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An Assessment of the Accounting Techniques on Business Performance in Selected Commercial Banks in Kabale Municipality, Uganda

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Abstract: *The study focused on accounting techniques for business performance of commercial banks in Kabale Municipality. The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between accounting techniques and the performance of commercial banks in Kabale Municipality. The specific objective of the study was; To examine the accounting techniques employed by selected commercial banks in Kabale Municipality, The study adopted a cross-sectional design which was quantitative and descriptive in nature. The study sample comprised 118 respondents selected by both simple random sampling and purposive sampling. The data were tested for reliability and analysed using SPSS and results were presented based on the study objectives. Study findings revealed that the use of accounting techniques had a significant effect on the financial performance of selected commercial banks in Kabale municipality (p=.031<0.05). The study concluded that accounting techniques had a significant effect on business performance in banks. Therefore, the researcher recommended that banks should have operational accounting techniques in place which could shape the choice of financing hence resulting in better financial performance.*

Keywords: *Accounting techniques, Performance, Kabale Municipality*

1. INTRODUCTION

The performance of commercial banks in Kabale Municipality has continuously deteriorated over the years as evidenced in the Bank of Uganda annual report (2020) which indicates a decline in the use of accounting techniques. For instance, banks like the former Crane Bank Uganda Limited which was recently closed and sold to DFCU bank, and National Bank of Commerce which was also closed by Bank of Uganda among other poor performing Banks within Kabale Municipality has greatly been affected by continued poor financial performance. The use of accounting techniques by Centenary Bank Kabale, Stanbic Bank Kabale, And Bank of Baroda Kabale, has a strong relationship with financial performance. If these are not correctly analyzed, then poor financial performance is bound to continue rising in these institutions. Therefore, the study investigated the above problem basing itself on the research objectives stated below hereafter.

Performance of commercial banks in a broader sense refers to the degree to which financial objectives are being or has been accomplished It is the process of measuring the results of a firm's policies and operations in monetary terms. It is used to measure a firm's overall financial health over a given period of time and can also be used to compare similar firms across the same industry or to compare industries or sectors in aggregation. Accounting techniques have a direct impact on supervisory work, and on central banks' oversight, given that banks' accounting figures form the basis for calculating financial and regulatory ratios.

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between accounting techniques and the performance of commercial banks in Kabale Municipality

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Accounting Techniques and Performance of Commercial banks

Standard Costing**:** Standard costing is a method of recording accounting transactions at their expected costs and then analyzing any differences between the standard costs and actual costs, Northcote (2007). While this technique is certainly not new, the speed at which this information can be analyzed has definitely changed. Using modern accounting information systems, small-business owners are able to examine variances between actual and standard costs in real-time as soon as materials are purchased and products are manufactured, Northcote (2007). In the past, these techniques would require calculations by an accountant. Now, some of this functionality is built into popular software packages. While this is certainly more convenient, small-business owners should be careful. Interpretation of standard costing variances still requires an understanding of how the process

Balanced Scorecards**:** The balanced scorecard is the accounting technique that combines financial and non-financial measures to give a more holistic snapshot of the firm or individual performance, Kaplan and Norton (1992). In the history of management accounting, the balanced scorecard is fairly new, with the technique only being started in the 1990s, Northcote (2007). While the use of the balanced scorecard technique is popular it does have limitations. Even though compensation is often tied to balanced scorecard results, this may have negative consequences. Bonus amounts are powerful motivators; if small-business owners are not absolutely positive that the metrics being used in the balanced scorecard are correct, they should be cautious in using the scorecard to award compensation.

Real-time Inventory Management: The advent of radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology in the last decade has drastically changed inventory management, Holthausen and Larcker (1999). In the past, companies often chose between periodic and perpetual inventory systems. Periodic systems record purchases of inventory in bulk and the cost of goods sold is determined at the end of the month. Perpetual systems update the company's cost of goods sold with every inventory transaction. By attaching RFID tags to products, businesses are able to track each individual inventory item throughout the company. Furthermore, as the company scans the RFID tags when

Process Management: According to Mbabazi and Agaba (2021), Modern management accounting techniques have made great changes in the performance of commercial banks. Management by exception, the process of only focusing management attention on processes when there is reason to believe that the process is not working correctly, can be applied much more efficiently using modern quality tracking techniques. For example, in the past a company assessing the quality of finished goods might measure every 100th unit produced to ensure that the product met specifications. Now machinery can measure any unit that falls outside of specifications and immediately remove the item from the assembly line, Goddard (2005).

