

The relationship between gender diversity and selected telecommunication organizations performance in Zimbabwe.

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to God Almighty, my Children (Declan, Brenden and Mikayla), my Husband (Pedzisai Kowe), my Parents (Betty and Evaristo Rukasha), my siblings (Tendai, Tawonga and Tinashe Rukasha) and myself.

## Declaration

I, **Geraldine Rukasha**, do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and research, except to the extent indicated in the Acknowledgements, References and by comments included in the body of the report, and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

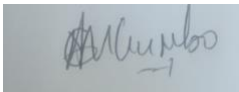
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I, **Dr. Clever Gumbo**, do hereby confirm that I supervised **Geraldine Rukasha** throughout the course of this research.



\_\_\_\_\_

14 September 2020

Dr C Gumbo

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I thank God for leading me on my journey to the completion of my MBA programme; a long and tumultuous journey that almost saw me quitting not only once but twice. The programme tested my ability to be a wife, a mother and a student all at the same time given that I fell pregnant in the duration of the programme.

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## **Abstract**

The study sought to establish the relationship between women`s and performance of an organisation by examining the effects of gender disparity on organizational performance taking a case of selected Telecommunications companies in Harare Zimbabwe. The study focuses on selected telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe, namely TelOne, Econet, NetOne and Telecel Zimbabwe. The focus of the study was on the effects of social category diversity attributes, skills diversity attributes and values diversity of employees on organization performance. The study unit of analysis was the management of the selected telecommunication companies. The study covered the period between 2015 and 2019.

This study has adopted a positivism paradigm, a descriptive research design and a deductive reasoning approach was used to help organize research activities including the collecting of data in ways that are more likely to achieve research aims. The target population was the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe and the study adopted a stratified and convenience sampling method to select four companies. A questionnaire was used to obtain data for a quantitative methodology to analyse the data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

The results indicate a positive relationship between gender diversity and organizational performance as measured by the stated variables. The study recommended organisations to value gender diversity, mainly the inclusion of women in leadership, as it has implications on organizational performance.

**Key Words:**

Gender Diversity, Telecommunications Industry, Organisational Perfomance, Leadership, Workforce Diversity

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## **Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Presently, the entire world is becoming a global village and the cross-border distances are reducing with a high pace with enhanced global interconnectedness of business operations and people. As a consequence of such liberalized and globalized shift, workforce diversity and inclusive work practices have become significant for organizational survival, growth and success. In this global village, diversity at the work place is imperative for the success of an organization. The success and failure of a company is also linked with its leadership compositions. Because the management of an organization plays an important role in formulating strategic plans, creating linkage with different stakeholders, motivating employees, and designing a strategy to attract customers and to get a competitive advantage. Thus, to do this diversified leadership in an organization is the key. Diversity is an existence created by individuals and groups from a wide background of demographic and philosophical differences. It is extremely important to support and protect diversity because by valuing individuals and groups free from partiality, and by nurturing a culture where equity and mutual respect are intrinsic (Spring, 2017).

The rise in personnel gender diversity has fascinated the attention of both researchers and practitioners. Of particular note, a question arises whether the gender structure in an organization's workforce will impact individual, group, or organizational level performance. This study seeks to critically analyze how gender diversity affect company financial performance within the context of telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

This introduction is comprised of background to the study, research problem, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypothesis of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, assumptions and limitations.

### **1.1 Background of study**

The just ended century will forever be remembered for one thing which is the struggle for gender equality in various areas such as political, social and economic rights and the oppression that the disadvantaged gender went through and still goes through to achieve gender equality. During the

last decades, governments have put many resources in researching, exposing as well as finding lasting solutions to the long problem of gender equality (OXFAM, 2015). To add to the vast number of the conferences, seminars and workshops that were held in various nations such as Beijing, the United Nations organized approximately five world conferences as an effort of monitoring the status of the disadvantaged gender, suggest the initiatives that were against a host of intransigent issues, and encouraged the implementation of platforms that were agreed upon by the nations that participated (Ochieng, 2017).

Nevertheless, there is still a long way to go for governments particularly those on the African continent to make better implementations that can achieve gender equality in leaderships. In the academic settings, gender studies are now dedicated to impact on their company performance negatively. Understand the whole system that the society defines and hypothesize the gendered norms for their individuals. A study of the gendered company performance studies masculinity and femininity as they operate within a system of the gendered understandings that has to be understood as a whole. The number of the disadvantaged gender in some of the African legislatures is more than most of the developed countries (Nussbaum et al.2013). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the increase in this marginalized gender is a representation of their interests in making decisions in leadership. To say it simpler, the politics of representation does not guarantee or necessarily lead to leadership transformation. For instance, various studies across the globe have shown that with the increased number of the disadvantaged group in companies' leadership, their issues, interests, values among others have not been incorporated into the leadership discourses great policies in place. Thus, they are not translating into effective action on the ground (Zambrano, 2018). Although laws are necessary, they are not sufficient enough to change the African governance architecture and telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe has not been spared.

The governments and industries need to do more in ensuring that the disadvantaged gendered groups are catered for as this is also crucial for the overall social development and democratic leadership. Therefore, there is need to support the structures and processes that point to possibilities and opportunities in terms of gender equality. This work builds on the previous works on gender disparities and leadership in Africa particularly in Zimbabwe.

Two statistics about women's board representation are commonly reported: the percentage of board positions that are held by women and the percentage of companies that have one or more

women on their boards (Burgess & Tharenou, 2016). Meanwhile, very little is known about the effect of fewer women in senior positions and the factors perpetuating gender disparity in boardrooms. Pay differentials between men and women are reflected in the absence of women in company boardrooms. Very few women sit on company board of directors (Burke & Mattis, 2014; Catalyst, 1998) and this should be an area of concern to women, governments and companies. Women held 25 percent of the board seats at the UK's largest public companies in May 2015 (Gordon, 2015). In 2014, women held only 14 percent of the board seats at companies on the SP Composite 1500 Index (Ernst & Young, 2013).

Gender diversity signifies variances in perceptions that individuals bring to their work situations or environment (Adams & Ferreira, 2009). In a boardroom, appointing women directors may offer diverse points of view and problem-solving qualities to board deliberations and administration (Letendre, 2004); lower excessive risk taking in strategic decisions (Eckel & Grossman, 2008); reduce overconfidence in decision-making (Barber & Odean, 2001) and provide additional board monitoring (Sitthipongpanich & Polsiri, 2013). The positive impact of female directors on firm performance and value has been well documented (Carter, Simkins & Simpson, 2003; Campbell & Minguez-Vera, 2008).

Meanwhile companies said that they found it difficult to assign more females to their boards due to the lack of a 'pipeline' of suitably qualified candidates (Gordon, 2015). In the USA, Groysberg and Bell, (2013) discovered that female board members actually had far more operational experience on their resumes than male board members on average. They also found that the majority of female board members reported having actively sought their board seats while the same was not true of male board members.

A number of nations including Belgium, France, Iceland, Spain and the Netherlands introduced a quota system in order to increase the quota of women in corporate boards (Groysberg & Bell, 2013). For example, in 2005, Norway mandated a 40 percent quota for female board participation while Finland used shame tactics which required companies without women on their boards to disclose the reason(s) in their annual reports (Nobel, 2013). An analysis of 6,000 companies across 45 countries by GMI Ratings in 2013 showed that a quota system had made a clear impact in countries where it had been adopted. In France, where it became mandatory in 2014 for a fifth of board directors to be female, the number of women directors rose in 2013 to just over 18 per cent.

In Italy, the proportion of women on boards rose by nearly 4 percentage points between 2011 and 2013, after Italy adopted a law requiring 20 percent female representation in new board nominees. In the Nordics, women now account for nearly a third of seats on all corporate boards. But do quotas have an optimistic effect on board and company performance? The effect of quotas is not yet known and would require further investigation.

The greatest diversity challenge facing public companies listed on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange was the chronic lack of women on boards. How can more women be appointed to company boards? What actions should companies; government and women take to help increase the representation of women on corporate boards? These were the overarching issues addressed in this study. The main resolution of the study was to explore the gender differences on board of directors of public companies registered on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange. The findings of the study provided insights into the factors that explained the propensity of the gender differentials in corporate governance and power in Zimbabwe and consequently proffered suggestions on how more women could be appointed to company boards (Njaya1 & Chimbadzwa, 2015).

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The number of the disadvantaged women in some of the African legislatures is more than most of the developed countries (Nussbaum et al.,2013). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the increase in this marginalized gender is a representation of their interests in making decisions in leadership. To say it simpler, the politics of representation does not guarantee or necessarily lead to leadership transformation, (Agarin, 2020). For instance, various studies across the globe have shown that with the increased number of the disadvantaged group in companies' leadership, their issues, interests, values among others have not been incorporated into the leadership discourses great policies in place. Thus, they are not translating into effective action on the ground (Zambrano, 2018). Although laws are necessary, they are not sufficient enough to change the African governance architecture and telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe has not been spared. Women rights particularly their representation in leadership positions has been a debate across the globe. In spite of the agreement by the international communities regarding the basic principles of the rights of women, many governments especially in Africa have continued to disregard this basic importance by not putting enough effort on incorporating women in leadership. Gender equality in leadership



is not only an indicator of the wellbeing of the society, but also a basis of achieving company performance (Munyua, 2015).

This study critically analyses the Gender and Company performance the case of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. This research puts women at the center of gender equality in leadership and company performance as they have been the most disadvantaged gender group compared to the men (Nzomo, 2015).

### **1.3 Main Research Objective**

To assess the relationship between gender diversity in leadership and company financial performance in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

#### **1.3.1 Specific Research Objectives**

- i. To establish the effect of women's skills diversity on organization performance of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe.
- ii. To assess the effect of women's values diversity on organization performance of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe.
- iii. To determine the effect of women's social diversity on organization performance of Telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe

### **1.4 Main Research Question**

What is the relationship between gender diversity in leadership and organization performance in the telecommunication sector in Zimbabwe?

#### **1.4.1 Specific Research Questions**

- i To what extent women's skills diversity affect organization performance in the telecommunication sector in Zimbabwe?

- ii How does women's values diversity affect organization performance of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe?
- iii What effect does women's social diversity have on organization performance of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe?

## **1.5 Hypotheses of the study**

This study adopted the following research hypotheses:

### **1.5.1 Main Hypothesis of the study**

H<sub>0</sub>: Gender diversity in leadership does not increase organization performance of companies in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

### **1.5.2 Specific Hypotheses of the study**

H<sub>a</sub>: Gender diversity in leadership increases organization performance of companies in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

Research methodology is the path through which researchers need to conduct their research. It shows the path through which these researchers express their problem and objective and present their result from the data obtained during the study period (Sileyew, 2019). Basically, a research methodology can be classified as qualitative, quantitative or mixed methodology.

