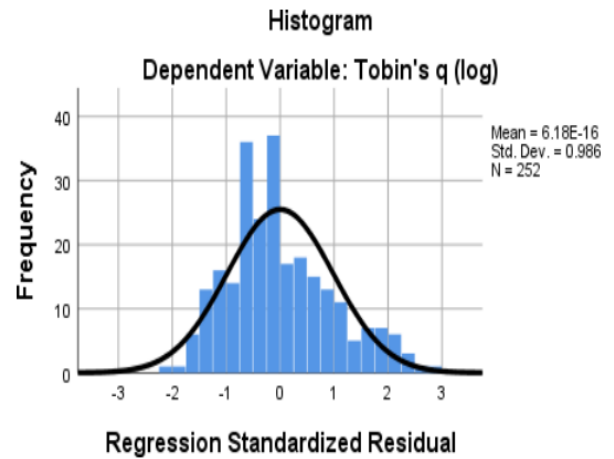


Figure 2. Histogram of Tobin's Q (log).

Figure 1 illustrates the frequency distribution of ROA, and it can be seen clearly that the distribution of errors is not normal in the case of ROA (high kurtosis with long tails from both sides). Figure 2 shows the distribution of errors in the case of Tobin's Q, which it is considered as a normal distribution since it looks bell-shaped. Therefore, it can be concluded that the normality assumption is only met for Tobin's Q (Tobin's Q has undergone log-transformation; we are not using the original values).

Homoscedasticity: The assumption of homoscedasticity, as proposed by Coakes, Steed, and Dzidic (2006), is tested by looking at residual scatterplots. The assumption of homoscedasticity should be met if there is no obvious relationship between the residuals and the expected values. The scatterplots obtained from the initial analyses are presented below.

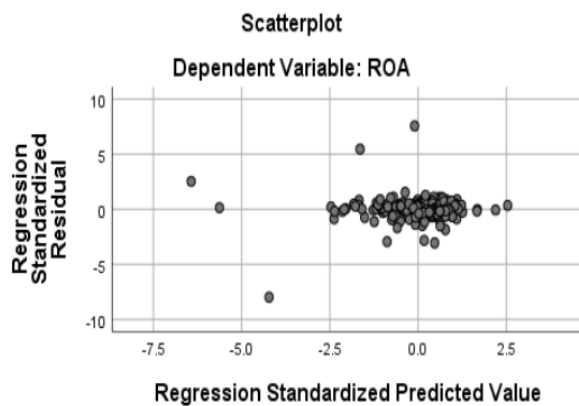


Figure 3. Scatterplot of ROA.

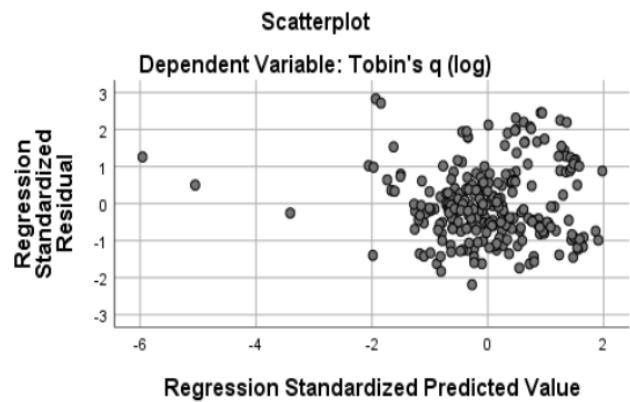


Figure 4. Scatterplot of Tobin's Q (log).

As shown in Figure 3, the errors of ROA are not too scattered across the horizontal axis (they tend to make a horizontal line), whereas Figure 4 illustrates that the Tobin's Q errors are much more scattered across the horizontal axis, and a clear shape cannot be seen. Therefore, it can be concluded that the homoscedasticity assumption was only met for Tobin's Q.

The non-existence of multicollinearity: Multicollinearity is a situation in which the independent variables are highly associated with one another. A good measure of multicollinearity is the variance inflation factor (VIF), which is calculated for each independent variable alone and shows its overall association with another independent variable. According to Akinwande, Dikko, and Samson (2015), multicollinearity exists if the VIF is very large ($VIF > 10$) for each independent variable, and the average VIF from all independent variables are substantially greater than one. The VIF results in Table 5 were obtained from the initial analyses and illustrates that the scores range from 1.074 to 1.380, implying that multicollinearity is not an issue.

Table 5. Variance inflation factor.

Independent variables	VIF	
	Y = ROA	Y = Tobin's Q
ACS	1.346	1.346
ACI	1.380	1.380
ACM	1.078	1.078
FS	1.105	1.105
FA	1.294	1.294
FL	1.074	1.074
AS	1.235	1.235
Overall	Average = 1.216	Average = 1.216

Furthermore, we can see from Table 5 that for both dependent variables the VIFs for all independent variables are small (none has even exceeded 1.5) and the average VIF is 1.216 under both dependent variables (which is very close to 1). Therefore, we can say that the assumption of the non-existence of severe collinearity is met for both dependent variables.