Ratio Analysis: Ratio analysis is a commonly used tool for financial statement analysis. A ratio is a mathematical relationship between one numbers to another number. Ratio is used as an index for evaluating the financial performance of the business concern. An accounting ratio shows the mathematical relationship between two figures, which have meaningful relation with each other. Ratio can be classified into various types. Classification from the point of view of financial management is as follows: Liquidity Ratio, Activity Ratio, Solvency Ratio and Profitability Ratio. But For this study the following ratios will be considered, four key liquidity ratios, four profitability ratios, three leverage ratios and one asset quality ratio.

Okoye and Akenbor (2014) opined that it is expedient for Uganda to adopt a global accounting standard because many Ugandan companies have securities of foreign companies. A number of researchers have the benefit of the use of various Accounting techniques. According Okpala (2012) in his study perceived that Accounting Standards will promote foreign direct investment (FDI) and economic growth in Uganda. Taiwo and Adejare (2014) claimed that IFRS will improve financial performance, and quality of accounting records the. It will r business efficiency, aid resource allocation and performance planning in companies.

Mbabazi and Agaba (2021) argued that adopting Accounting standards alone will not make comparing financial statement so easy. This is in line with the adoption of International accounting standards in Germany. In his study, Tanko (2012) revealed empirical studies that showed the adoption of IFRS do not necessarily result in better accounting quality.

Herbert and Tsegba (2013) studied the economic consequence of accounting standards in collaboration with IFRS adoption in Uganda. They found that the major setback towards the implementation of accounting standards in Uganda is centered on limited knowledge of IFRS in accounting and auditing curriculum. They added that preparers of financial reports lack sufficient experience and understanding with the use of accounting standards. It was posited that before Ugandans adoption of accounting standards, therefore should have been an efficient dialogue with renowned stakeholders so as to understand the implication of transition.

Financial Performance

Financial performance looks at the results of a firm's policies and operations in monetary terms. These results are reflected in the firm's return on investment, return on assets, value added (Hillman & Keim, 2001). It’s an approximation for financial success (Birlay and Westheed, 2001). It’s also the rate at which an enterprise is satisfied with profits or the way they rank their performance in comparison to main competitors (Brooks & Wright, 1999). Waddock and Graves (1997) and Cochran and Wood (1984) state that accounting measures of Return on equity, Return on assets and Return on investment are used to measure financial performance of an organization.

ROA (Return on Assets) shows how profitable a company’s assets are in generating revenue. It is given by the ratio between net income and total assets. This ratio tells us what the company can do, with what it's got that is how many dollars/euros of earnings they derive from each dollar/euro of assets they control. It is a useful number for comparing competing companies in the same industry. The number will vary widely across different industries. Return on assets is the capital intensity of a company, which will depend on the industrial sector. Companies that require large initial investments will generally have lower returns on assets.

ROCE (Return on Capital Employed) is used in finance as a measure of the returns that a company is making from capital employed. It is commonly used as a measure for comparing the performance of businesses and for assessing whether a business generates enough returns to pay for its cost of capital. It is given by the ratio between the pre-tax operative profit and the capital employed (Preston & Bannon, 2007).

Zhiwu and Knez (2006) agree that, primary the business activity of commercial banks is lending and therefore the loan portfolio represents one of the largest assets and a predominate source of revenue. It is also a great source of risk to a bank's soundness. Whether due to lax credit standards, poor portfolio risk management, or weaknesses in the economy, loan portfolio problems have historically been the major cause of bank losses and failures**.** Preston and Bannon (1997) add that while annual audits of loan portfolios may address these risks, experience has revealed that continuous monitoring of the portfolio is the preferred approach. Identifying control breaches, anomalies and high risk activities early and employing a firm remediation strategy often prevents and certainly minimizes the impact of any potential impairment of the portfolio.

The ultimate goal of a business organization is higher financial performance or maximization of wealth for stake holders (Joseph and Dai, 2009). Nonetheless, attaining the organization’s goals depends upon the extent to which its organizational performance is reached (Katou and Budhwar, 2007). Organizational performance is generally indicated by effectiveness, efficiency, satisfaction of employees and customers, innovation, quality of products or services, and ability to maintain a unique human pool. The organizational performance variables of the present study included features such as product quality, customer satisfaction, new product development, ability to attract employees, ability to retain employees, and relationship between management and employees.