In pursuit of the research objective, a quantitative research methodology was followed. Quantitative research is used to quantify behaviors, opinions, attitudes, and other variables and make generalizations from a larger population. Quantitative research uses quantifiable data to articulate facts and reveal patterns in research. This type of research method involves the use of statistical, mathematical tools to derive results. The methodology was chosen as it allows the researcher to test the relationships between variables and therefore test the hypothesis at the end of the study.

## **1.7 Scope of the study**

The study sought to examine the effects gender disparity on organization performance taking a case of Telecommunication companies in Harare Zimbabwe. The study focuses on selected telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe. The focus of the study was on the effects of social category diversity attributes, skills diversity attributes and values diversity of employees on organization performance. The study unit of analysis was the management of the selected telecommunication companies. The study covered the period between 2015 and 2019.

## **1.8 Significance of Study**

The study findings are important to:

### **1.8.0 The telecommunication sector**

There have been fewer studies conducted in Zimbabwe with respect to gender diversity; a few have focused on analysing the connection between acceptance of gender diversity among the employees, diversity procedures and curricula adopted by the telecommunication companies and barriers to the same. Thus, this study will attempt to fill this research gape on gender diversity and company performance. Telecommunication companies will be able to see how best to structure their leadership for better performance results.

The study findings are expected to be very useful to the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe on how best to address gender disparities in leadership to address the performance of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. This helps the sector to thrive in their industry that has experienced stiff competition due to constant technological advancements. This study is meant to give in-depth information on the gender disparities in leadership, factors leading to gender disparities, effect of gender disparities in leadership and challenges in addressing gender disparities in leadership in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. The study also provides suggestions as to how the best mix can be used to increase their organizational performances in the telecommunications sector.

### **1.8.1 The future researchers and academia**

The study findings of this research are expected to help the academia by providing existing literature concerning the subject and serves as a reference for other researches. It is also expected to add to the gender and company performance body of knowledge by providing theories on the supporting the subject and areas of further research. The study is expected to be very useful and valuable to the government and policy makers, through providing information which can be used as a guide when making policy guidelines on the consequence of gender disparities in leadership on company performance of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

### **1.8.2 The researcher**

This study is also of great importance to the researcher who carried out the research since it will help the researcher in improving his qualitative researching skills which is one of the exit competencies of the MBA degree program. The student will be able to identify gaps in knowledge and offer suggestions. By the end of this study the researcher will be able to attain the MBA from the University which is the main thrust in carrying out this study.

### **1.9 Assumptions**

The study will assume that:

- i Females and males are treated equally.
- ii Since they are treated equally, there must be innate differences between females and males that cause their performances to differ.

### **1.10 Limitations**

This study was conducted against the background of several limitations like availability of study respondents and their willingness to participate in the study which posed a significant challenge there might be delays in getting access to secondary data. Time frame is limited; the study will not be able to cover all telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe. The researcher might face financial challenges due to economic situation in Zimbabwe to cover for transport and printing OD required questionnaires to collect data. As measures to deal with this are, authorization to

access data will be sought much ahead of the time, the sample of telecommunication companies will be strategically chosen and the researcher will use digital media in most cases to cut costs of printing materials. To improve the response rate in this segment of the population, respondents were sought and interviewed during office hours.

## **1.11 Dissertation outline**

This research project is divided into five chapters thus chapter 1 to 5

### **1.11.1 Chapter 1**

Chapter 1 provides an Introduction to the research. Introduction of the research will be made through provision of the outline of the whole study in brief by looking on the study background, the research problem, research objectives, research questions, research hypotheses, research assumptions, value of the study, delimitations of the study and ethical considerations.

### **1.11.2 Chapter 2**

Chapter 2 covers on Literature Review. It gives definitions and explanations of relevant terms and variables that are used in this study concerning gender equity in leadership and company performance; this is done by relating to past studies by other researchers. The chapter provides viewpoints of previous scholars which are noted and presented in an organized way to be compared with the research findings in Chapter 4. The existing literature is reviewed by making constant references to set research objectives and questions, clearly showing the existing research gap which needs to be investigated.

### **1.11.3 Chapter 3**

Chapter 3 covers the Research Methodology adopted in this study. It explains how the study will be carried out by providing the research approach, philosophy, research design, research instruments, sampling techniques, study population, data sources, research instruments, methods of collecting primary and secondary data, data analysis, research limitations and ethical considerations.

### **1.11.4 Chapter 4**

Chapter 4 looks on Data Presentation and Interpretation of research findings. It presents and analyses collected primary data, comparing it to literature gathered in Chapter 2. This analyzed data is then presented in form of pie charts, bar and line graphs, supported by brief explanations that aid in easy understanding and interpretations of these findings in a logical manner. The findings already identified in the literature review thus in Chapter 2 are compared with the main findings found from the interpretation and analysis of primary research data.

### **1.11.5 Chapter 5**

Chapter 5 gives Research Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, Study limitations and Areas of further research. It clearly shows the level of accomplishment achieved in this study based on the set research objectives, questions, and aims of this study. These are evaluated to see how well they were addressed. It also provides limitations encountered in carrying out the research process and ways employed to lower these limitations and lastly this chapter gives areas of further research.

### **1.12 Chapter summary**

This Chapter introduced the concept of gender diversity and company performance. The main background to gender diversity was discussed and the problem statement outlined. The study objectives were set and their corresponding questions. The hypothesis to the study was given which will be tested at the end of the study. The scope of the study was given and also research limitations. Assumptions underpinning the study were given.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter will cover literature on gender diversity and company performance. It will review key issues in gender diversity. The literature review will be done in such a way that the researcher will be able to identify gaps in the area under study. A literature review is a survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic. It provides an overview of current knowledge, allowing you to identify relevant theories, methods, and gaps in the existing research Shona McCombes, (2019). The related literature will be summarized to ensure a critical analysis of the gathered information .commonalities and differences in different studies will be discussed.

#### **2.1 Literature search strategy**

This chapter will make use of the studies carried out in the period between the year 2014 and 2020 so that the information will be more relevant to the study. The key words to be used in literature search are “gender diversity and company performance in telecommunication sector”. Models and theories which were proposed before 2014 will be used when there are no current theories and models. The literature materials will include journals and articles published on reliable websites. Articles and journals were screened based on objectives of the studies conducted. Research papers with similar objectives or closer to the current study were considered for review.

#### **2.3 Definition of major terms**

Gender diversity means equal representation of male and female, (Zahid et al., 2020). Workplace diversity does not mean only to bring the different workforce to an organization. It also involves diversified talent to the organization (Bibi & Naima, 2015).

Diversity includes all characteristics and experiences that define each of us as individuals, (Zahid et al., 2020). It Diversity includes the entire spectrum of primary dimensions of an individual, including



Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Religion, Disability, and Sexual orientation (Soto, 2020).’

Herdman and Mcmillan-Capehart, (2010) refer to diversity as the degree of intra- company representation of people with different group affiliations of cultural significance. A modest definition of gender diversity is when a company is represented by an equal proportion of men and women.

### **2.3.1 Workforce diversity**

This refers to differences among people founded on culture, gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, educational background, physical and mental disability, and other socio-economic class, (Herring, 2009). For the present study, workforce diversity is operationally limited to gender diversity.

Many meanings of diversity exist in literature with the definition often becoming unclear (Herring, 2009).

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

This section covers a review of theories related to gender diversity in leadership and company performance in general. Various behavioural theories can be connected to enhanced company financial performance based on advanced diversity amongst board members. This study is guided by two theories main which are socialisation theory and Hierarchical Theory (HT). The main theory underpinning this study is socialization theory.

### **2.4.1 Socialisation Theory (ST)**

Various theories have been utilized in the contextualization of the aspect of gender inequality and its effects on company performance. This encompasses the socialization theory to hierarchical prescriptions of gender. Some of the diverse theoretical traditions that assist in identifying sex and gender are such as is because of biology or socialization. This is based on the level of analysis of an individual that encompasses social identities whenever men grow up as competitive and work-oriented, (Ludlender, Debbie & Guy, 2013). On the contrary, women grow up to become nurturing, person oriented and child centered. Regarding gender, the socialization theory notes that parents

and guardians teach children to behave in particular ways according to their gender. Boys are taught to act in a masculine way while girls in a feminine way Risman, (2018). As an example, parents differentiate the type of toys that they buy for either of their children's gender. Boys are bought trucks or army toys, while girls get dolls and play house type of toys. Risman, (2018) mentioned noted that the second tradition lays its focus on the ways in which social structure forms gendered behaviour. According to his approach, both men and women differ in their behaviours as they fill varied posts in various institutions, working organizations and families, implying that they undertake dissimilar gendered roles. The third emphasise is on the interactive perception that focuses on the contextual issues including the cultural expectations and the situational meanings that are taken for granted. Risman, (2018) states that, this gender concept means that there is an expectation for an individual to form differences which are neither unavoidable nor indispensable. Hence, this gendered variation can be understood to mean validation of inequality, as anything female in the patriarchal society is not valued but are looked down upon (Kombo, 2012).

#### **2.4.2 Hierarchical Theory (HT)**

This theory talks about gender inequality and its linkage to company performance. This theory's foundation is grounded in the arguments of Amartya Sen's arguments. The author equated freedom and development (company performance) where the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is not the final goal to be achieved but the freedom that is connected with it. For instance, some of the freedom connected to it includes the freedom for education, to make decisions, to impact a person's life, the freedom to have a longer life and freedom to make a choice to have education. In view of this unique situation, confinements on property ownership, sparing or obtaining, or making work contracts would qualify as disincentives to development, while flexibility to practice the exercises would be connected with financial development (Longwe, 2017). Along these lines gender inequality, considered as a various levelled perspective of sexual orientation relations, with men above women, and the latter viewed as second rate and less significant by their sex, is development impeding. The contention is that sexual orientation uniformity communicated in an equivalent esteeming and arrangement of chances for both sexes upgrades improvement in all circles. It appears in the available opportunities for improvement, education, wellbeing, and nourishment. It also shows in violence and general imperceptibility of the women's work. The chain of importance is worthy by both genders and is not regularly addressed. It is sufficiently general to apply to

countries, societies and eras with the fundamental assumption that adjustments in the status of women will get to be apparent being developed just over a more extended period. Different studies have concentrated on the resultant impacts of the socially characterized parts recognizing masculinity and femininity. The greater part of these studies has basically reported Gender Based Violence (GBV). As indicated by the UN, brutality against women ought to be comprehended inside the setting of ladies' and young ladies' subordinate status to men and young men in the public arena (Goetz, 2018).