Consequently, the assumptions are all met when the dependent variable is Tobin's Q, while not all assumptions are met when the dependent variable is ROA, specifically normality and homoscedasticity are not met. Based on the findings, running the regular multiple regression analysis for Tobin's Q is not an issue since all underlying assumptions are met, hence it will give solid results; however, this is not the case for ROA. According to Yaffee (2002), in the case of violations in regular regression, conducting a robust regression analysis can be applied to correct any problems. Therefore, this study used the regular regression analyses for Tobin's Q, while a robust regression analysis was used for ROA, which is powerful in the case of assumption violation.

4.3. Model Results

The regression analyses for both equations are summarized in Table 6, which indicates whether the model is statistically significant or not.

Table 6. Regression analysis results.

Regression Statistics		Y	
		ROA*	Log (Tobin's Q)**
R		0.388	0.529
R-Squared		0.150	0.280
Adjusted R-Squared		0.126	0.486
Std. Error of the Estimate		0.103	0.542
Overall Model Sig.		0.000	0.000
Equation Constant (α)(sig.)		0.105 (0.000)	-0.454 (0.015)
Coefficient (β) of the Main IV's (sig.)	ACS	-0.008 (0.211)	0.029 (0.685)
	ACI	0.017 (0.385)	-0.691 (0.001)
	ACM	-0.007 (0.224)	-0.080 (0.212)
Coefficient (β) of the Control IV's (sig.)	FS	0.000 (0.311)	0.000 (0.084)
	FA	-0.003 (0.000)	0.012 (0.180)
	FL	-0.104 (0.000)	-0.601 (0.000)
	AS	0.024 (0.000)	-0.232 (0.001)

Note: *All coefficients are estimated using a robust regression procedure in the case of ROA rather than regular procedures.

** Results are based on the log of Tobin's Q (not raw Tobin's Q).

The results in Table 6 illustrates that, first, the linear model "ROA = $\alpha + \beta_1 \text{ACS} + \beta_2 \text{ACI} + \beta_3 \text{ACM} + \beta_4 \text{FS} + \beta_5 \text{FA} + \beta_6 \text{FL} + \beta_7 \text{AS} + \varepsilon$ " is statistically significant (it seems to actually exist), since the model's p-value is .000 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the model generally fits the data. The degree of fit is measured by R-squared, which was calculated as 0.150. This means that 15% of the changes in ROA can be explained by this model (or the seven independent variables). However, the 15% cannot be generalized as a degree of fit in the larger population of firms (it is restricted for the sample of this study; 15% of the changes in ROA are explained by the values of the independent variables in this study). In order to generalize such a percentage to the larger population, the adjusted R-squared should be used, which was calculated as 0.126. This means that 12.6% of the variation in ROA generally is explained by this model (or the seven independent variables).

Second, the linear model, "Log (Tobin's Q) = $\alpha + \beta_1 \text{ACS} + \beta_2 \text{ACI} + \beta_3 \text{ACM} + \beta_4 \text{FS} + \beta_5 \text{FA} + \beta_6 \text{FL} + \beta_7 \text{AS} + \varepsilon$ ", is statistically significant (it seems to actually exist), since the model's p-value is 0.000 (< 0.05). Therefore, the model generally fits the data of this study. The degree of fit is measured by R-squared, which was calculated as 0.280. This means that 28% of the changes in log Tobin's Q can be explained by this model (or the seven independent variables). However, the 28% cannot be generalized as a degree of fit in the larger population of firms (it is restricted for the sample of this study; 28% of changes in Tobin's Q are explained by the values of the independent variables in this study). In order to generalize such a percentage to the larger population, the adjusted R-squared should be used, which was calculated as 0.486. This means that 48.6% of the variation in Tobin's Q is explained by this model (or the seven independent variables).

4.4. Main Findings

The regression results for ROA in Table 6 demonstrate that the effect of the size of the audit committee (ACS) on ROA is not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.008$, p-value $> .05$). This result is consistent with the findings of Al-Matari et al. (2014); Darko et al. (2015) and Herdjiono and Sari (2017). Furthermore, audit committee independence (ACI) does not affect ROA in a statistically significant sense ($\beta = 0.017$, p-value > 0.05). The same results have been found by Kajola (2008) and Zhou et al. (2018). In addition, the frequency of audit committee meetings (ACM) has no significant effect on ROA ($\beta = -0.007$, p-value > 0.05). The same findings were discovered by Bansal and Sharma (2016). Hence, H1, H2, and H3 are rejected in the case of ROA. Based on the findings, it seems that the AC characteristics or structures among Omani non-financial firms need more control and monitoring by the related authorities to ensure that firms appoint the right members with financial knowledge to enhance financial performance. On the contrary, the main influence comes from all control variables except firm size (FS), which has no effect on ROA. Firm leverage (FL) shows a significant negative effect on ROA. This result affirms that companies with high leverage will probably spend more on CG since greater debts can raise agency costs. Moreover, auditor size (AS) is the only variable that has a strong positive effect on ROA, which confirms with the findings by Al-Ajmi (2008), who stated that Big Four audit firms provide high-quality auditing due to their extensive skills and knowledge, which affect their performance positively.