According to Orikyiriza and Agaba (2022), organizational performance means the transformation of inputs into outputs for achieving certain outcomes. With regard to its content, performance informs about the relation between minimal and effective cost (economy), between effective cost and realized output (efficiency) and between output and achieved outcome (effectiveness). Sales performance can be explained as all the activities or investment carried out in the firm in the given period of time. It can be measured by total amount of revenue collected for the goods sold.

Growth revenue is defined as total amount of money collected by the company for the goods they sold in a specific time and this amount is calculated before any expenses are subtracted. Effectiveness of the organization depends on the three basics performance determinants which include; efficiency and process reliability; human resource and relations and innovation and adaptation to environment (Joseph and Dai, 2009). Efficiency is defined as a term practiced by organization or firm to use people and resources to carry out important operations in a way which minimizes the costs. When the resources are used in a proper way as compared to the competitors the cost of operation will decrease and the profit margin will increase. Efficiency is important when the competitive strategy of the firm offers products and services at lower rates than the competitors. Human resource relation is defined as trust, organizational commitment, collective identification and cooperation among the employees (Joseph and Dai, 2009).

Most organizations view their performance in terms of effectiveness in achieving their mission, purpose or goals. Most public organizations, for example, would tend to link the larger notion of organizational performance to the results of their particular programs to improve the lives of a target group (Katou and Budwar, 2007). At the same time, a majority of organizations also see their performance in terms of their efficiency in deploying resources. This relates to the optimal use of resources to obtain the results desired. Finally, in order for an organization to remain viable over time, it must be both financially viable and relevant to its stakeholders and their changing needs.

In the Organizational performance framework, these four aspects of performance are the key dimensions to organizational performance. Organizations exist within certain external contexts or environments that facilitate or impede their performance. Key factors in the policy or regulatory environment, and in the economic, political, socio-cultural, environmental and technological contexts, affect how the organization does its work, or the work it does (Kaplan and Norton, 1993). Internally, performance is driven by the organization's motivation to perform, which refers to the organizational culture, history, mission, values and incentive systems. These factors affect the quality of work, the nature of how the organization competes, and the degree of involvement of internal stakeholders in decision-making processes.

Performance is driven, in part, by organizational capacity, which we now understand as existing in seven basic areas: strategic leadership, human resources, financial resources, infrastructure, programming and process management, and inter-institutional linkages (Usha, 2009). Each of these seven capacity areas may be described in sub-components, as for example in the organization's strategic leadership capacity which is understood as its structure, governance, leadership, strategic plans and niche management. Human resources, financial resources and infrastructure are seen as resources as well as the management of these resources (Katou and Budwar, 2007). Organizations also have capacities that result from the relations, partnerships and alliances they have established with other organizations referred to as inter-institutional linkages. Kaplan and Norton (1992) explains balanced scorecard methodology as a comprehensive approach that analyzes an organization's overall performance in four ways, based on the idea that assessing performance through financial returns only provides information about how well the organization did prior to the assessment, so that future performance can be predicted and proper actions taken to create the desired future (Orikyiriza and Agaba, 2022)

3. METHODS

According to Agaba and Turyasingura (2022), a research design is a given framework for the collection and analysis of data. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design which involved collecting data at a particular point in time that is useful in obtaining facts and perceptions of respondents. A cross sectional survey is also useful in making statistical explanations and inferences about the key variables of the study.

The population of the study comprised of employees and clients of selected commercial banks in Kabale Municipality that's to say; Stanbic Bank Kabale, employees and clients of Centenary Bank Kabale Branch, and employees/clients of Bank of Baroda Kabale all totaling up to 180 respondents. A sample is a proportion of the population whose results can be generalized to the entire population as defined by Amin(2005).The study used asamplesizeof123 from a population of 180 which was derived using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) statistical table.

Table showing Sample Size Determination

Respondent Category	Total Population	Sample	Sampling Technique
Branch managers	06	06	Purposive sampling
Assist. Managers	08	08	Purposive sampling
Supervisors	15	14	Simple random sampling
Tellers	30	22	Simple random sampling
Credit administrators	08	08	Purposive sampling
Loans officers	30	22	Simple random sampling
Clients	83	43	Simple random sampling
Total	180	**123**	

Source: Primary data, 2020

Validity

To establish validity, the instrument was given to two experts to evaluate the relevance, language clarity and comprehensiveness of the study variable and objectives. Each item in the instrument was analyzed by objective and rated each item on the scale of relevant (4), quite relevant (3), somewhat relevant (2), and not relevant (1). Validity was determined using the Content Validity Index (C.V.I) formula

C.V.I = Total Number of Questions rated relevant by Judges
Total Num~~ber of items in Questionnaire~~
= 33 /38
= 0.85*100

This CVI of 0.85 was considered high enough because Amin (2005) recommends for a CVI for 0.7 and above in survey studies.