### **2.5.1 The Concept of Workforce Diversity**

After three decades of talking about diversity in the workplace, there is still considerable debate and confusion over what actually constitutes workforce diversity, (Simons & Rowland, 2014). Workforce diversity is commonly viewed as recognizing, understanding, accepting, valuing, and celebrating differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and public assistance status. Diversity refers to a mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, values, and benefits as properties to the groups and organizations with which they interrelate, (Otiye, Messah, & Mwaleka, 2014). Mulkeen, (2008) describes workplace diversity as all the differences that exist within people with deference to age, gender, sexual orientation, education, cultural background, religion, and work experience. Valuing diversity is a key factor of effective people management, which can advance workplace output (Black Enterprise, 2015). Dessler, (2016) defines diversity as the variety or multiplicity of demographic features that characterize a company's workforce, particularly in terms of race, sex, culture, national origin, handicap, age, and religion. The term diversity is used to illustrate how individuals differ by gender, ethnicity, age, physical abilities, lifestyle, and religion. Workplace diversity incorporates the meaning of diversity within a workplace setting. (Elsaid, 2012).

Advocates of board diversity contend for the case of boardroom diversity along moral and fiscal gains. The ethical view point regards board diversity as necessary, and argues that it is discriminatory to exclude certain groups from corporate elites based on gender, race, religion among others, (Carter et al., 2003). Additionally, board diversity is one means to permit constituencies of societies that have historically been omitted from positions of power. Also, board

diversity is linked to the notion of equality of representation and in the end, to the ideal of fair outcomes in the society, (Brammer et al., 2007). In terms of the monetary case for board diversity, it is argued that diversity encourages the purposeful ability of the board, predominantly its capacity to engage in multifaceted problem solving, strategic decision making, and management monitoring, (Forbes & Milliken, 1999).

### **2.5.2 The Concept of Organizational Performance**

Today, organizations are embracing a more inclusive definition of diversity that recognizes a spectrum of differences that influence how employees approach work, interact with each other or derive satisfaction from work, (Daft, Kendrick & Natalia, 2010). Okoro et al, (2012) state that recruitment, management and maintenance of a diverse workforce ensures that the right combination of skills and competencies are available in an organization. Demographic diversity refers to the extent to which a business unit (for example), a work group or organization is heterogeneous with respect to demographic attributes such as age, sex tenure, (Sungjoo & Rainy, 2009). Social cultural diversity on the other hand refers to attributes such as race, ethnicity, religion, HIV Status, or sexual orientation. Workforce diversity has progressed from a focus on legally endangered human attributes such as race, gender and age to a much more comprehensive definition that includes the complete spectrum of human variances among employees in terms of age, cultural background, physical abilities and disabilities, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation, (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004).

Richard et al, (2006) view organizational performance as encompassing three specific areas of firm outcomes: (a) financial performance, (profits, return on assets, return on investment.), (b) product market performance (sales, market share.); and (c) shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc.). Experts in many arenas are concerned with organizational performance including strategic planners, operations, finance, legal, and organizational development. In recent years, many organizations have attempted to manage organizational performance using the balanced scorecard methodology where performance is tracked and measured in multiple dimensions such as financial performance (e.g. shareholder return), customer service, social responsibility, internal business processes employee stewardship. (Richard et al, 2009).

Daft, (2000) defines organizational performance as the organization's capability to achieve its goals by means of resources in an efficient and effective way; effectiveness being the extent to which the organization achieves a stated goal, and efficiency being the amount of resources used to achieve an organizational goal. Allen, Dawson, Wheatley and White, (2007) noted that, when defining firm performance, it is imperative to study a wide range or variation of organizational performance measures which include quality, productivity, market share, profitability, return on equity, customer base and overall firm performance. The term performance was from time to time confused with productivity. Ricardo, (2001) explains that there is a variance between performance and productivity. Productivity being a ratio representing the volume of work accomplished in a given amount of time. Performance being a broader indicator that could include productivity as well as quality, consistency and other factors. Waiganjo et al., (2012), note that organizational performance may be measured in terms of its multiple objectives of profitability, employee satisfaction, productivity, growth among many other objectives. Advocates of the balanced score card performance management system have proposed a broader performance measurement approach that recognizes both the financial and non-financial measures including sales, profitability, return on investments, market share, customer base, product quality, innovation and company attractiveness.

Lately, many organizations have endeavored to manage organizational performance using the balanced scorecard methodology where performance is traced and measured in several scopes such as financial performance, customer service, social responsibility, employee stewardship. Khan and Khan, (2011) assert that organizational performance depends on various factors including the contributions of human resource capital. This is because human resource in an organization plays an important role in the evolution and organizational performance. (Abu-Jarad, Yusuf & Nikbil, 2010), noted that although many studies have found that different organizations tend to emphasize on different objectives, literature suggests that financial profitability and growth are the most common measures of organizational performance.

Richard et al, (2009) explains that organizational performance comprises of the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (goals, objectives). Kunze, (2013), has defined organizational performance as consisting of both organizational and operational dimensions of performance. Operational performance being measured in terms of employee productivity (ratio of sales/to number of employees) as well as employee retention and fluctuation. Research on performance has gone through many phases in the last 30 years. Initially, they were focused mostly on financial indicators but with time, the complexity of the performance measurement system increased by using both financial and non-financial indicators (Gavrea et al, 2011). Many arrangements engaged by firms do not seem to affect their financial performance much which has led scholars to widen the definition of firm performance to include corporate social performance (Brammer & Millington, 2008; David, Bloom & Hillman, 2007).

### **2.6.1 The relationship between gender diversity and company performance**

Previous attempts to empirically study the outcome of gender diversity of boards of directors on firm performance resulted in mixed conclusions (Simpson, Carter & D'Souza, 2010). Some authors reported a positive effect of diversity of boards of directors on firm performance, others found a negative effect, and further researchers found no relationship or an ambiguous relationship. In the next three sections, each category of results will be further examined.

#### **2.6.1.1 Positive effects of gender diverse boards on company performance**

There are an amount of empirical studies probing the effect of gender diverse boards of directors on company performance which result in a positive effect. A noticeable feature about these articles is that they cover different time intervals, performance measures as well as samples or countries. The earliest studies in consideration are examining samples in the 1990s. Analysing publicly traded Fortune 1000 firms, Carter et. al. (2003) found a positive relationship between the proportion of female board directors and firm value measured in Tobin's Q. This is supported by Erhard, Werbel and Shrader, (2003), who observed an increased effectiveness in the monitoring function of gender diverse boards of US companies as well better firm performance measured in ROA and ROI. Another study drawing on a sample from the 1990s found a positive relation

between the percentage of female directors and Tobin's Q of Spanish firms (Campbell & Minquez-Vera, 2008).

Regarding samples in the 2000s, researchers also examined the board diversity-firm performance link in developing countries. Liu et al., (2014) identified a strong positive effect of female directors on the ROA and ROE of Chinese firms. Mahadeo, Soobaroyen and Hanuman (2012) examined Mauritian companies and discovered a significant positive performance effect of gender diverse boards compared to boards with no female representation. Other works in the 2000s investigating the effect of gender diverse boards on firm performance and finding positive effects include studies in France (Sabatier, 2015) or Spain (Martin-Ugedo & Minquez-Vera, 2014). The study of Martin-Ugedo and Miquez-Vera (2014) additionally examines the aforementioned effect in SMEs, considerably differentiating itself compared to the other studies, whose samples usually include large, publicly traded firms.

#### **2.6.1.2 Negative effects of gender diverse boards on company performance**

Next to results regarding a positive effect, a small part of academic works on the board gender diversity-firm performance link also reports that increased gender diversity in boards of directors leads to decreases in firm performance. For example, Adams and Ferreira (2008) report that even though women directors are found to be more active monitors, in countries with otherwise strong shareholder protection more gender diverse boards may lead to over-monitoring through which firm performance is negatively affected. This finding partially contradicts the agency theoretical perspective on the effect of gender diverse boards on firm performance. The authors go on to propose that in weak shareholder protection circumstances, gender diverse boards might be positive for firm performance (Adams & Ferreira, 2008). However, this proposition is questioned by other studies, which for example found a negative impact of board gender diversity on firm performance in countries with actually weak investor protection (Ujunwa, Okoyeuzu & Nwakoby, 2012; Okike, 2007).

Next to single-country studies, literature furthermore entails multi-country studies that result in positive effects of board gender diversity on firm performance, including examinations of a sample of European firms (Isidro & Sobral, 2014) as well as across the world (Terjesen et al., 2015).

### **2.6.1.3 No effects of gender diverse boards on firm financial performance**

Besides the clearly positive and clearly negative findings in some studies, a large part of the literature about this topic results in more pronounced effects of gender diversity of boards on firm financial performance. These can be classified into either 1) no effect or relationship at all, or 2) ambiguous effects/effects subject to other factors.

Firstly, there is a variety of studies observing no effect of gender diversity on corporate boards at all. According to Rose, (2007) there is no significant link between gender diversity of boards and firm performance measured in Tobin's Q. This is supported by other studies (Carter et al., 2010). Even though women are more likely to serve on the boards of better-performing companies, studies could not find evidence that gender diverse boards in itself are value-improving (Farrel & Hersch, 2005). Francoeur et al., (2008) examined female participation in both top management and corporate governance of Canadian firms, stating that gender diverse boards create enough value to keep pace with normal stock returns, but not more value than other board forms. Gender diversity of boards furthermore was observed to have no effect on company performance during crisis times (Engelen van den & Berg van der Laan, 2012). Secondly, other research about the effect of gender diverse boards of directors on firm performance results in ambiguous effects or relationships. For example, in analysing gender diversity of boards in Malaysian companies Abdullah et al., (2015) found that female directors bring economic value, however this is moderated by significant negative market perceptions, leading the market to discount their impact.

In examining the association between gender diversity of top administration boards and the propensity to strategic change. Tirana, Miller & Tzrebiatkowski, (2013), observed that depending on the situation gender diversity can either impede or propel the company's ability to react to changes in its environment. The impact of gender diversity on company performance also depends on the measure of firm performance as well as on the measure of the proportion of women on boards, (Smith et al., 2006). So, after summing up the previous empirical evidence about the effect of gender diverse boards on firm financial performance, the question of why different articles come



to different results remains. The three most usually reviewed possible reasons for this are time, causality, and critical mass (Lückenrath-Rovers, 2013). According to Lückenrath-Rovers, (2013), time refers to the difference between static and dynamic measurements as well as the point in time when the measurements happen. Causality refers to the problem that causality and endogeneity might influence conclusions. Critical mass refers to the problem that a subgroup needs to reach a certain size in order to influence an overall group, (Kramer et al., 2006). This paper will confidently circumvent the problems of time and critical mass, as a broader time range will be covered and in the sample the percentage of female board members needs to be at least 40 %, making the number of both genders in the board nearly equal.