The regression analysis results on Tobin's Q as a dependent variable (see Table 6) illustrate that the size of the audit committee (ACS) does not influence Tobin's Q ($\beta = 0.029$, p-value > 0.05), which agrees with the findings by Darko et al. (2015). In addition, the frequency of audit committee meetings (ACM) does not influence Tobin's Q ($\beta = -0.080$, p-value > 0.05), regardless of the number of meetings or composition. The results imply that the efficacy of the AC may be determined by how well the members can carry out their roles and obligations. This result is in line with the findings by Al-Matari et al. (2014). Conversely, the only independent variable that has a significant effect on Tobin's Q is the independence of the audit committee (ACI) ($\beta = -0.691$, p-value < 0.05). These outcomes are similar to the findings by Bansal and Sharma (2016), who indicated that ACI has an adverse impact on Tobin's Q because of inaccurate asset valuation when there are more independent directors in the AC. Hence, H1, H2, and H3 in the case of Tobin's Q are also rejected.

Two of the control variables have significantly negative effects on Tobin's Q , namely firm size (FL) and auditor size (AS), with respective β values of -0.601 and -0.232 and p-values of 0.000 and 0.001. Thus, it can be implied that high leverage firms in Oman perform poorly in the stock market. These results contradicted the findings by Fauzi and Locke (2012); Lama (2012) and Zeitun and Tian (2007), who expressed that high firm leverage (FL) results in an improvement of Tobin's Q . Similarly, the size of the audit firm (AS) affects Tobin's Q negatively, and this indicates that Big Four audit firms in Oman need to focus more on firms' market performance and evaluation of assets.

Consequently, from the previous analyses of Omani firms, it seems that AC members do not add value to a firm's performance, and their position on the AC may increase agency problems. Firms should appoint AC members based on specific criteria and carry out continuous evaluations, and those members must be independent and highly knowledgeable on financial issues. Furthermore, an AC is an important committee among others because of its role in enhancing and controlling management actions that reflect an improvement of firm performance. The government authorities should follow procedures to ensure that firms are following the CG Code and appoint qualified members to drive the market and attract investors.

5. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

This study found that all three main variables, namely audit committee size (ACS), audit committee independence (ACI), and audit committee meetings (ACM), do not have a significant effect on firms' financial performance measured by ROA, and in the case of Tobin's Q , there is only a significant reverse effect with ACI. The study found that only around 36% of AC members are independent, and this percentage is in contrast with the Corporate Governance Code that requires the majority of committee members to be independent. On average, there are four AC members per firm, and while this number is in accordance with the Omani CG Code, it does not reflect performance improvement. In addition, the number of annual meetings held is more than the code's minimum requirement, and those meetings do not show any enhancement of firm performance.

In terms of contributions, this research enhances the understanding of AC characteristics in GCC countries, and especially in Oman, where there is very limited research that looks into the relationship between AC characteristics and the financial performance of a company. In addition, this study recommends that AC structure needs more control and oversight from government authorities, especially in terms of independence. Oman CG regulators should evaluate companies regularly to ensure the adoption of CG mechanisms to improve firm performance and reflect a positive impact on the whole economy in addition to updating the code in accordance with the latest international practices.

The findings of this study have considerable implications; they contribute to a better understanding of how effective CG practices, specifically AC characteristics, influence firm performance, especially for Omani policymakers. In addition, it gives the government authorities and financial statement users in-depth details on how ACs are important and how their characteristics are crucial for firms and the economy to flourish. Furthermore, it invites the authorities to give careful consideration to how CG practices are implemented and ensure they are adopted fairly and accurately.

Finally, the current study only focused on the effects of ACS, ACI, and ACM of Omani non-financial firms with ROA and Tobin's Q as financial indicators between 2016 and 2019, which is considered as the adoption period of the latest CG code in Oman. Therefore, other AC characteristics, such as multiple memberships, diligence, and foreign representation, should be considered in future studies along with other performance measures, such as ROE. Furthermore, future studies could look at financial firms and evaluate the structure and effect of ACs on financial success.

