

# Mapping the Landscape of Corporate Governance Research in Cameroon: A Scoping Review

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## Abstract

Corporate governance is pivotal in enhancing business integrity and efficiency, influencing overall firm performance, and safeguarding stakeholders' interests. This scoping review aims to consolidate existing research on corporate governance in Cameroon, identify predominant themes, and highlight research gaps to inform future studies and policy-making. A comprehensive search strategy across databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, were employed, focusing on studies from 2010 to 2023. A two-step screening process and thematic analysis were used to ensure rigour. The research concentrates predominantly on urban centres in Cameroon. Significant gaps include integrating traditional governance models with modern practices and addressing Small and Medium Size Enterprises' challenges. The review emphasises the need for improved board diversity, audit quality, integration of conventional governance, sector-specific reforms, and longitudinal studies. Future research should focus on empirical and comparative studies to bridge these gaps, contributing to better governance practices and economic development in Cameroon.

**Keywords:** corporate governance, Cameroon, board dynamics, regulatory impacts, accountability practices

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Corporate governance refers to the management and control of firms through their structure, practices, and operating processes. It is instrumental in creating superior business integrity, efficiency, and heightened firm performance to secure stakeholders' interests (Gillan, 2006; Shleifer & Vishny, 1997). The core purpose of any company is to create value for society while respecting its operational environment. In light of global transformations driven by economic, political, and health crises, companies must adapt their strategies to consider financial goals and broader stakeholder interests, including social and environmental concerns. Good corporate governance is critical to meeting these challenges, as it guides how companies define objectives, make decisions, and create sustainable value, ultimately contributing to the development of their surrounding environment. Good governance is essential for all Cameroonian companies, regardless of their size, whether small, medium, or large, and whether they operate in the private or public sector (Gicam, 2023).

Effective corporate governance mechanisms are crucial, particularly for economies like Cameroon, as they facilitate market confidence and investment functioning, thereby contributing to economic growth. This is because the Cameroonian context presents a unique socio-economic setting and legal and regulatory framework permeated by cultural influences that challenge and allow the development of fit and proper corporate governance practices (Feudjo & Mfouapon, 2021).

According to Boubakari and Feudjo (2010), the corporate sector in Cameroon is diverse, ranging from family-owned businesses to multinational corporations. Each of these enterprises operates within a changing regulatory environment. The Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa (OHADA) plays a vital role in the legal framework, affecting corporate governance practices in Cameroon and its region (Fossung & Verges, 2022; Ndongko & Tantoh, 2012). However, local contexts and enforcement capacities significantly influence these laws' implementation and effectiveness (Etchu & Nkwenti, 2015). Corporate governance has gained global recognition for its significance, with substantial studies highlighting its role in contributing to financial performance, risk

management, and corporate sustainability (Claessens & Yurtoglu, 2013). However, Cameroonian corporate governance research remains fragmented and underinvestigated. Though studies exist that target board dynamics, issues of accountability, and the impacts of regulations, there is hardly any comprehensive research specifically addressing the peculiar challenges and opportunities that define the Cameroonian context (Tchakoute Tchuigoua, 2014; Sama-Lang & Zesung, 2016). There is a need to understand how traditional governance structures, characterised by communal and hierarchical influences, interact with modern corporate governance frameworks (Kolk & Lenfant, 2012).

In addition, most of the available research has focused on urban cities, especially Douala and Yaoundé, resulting in a considerable shortage of knowledge in rural and less-developed areas (Boubakari & Feudjo, 2010). Certain industries have lacked specific investigations, while others, such as technology, health, and education, are more pertinent. This highlights the need for a critical review and analysis of the literature concerning corporate governance in Cameroon. Given the variety of corporations and the dynamic regulatory environment, there is a pressing need to synthesise existing knowledge, identify emerging themes, and pinpoint research gaps that could guide further studies and policy formulation (Kiggundu, 2002).

This scoping review, therefore, synthesises existing literature to present a clear picture of what the state of corporate governance research looks like in Cameroon, shedding light on what matters to scholars, policymakers, and corporate practitioners in their collective effort to uplift and sustain better corporate governance practice in the country. The review thus maps the current research landscape about corporate governance dynamics in developing economies and further enhances the governance discourse.

### *1.2 Objectives*

The main objectives of this scoping review are to:

- (1) Systematically map the existing literature on corporate governance in Cameroon, highlighting the main themes and areas of focus.
- (2) Analyse the methodologies applied in the study of corporate governance in the context of Cameroon.
- (3) Examine gaps in the literature and suggest ideas for further research to improve knowledge and practice on corporate governance in Cameroon.
- (4) Offer insights from the Cameroonian perspective that will be interjected into the global conversation on corporate governance to deepen academic understanding and provide practical implications to policymakers, corporate leaders, and other stakeholders in the governance process.

A preliminary search of Scopus, the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, and JBI Evidence Synthesis was conducted, and no current or ongoing systematic reviews or scoping reviews on the topic were identified.

### *1.3 Review Questions*

- (1) What are the predominant themes and methodological approaches in corporate governance research in Cameroon? This question seeks to establish the central topics and methodological approaches used in such studies on, for example, board dynamics, accountability, and the impacts of regulation on corporate governance.
- (2) What areas are missing from the discussion on corporate governance in Cameroon, and how do these areas align with the traditional governance structures? This research question brings forth scantily researched or uninvestigated areas of corporate governance, including integrating traditional governance tools with modern ones.
- (3) What implications does this have for improving practices and policies that support corporate governance in Cameroon? The final question synthesises insights to suggest how they might influence future research, policy-making, and practical implementations in corporate governance within the Cameroonian context.

### *1.4 Inclusion Criteria*

Studies that will be considered for inclusion must meet the following requirements:

**Contextual Relevance:** The research should be on corporate governance in the Cameroonian context, explaining board structures, mechanisms of accountability, regulatory impacts, or any other distinctive features of Cameroon.

**Type of Study:** Both empirical and theoretical analyses shall be considered. Empirical studies may be based on qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method research design. Theoretical analyses must lead to conceptual insights or frameworks specifically in the domain of corporate governance in Cameroon.

Type of Publication: Studies must be published in peer-reviewed journals or by reputable research institutions to ensure data reliability and robustness.

Language: Studies published in English and French are included.

Date of Publication: Studies from 2010 to 2023 have been incorporated to include recent developments and current practices in corporate governance.

### *1.5 Exclusion Criteria*

Studies that will be excluded from the review are those based on the following:

Context Irrelevant: Studies that do not articulate the Cameroonian context's corporate governance concerns and issues.

Non-peer-reviewed studies: Materials such as reports, opinion pieces, and conference abstracts, as they might contain seminal insight into regulatory or industry-specific contexts but without limit in their source or nature.

Broader Focus: The studies mainly address more comprehensive economic or financial analyses that do not directly relate to corporate governance matters.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

The scoping review was conducted following the JBI methodology for scoping reviews (JBI, 2020).

### *2.1 Search Strategy*

To ensure a thorough exploration of corporate governance in Cameroon, a comprehensive search strategy was developed. The process began with identifying core terms such as "corporate governance" and "Cameroon" and expanded through synonyms and related terms to maximise search coverage. The literature search spanned major databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, complemented by targeted searches in specialised journals focused on business ethics and corporate governance.

Boolean operators were integral to the strategy, helping to combine terms effectively; for instance, "corporate governance" AND "Cameroon" were used to pinpoint studies relevant to the geographical and thematic focus. Phrase searching ensured accuracy by capturing exact terms, while truncation captured variations of keywords, increasing the breadth of the search.

The inclusion criteria were stringent, focusing on publications from 2010 to 2023 in English and French, reflecting Cameroon's bilingual context. This time frame was chosen to provide a contemporary perspective while capturing significant developments in the field. Exclusions were made for non-peer-reviewed materials and outdated sources to maintain a high standard of scientific rigour.