Empirical evidence on the effect of gender diverse boards of directors on company performance in Norway. The country under consideration in this paper will be Norway. To the best of the author's knowledge in May 2015, there are only five studies investigating the impact of the quota for greater female board representation directly or indirectly. Of those 5 studies, one is not considering the board gender diversity-firm performance link, but rather evaluating the quota's impact on board structures of Norwegian PLCs. Herein it is concluded that the quota led to inefficient board structures and that costs of restructuring were high (Bohren & Staubo, 2014). Out of the four further works investigating the link between gender diversity of boards and company performance in Norway, one identified a positive effect, one identified no effect and two observed negative effects.

Nygaard, (2011), studying the impact of the mandating of the quota at the end of 2005, found that for firms with low information asymmetry, the quota had beneficial, value-creating effects. Furthermore, firm performance measured in ROA for these companies from 2004 to 2008 improved. Dale-Olsen et al. (2013) compared firm performance measured in ROA from quota-affected Norwegian companies with unaffected Norwegian companies from 2003 to 2007 and derived that the impact of the quota and the board gender diversity-firm performance link is negligible in the short-term. In contrast to the aforementioned studies, Ahern and Dittmar (2012) observed a large decline in Tobin's Q of Norwegian PLCs from the introduction of the quota until 2009. Another study with a sample of Norwegian firms found a negative relationship between gender diversity of boards and firm performance measured in ROA and Tobin's Q (Bohren &

Strom, 2010). The dataset of this study however only covered the period from 1989- 2002, which was before the introduction of the quota and the subsequent increase in female directorships.

The most recent sample time from the aforementioned works is 2009, only three years after mandating of the quota and only one year after 40 % female board of director representation was achieved. As Dale-Olsen et al. (2013) note, “Future research should look at potential long-term effects of the reform” (p.129). In this paper, it is intended to provide part of this future research, as a dataset ranging until 2013 will provide a medium- to long-term analysis of the quota’s impact and the effect of gender diverse boards of directors on firm financial performance.

Mixed empirical outcomes exist on the effect of board gender diversity on firm performance. Smith, Smith, and Verner (2006) study 2,500 Danish firms and show that the number of women in top management jobs tends to have positive effects on firm performance, even after monitoring for numerous characteristics of the firm and direction of causality. Lenard, Yu, York, and Wu, (2014) study gender diversity on the board of directors and its relationship with risk management and corporate performance and show that more gender diversity on the board of directors impacts firm risk by contributing to lower variability of stock market return. They also show that the higher the percentage of female directors on the board, the lower the variability of corporate performance. However, Sila, Gonzalez, and Hagendorff, (2016) provide evidence to the effect that boardroom female representation has no influence on equity risk.

Mahadeo, Soobaroyen, and Hanuman, (2012) find that proportion of female directors positively impacts corporate performance. Strøm et al. (2014) confirm this theory with the evidence that a female chief executive officer and a female chairperson of the board are positively related to MFI performance. Solakoglu and Demir (2016) find some weak evidence that gender diversity impacts firm performance. Khan and Vieito, (2013) find that female CEOs<sup>1</sup> positively and significantly influence firm performance measured by return on assets (ROA). Cook and Glass, (2015) analyse the data-set of all CEOs and board of directors in Fortune 500 companies over a 10-year period and find a somewhat significant positive relationship between board diversity and the prospect of a woman being appointed CEO. They further find that board diversity significantly and positively influences the post-promotion success of women CEOs. They also find that board composition is

critical for the appointment and success of women CEOs and that increasing board diversity should be fundamental to any organizational diversity efforts.

#### **2.6.1.4 Contradicting studies**

On the other hand, there are studies that do not observe any significant effect of board gender diversity on firm performance. Francoeur, Labelle, and Sinclair-Desgagné (2008) study the 500 largest Canadian firms and find, among other things, that the impact of female directors on firm performance is insignificant. A recent study by Babalos, Caporale, and Philippos, (2015) also finds that gender does not influence fund performance.

Contrary to studies that indicated that female on boards had a positive effect, there was studies that indicated that the presence of women on boards had no effect. Rose, (2007) failed to find any significant link between female representation and firm performance measured as Tobin's Q on listed Danish firms. One of the explanations provided by Rose was that board members that not originate from the traditional background could have assimilated to the traditional board members, and as a result they have adopted the behavior from the conventional board members. This phenomenon was also described by Gordini and Rancati, (2017) and can be referred to as silent learning. Consequently, the benefits from having females on the board are not realized. Gallego-Alvarez, Garcia- Sanchez and Rodriguez-Dominguez (2010) found no significant link between board gender diversity and financial performance measured by both market and accounting measures. Likewise, Carter, D'Souza, Skimkins and Simpson, (2010) also failed to find any significant relationship between Tobin's Q and gender diversity on SP 500 index firms. Similarly, Isidro and Sobral, (2015) found no evidence that higher female representation on the board affects firm value on European firms. Haslam, Ryan, Kulich, Trojanowski and Atkins, (2010) measured financial performance both in Tobin's Q and accounting measures on FTSE 100 companies. When accounting measures was used, there was no relationship between board gender diversity and performance.

However, when Tobin's Q as used, the boards with higher gender diversity was outperformed by male-only boards. Ahren and Dittmar, (2012) investigated how Norwegian firms performed after Norway implemented a gender quota legislation in 2003. They found that board composition changed as a result from the gender quota legislation. The boards members elected became both

less experienced and younger (Ahren & Dittmar, 2012). Financially, the firms performed worse in both accounting returns and Tobin's Q. Further, firms grew from debt-financed acquisitions which lead to an increase in debt ratio. Likewise, the findings from Bøhren and Strøms (2010) suggested that the firm created more value for its owner when gender diversity was low. Mínguez-Vera and Martin (2011) found a negative link between firm performance and board gender diversity. They suggested that result might be due to that females was more risk averse and implemented less risky strategies (Mínguez-Vera & Martin, 2011). Adams and Ferreira, (2009) suggested that firms with strong governance were negatively affected by diversity and that firm with weak governance was positively affected by diversity. The results were due to that a more gender-diverse board provided stronger governance. If the firm already had strong governance and implemented a stronger board this could lead to over monitoring. On the contrary, if the firm had weak governance, a stronger board could be beneficial (Adams & Ferreira, 2009).

From the previous findings, the drawn conclusion was that gender diversity within the board of directors had a noticeable effect on firm financial performance. Although, the evidence regarding the relationship was mixed, a larger amount of studies demonstrated that there exists a positive link between board gender diversity and firm value.

### **2.6.2 Benefits of gender diversity in the telecommunication sector.**

Hypothetically, there are a number of opinions in favor of diversity of board members. For example, Carter et al. (2003) identify five positive arguments for board diversity in a principal agent framework. They orate that a more diverse board is able to make decisions based on the evaluation of more alternatives equated to a more homogenous board. A diverse board is seen to have a better understanding of the market place of the firm, which increases innovation and creativity. Board diversity may also improve the image of the firm if the positive image has positive effects on customer`s behaviour. Explicitly, advocates of board diversity argue that a diverse board will result to improved financial and company performance, increased capacity to link with the global and domestic markets, expanded access to global and domestic talent pools, enhanced creativity and innovation, and strengthened social capital and cohesion (Kochen, et al. 2008).

Numerous arguments have been presented as an attempt to present why greater diversity can affect the firm's financial performance positively. For example, it has been proposed that diversity promotes a better understanding of the marketplace. Understanding the market place could create value for the company since the board could better understand different stakeholder (Gordini & Rancati, 2017). According to the stakeholder theory, the companies have contracts with its stakeholders and the value of the company depends on the company's ability to fulfil these contracts (Cornell & Shapiro, 1987). Stakeholders do not exclusively encompass shareholders, but include creditors, employees, customers and communities (Harjoto, Laksmana & Lee, 2015). Effective stakeholder management is crucial for the company's survival and success. The company has to pay attention to stakeholders to increase shareholder wealth (Parmar, Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Purnell & de Colle, 2010). If the company fails to align the interests of its various stakeholders, the company could suffer losses both economically and in reputation (Harjoto et al., 2015). Organizations such as the European Union and the OECD have given recommendations which encourage companies to increase the degree of stakeholder orientation (Rose, 2008).

Secondly, gender diversity could enhance more effective problem-solving capabilities since the different perspectives that emerges lead decision-makers to more carefully evaluate and decide between alternatives (Rose, 2007; Campbell & Minquez Vera, 2008). Robinson and Dechant, (1997) suggested that heterogeneous groups produced higher-quality decisions compared to less heterogeneous groups. Also, female involvement in the decision-making may also result in more creative and innovative outcomes (Lazzaretti, Godoi, Camilo & Marcon, 2013). Torchia, Calabrò and Michèle (2015) suggested similar benefits of diversity. The group could benefit from higher quality of problem-solving, greater productivity, better goal achievement and higher satisfaction among the group members. Greater board diversity was claimed to not only increase the financial performance through more effective decision-making and enhance board performance, but also contribute to gain legitimacy in the eyes of investors (Post & Byron, 2015). Another argument put forward was that a broader perspective within the board is positive since it contributes to a better understanding of the complex environment (Robinson & Dechant, 1997).

Firstly, empirical evidence suggests that female directors are, on average, better monitors (Carter, D'Souza, Simkins & Simpson, 2010; Adams & Ferreira, 2009). Dang, Bender and Scotto, (2015) found that female directors are likely to put more effort into monitoring duties than male directors.

They furthermore bring a new perspective into complicated issues (Francoeur, Labelle, Sinclair-Desgagne, (2008), ask questions more frequently, provide higher levels of board accountability and are better prepared for meetings (Terjesen et al., 2009). This in turn can help to reduce informational bias in formulating strategies and making decisions (Westphal & Milton, 2000), thereby limiting the risks of moral hazard and adverse selection, two important risks considered in agency theory (Lambert, 2001). Additionally, in firms that have more gender diverse boards, managers are more likely to receive equity-based compensation (Dang et al., 2015), which leads to a better alignment of manager-shareholder interests.