The relationship between non-financial listed companies and financial listed companies should be investigated further in future studies, as they all contribute to the economy. To learn more about the relationship between corporate governance systems and firm performance in diverse circumstances, additional research should be conducted using qualitative research methods, such as interviews, to gain a more in-depth understanding of this

problem. Additionally, it will provide more information on the significance of corporate governance mechanisms as monitoring tools from diverse economies, demonstrating how institutional settings affect the effectiveness of corporate governance mechanisms (contextual factors).

The findings of this study are important to corporate governance research for a number of reasons. Oman is an emerging securities market that has many different laws about how corporate governance should work. This study provides information about how corporate governance and financial firm performance work together in this new market. CG practitioners and policymakers can now review the CG code of conduct to improve the financial performance of companies that are on the stock market. Recently, Oman has focused on improving its financial stability and the performance of its businesses, and corporate governance rules are being reviewed. In this way, this study helps policymakers develop effective corporate governance mechanisms and evaluate the effectiveness of the policies that are already in place.

Funding: This work is supported by Innovation & Research Management Centre and the Institute of Energy Policy & Research UNITEN (Grant number: 253071712452).

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Authors' Contributions: Both authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study.

REFERENCES

- Abbott, L. J., Parker, S., Peters, G. F., & Raghunandan, K. (2003). The association between audit committee characteristics and audit fees. *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory*, 22(2), 17-32. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2308/aud.2003.22.2.17>.
- Afify, H. A. E. (2009). Determinants of audit report lag Does implementing corporate governance have any impact? Empirical evidence from Egypt. *Journal of Applied Accounting Research*, 10(1), 56-86. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/09675420910963397>.
- Ahmed, E., & Hamdan, A. (2015). The impact of corporate governance on firm performance: Evidence from Bahrain Bourse. *International Management Review*, 11(2), 21-37.
- Akinwande, M. O., Dikko, H. G., & Samson, A. (2015). Variance inflation factor: As a condition for the inclusion of suppressor variable(s) in regression analysis. *Open Journal of Statistics*, 5(7), 754-767. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojs.2015.57075>.
- Al-Ajmi, J. (2008). Audit and reporting delays: Evidence from an emerging market. *Advances in Accounting*, 24(2), 217-226. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adiac.2008.08.002>.
- Al-Daoud, K. I., Saidin, S. Z., & Abidin, S. (2016). Board meeting and firm performance: Evidence from the Amman stock exchange. *Corporate Board: Role, Duties and Composition*, 12(2), 6-11. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.22495/cbv12i2art1>.
- Al-Hussain, A. H., & Johnson, R. L. (2009). Relationship between corporate governance efficiency and Saudi banks' performance. *The Business Review*, 14(1), 111-117.
- Al-Malkawi, H.-A. N., Pillai, R., & Bhatti, M. (2014). Corporate governance practices in emerging markets: The case of GCC countries. *Economic Modelling*, 38, 133-141. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econmod.2013.12.019>.
- Al-Mamun, A., Yasser, Q. R., Rahman, M. A., Wickramasinghe, A., & Nathan, T. M. (2014). Relationship between audit committee characteristics, external auditors and economic value added (EVA) of public listed firms in Malaysia. *Corporate Ownership & Control*, 12(1), 899-910. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.22495/cocv12i1c9p12>.
- Al-Matari, E. M., Al-Matari, Y. A., & Saif, S. A. (2017). Ownership structure, audit quality and firm performance moderating and direct-effect models: An empirical study. *Corporate Board: Role, Duties and Composition*, 13(1), 28-35. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.22495/cbv13i1p3>.
- Al-Matari, E. M., Al-Swidi, A. K., Fadzil, F. H., & Al-Matari, Y. A. (2012). The impact of board characteristics on firm performance: Evidence from nonfinancial listed companies in Kuwaiti Stock Exchange. *International Journal of Accounting and Financial Reporting*, 2(2), 310-332. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijaf.v2i2.2384>.
- Al-Matari, E. M., Al-Swidi, A. K., & Fadzil, F. H. (2014). The effect of board of directors characteristics, audit committee