Documentation of the search process was meticulous, ensuring every step, from the initial keyword search to the final selection, could be replicated and verified. This included recording search terms, databases used, and the number of results retrieved. A two-step screening process was employed: an initial review of titles and abstracts to weed out irrelevant publications and a thorough full-text review to confirm eligibility based on more detailed criteria.

### *2.2 Study/Source of Evidence Selection*

Following the search, all identified citations were collated and uploaded into Mendeley (Elsevier, Amsterdam, The Netherlands), and duplicates were removed. Following a pilot test, titles and abstracts were then screened by two independent reviewers for assessment against the inclusion criteria for the review. Potentially relevant sources were retrieved in total, and their citation details were imported into the JBI System for the Unified Management, Assessment and Review of Information (JBI SUMARI) (JBI, Adelaide, Australia). Two independent reviewers assessed the full text of selected citations in detail against the inclusion criteria. Reasons for excluding sources of evidence in full text that did not meet the inclusion criteria were recorded and reported in the scoping review. Any disagreements between the reviewers at each stage of the selection process were resolved through discussion or with an additional reviewer. The results of the search and the study inclusion process were reported in full in the final scoping review and presented in a PRISMA flow diagram (Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*. 2021;372).

### *2.3 Data Extraction*

Two independent reviewers used a data extraction tool based on the JBI data extraction form for scoping reviews to extract data from the papers included in the scoping review (Aromataris & Munn, 2020). The data extracted included

specific details about the participants, concept, context, study methods, and key findings relevant to the review questions.

The draft data extraction tool was piloted with a subset of included studies to ensure reliability and validity. During the piloting phase, reviewers identified any issues with the form and made necessary modifications. These modifications were documented in the scoping review to maintain transparency.

The draft data extraction tool was modified and revised as necessary while extracting data from each included evidence source. Any disagreements with the reviewer were resolved through discussion or with an additional reviewer. If appropriate, authors of papers were contacted to request missing or extra data.

### 2.4 Study Inclusion

This flow diagram details the process of identifying, screening, and including studies in the review. It shows the number of records identified, screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the final review.

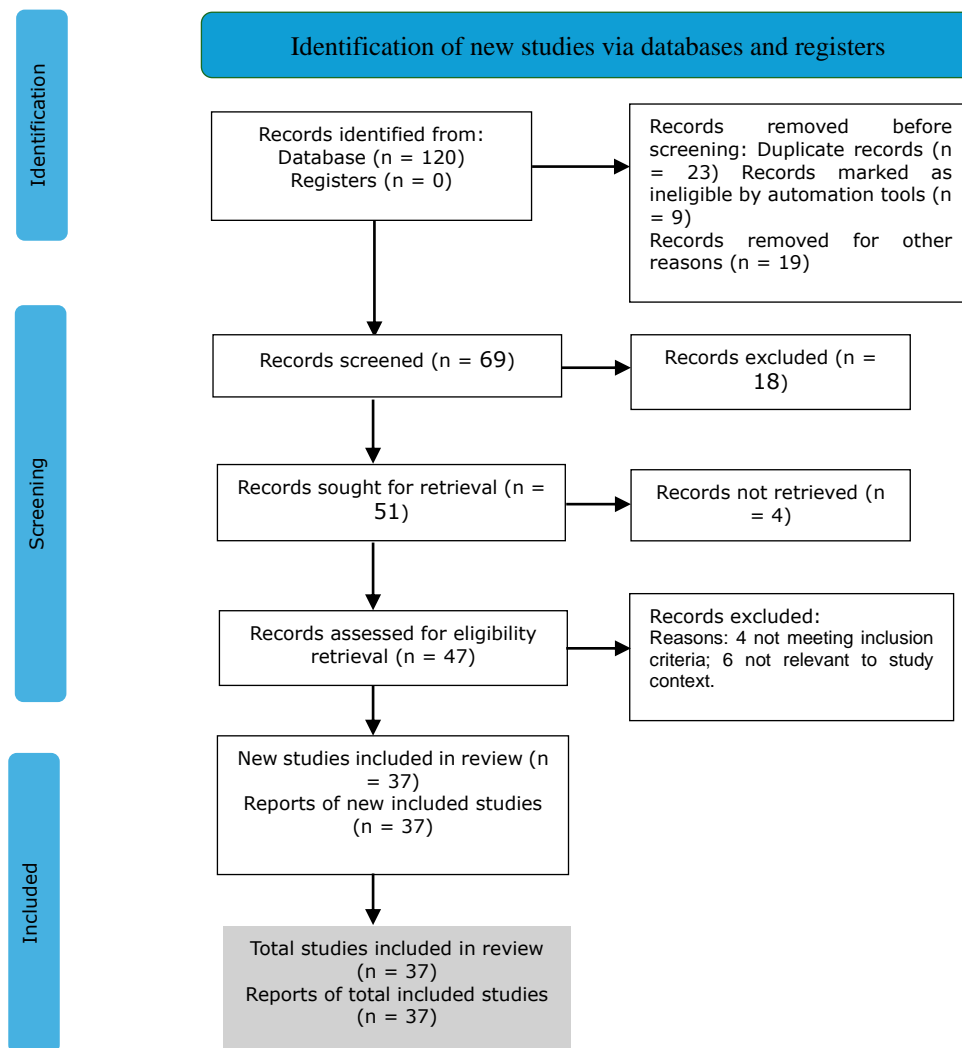


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of search and study selection process

Figure 1 provides a PRISMA flow diagram illustrating the study selection process. Initially, 120 records were identified from the database. After removing duplicates and ineligible records, 69 records were screened. Of these, 51 records were sought for retrieval, with 47 assessed for eligibility. Ultimately, 37 new studies were included in the review.

#### 2.4.1 Characteristics of Included Studies

The included studies provide a comprehensive overview of corporate governance practices and their implications in Cameroon. The characteristics of these studies were synthesised based on several key attributes, as shown in Appendix II: setting/context, participants characteristics, groups, outcomes measured, and results.

#### 2.4.2 Thematic Concentration

Thematic analysis revealed three main areas of focus across the included studies:

**Board Structure and Dynamics:** Studies examined the composition, diversity, and effectiveness of boards, emphasising the role of independent directors and board size in influencing governance outcomes. Boubakari and Feudjo (2010) highlighted the preference for self-financing in family-owned firms to maintain control.

**Corporate Accountability Practices:** Research explored mechanisms for ensuring accountability, including corporate disclosure practices, auditing processes, and ethical business conduct. Fossung and Verges (2022) demonstrated the positive relationship between audit quality and value creation.

**Regulatory Impacts:** Studies assessed the influence of national and regional regulations on corporate governance practices, focusing on compliance with laws and the role of regulatory bodies. Sama-Lang and Zesung (2016) investigated the role of ethics in OHADA's legal framework.

#### 2.4.3 Sectoral Focus

The literature primarily focused on the banking, telecommunications, and microfinance sectors. These sectors are critical to Cameroon's economy and present unique governance challenges and opportunities. A notable lack of technology, healthcare, and education research indicates areas for future investigation.

#### 2.4.4 Geographic Focus of Studies

Most studies are concentrated in urban areas such as Douala and Yaounde, with limited research on rural business settings. This urban-centric focus leaves a significant knowledge gap regarding governance practices in rural areas (Areneke et al., 2019; Sama-Lang & Zesung, 2016). Limited research was conducted in rural settings, highlighting a gap in understanding corporate governance practices in these regions.