### **2.6.3 Evaluating the Impact of Diversity on Business Performance**

To identify the interrelationship between business performance and diversity at organizational level, it's important to be clear about how diversity and performance are defined and measured. Diversity ranges from distributive concerns based on the traditional categories of race, ethnicity and gender to the inclusion of a vast array of differences in age, sexual orientation, disability, employment status, tenure, function, educational background, lifestyle, religion, values and beliefs in addition to race, ethnicity and gender. Anderson and Metcalf, (2003) identify three different categories of employee diversity: Social category diversity relates to differences in demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnicity and geographical region of origin; Informational diversity refers to diversity of background such as knowledge, education, experience, tenure and functional background; and value diversity which includes differences in personality and attitudes.

Diversity enhances customer relations and increases market share; diversity enhances employee relations and reduces the cost of labour; diversity improves employee quality and performance in terms of diverse skills, creativity, problem-solving and flexibility. Research findings suggest that having a diverse employee leads to increased market share and increased sales to minority-culture groups (Cox & Blake, 2001). This is explained by the preference of many customers to buy from people like themselves and from companies that promote diversity. Diversity contributes to increased market share because it enhances a company's ability 'to deal more sensitively with multicultural domestic and foreign customers, thereby increasing customer satisfaction, keeping and gaining market share' (Bhadury, 2000).

Several studies indicate that employers who successfully manage diversity are better at attracting and retaining skills and talent 'because many workers are drawn to companies that embrace diversity' (Woods & Sciarini, 2005). As well as recruiting the best people in the labour market by embracing diversity, such employers can also benefit from cost savings by having a more cost-effective recruitment process. McEnrue, (2003) found that the recruitment expenditure of companies that value diversity is forty per cent less than that of those that don't and that they suffer less from high costs of labour turnover, absenteeism and discrimination lawsuits (Cox, 2001). Advocates of diversity management argue that an inclusive diversity climate increases the performance and productivity level of employees through increased job satisfaction and commitment. They also argue that diversity fosters adaptability to environmental change and company flexibility – and provides a competitive edge by doing so (Cox & Blake, 2001). This study adopted the following measures of organization performance: Customer satisfaction and market share, Employee satisfaction and labour costs, Employee quality and performance.

Skills and informational diversity are the result of diversity in employees' education and experiences. Skills diversity contributes positively to employee's productivity and hence the overall organization productivity. Skills diversity leads to innovation and hence overall improved Quality of programs, products and services that the organization offers. Skills diversity creates a large pool of experiences, ideas and education that creates new products (Cox, 2001). Such firms create an environment of high productivity and thus attract top talent employees and are able to retain these employees due to their progressive nature. The overall benefit is savings in recruitment and training costs, as well as the advantage of maintaining corporate knowledge and expertise (DiTomaso, 2007).

Personality refers to distinctive characteristics of a person that include emotions, values, attitudes and competencies. An organization will have employees with differences in personalities. These personality differences influence employees' decision making, and attitudes towards team participation, training and development, organization change and the general comfort of employees to different social and collaboration standards. Attitude on the other hand can be described as the person's tendency to respond to various aspects of people, situations and objects. This is usually influenced by a person's beliefs and feelings drawn from social economic and

cultural experiences. Therefore, employee values will determine their overall involvement in the organization and the quality of value addition to their employer. This value is the source of creativity, innovation, effectiveness and efficiency in the organization which translates to the organization bottom line through increased revenues and market share growth (Bacharach, 2005).

According to Anderson and Metcalf, (2003) social category diversity is linked to differences in cultures and demographic attributes of employees. These differences can be in age, ethnicity, gender and places of origin. This diversity is associated with a mix of viewpoints, opinions and experiences at the workplace. Gender and age diversity have been associated with enhanced business performance through increased employee satisfaction and overall firm productivity which in return reduces labour costs. A productive employee on the other hand, delivers results through increased sales, costs savings, improving their job efficiency which feed to the overall bottom line results for an organization.

Employees' age diversity on the other hand is an excellent source of organization learning that promotes innovativeness which results in new and better products and services in the market place and efficient business processes that impact the bottom line. On the other hand, companies which promote gender diversity earn both professional acclaims today complemented with increased employee and customers loyalty. They also attract a large number of job applicants, which means they have the choice of hiring the best employees in the market which becomes a source of competitive advantage. Increased customer satisfaction is associated with an improved bottom line since customers always reward such organizations with repeat business and hence sustained revenue growth (Kochan, 2003).

Ethnic diversity has been found to have a positive impact on firms that operate in industries more open to trade e.g. multinationals. These organizations are able to hire employees that reflect the ethnicity of the markets they serve. This makes it easy for such businesses to communicate to their customers in these markets more effectively. Establishing a positive image in the communities the organization operates will reflect on the company's bottom line, due to sustained sales and profitability. Social category diversity allows employees to be able to communicate to different categories of customers more effectively. It helps an organization navigate past biases or misconceptions through respect for differences that they may not understand. This in return helps



an organization expand its market share, increase customer satisfaction and loyalty (Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2000).

#### **2.6.4 Intervening variables**

The effects of employee diversity are conditioned by other company and contextual factors and that diversity can't be used as competitive company strength unless it's managed effectively. There are at least four main moderating or intervening variables that condition the effects of diversity: the nature of work tasks, corporate business strategy, diversity and company context and diversity and context. Regarding the effects of the nature of work tasks on the diversity–business-success relationship, Cordero, (2006) suggests that, 'Homogeneity appears to be a benefit for groups with more routine tasks, while heterogeneity produces benefits.'

The impact of diversity on business performance also displays variations in accordance with corporate business strategy (Richard, 2006). Dwyer, (2003) posits that a growth-oriented, culturally diverse company benefits from employees who are flexible in their thinking and who are less likely to be worried about departing from the norm. Their research findings suggest that firms adopting growth strategies benefit from the increased levels of performance stemming from gender diversity at managerial level. The positive relationship between business performance and employee diversity in growth-oriented companies holds true for race diversity as well as gender diversity; but race diversity is shown to be associated with harmful and negative outcomes for the downsizing firms (Richard, 2006).

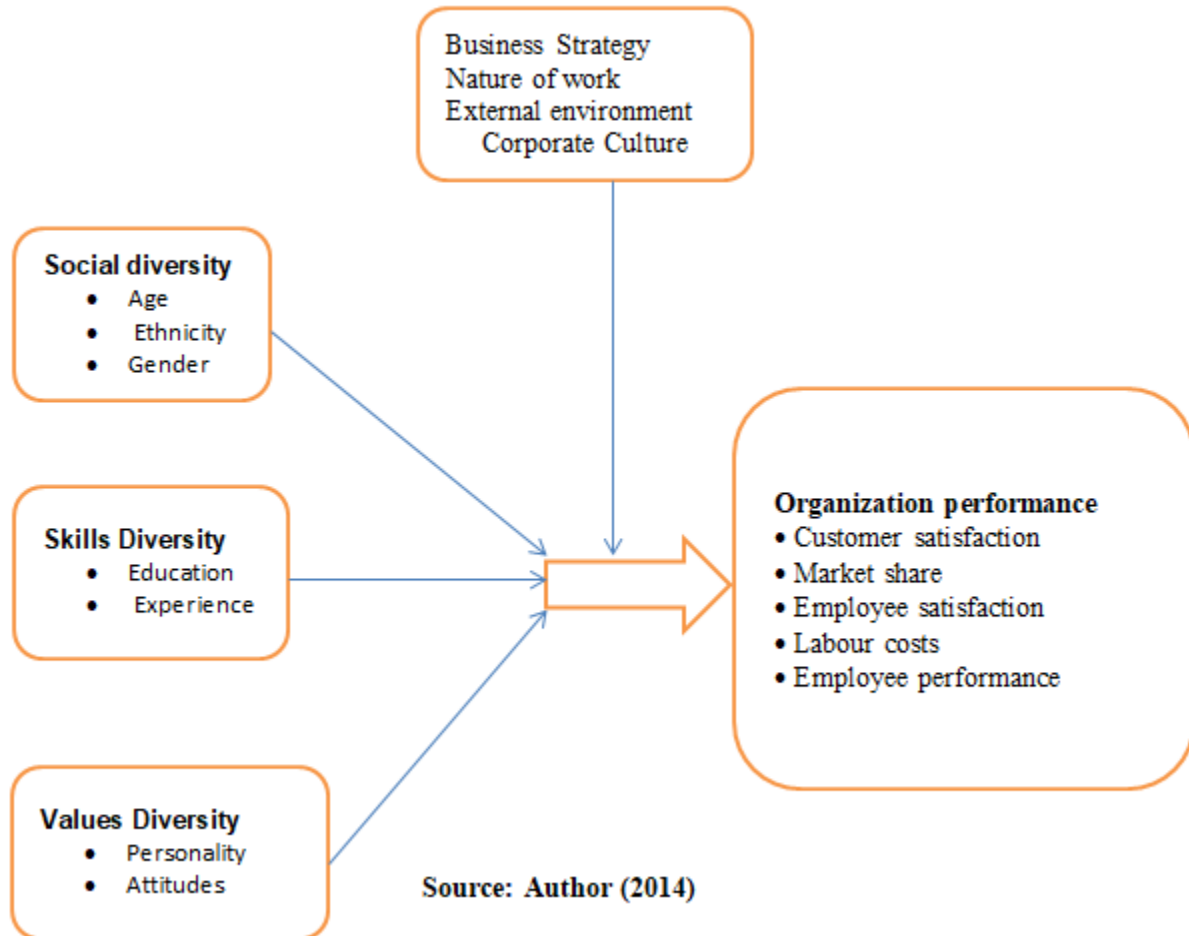
Certain company cultures nurture the positive effects of diversity while others dampen them. According to the research findings of Chatman, (2008) company cultures based on collectivist values positively moderate the relationship between employee diversity and business performance by dissolving the conflicts stemming from and fostering the potential benefits of diversity. Beaudry (2000) argues that the nature of the impact diversity has, depends to a large extent on the nature of the diversity climate rather than the existence of diversity. To assess the impact of diversity on company performance, it is crucial to overcome 'the widespread use of the "one-size-fits-all approach (Barak, 2000).

### **2.6.5 Research gap**

Literature on gender diversity and organizational performance is growing. However, there seems to be a growing debate on what constitute a proper definition of gender diversity. There are very few studies on gender diversity and organizational performance in Zimbabwe. No known study has been conducted on gender diversity and organizational performance in the context of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe. The study will therefor try to cover the gap by investigating the impact of gender diversity on organizational performance specifically targeting the telecommunication sector in Zimbabwe.