- characteristics and executive committee characteristics on firm performance in Oman: An empirical study. *Asian Social Science*, 10(11), 149-171. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n11p149>.
- Al-Matari, Y. A., & Al-Matari, E. M. (2012). Board of directors, audit committee characteristics and performance of Saudi Arabia listed companies. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 2(4), 241-251.
- Al-Matari, E. M., Hanim, F., Fadzil, B., & Al-Swidi, A. K. (2014). The moderating effect of board diversity on the relationship between board of directors characteristics and firm performance in Oman: Empirical study Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate school of business, University Utara Malaysia, Malaysia. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 21(5), 782-791.
- Al-Matari, E. M. (2020). Do characteristics of the board of directors and top executives have an effect on corporate performance among the financial sector? Evidence using stock. *Corporate Governance (Bingley)*, 20(1), 16-43. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/cg-11-2018-0358>.
- Al-Matari, E. M., Al-Swidi, A. K., & Fadzil, F. H. B. (2014). Audit committee characteristics and executive committee characteristics and firm performance in Oman: Empirical study. *Asian Social Science*, 10(12), 98-113. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n12p98>.
- Al-Matari, E. M., & Mgamal, M. H. (2019). The moderating effect of internal audit on the relationship between corporate governance mechanisms and corporate performance among Saudi Arabia listed companies. *Accounting and Administration*, 64(4), 1-27. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.22201/fca.24488410e.2020.2316>.
- Al Ani, M. K., & Mohammed, Z. O. (2015). Auditor quality and firm performance: Omani experience. *European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences*, 9(74), 13-23.
- Aldamen, H., Duncan, K., & Kelly, S. (2012). An empirical analysis of corporate governance and firm value: Evidence from KSE-100 Index. *Accounting and Finance*, 52(4), 971-1000.
- Aldamen, H., Duncan, K., Kelly, S., Mcnamara, R., & Nagel, S. (2012). Audit committee characteristics and firm performance during the global financial crisis. *Accounting and Finance*, 52(4), 971-1000. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-629X.2011.00447.x>.
- Aljifri, K., & Moustafa, M. (2007). The impact of corporate governance mechanisms on the performance of UAE firms: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Economic & Administrative Sciences*, 23(2), 71-93. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/10264116200700008>.
- Alqatamin, R. M. (2018). Audit committee effectiveness and company performance: Evidence from Jordan. *Accounting and Finance Research*, 7(2), 48. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5430/afr.v7n2p48>.
- Alzharani, A. M., Ahmad, A., Aljaaidi, K. S., Ghares, M., Chen, S., & Liu, X. (2011). An empirical investigation of factors associated with firm performance evidence from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research*, 25(1), 30-36.
- Amer, M., Ragab, A. A., & Shehata, S. E. (2014). *Audit committee characteristics and firm performance: Evidence from Egyptian listed companies*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of 6th Annual American Business Research Conference, June, 52.
- Ang, J. S., Cole, R. A., & Lin, J. W. (2000). Agency costs and ownership structure. *The Journal of Finance*, 55(1), 81-106.
- Aras, G. (2015). The effect of corporate governance practices on financial structure in emerging markets: Evidence from BRICK countries and lessons for Turkey. *Emerging Markets Finance and Trade*, 51(sup2), S5-S24. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1540496x.2014.998940>.
- Arslan, M., & Alqatan, A. (2020). Role of institutions in shaping corporate governance system: Evidence from emerging economy. *Heliyon*, 6(3), e03520. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03520>.
- Arslan, M., Zaman, R., Malik, R., & Mehmood, A. (2014). Impact of CEO duality and audit committee on firm performance: A study of oil & gas listed firms of Pakistan. *Research Journal of Finance and Accounting*, 5(17), 151-156.
- Azeez, A. A. (2015). Corporate governance and firm performance: Evidence from Sri Lanka. *Journal of Finance*, 3(1), 180-189. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.15640/jfbm.v3n1a16>.
- Baatwah, S. R., Salleh, Z., & Ahmad, N. (2018). High-quality auditors vs. high-quality audit: The reality in Oman. *Afro-Asian*