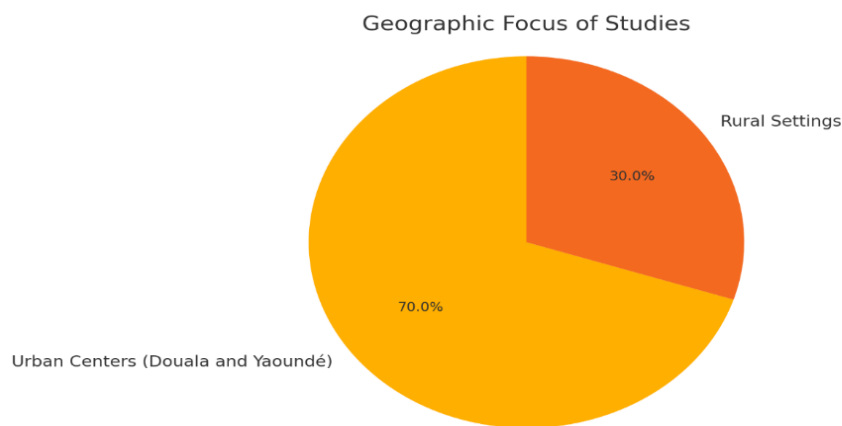


Figure 2. Geographical focus of the studies

Figure 2 illustrates the geographic focus of the reviewed studies, with a significant majority (70%) concentrating on urban centres such as Douala and Yaounde and the remaining 30% focusing on rural settings.

### 3. Synthesised Findings

#### 3.1 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Board Composition and Effectiveness

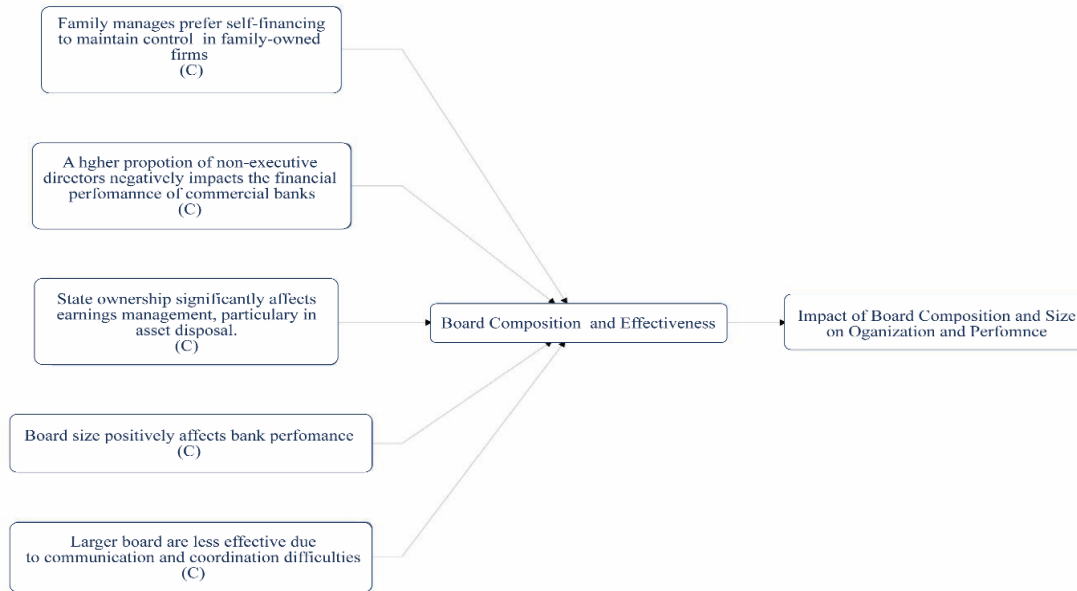


Figure 3. Impact of Board Composition and Size on Organisational Performance

Figure 3 shows the main issues affecting board composition and what it means towards organisational performance. In fact, family managers who own enterprises prefer self-financing because they want to remain in control of the firm. At the same time, a high percentage of non-executive directors lower the financial performance of commercial banks. Furthermore, state ownership significantly affects earnings management, particularly concerning asset disposal. In contrast, large boards do not have good communication and coordination abilities and are ineffective towards their goals. Surprisingly enough, having smaller boards can be more effective since size positively affects bank performance. Each of these findings is unreliable (C), implying that although the information is helpful, one should use it cautiously.

#### 3.2 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

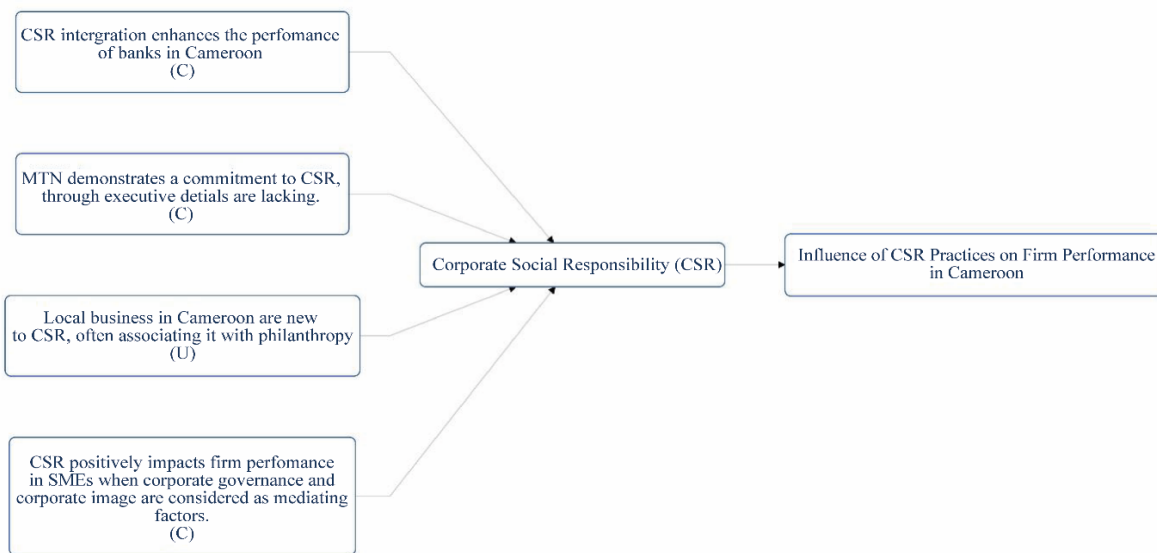


Figure 4. Influence of CSR Practices on Firm Performance in Cameroon

Figure 4 shows how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices in Cameroon can impact firm performance. Key findings include the fact that the integration of CSR enhances the performance of banks in Cameroon, but while some companies exhibit a commitment to CSR, they lack execution specifics. Locally based firms are new to CSR and often associate it with philanthropy, whose credibility is given an uncertain rating (U). Furthermore, when mediating factors like corporate governance and corporate image are considered, CSR positively affects firm performance in SMEs. Most of these ratings are low credibility (C), so while the information they provide is valid, it should be handled cautiously.

3.3 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Audit Quality and Financial Reporting