Reliability

To ensure reliability In this case the researcher pilot tested the instrument once but on a larger sample. Cronbach's alpha was then used to measure the internal consistency on the pilot tested respondents. This is often the case with an instrument that measures the attitudes of respondents. A computer program, SPSS was used to calculate Cronbach's alpha for scores which fall along a continuum of the Likert scale. The advantage with this method was that the researcher went to the field once and the questions were entered and run using the using SPSS. The Results of the Reliability test is presented in Table below

Table showing Reliability Results

Variable	**No. of questions**	**Alpha**
Accounting Techniques	08	0.875
Accountability	08	0.750

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Transparency	08	0.875
Performance	09	0.899
Total	**33**	**0.850**

Source: Primary data

Data Analysis

The data collected was sorted and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)for analysis. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyze demographic data, establish extent to which accounting techniques have improved performance of commercial banks in Kabale Municipality and the results were analyzed using regression. The findings were presented in tables, pie charts and graphs. Pearson correlation was used to establish the relationship between accounting techniques and performance of commercial banks in Kabale Municipality

4. RESULTS

Response rate

Summary of Study Response Rate

Category of Respondents	Targeted respondents	No. actually involved	Response rate
Branch managers	06	06	100%
Assist. Managers	08	07	87.5%
Supervisors	14	14	100%
Tellers	22	20	90.9%
Credit administrators	08	08	100%
Loans officers	22	22	100%
Clients	43	41	95.4%
Total	**123**	**118**	**96.3%**

Source: Primary data, 2020

As presented in the table above, a total number of 123 respondents were expected to participate in the study, but 118 respondents actually participated to make a response rate of 96.3%. Others did not participate in interviews sighting reasons for being busy some were reported out of their duties. This response rate is above the 60-70% response rate as recommended by the Guttmacher Institute, (2006) for a study to be considered as one with satisfactory results.

Sample Characteristics of the respondents and commercial banks

This section presents the characteristics respondents such as number of years worked, level of education attained, and management level. The results were presented in table form with generated respective frequencies.

4.1 Highest Qualification Attained by the respondents

The results showing the percentage proportion of respondents in relation to the highest qualification attained are presented in table below.

Table showing the results on the education level of the respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Diploma	34	28.8	
Degree	50	42.4	
Postgraduate	15	12.7	100.0
Masters	07	5.9	
Others	12	10.1	
Total	**118**	**100.0**	

Source: Primary Data, 2020

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Results from table 4 show that the majority of respondents had bachelors' degrees with 42.4%, followed by diploma with 28.8% then postgraduate with 12.7%. lastly others category with 10.1%. the least percentage of respondents was Masters category with 5.9%. This means that majority of the respondents have the right skills and knowledge to respond to the study variables.

4.2.2 The length of service in the commercial banks by the respondents

Table Showing Respondents' numberof years worked with the organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 1 Year	37	31.4	31.4	31.4
	2-3 Years	35	29.7	29.7	61.0
	4-5 Years	34	28.8	28.8	89.8
	6-10 Years	9	7.6	7.6	97.5
	Above 10 Years	3	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	**118**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Primary data 2020

From table above, it is clearly indicated that majority of the respondents had served their banks for a period less than a year (31.4% of respondents), and 29.7% for 2-3 years respectively. Other respondents 28.8% had served their organizations for about 4-5years. 7.6% of respondents had worked with their organizations for about 6-10 years while the rest minority of the respondents 2.5% had worked with their organizations for over 10 years.

4.2.3 Management Level

Table showing Level of Management in an Organization

		Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Top	14	11.9	11.9	11.9
	Middle	30	25.4	25.4	37.3
	Other	74	62.7	62.7	100.0
	Total	**118**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Primary data, 2020

The minority of respondents (11.9%) had the top positions in as far as management of their organizations was concerned. 25.4% of the respondents were in middle positions of management. The rest majority were serving in other positions in their respective organizations. Majority of the respondents were serving in other different field

Table showing Descriptive statistics on accounting techniques used by Selected commercial banks in Kabale Municipality (N=118)