- Journal of Finance and Accounting*, 8(3), 209-236. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1504/aaifa.2018.10014354>.
- Baccouche, S., Hadriche, M., & Omri, A. (2013). The impact of audit committee multiple-directorships on earnings management: Evidence from France. *Journal of Applied Business Research*, 29(5), 1333-1342. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.19030/jabr.v29i5.8017>.
- Bansal, N., & Sharma, A. K. (2016). Audit committee, corporate governance and firm performance: Empirical evidence from India. *International Journal of Economics and Finance*, 8(3), 103. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijef.v8n3p103>.
- Barka, B. H., & Legendre, F. (2017). Effect of the board of directors and the audit committee on firm performance: A panel data analysis. *Journal of Management & Governance*, 21(3), 737-755. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10997-016-9356-2>.
- Basiru, S. K., & Nur, A. M. S. (2015). Audit committee attributes and firm performance: Evidence from Malaysian finance companies. *Asian Review of Accounting*, 23(3), 206-231. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1128/aem.71.1.159-168.2005>.
- Baydoun, N., Maguire, W., Ryan, N., & Willett, R. (2012). Corporate governance in five Arabian Gulf countries. *Managerial Auditing Journal*, 28(1), 7-22. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/02686901311282470>.
- Bennouri, M., Chtioui, T., Nagati, H., & Nekhili, M. (2018). Female board directorship and firm performance: What really matters? *Journal of Banking & Finance*, 88, 267-291. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbankfin.2017.12.010>.
- Bøhren, O., & Strøm, R. O. (2010). Governance and politics: Regulating independence and diversity in the board room. *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*, 37(9), 1281-1308. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5957.2010.02222.x>.
- Bouaine, W., & Hrichi, Y. (2019). Impact of audit committee adoption and its characteristics on financial performance: Evidence from 100 French companies. *Accounting and Finance Research*, 8(1), 92-102. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5430/afr.v8n1p92>.
- Bronson, S. N., Carcello, J. V., Hollingsworth, C. W., & Neal, T. L. (2009). Are fully independent audit committees really necessary? *Journal of Accounting and Public Policy*, 28(4), 265-280. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaccpubpol.2009.06.001>.
- Bronzetti, G., Veltri, S., & Mazzotta, R. (2016). Editorial: Is there still something to learn about the association of corporate governance with firm performance? *International Journal of Business and Management*, 11(10), 306. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v11n10p306>.
- Buallay, A., Hamdan, A., & Zureigat, Q. (2017). Corporate governance and firm performance: Evidence from Saudi Arabia. *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal*, 11(1), 78-98. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v11i1.6>.
- Cadbury, C. (1992). *The financial aspects of corporate governance*. London: The Committee on the Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance and Gee and Co. Ltd.
- Campbell, K., & Mínguez-Vera, A. (2008). Gender diversity in the boardroom and firm financial performance. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(3), 435-451. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9630-y>.
- Carcello, J. V., & Neal, T. L. (2000). Audit committee composition and auditor reporting. *The Accounting Review*, 75(4), 453-467. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2308/accr.2000.75.4.453>.
- Carter, D. A., D'Souza, F., Simkins, B. J., & Simpson, W. G. (2010). The gender and ethnic diversity of US boards and board committees and firm financial performance. *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 18(5), 396-414. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8683.2010.00809.x>.
- Christensen, J., Kent, P., & Stewart, J. (2010). Corporate governance and company performance in Australia. *Australian Accounting Review*, 20(4), 372-386. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1835-2561.2010.00108.x>.
- Coakes, S. J., Steed, L., & Dzidic, P. (2006). SPSS : Analysis without anguish version 13.0 for windows (Vol. 9, pp. 270). Australia: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cohen, J. (2013). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.): Taylor and Francis.
- Conger, J. A. (1998). Qualitative research as the cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 9(1), 107-121. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1016/s1048-9843\(98\)90044-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/s1048-9843(98)90044-3).
- Contessotto, C., & Moroney, R. (2014). The association between audit committee effectiveness and audit risk. *Accounting & Finance*, 54(2), 393-418. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/acfi.12010>.

- Danoshana, S., & Ravivathani, T. (2013). The impact of the corporate governance on firm performance: A study on financial institutions in Sri Lanka. *Merit Research Journal of Accounting, Auditing, Economics and Finance*, 6(1), 118–121.
- Darko, J., Aribi, Z., & Uzonwanne, G. (2015). Corporate governance: The impact of director and board structure, ownership structure and corporate control on the performance of listed companies on the Ghana stock exchange. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 16(2), 259–277. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/cg-11-2014-0133>.
- Das, K. R., & Imon, A. (2016). A brief review of tests for normality. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 5–12.
- Davidson, R., Goodwin-Stewart, J., & Kent, P. (2005). Internal governance structures and earnings management. *Accounting & Finance*, 45(2), 241–267. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-629x.2004.00132.x>.
- De Vlamincq, N., & Sarens, G. (2015). The relationship between audit committee characteristics and financial statement quality: Evidence from Belgium. *Journal of Management & Governance*, 19(1), 145–166. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10997-013-9282-5>.
- Detthamrong, U., Chancharat, N., & Vithessonthi, C. (2017). Corporate governance, capital structure and firm performance: Evidence from Thailand. *Research in International Business and Finance*, 42, 689–709. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ribaf.2017.07.011>.
- Dewi, K., & Monalisa, M. (2016). Effect of corporate social responsibility disclosure on financial performance with audit quality as a moderating variable. *Binus Business Review*, 7(2), 149–155. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.21512/bbr.v7i2.1687>.
- Elghuweel, M. I., Ntim, C., Opong, K. K., & Avison, L. (2017). Corporate governance, Islamic governance and earnings management in Oman: A new empirical insights from a behavioural theoretical framework. *Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies*, 7(2), 190–224. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/jaee-09-2015-0064>.
- Elsayed, N., & Elbardan, H. (2018). Investigating the associations between executive compensation and firm performance: Agency theory or tournament theory. *Journal of Applied Accounting Research*, 19(2), 245–270. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/jaar-03-2015-0027>.
- Fama, E. F., & Jensen, M. C. (1983). Separation of ownership and control. *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 26(2), 301–325.
- Fauzi, F., & Locke, S. (2012). Board structure, ownership structure and firm performance: A study of New Zealand listed-firms. *Asian Academy of Management Journal of Accounting and Finance*, 8(2), 43–67.
- Ghabayen, M. A. M. (2012). *Board characteristics and firm performance: Case of Saudi Arabia*. Doctoral Dissertation, Universiti Utara Malaysia.
- Glover-Akpey, I., & Azembila, A. B. (2016). The effect of audit committees on the performance of firms listed on the Ghana stock exchange. *OSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR)*, 18(11), 55–62.
- Heenetigala, K., & Armstrong, A. (2011). The impact of corporate governance on firm performance in an unstable economic and political environment: Evidence from Sri Lanka financial markets & corporate governance Conference. Available at SSRN 1971927. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1971927>.
- Herdjiono, I., & Sari, I. M. (2017). The effect of corporate governance on the performance of a company. Some empirical findings from Indonesia. *Journal of Management and Business Administration. Central Europe*, 25(1), 33–52. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7206/jmba.ce.2450-7814.188>.
- Hillman, A. J., & Dalziel, T. (2003). Boards of directors and firm performance: Integrating agency and resource dependence perspectives. *Academy of Management Review*, 28(3), 383–396. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2003.10196729>.
- Hoque, M. Z., Islam, M. R., & Azam, M. N. (2013). Board committee meetings and firm financial performance: An investigation of Australian companies. *International Review of Finance*, 13(4), 503–528. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/irfi.12009>.
- Hsu, W.-Y., & Petchsakulwong, P. (2010). The impact of corporate governance on the efficiency performance of the Thai non-life insurance industry. *The Geneva Papers on Risk and Insurance-Issues and Practice*, 35(1), S28–S49. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1057/gpp.2010.30>.
- Hussain, S., Hussain, M., & Awais, A. (2015). CG and its impact on firm performance: Comparison of UK and Oman. *Academic Research International*, 6(3), 124–135.