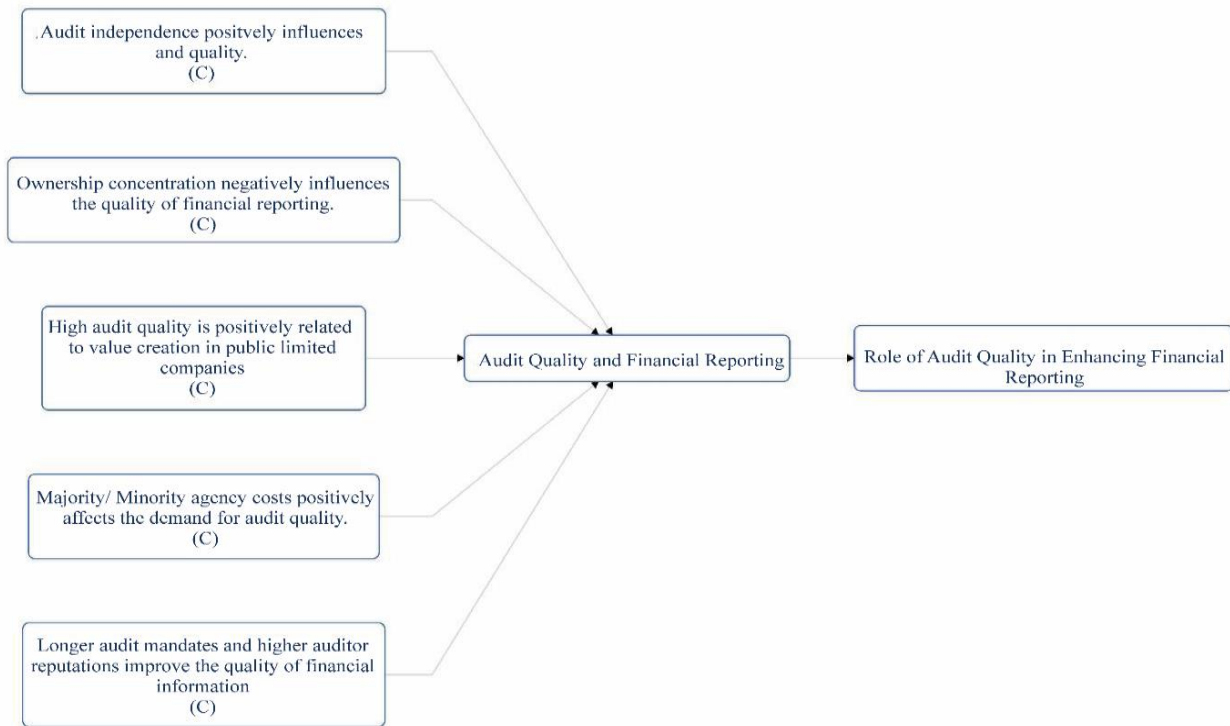


Figure 5. Role of Audit Quality in Enhancing Financial Reporting

The above figure shows the factors affecting audit quality and how it improves financial reporting. An independent auditor will enhance good audit conditions, while highly concentrated ownership impairs financial report quality. Besides that, high-quality audits create value in stock exchange-listed firms, and agency costs also increase demand for audits when majority-minority stakeholders incur them. In addition, an extended period of mandate and a better reputation for auditors can enhance financial information quality. These ratings have low credibility (C), so they should be taken cautiously, although they offer valuable insights.

3.4 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Governance Mechanisms and Financial Performance

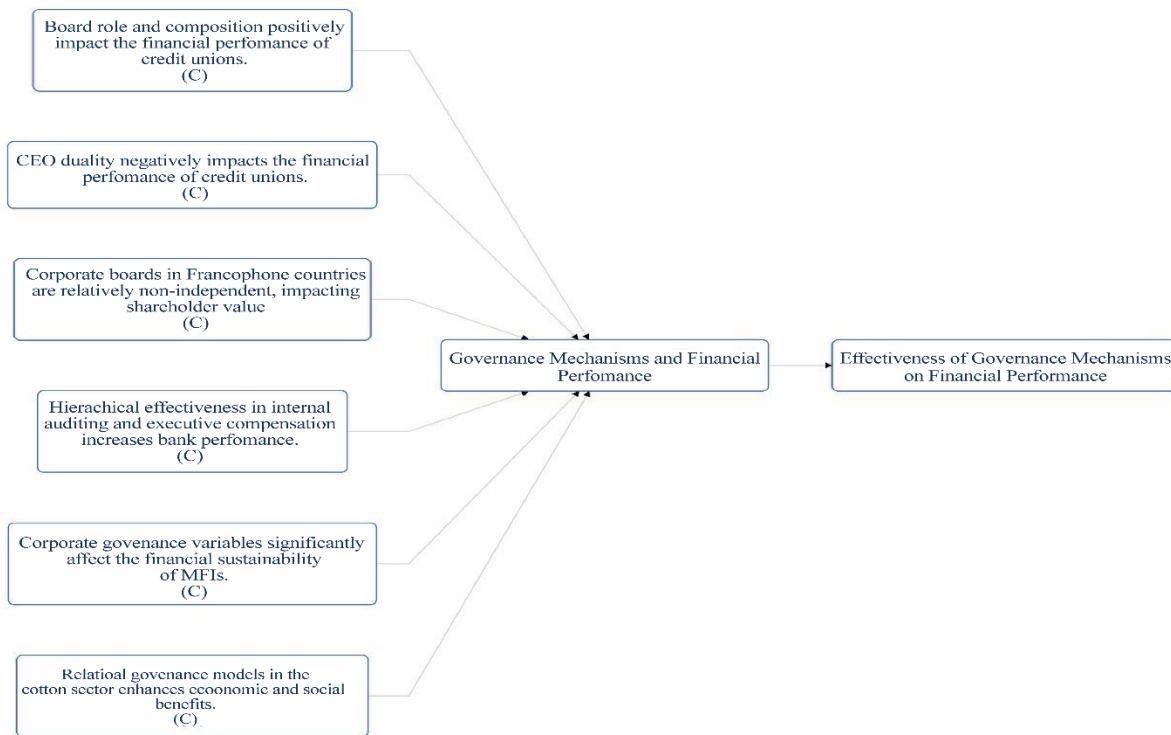


Figure 6. Governance Mechanism and Financial Performance

Figure 6 illustrates the crucial role of governance mechanisms on financial performance. It shows that having a well-structured and composed board boosts the financial health of credit unions, whereas combining the roles of CEO and board chair (CEO duality) is detrimental. In Francophone countries, corporate boards tend to lack independence, negatively affecting shareholder value. Effective internal auditing and fair executive compensation are linked to better bank performance, and governance variables are vital for the financial sustainability of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs). In the cotton sector, relational governance models promote economic and social benefits.

3.5 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Institutional Investors and Governance

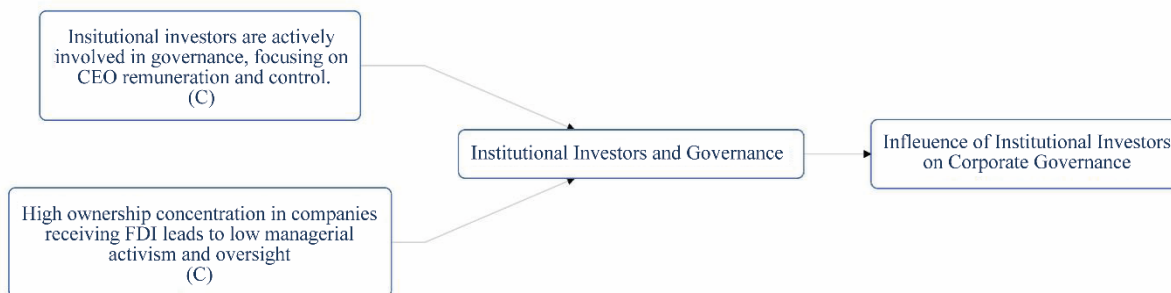


Figure 7. Institutional Investors and Governance

The findings in Figure 7 suggest that institutional investors significantly influence corporate governance, mainly by affecting CEO compensation and control mechanisms. However, in companies with high ownership concentration, especially those receiving foreign direct investment (FDI), there tends to be a decrease in managerial activism and oversight. Although these insights have a low credibility rating (C), they shed light on essential dynamics between institutional investors and corporate governance practices.