Statements	**SD F (%)**	**D F (%)**	**N F (%)**	**A F (%)**	**SA F (%)**	**M**	**Std. Dev**
The management of my bank has been employing standard costing in executing bank duties	45 (38.1%)	34 (28.8%)	25 (21.2%)	6 (5.1%)	8 (6.8%)	2.14	1.183
My bank uses balanced score cards to evaluate	30 (25.4%)	37 (31.4%)	25 (21.2%)	20 (16.9%)	6 (5.1%)	2.45	1.188

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My bank uses real-time inventory tool to analyse whether it has performed poorly or well in financial matters	50 (42.4%)	21 (17.8%)	20 (16.9%)	11 (9.3%)	16 (13.6%)	2.34	1.445
Modern accounting techniques have been employed by my bank to evaluate its performance	24 (20.3%)	10 (8.5%)	15 (12.7%)	60 (50.8%)	9 (7.6%)	3.69	1.113

Source: Primary data, 2020

Key: F = Frequency, %=Percentage, SD= Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N= Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, M = mean and Std. Dev = Standard Deviation

From the table above, when respondents were asked about whether their banks employ standard costing in executing its financial duties, majority (38.1%) strongly disagreed with the statement, 28.8% just disagreed with the statement, 21.2%were not sure with the statement, 5.1% agreed with the statement, and lastly 6.8% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. This was supported by mean and standard deviation of 2.14 and 1.183respectively.

On the respondents' views on whether their banks use balanced scorecards, Majority (31.4%) of them disagreed with the statement, this was followed 25.4% who stated that they strongly disagree with the statement. 21.2% of them were not sure. 16.9% and 5.1% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This was also represented by mean of 2.45 and standard deviation of 1.118.
When asked whether their banks use real-time inventory tool to analyse whether they have performed poorly or well in financial matters; a biggest percentage (42.4%) strongly disagreed with the statement, 17.8%of the respondents disagreed, 16.9% of the respondents were not sure whether their banks use real-time inventory tool to analyse whether they have performed poorly or well in financial matters. However, 9.3% agreed, and 13.6% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. This was supported by mean of 2.34 and standard deviation of 1.445

Pearson Correlations

	Financial Performance	Accounting Techniques
Financial Performance	1.000	
Accounting Techniques	.536	1.000

From the table above, there is also moderate positive correlation between Accounting techniques and financial performance in selected commercial banks in Kabale Municipality (.536).

On testing results from research findings, there was a moderate relationship (correlation is .536) the study emerged out to reveal that most commercial banks in Kabale municipality employ process management accounting technique. However, other accounting techniques such as balanced scorecards, inventory management system among others are not effectively used by commercial banks in Kabale Municipality. Proper use of accounting techniques means that individuals and businesses have access to useful and affordable financial products and services that meet their needs – transactions, payments, savings, credit and insurance – delivered in a responsible and sustainable way. This is in line Chantal and Lang field-Smith (1998b) who found greater use of advanced Accounting Techniques for example process management resulted in better performance. Discussion of Findings

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that several accounting techniques were not being used by selected commercial banks in Kabale Municipality. However, most commercial banks were using Process Management accounting technique to perform their daily weekly monthly and annual financial duties. Research further revealed a positive relationship between use of accounting techniques and financial performance (correlation is 0.536) which consequently geared the research to reject the null hypothesis two. This indicates that the more the commercial banks in Kabale Municipality properly implement various accounting techniques such as balanced score cards, process management and inventory management system, the more they are likely to perform highly financially and vice versa. This is in agreement with Johnson et al. (2000) and Durnev and Kim (2003) who suggests that adequate deployment of accounting techniques by financial institutions boost their returns on investments. (Shleifer and Vishny, 1997). Shleifer et al. (1997) urged that proper use of accounting technique scan easily check the manager's activities better in the bank. However, selected commercial banks in Kabale Municipality were not using various accounting techniques to run their daily banking activities yet accounting techniques should be put in place to encourage better performance of commercial banks and to the extent possible, prevent the manipulation of accounts or so-called "creative" accounting.

This would enhance market confidence, which is of key importance for financial stability.

Indeed, creative accounting can damage market trust and have disturbing effects on both financial stability and economic development.

It should be acknowledged, however, that market confidence and transparency cannot be satisfied by adequate accounting standards alone; the implementation of adequate internal controls and use of various accounting techniques such as balanced score cards also play a crucial role on financial performance.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that banks should continuously develop and maintain Accounting techniques in place.

The study recommends that banks to widen their capital structure bases by investing more in free-risk investments.

The study recommends that all stakeholders in the banking sector should be enlightened about practice of accounting techniques so that they know their rights

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