- Isidro, H., & Sobral, M. (2015). The effects of women on corporate boards on firm value, financial performance, and ethical and social compliance. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 132(1), 1-19. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2302-9>.
- Jackling, B., & Johl, S. (2009). Board structure and firm performance: Evidence from India's top companies. *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 17(4), 492-509. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8683.2009.00760.x>.
- Jensen, M. C., & Meckling, W. H. (1976). Theory of the firm: Managerial behavior, agency costs and ownership structure. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 3(4), 305-360. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-405x\(76\)90026-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-405x(76)90026-x).
- Jensen, M. C. (1986). Agency costs of free cash flow, corporate finance, and takeovers. *The American economic review*, 76(2), 323-329.
- Kajola, S. O. (2008). Corporate governance and firm performance: The case of Nigerian listed firms. *European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences*, 14(14), 16-28.
- Kanukuntla, D. K. S., & Rao, D. N. (2012). Corporate governance and accounting standards in Oman: An empirical study on practices. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 1-16. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.480522>.
- Kholeif, A. (2008). CEO duality and accounting-Based performance in Egyptian listed companies: A re-Examination of agency theory predictions. In *Corporate Governance in Less Developed and Emerging Economies* (Vol. 8, pp. 65-96): Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Klein, A. (2002). Audit committee, board of director characteristics, and earnings management. *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, 33(3), 375-400. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0165-4101\(02\)00059-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0165-4101(02)00059-9).
- Kumar, J. K. (2011). Does ownership structure influence firm value? Evidence from India. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.464521>.
- Lama, T. B. (2012). Empirical evidence on the link between compliance with governance of best practice and firms' operating results. *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal*, 6(5), 63-80.
- Leung, S., Richardson, G., & Jaggi, B. (2014). Corporate board and board committee independence, firm performance, and family ownership concentration: An analysis based on Hong Kong firms. *Journal of Contemporary Accounting & Economics*, 10(1), 16-31. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcae.2013.11.002>.
- Lipton, M., & Lorsch, J. W. (1992). A modest proposal for improved corporate governance: Business source. *Business Lawyer*, 42(1), 59-78.
- Liu, Y., Wei, Z., & Xie, F. (2014). Do women directors improve firm performance in China? *Journal of Corporate Finance*, 28, 169-184. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcorpfin.2013.11.016>.
- Madawaki, A., & Amran, N. A. (2013). Audit committees: How they affect financial reporting in Nigerian companies. *Journal of Modern Accounting and Auditing*, 9(8), 1070-1080.
- McDaniel, L., Martin, R. D., & Maines, L. A. (2002). Evaluating financial reporting quality: The effects of financial expertise vs. financial literacy. *The Accounting Review*, 77(s-1), 139-167. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2308/accr.2002.77.s-1.169>.
- Menon, K., & Williams, J. D. (1994). The use of audit committees for monitoring. *Journal of Accounting and Public Policy*, 13(2), 121-139. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0278-4254\(94\)90016-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0278-4254(94)90016-7).
- Mishra, R. K., & Kapil, S. (2018). Board characteristics and firm value for Indian companies. *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 10(1), 2-32. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/jibr-07-2016-0074>.
- Mohiuddin, M., & Karbhari, Y. (2010). Audit committee effectiveness: A critical literature review. *AIUB Journal of Business and Economics*, 9(1), 97-125.
- Muhammad, H., Rehman, A. U., & Waqas, M. (2016). The effect of corporate governance practices on firm value: Evidence from Pakistan. *East Asian Journal of Business Management*, 6(1), 5-12. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.26650/med.2019476390>.
- Naimah, Z., & Hamidah. (2017). The role of corporate governance in firm performance. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 34, 13003. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20173413003>.
- Nuryanah, S., & Islam, S. (2015). *Corporate governance and financial management: Computational optimisation modelling and accounting perspectives*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Olokoyo, F. O. (2013). Capital structure and corporate performance of Nigerian quoted firms: A panel data approach. *African*