3.6 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Legal and Ethical Challenges

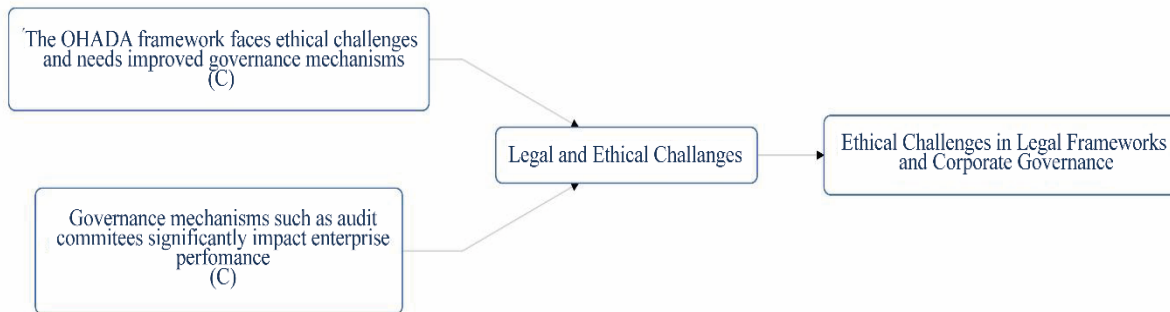


Figure 8. Legal and Ethical Challenges

The findings in Figure 8 show that while the OHADA framework is vital for keeping legal consistency across member states, it faces significant ethical challenges that need better governance mechanisms. Practical tools like audit committees are essential for improving enterprise performance. Although these insights have a low credibility rating (C), they highlight key areas where legal and corporate governance can be enhanced.

3.7 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Sector-Specific Governance Insights

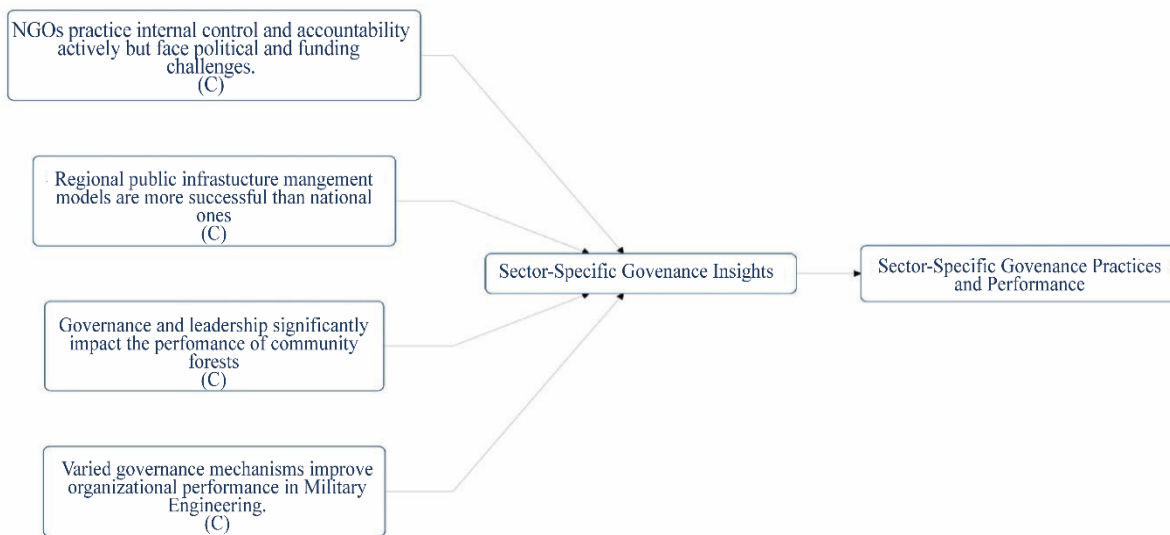


Figure 9. Sector-Specific Governance Insights

The results in Figure 9 above indicate that governance practices tailored to sectors can impact performance in various industries. For instance, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can uphold control and accountability despite financial hurdles. Localised public infrastructure management models often outperform ones that highlight the advantages of governance. In community forests, effective governance and strong leadership play a role in achieving success. Furthermore, a combination of governance mechanisms enhances performance in the military engineering sector. Although these insights are deemed (C), they offer practical advice for enhancing governance practices across different sectors.

### 3.8 Meta-Aggregative Flow Diagram: Governance Mechanisms and Financial Performance

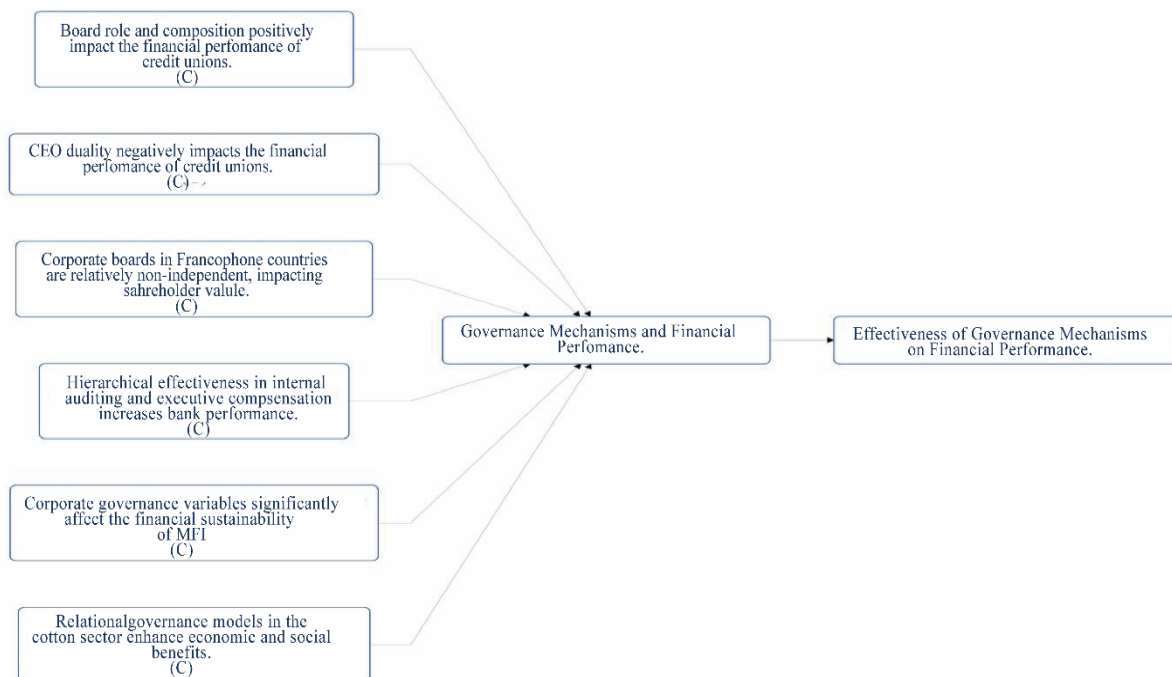


Figure 10. Governance Mechanisms and Financial Performance

The results in Figure 10 highlight that having a mix of people on a board and good governance practices can significantly boost how healthy organisations perform financially. They also show that having one person serve as CEO and board chair can harm credit unions. Moreover, when corporate boards in French-speaking countries lack independence, it can hurt shareholders' value. The study also points out the effects of internal auditing and fair executive pay systems on how well banks do and the importance of governance factors for microfinance institutions. Using governance models in industries like cotton brings economic benefits and social perks.

#### 4. Review Findings

The results of this scoping review are laid out in an organised and coherent manner, directly tackling the review goals and inquiries. The presentation encompasses a mix of summaries, tables and visuals to offer a snapshot of the current landscape of corporate governance research in Cameroon. The main aim of this scoping review was to chart the existing body of literature on governance in Cameroon, focusing on identifying themes, research methodologies used and areas where further investigation is needed. The review sought to shed light on how traditional governance structures align with practices and to propose suggestions for enhancing corporate governance policies and practices in Cameroon.

##### Predominant Research Themes and Methodological Approaches

Research Question 1: What are Cameroon's predominant themes and methodological approaches in corporate governance research?