### **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) describes a conceptual framework as a hypothesized model identifying the concepts under study and their relationship. The purpose of the conceptual framework is to help the reader to see the proposed relationships at a glance. The conceptual framework shows the relationship between gender equity in leadership and company performance in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. The independent variable is gender equity in leadership and the dependent variable is company performance in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. The conceptual framework assumed for this research is presented below:



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework:**

Figure 1 above denotes the main variables under study and how each influences one another. This entails that gender equity in leadership is the independent variable and organizational performance is the dependence variable. Organization performance on the other divide looks into return on gender equity investment (ROI) in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. The main focus is on gender leadership and company performance of telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe.

### **2.7.1 Independent Variable**

The conceptual framework of this paper illustrates the three dimensions/elements of gender diversity which are skills diversity, social diversity and values diversity as the independent variables as they relate with organizational performance which is the dependent variable.

### **2.7.2 Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable is organizational financial performance. The paper seeks to show how the variations in organizational performance may be explained by the aforementioned independent variables. For the purpose of this paper, organizational performance described in objective terms like growth in sales and profits, customer subscriptions, and technological innovations using the balanced score card approach. The use of this approach provides a comprehensive holistic view of a firm's performance. (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Objective measures of performance allow a broader range of organizations to be compared with a single study (Allen, Dawson, Wheatley, & White, 2008).

### **2.7.3 The Moderating Variable**

It is conceptualized that the independent variables do not directly affect the dependent variable but have an influence on employee engagement which further influences the dependent variable. The level of employee engagement is the variable that is likely to be influenced by the way various diversity elements are entrenched within the organizations. This may be indicated by rates of employee turnover and absenteeism. The level of employee engagement may further influence the employees' productivity as an organizational outcome as well as other aspects of organizational performance.

### **2.7.4 Extraneous Variables**

Although the focus of this paper is to establish the effects of workforce diversity on organizational performance, a set of extraneous variables that are not related to the purpose of the study may affect the dependent variable. It is recognized that these factors are likely to influence the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. These factors include but are

not limited to; Firm Size, Firm Age, and Marketing Strategy among others. These extraneous variables would be factored as the error term  $e$  of the regression model in a research Situation.

## **2.8 Chapter summary**

This chapter reviewed literature on gender diversity and organizational performance .This chapter uncovered different relationships that ranges from positive ,negative and no relationship at all between gender diversity and organizational financial performance .From all the factors noted, literature highlighted challenges in trying to promote gender diversity and possible ways to promote it within different organizations .

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research design and methodology**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This section of the study outlined the research design and methodology. In trying to answer the research questions, this section will outline the methods and approaches that were used in collecting data, analysing it, and interpreting it to the final users. It presents the research design; target population, sampling design, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. The literature review provided a basis on which the research methodology was chosen in order to fill the research gap identified.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research design is envisioned to provide an appropriate framework for a study. A very noteworthy decision in research design process is the choice to be made regarding research approach since it determines how pertinent information for a study will be obtained; however, the research design process involves many interrelated decisions (Sileyew, 2019).

The study adopted a descriptive design of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe as the unit of analysis. A descriptive research was adopted in order to scrutinize, illustrate and document aspects of circumstances as it logically occurs (Ngechu, 2016). In this instance, there is no investigational manipulation or any arbitrary selection of groups. According to Cooper and Schindler, (2016), in a cross-sectional blueprint, either the entire population or a subset thereof is preferred, and from this set, the data is collected to help re-join research objectives. Descriptive design addresses the what, question of the population under study. Cross sectional descriptive is a type of cross-sectional design that engrosses the collection of information from any given sample of the population element (Ngechu, 2016). A descriptive design attempts to gather quantitative data from a subset of the entire population to describe the phenomena to find out individual's perception, attitude, and behaviour pertaining to the elements under consideration (Mugenda Mugenda, 2016). A descriptive research design is chosen because it appeals and allows generalization a particular parameter. The data obtained is standardized to allow easy comparison

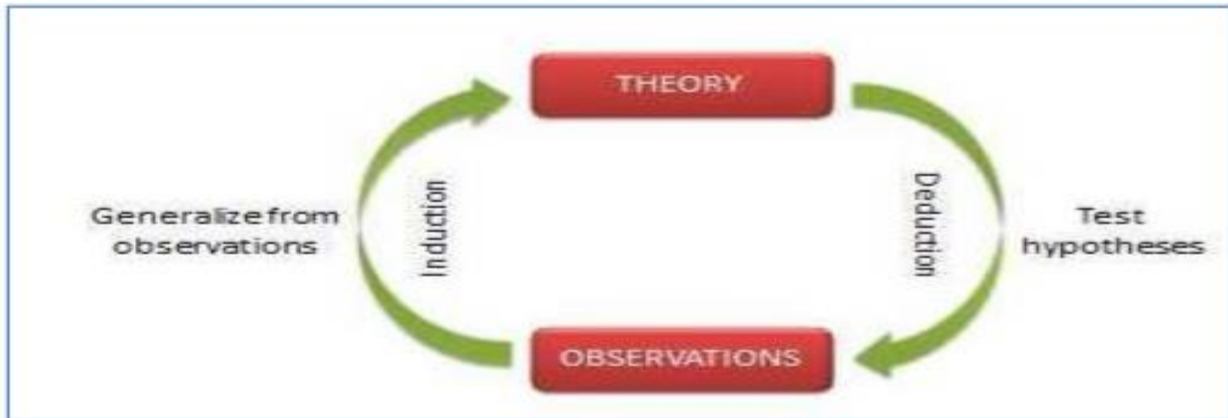
to deduce meanings on the variables. It explores the existing status of variables to understand how one influences the other. It is enhancing a systematic description that is accurate, valid and reliable to look into the effect of gender disparities in leadership on company performance of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

### **3.2.1 Research methodology**

Research methodology is the path through which researchers need to conduct their research. It shows the path through which these researchers express their problem and objective and present their result from the data obtained during the study period (Sileyew, 2019). Basically, a research methodology can be classified as qualitative, quantitative or mixed methodology. In pursuit of the research objective, a quantitative research methodology was followed. Quantitative research is used to quantify behaviors, opinions, attitudes, and other variables and make generalizations from a larger population. Quantitative research uses quantifiable data to articulate facts and reveal patterns in research. This type of research method involves the use of statistical, mathematical tools to derive results. The methodology was chosen as it allows the researcher to test the relationships between variables and therefore test the hypothesis at the end of the study.

### **3.2.2 Research approach**

After defining the research philosophy, a suitable research approach had to be selected to deal with research problem. Smith et al. (2002) stated that the research approaches helped to organize research activities, including the collecting of data in ways that are more likely to achieve research aims. He further mentioned that good research is based on sound reasoning. It follows therefore that sound reasoning is finding the correct premises, testing the connections between their facts and assumptions and making claims based on adequate evidence. Reasoning is distinguished between two types which is the deductive and inductive reasoning.



**Figure 2: Research approaches Source: Bhattacharjee (2012)**

The study followed a deductive approach. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:18) quantitative research focuses on deduction, confirmation, theory/hypothesis testing, explanation, prediction, standardized data collection and statistical analysis. Amaratunga et al. (2002:19) point out that the quantitative approach grows out of a strong academic tradition that places considerable trust in numbers that represent opinions or concepts. Borkan, (2004:4) is of the idea that quantitative data collection tools permit the researcher to conclude only about that which he or she is examining and that the statistical method may work best in segregating or identifying the correlates related with variations at specific moments in time.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources for data collection. The primary data is collected using a semi-structured questionnaire that has closed ended questions formulated in line with set objectives of the study. However, the open-ended questions will facilitate the collection of factual information to aid in analysing the research data. The closed ended questions are based on a 5-point Likert-Scale:

1= strongly agree; 2= Agree; 3= Neutral; 4= Disagree; 5= strongly disagree.

The researcher personally self-administered the questionnaires to managers and supervisors in the 4 telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe then collect the questionnaires later, through the drop and pick soon after method. This will ensure the capturing of all the issues required and also ensures high response rates. Secondary data will be obtained from both internal and external



sources through document analysis technique in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe, their documented records and from other published sources. These documents include: periodicals, journals, reports, administrative documents, press releases, economic surveys, and multimedia online resources.

### **3.3.1 Methods of Data Collection**

The study used both secondary and primary data. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data.

### **3.3.2 Research instrument (Questionnaire)**

The research process took the form of a survey method. A survey involves the structured collection of data from a sizeable population (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). A questionnaire was used to allow the collection of data regarding gender diversity and organizational financial performance. Apart from being inexpensive, questionnaires are also a practical way to gather data. They can be targeted to groups of your choosing and managed in various ways. You can pick and choose the questions asked as well as the format (open-ended or multiple choice). They offer a way to gather vast amounts of data on any subject. They can be used in a wide variety of ways (Debois, 2020). The questionnaire was distributed by email with an electronic link to the online survey. The questionnaire was used because it is one of the most efficient ways to collect data as it typically contains fixed responses.

### **3.3.3 Pilot testing**

Saunders and Lewis (2012) mentioned that pilot testing will give an indication of possible problems with questions and the length of the interview. By conducting pilot tests with typical participants, each question was critically evaluated in terms of clarity. A pilot study was conducted using six representatives from the selected telecommunication companies after the pilot test was done; certain questions were amended to make them simpler to understand, ensuring clarity for respondents.

### 3.4 Population and sampling techniques

This study identified the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe as the target population. Employees of the selected telecommunication organisations were the target population for the study. According to Mugenda (2016), a population is a set of all units of analysis in one's problem area. It also refers to a set of people, elements, events, groups or households that are being investigated (Bryman & Bell, 2017). The target population is a group of individuals to which the researcher would like to generalize the result (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2016).

#### 3.4.1 Sampling and sampling techniques

This study adopted a multistage sampling method which was comprised of convenience and stratified and followed by convenience sampling to select four telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe namely: Econet Zimbabwe, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne Zimbabwe. It is from these four telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe (strata) that were under investigation. It is within these 4 strata that convenience sampling was then be applied to select the final representative sample. Convenience sampling enables quick access of data as it is collected from people who are easy to reach (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2016). Table below gives the sample sizes.

Telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe	Sample size
Econet Zimbabwe	40
NetOne	40
TelOne Zimbabwe	40
Telecel	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>

**Table 1: Sample size**

As shown in the sampling table 1.0 above, this research will select 40 respondents from each telecommunications company in Zimbabwe giving a sample size of 160. The representative sample will only include middle and senior management in the four companies.