- Development Review*, 25(3), 358-369. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8268.2013.12034.x>.
- Omani Capital Market Authority (OCMA). (2016). Code of corporate governance for public listed companies 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.cma.gov.om/Home/CircularFileDownload/5308>. [Accessed 21 July 2022].
- Oseit, K., & Ntim, C. (2011). The impact of corporate board meetings on corporate performance in South Africa. *African Review of Economics and Finance*, 2(2), 83-103.
- Paniagua, J., Rivelles, R., & Sapena, J. (2018). Corporate governance and financial performance: The role of ownership and board structure. *Journal of Business Research*, 89, 229-234.
- Persons, O. S. (2005). The relation between the new corporate governance rules and the likelihood of financial statement fraud. *Review of Accounting and Finance Sarbanes-Oxley*, 4(2), 125-148.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2016). Oman new corporate governance code. Retrieved from www.pwc.com/structure.
- Rashid, A. (2018). Board independence and firm performance: Evidence from Bangladesh. *Future Business Journal*, 4(1), 34-49. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fbj.2017.11.003>.
- Reddy, K., Locke, S., & Scrimgeour, F. (2010). The efficacy of principle-based corporate governance practices and firm financial performance: An empirical investigation. *International Journal of Managerial Finance*, 6(3), 190-219. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/17439131011056224>.
- Reguera-Alvarado, N., & Bravo, F. (2017). The effect of independent directors' characteristics on firm performance: Tenure and multiple directorships. *Research in International Business and Finance*, 41(2), 590-599.
- Shan, Y., & Walter, T. (2016). Towards a set of design principles for executive compensation contracts. *Abacus*, 52(4), 619-684.
- Spira, L. F. (2003). Audit committees: begging the question? *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 11(3), 180-188.
- Sun, Q., Tong, W. H., & Tong, J. (2002). How does government ownership affect firm performance? Evidence from China's privatization experience. *Journal of Business Finance & Accounting*, 29(1-2), 1-27.
- Vafeas, N. (1999). Board meeting frequency and firm performance. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 53(1), 113-142.
- Walker, E. W., & Petty, J. W. (1978). Financial differences between large and small firms. *Financial Management*, 7(4), 61-68.
- Wild, J. J. (1996). The audit committee and earnings quality. *Journal of Accounting, Auditing & Finance*, 11(2), 247-276.
- Wong, F. S., Ganesan, Y., Pitchay, A. A., Haron, H., & Hendayani, R. (2020). Corporate governance and business performance: The moderating role of external audit quality. *Journal of Governance and Integrity*, 2(2), 34-44. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.15282/jgi.2.2.2019.5466>.
- Yaffee, R. A. (2002). Robust regression analysis: Some popular statistical package options. *RobustReg2.pdf*. 1-12. Retrieved from: <http://www.nyu.edu/its/statistics/Docs/RobustReg2.pdf>.
- Yasser, Q. R., Entebang, H. A., & Mansor, S. A. (2015). Corporate governance and firm performance in Pakistan: The case of Karachi stock exchange (KSE)-30. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 3(8), 482-491. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2551636>.
- Zeitun, R., & Tian, G. G. (2007). Does ownership affect a firm's performance and default risk in Jordan? *The International Journal of Business in Society*, 7(1), 66-82. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/14720700710727122>.
- Zhou, H., Owusu-Ansah, S., & Maggina, A. (2018). Board of directors, audit committee, and firm performance: Evidence from Greece. *Journal of International Accounting, Auditing and Taxation*, 31(2), 20-36.
- Zraiq, M., & Fadzil, F. (2018). The impact of audit committee characteristics on firm performance: Evidence from Jordan. *Scholar Journal of Applied Sciences and Research*, 1(5), 39-42.

Views and opinions expressed in this article are the views and opinions of the author(s), Asian Economic and Financial Review shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability, etc., caused in relation to/arising from the use of the content.