Table 1. Summary of Key Themes and Methodological Approaches in Corporate Governance Research in Cameroon

Theme	Methodological Approach	Key Findings
Board Structure and Dynamics	Quantitative, Mixed Methods	Diverse and independent boards are more effective in overseeing management and strategic decision-making.
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Qualitative, Quantitative	Effective CSR practices positively impact corporate image and financial outcomes.
Audit Quality and Financial Reporting	Quantitative, Mixed Methods	High-quality audits are associated with improved financial reporting and organisational performance.
Governance Mechanisms and Accountability	Qualitative, Quantitative	Various governance mechanisms, such as risk management and transparency, enhance financial performance.
Institutional Investors	Qualitative, Mixed Methods	Institutional investors significantly impact CEO remuneration and decision-making processes.
Legal and Ethical Challenges	Qualitative	Ethical and legal challenges are commonly addressed within the OHADA framework and other regulatory environments.

4.1 Predominant Research Themes

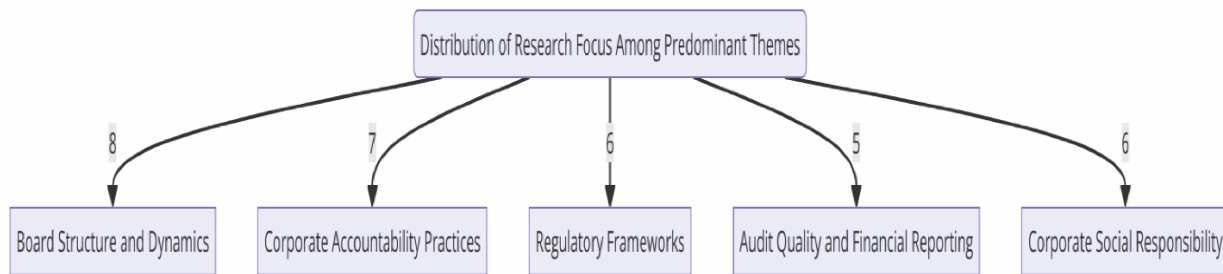


Figure 11. Distribution of research themes

This concept map (figure 11) illustrates the distribution of research focus across various predominant themes. The numbers above each theme indicate the count of studies focusing on that theme.

4.1.1 Board Structure and Dynamics

Studies highlight the importance of board composition, diversity, and the roles of executive and non-executive directors. Effective board governance is associated with improved decision-making and organisational performance (Boubakari & Feudjo, 2010; Chrysantus et al., 2023; Fossung & Verges, 2022). Key findings include the positive impact of diverse and independent boards on governance outcomes (Tchakoute Tchuigoua, 2014; Akame & Besong, 2019).

4.1.2 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR practices are shown to impact corporate reputation and financial performance positively. Research explores how companies integrate CSR into business strategies (Ateufack, 2021; Bimeme & Ongono, 2022; Fofu & Awolusi, 2021).

4.1.3 Audit Quality and Financial Reporting

High-quality audits are found to enhance financial transparency and organisational performance. Studies discuss the role of auditor independence and competence in ensuring accurate financial reporting (Fossung & Magang, 2019; Fossung & Verges, 2022; Arzizeh, 2023).

#### 4.1.4 Governance Mechanisms and Accountability Practices

Research emphasises the need for transparency and accountability in corporate governance. Central themes include corporate disclosure practices, ethical standards, and robust auditing processes (Karson, 2023; Ateufack, 2021; Sama-Lang & Zesung, 2016; Wamba et al., 2018). Accountability practices are linked to stakeholder trust and organisational integrity (Asongu & Nwachukwu, 2016; Christie, 2024).

#### 4.1.5 Institutional Investors and Regulatory Frameworks

The influence of regulatory frameworks, particularly the OHADA laws, on corporate governance practices is a significant area of focus. Studies examine how these regulations are implemented and enforced within the Cameroonian context (Fossung et al., 2020; Ateufack, 2021; Sama-lang & Zesung, 2016). The effectiveness of regulatory bodies in promoting good governance is a recurrent theme.

The concept map highlights five key areas: Board Structure and Dynamics (8 studies), Corporate Accountability Practices (7 studies), Regulatory Frameworks (6 studies), Audit Quality and Financial Reporting (5 studies), and Corporate Social Responsibility (6 studies).

#### 4.2 Methodological Approaches

The studies employed a variety of methodological approaches, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Qualitative methods, such as case studies and interviews, were prevalent, allowing for in-depth exploration of governance issues. Quantitative methods, including statistical analysis and econometric modelling, were used to examine relationships between corporate governance variables and firm performance. The mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive understanding by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

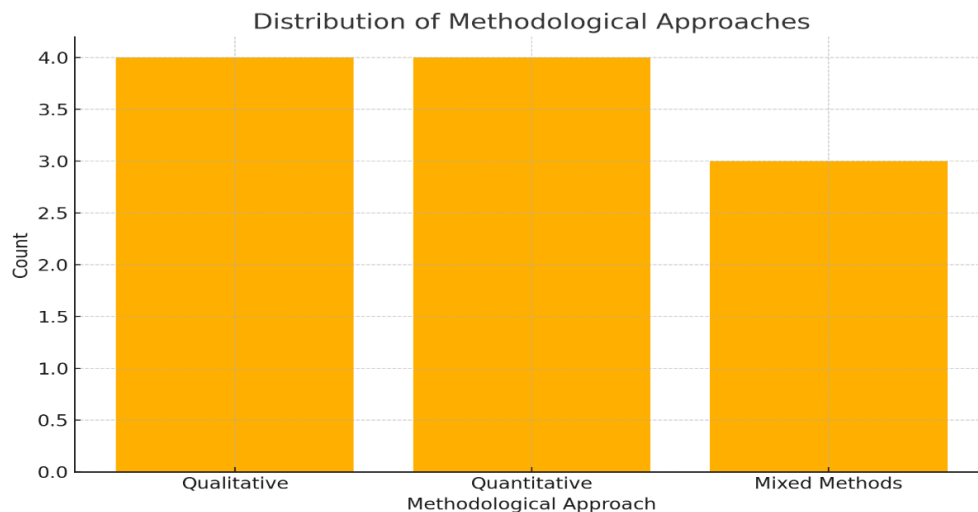


Figure 12. Distribution of Methodological Approaches

As shown in Figure 12, the distribution of methodological approaches across the reviewed studies indicates an equal preference for qualitative and quantitative methods, each with a count of 4, while mixed methods are slightly less common, with a count of 3.

##### 4.2.1 Qualitative Approaches

Most studies employ qualitative methods, such as case studies and interviews, to gather in-depth insights into corporate governance practices (Feudjo & Nfouapon, 2021; Ngnintsa & Wamba, 2022; Elle, 2022; Meto'o & Wamba, 2023). Thematic analysis is commonly used to identify key themes and patterns (Tchatchoua, Ndonmbou & Nguetack, 2018; Ngoungo, 2012)

##### 4.2.2 Quantitative Approaches

Some studies use surveys and statistical analysis to quantify the impact of governance practices on organisational outcomes (Areneke, 2015; Manka et al., 2021; Chrysantus et al., 2023; Nde & Mbongo, 2017; Wamba & Ketcha, 2018). There is limited but significant use of quantitative methods in the literature (Mukete & Nkwain, 2017).

4.2.3 Mixed Methods

A few studies employ mixed-method approaches, combining qualitative and quantitative data to understand governance issues comprehensively (Mat Yasin et al., 2016; Fonkam & Ngu, 2018).

4.3 Identified Gaps in Literature

Research Question 2: What gaps exist in the literature on corporate governance in Cameroon, and how do these areas align with traditional governance structures?

Table 2. Identified Research Gaps and Recommendations for Future Research

Research Gap	Description	Recommendations for Future Research
Integration of Traditional Governance Models	Limited research on integrating traditional governance practices with modern frameworks.	Conduct studies exploring synergies between traditional and modern governance practices.
Focus on SMEs and Rural Businesses	Lack of studies addressing governance challenges faced by SMEs and rural businesses.	Increase research efforts on SMEs and rural business governance to understand their unique needs.
Longitudinal Studies	Few studies track the evolution of corporate governance practices over time.	Undertake longitudinal research to assess long-term impacts of governance reforms.
Sector-Specific Governance Studies	Insufficient research on specific sectors such as technology, healthcare, and education.	Develop sector-specific studies to address unique governance issues in various industries.
Impact of Regulatory Changes	Limited examination of the direct impact of specific regulatory changes on governance.	Investigate the effects of recent regulatory changes on corporate governance practices.