### **3.5 Research limitations**

The sample was small hence not necessarily represent the population statistically and impacts the data validity (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The study was limited to Zimbabwean organizations due to the geographic constraints of the researcher and access to the participants. The researcher distributed surveys to participants within her personal and professional business networks, which potentially limited the industry and demographic range. As the survey comprised mainly closed-ended questions, it is possible that answers the respondent would not otherwise have chosen were suggested. Respondents with no option or no knowledge could have answered anyway and could even have been forced to make choices they would not necessarily have made.

### **3.6 Validity and reliability**

This research will establish the reliability of data gathered by carrying out a pilot study with 10 questionnaires. These 10 questionnaires will be administered to 8 respondents from the 4 telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe and the other 2 to research experts. All the 10 respondents that participated in the pilot study will not be included when collecting final data. Experts will also be consulted to ensure the reliability and validity of the research instrument. Data gathered will be sorted and coded before being captured into the SPSS. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient will be used to aid in assessing the internal consistency of the research instruments.

"Content validity" is the extent to which a questionnaire provides enough data to answer the research questions, while "construct validity" is the extent that the questions will collect data about what is intended to be measured (Lewis, 2012). To ensure that the questions are understood clearly and that the questions are not leading, a pilot-test was conducted with four respondents picked from the selected telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe. Lewis, (2012) state that pilot testing will give an indication of possible problems with questions and the length of the interview. By conducting pilot tests with typical participants, each question was critically evaluated in terms

of clarity. After the pilot test was done, certain questions were amended to make them simpler to understand, ensuring clarity for respondents.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

In this study the researcher considered voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity on all gathered data both throughout and after the research.

Firstly, the research got clearance from University of Zimbabwe, Graduate School of management (See ---- the introduction letter). The researcher promised to respect and cause no harm to research participants, to be professional, trustworthy and responsible throughout the research process and after. The ethical considerations cover on the norms and standard of behaviour that affect and direct the moral choices and relationships of the researcher with participants (Saunders, 2016). Ethical considerations cover how the researcher come up a research topic, design, data collection, processing and analysis as well as how these are clarified in the research up to the write up of the study findings in a responsible and moral manner (Cooper & Schindler, 2016).

### **3.8 Data Collection**

The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources for data collection. The primary data is collected using a semi-structured questionnaire that has closed ended questions formulated in line with set objectives of the study. However, the open-ended questions will facilitate the collection of factual information to aid in analysing the research data. The closed ended questions are based on a 5-point Likert-Scale:

1= strongly agree; 2= Agree; 3= Neutral; 4= Disagree; 5= strongly disagree.

The researcher personally self-administered the questionnaires to managers and supervisors in the 4 telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe then collect the questionnaires later, through the drop and pick soon after method. This will ensure the capturing of all the issues required and also ensures high response rates. Secondary data will be obtained from both internal and external sources through document analysis technique in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe, their documented records and from other published sources. These documents include: periodicals,

journals, reports, administrative documents, press releases, economic surveys, and multimedia online resources.

### **3.8.1 Data Analysis**

The data gathered was checked for completeness and correctness followed by coding, tabulation and organizing. The Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used to analysis quantitative data. This helped in summarizing and analysing the data collected, enabling the researcher to obtain underlying features of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. Descriptive statistics were used to find the measures of central tendency (mean) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation). Section A: addresses the demographic general information about the respondent and the company, Section B: addresses the gender disparities in leadership in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe, Section C: looks on the factors leading to gender disparities in leadership of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe, Section D: covers the effect of gender disparities in leadership on the performance of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe and lastly Section E: looks on the challenges faced in addressing gender disparities in leadership in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. The Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analysis quantitative data. This helped in summarizing and analysing the data collected, enabling the researcher to obtain underlying features of the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. In addition, a regression model and Pearson's correlation was used to find the relationship between gender diversity in leadership and company performance in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

### **3.9 Regression Model**

Several models could be used to analyse quantitative data which are logistic, probit, Tobit, discriminant analysis and regression models. Logistic, probit and tobit apply when the dependent variable is dichotomous Muathe, (2010). In this study, the dependent variable was continuous, so panel multiple regressions model was the most suitable. This was used to test the relationships between the various variables so as to understand the strength of each predictor variable

The following regression model will be adopted in this study:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y –Organizational Performance

X<sub>1</sub> – Values diversity

X<sub>2</sub> –Skills diversity

X<sub>3</sub> –Social diversity

a –is the constant

ε – Error term telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe

Hypothesis testing was conducted for R values.

### **3.10-Chapter summary**

This chapter outlined the research methodology used for the study. All methods and procedures use ensured that research questions were answered in order of their importance. The selected methods were considered to be the most appropriate considering all the methods available. Justifications for the use of the selected methods were provided in the chapter.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Data analysis, findings and discussion**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on data presentation and analysis. The data for the study was obtained from 160 telecommunication workers from the selected four companies each equally represented. Data was collected using online questionnaires and online interviews. The data presentation process ensures that research questions were answered in a systematic manner. Presentation and analysis of data was guided by the research methodology. The results presented in this chapter were based on the topic gender diversity and organizational financial performance. Secondary data for Telecommunication Company's financial performance was sourced from company's websites. Historical data on company performance was captured manually into excel spreadsheet.

#### **4.1 Demographic findings**

This section provides information on the demographic findings of respondents. It includes the respondents' demographic characteristics such as age, gender, academic qualifications and the number of years they had worked in their organization.

##### **4.1.1 Questionnaire response rate**

The data was collected using 160 questionnaires that were distributed electronically through WhatsApp and emails. All respondents were notified on time as a result a lot of them managed to successfully complete the questionnaires. The response rate was 79%. There were 33 questionnaires which were never returned which constitute 21% of all the questionnaires distributed. All the returned questionnaires were fully completed as a result they were used as the basis for finding conclusion to this study. The response rate demonstrated the willingness of respondents to participate in the study.

### 4.1.2 Ages of respondents

The graph below shows different age groups that took part in the study. The highest number of respondents from all age groups was women. The majority of respondents were below the age of 20 as they constituted 21.25% of all the respondents. The highest age group which was represented by men was below 20 year and the lowest represented age group was 51years and above. The second represented age was from age 40 to 50 years. The lowest represented age groups for all women and men constituted 5.6% and 4.4 % respectively.

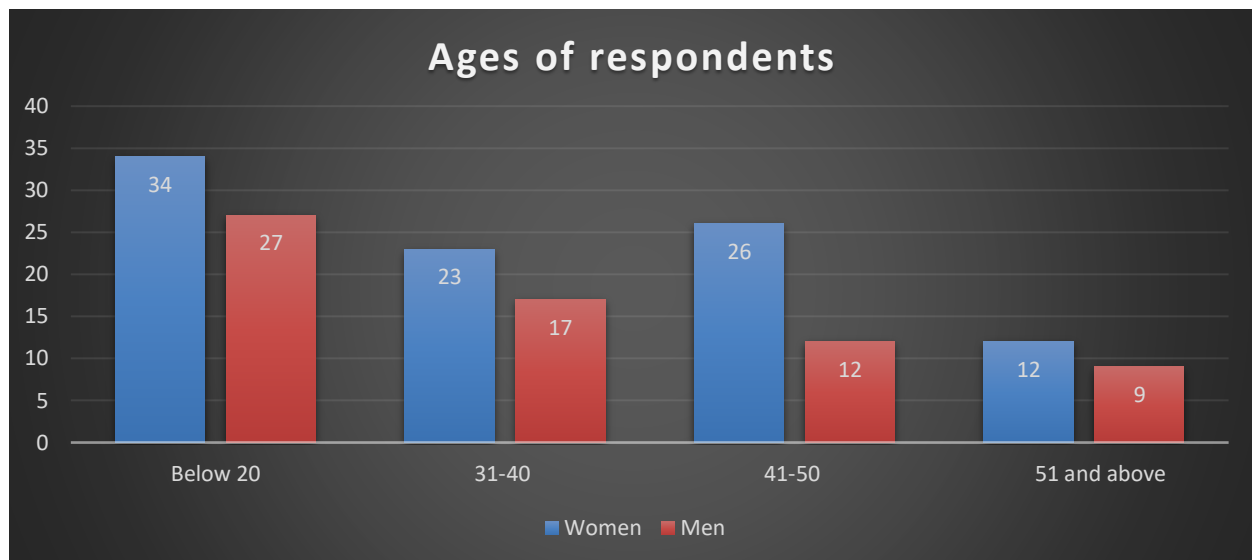
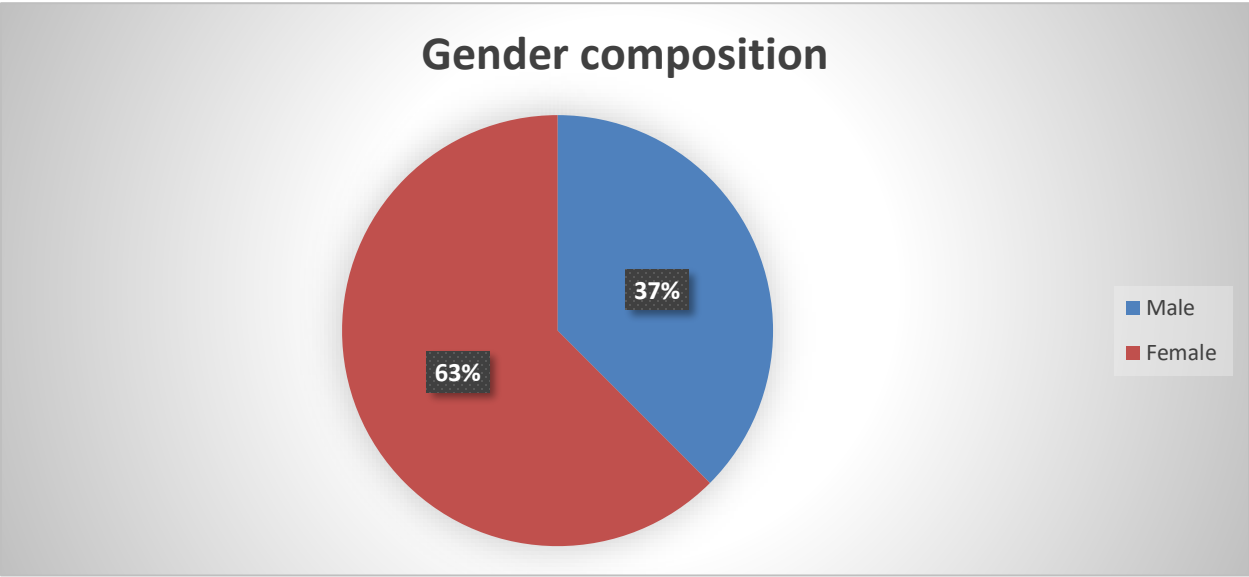


Figure 3: Ages of respondents Source: Data analysis (2020)

### 4.1.3 Gender composition

Respondents were drawn from four telecommunication companies comprises of men and women. The highest number of respondents was women. It was not clear whether there are more women in the telecommunication sector than men or it was only by chance that more women than men took part in this study. Results from the study indicated that from the selected telecommunication companies, there is gender inequality. There were 63% of respondents who were women and 37% who were men as shown in pie chart below.