Significant gaps were identified, including integrating traditional governance models with modern practices, the governance challenges faced by SMEs and rural businesses, the lack of longitudinal studies, and the need for sector-specific research. Addressing these gaps through future research is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of corporate governance in Cameroon.

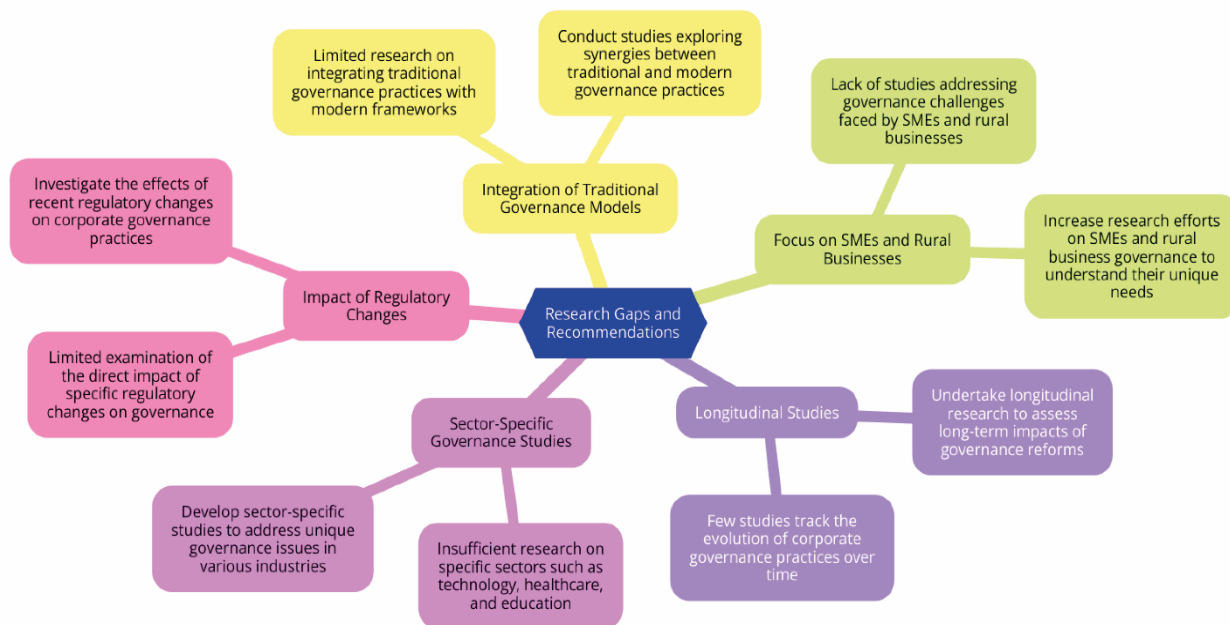


Figure 13. Research Gaps and Recommendation

Figure 13 presents a mind map detailing the research gaps and recommendations identified in the review. The map categorises these gaps into several areas, including the impact of regulatory changes on corporate governance practices, the need for sector-specific governance studies, the integration of traditional governance models with modern frameworks, a focus on SMEs and rural businesses, and the necessity of longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impacts of governance reforms.

#### 4.3.1 Integration of Traditional and Modern Practices

Few studies explore how traditional governance models, characterised by communal and hierarchical structures, can be integrated with modern corporate governance frameworks. This area remains underexplored and presents future research opportunities (Fonchingong & Asongu, 2016; Mukete & Nkwain, 2017).

#### 4.3.2 Longitudinal Studies

There is a need for longitudinal research to understand the long-term impacts of corporate governance reforms and practices. Most existing studies are cross-sectional and do not capture the dynamic nature of governance changes over time (Chrysantus et al., 2023; Agbor & Nkafu, 2017; Nde & Mbongo, 2017).

#### 4.3.3 Sector-Specific Research

There is a lack of research focusing on specific sectors such as technology, healthcare, and education. Sector-specific studies are necessary to address different industries' unique challenges and opportunities (Ndongko & Tantoh, 2012; Kamdem & Fokam, 2019; Fonkam & Ngu, 2018).

#### 4.3.4 Alignment with Traditional Structures

Some studies highlight the influence of traditional institutions and leadership on corporate governance, but this area remains underexplored. Integrating traditional practices with contemporary governance models can provide a holistic approach to governance in Cameroon (Fonchingong & Asongu, 2016; Mukete & Nkwain, 2017).

### 4.4 Implications for Practice

Research Question 3: What implications do the findings have for improving corporate governance practices and policies in Cameroon?

#### 4.4.1 Enhancing Board Diversity and Independence

Companies should prioritise the inclusion of diverse and independent directors on their boards to enhance decision-making and governance effectiveness. Diverse boards are associated with better governance outcomes and increased stakeholder trust (Boubakari & Feudjo, 2010; Tchakoute Tchuigoua, 2014; Akame & Besong, 2019).

#### 4.4.2 Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Integrating CSR into core business strategies can improve corporate image and financial performance. Companies should adopt practices that align with stakeholder expectations and ethical standards (Ateufack, 2021; Fofuh & Awolusi, 2021; Ngum & Fon, 2016; Nkohkwo & Nguiffo, 2019).

#### 4.4.3 Strengthening Audit Quality

Ensuring auditor independence and competence is crucial for enhancing financial transparency and accountability. Companies should implement robust auditing practices to improve financial reporting (Fossung & Verges, 2022; Mbilla & Ngoh, 2020).

#### 4.4.4 Developing Sector-Specific Governance Guidelines

Tailoring governance frameworks to address the unique challenges of different sectors can enhance overall governance quality. Sector-specific guidelines can provide targeted solutions for governance issues in various industries (Ndongko & Tantoh, 2012; Kamdem & Fokam, 2019; Fonkam & Ngu, 2018).

### 4.5 Implications for Future Research

#### 4.5.1 Expanding to Rural Settings

Future studies should broaden their focus to include rural areas to gain a comprehensive understanding of corporate governance across all regions in Cameroon (Areneke et al., 2019; Sama-Lang & Zesung, 2016).

#### 4.5.2 Sector-Specific Studies

More research on governance practices in various sectors is needed to address their unique challenges and opportunities. Sector-specific studies can provide insights into industry-specific governance issues (Ndongko & Tantoh, 2012; Kamdem & Fokam, 2019; Fonkam & Ngu, 2018).

#### 4.5.3 Integration of Traditional and Modern Practices

Further research should explore how traditional governance models can be effectively integrated with modern practices. Comparative studies can provide insights into the benefits and challenges of hybrid governance models (Fonchingong & Asongu, 2016; Mukete & Nkwain, 2017).

#### 4.5.4 Longitudinal Research

Conducting longitudinal studies will help track the evolution of corporate governance practices over time and assess the long-term impacts of governance reforms (Chrysantus et al., 2023; Agbor & Nkafu, 2017; Nde & Mbongo, 2017).

#### 4.5.5 Implications for Improving Corporate Governance Practices and Policies

The findings highlight several implications for improving corporate governance in Cameroon. Recommendations include enhancing board diversity, promoting CSR practices, strengthening audit quality, incorporating traditional governance structures, and conducting sector-specific and longitudinal studies. These measures are essential for advancing governance practices and contributing to economic development and stability in Cameroon.

### 5. Discussion

This scoping review aimed to map the existing literature on corporate governance in Cameroon, focusing on identifying predominant themes, methodological approaches, and gaps in research. This section discusses the findings in detail, contextualises them within the broader literature, and highlights the implications for practice and future research.

#### 5.1 Predominant Themes and Methodological Approaches

##### 5.1.1 Board Structure and Dynamics

The review highlights that a significant portion of the literature focuses on board structure and dynamics, emphasising the roles of board composition, diversity, and the balance of power between executive and non-executive directors. This focus aligns with global trends in corporate governance research, where board composition is a critical determinant of governance quality and organisational performance (Tchakoute Tchuigoua, 2014; Akame & Besong, 2019). In Cameroon, diverse and independent boards are associated with improved decision-making and enhanced accountability, echoing findings from other emerging economies.

##### 5.1.2 Corporate Accountability Practices

Corporate accountability emerged as another central theme, with studies highlighting the importance of transparency, ethical practices, and robust auditing processes (Ramecesse, 2021; Sama-Lang & Zesung, 2016). This focus is particularly relevant in the Cameroonian context, where regulatory frameworks such as the OHADA laws play a crucial role in shaping corporate governance practices. Ensuring accountability through stringent audit practices and transparent reporting can foster stakeholder trust and improve corporate performance.

##### 5.1.3 Regulatory Frameworks

The impact of regulatory frameworks, particularly the OHADA regulations, is a recurring theme in the literature (Ndongko & Tantoh, 2012; Nkakleu & Ateufack, 2021). These studies underscore the importance of effective regulatory enforcement in promoting good governance practices. However, the variability in the implementation and effectiveness of these regulations across different regions of Cameroon highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of how regulatory frameworks interact with local contexts.

##### 5.1.4 Audit Quality and Financial Reporting

High-quality audits are shown to enhance financial transparency and corporate performance, emphasising the need for auditor independence and competence (Fossung & Verges, 2022; Mbilla & Ngoh, 2020). The focus on audit quality reflects a global emphasis on the role of auditing in mitigating financial misreporting and ensuring the accuracy of financial disclosures. In Cameroon, strengthening audit practices can significantly improve overall governance quality.

### 5.1.5 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The positive impact of CSR on corporate reputation and financial performance is well-documented in the literature (Ateufack, 2021). CSR initiatives enhance corporate image and align business practices with societal expectations, contributing to sustainable development. This finding underscores the importance of integrating CSR into core business strategies to achieve long-term corporate success.

## 5.2 Gaps in the Literature

### 5.2.1 Geographic Focus

The concentration of studies in urban areas like Douala and Yaounde highlights a significant geographic bias in the existing literature. This urban-centric focus leaves rural governance practices underexplored despite the unique challenges and opportunities they present (Areneke et al., 2019). Future research should address this gap by including diverse geographic settings to provide a comprehensive understanding of corporate governance across Cameroon.

### 5.2.2 Sector-Specific Research

The lack of sector-specific studies, particularly in technology, healthcare, and education, indicates a need for more targeted research (Ndongko & Tantoh, 2012; Kamdem & Fokam, 2019). Different sectors face unique governance challenges and opportunities, and sector-specific guidelines can provide tailored solutions to enhance governance practices.

### 5.2.3 Integration of Traditional and Modern Practices

Few studies explore integrating traditional governance models with modern corporate governance frameworks. Given the strong influence of communal and hierarchical structures in Cameroonian society, understanding how these traditional practices complement modern governance models is crucial (Fonchingong & Asongu, 2016; Mukete & Nkwain, 2017).

### 5.2.4 Longitudinal Studies

Most existing studies are cross-sectional, lacking the temporal depth to capture the dynamic nature of governance changes over time. Longitudinal research is needed to understand the long-term impacts of corporate governance reforms and practices (Chrysantus et al., 2023; Agbor & Nkafu, 2017).

## 5.3 Implications for Practice and Future Research

### 5.3.1 Enhancing Board Diversity and Independence

The findings suggest that companies should prioritise board diversity and independence to improve governance outcomes. Diverse boards bring various perspectives and experiences, enhancing decision-making and accountability (Boubakari & Feudjo, 2010; Tchakoute Tchuigoua, 2014).

### 5.3.2 Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Integrating CSR into business strategies can enhance corporate reputation and financial performance. Companies should adopt CSR practices that align with stakeholder expectations and ethical standards to achieve sustainable success (Ramecesse & Ateufack, 2021; Ngum & Fon, 2016).

### 5.3.3 Strengthening Audit Quality

Ensuring the independence and competence of auditors is crucial for financial transparency. Implementing robust auditing practices can improve the accuracy of financial reporting and enhance overall governance quality (Fossung & Verges, 2022; Mbilla & Ngoh, 2020).

### 5.3.4 Developing Sector-Specific Governance Guidelines

Tailoring governance frameworks to address the unique challenges of different sectors can enhance governance quality. Sector-specific research can provide insights into industry-specific governance issues, leading to more effective governance practices (Ndongko & Tantoh, 2012; Kamdem & Fokam, 2019).

### 5.3.5 Expanding Research to Rural Settings

Future studies should include rural areas to understand corporate governance across Cameroon comprehensively. This broader geographic focus can provide valuable insights into different regions' diverse governance practices and challenges (Areneke et al., 2019; Wabulembo & Eno, 2020).



### 5.3.6 Exploring the Integration of Traditional and Modern Practices

Further research should explore how traditional governance models can be effectively integrated with modern practices. Comparative studies can provide insights into the benefits and challenges of hybrid governance models, enhancing the understanding of governance in the Cameroonian context (Fonchingong & Asongu, 2016; Mukete & Nkwain, 2017).

### 5.3.7 Conducting Longitudinal Research

Longitudinal studies are needed to track the evolution of corporate governance practices over time and assess the long-term impacts of governance reforms. This approach can provide a deeper understanding of how governance practices develop and change in response to regulatory and market dynamics (Chrysantus et al., 2023; Agbor & Nkafu, 2017).

## 6. Conclusion

This scoping review comprehensively maps the landscape of corporate governance research in Cameroon, providing a detailed analysis of the predominant themes, methodological approaches, and gaps in the literature. The review highlights the critical importance of corporate governance in enhancing business integrity, efficiency, and overall organisational performance within the unique socio-economic context of Cameroon.

The findings strongly focus on board structure and dynamics, corporate accountability practices, regulatory frameworks, audit quality, and corporate social responsibility (CSR). These themes are central to understanding how corporate governance is conceptualised and practised in Cameroon. The studies underscore the positive impact of diverse and independent boards, the necessity of transparency and ethical standards, and the significant role of regulatory frameworks like OHADA in shaping governance practices.

Methodologically, the literature employs qualitative and quantitative approaches, favouring qualitative case studies and thematic analysis. While qualitative methods provide rich, nuanced insights, the limited use of quantitative methods indicates a need for more robust statistical analyses to complement these findings.

Several gaps in the literature were identified, including a geographic bias towards urban centres and a lack of research in rural areas. Additionally, sector-specific studies are scarce, particularly in critical areas such as technology, healthcare, and education. The integration of traditional governance models with modern corporate practices remains underexplored, and the absence of longitudinal studies highlights the need for research that captures the dynamic nature of governance changes over time.

These findings have significant implications for both practice and future research. Enhancing board diversity and independence, promoting CSR, strengthening audit quality, and developing sector-specific governance guidelines are crucial for improving corporate governance practices in Cameroon. Future research should expand to rural settings, explore sector-specific governance issues, investigate the integration of traditional and modern practices, and conduct longitudinal studies to track the evolution of governance practices over time.

In conclusion, this scoping review provides a foundational understanding of corporate governance in Cameroon, identifying critical areas for improvement and future research. Cameroon can enhance its corporate governance framework by addressing the identified gaps and implementing the suggested practical improvements, contributing to sustainable economic growth and development. This review offers valuable insights for academics, policymakers, and corporate leaders, fostering a deeper understanding of governance practices in emerging economies.

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