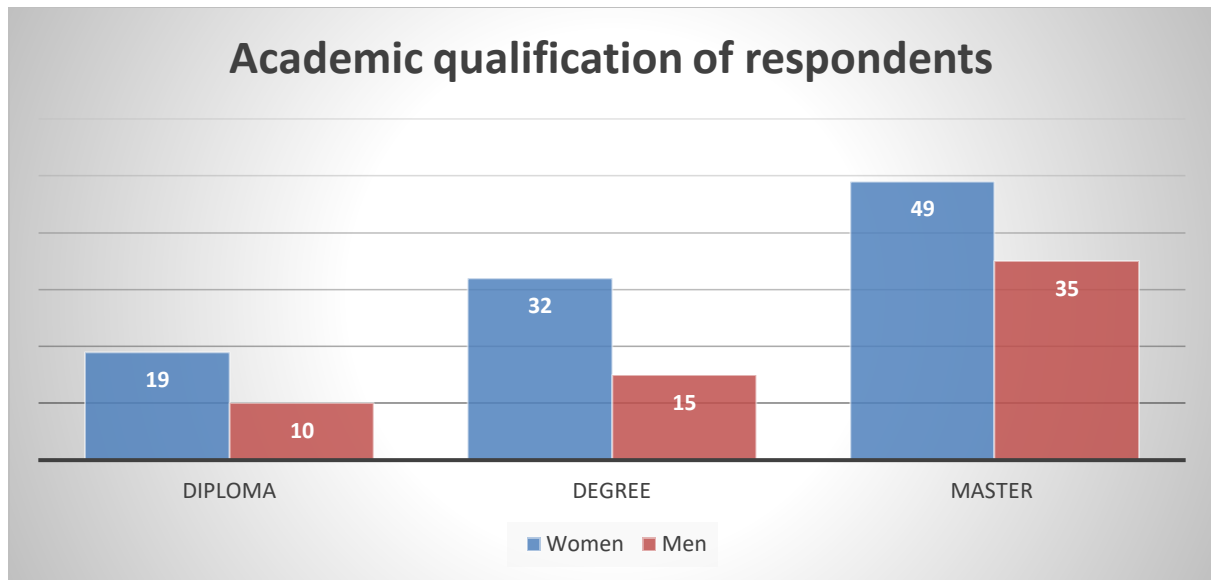




**Figure 4: Gender of respondents Source: Data analysis (2020)**

**4.2.4 Academic qualification of respondents**

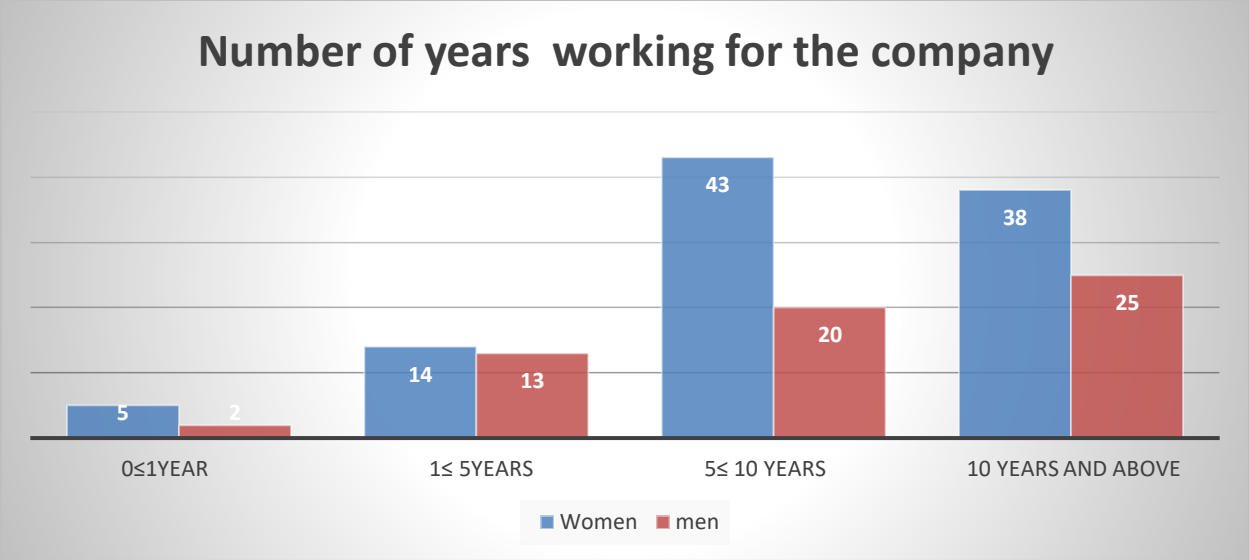
The educational background of respondents varies from diploma level up to master’s level. Respondents were asked to indicate their education background as this was going to have an implication in the respondent’s ability to provide useful information to the study. There were more degree holders in the group of respondents than any other qualification. They were more women with master’s degree than men. There were 30.6% of women with master’s degree and 21.9% men with master’s degree. The lowest level of qualification was diploma level on which women constituted 11.9% and men constituted 6.25%.The levels of education resembled by the respondents gave the researcher more confidants in the questionnaires findings. The level of education demonstrates that respondents were in a good position to give credible information. Most importantly, it showed that there is skill diversity amongst employees of the selected telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe. Skills diversity creates a large pool of experiences, ideas and education that creates new products. Such firms create an environment of high productivity and thus attract top talent employees and are able to retain these employees due to their progressive nature (Bhadury, 2000).



**Figure 5: Academic qualification of respondents Source: Data analysis (2020)**

#### **4.2.5 Number of years working for the company**

The number of year a respondent has worked for the company will ensure that the respondent has a deep understanding of the organizations operations and information. The number of years worked at the selected telecommunication company is represented below.

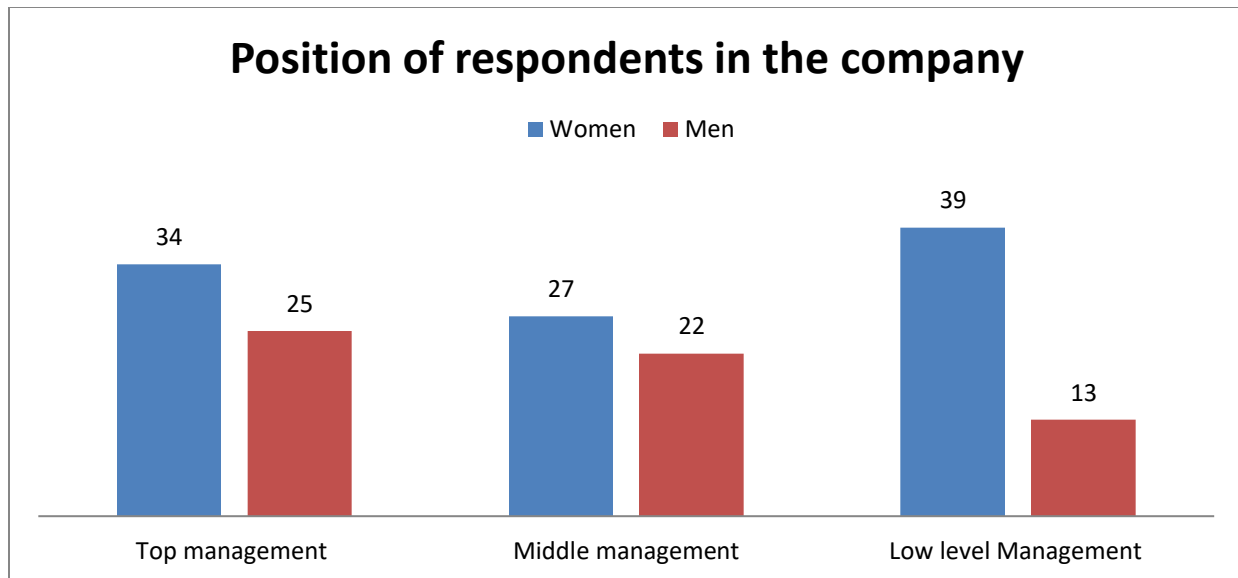


**Figure 6: Number of years working for the company (source: Data analysis 2020)**

The majority of women as shown by 26, 9% (43) worked for the telecommunication company for 5 to 10 years and the majority of men as shown by 15, 6% (25) worked within their companies for above 10 years. There were only 3% of women who worked for their organizations for less than a year and 1, 25% of men who worked for the same period. For the period of 1 year to 5 years there were 8,75% women and 8,12% men. The results were characterized by diverse tenures within different telecommunication companies which has a significant implication on experience which will as a result impact the overall employee diversity in terms of skills and knowledge. The majority of respondents have tenures from 5 years and above as a result the telecommunication companies have necessary skills and knowledge diversity required for creativity, innovation and organizational performance. This supports the findings of that diversity improves employee quality and performance in terms of diverse skills, creativity, problem-solving and flexibility as indicated by (Cox, 2001).

**4.2.6 Respondent position in the organization**

The results indicated that respondents came from different levels of organizational hierarchy that is top level management, middle management and low level management. The bar graph below shows positions of respondents in the organization.



**Figure 7:Position of respondents in the company (source: Data analysis 2020).**

The graph above shows that the majority of women are in the lower level management positions as shown by 24.4 % (39) where men constituted 8.12% (13). The highest representation in the middle level management were women who constituted 16,9% against men who were 13.75% (22). In the top level management, women also hold the majority share of 21.25% (34) against men who were 15,6% (25). All three levels of management were represented as a result credibility of information concerning gender diversity at different levels was enhanced.

### **Reliability**

Reliability was checked using the Cronbach Alpha technique. Initially pilot test of research instrument was done using selected telecommunication workers who were not included in the final process of data gathering. Actual participants were not involved in the pilot testing. By convention, a cut-off 0.60 is common in descriptive research; alpha should be at least 0.70 or higher to retain an item in “adequate “scale (Hair et al., 1995). All Cronbach’s values in this study are greater than 0.60 thus proving the study to have higher reliability.

## Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.763	160

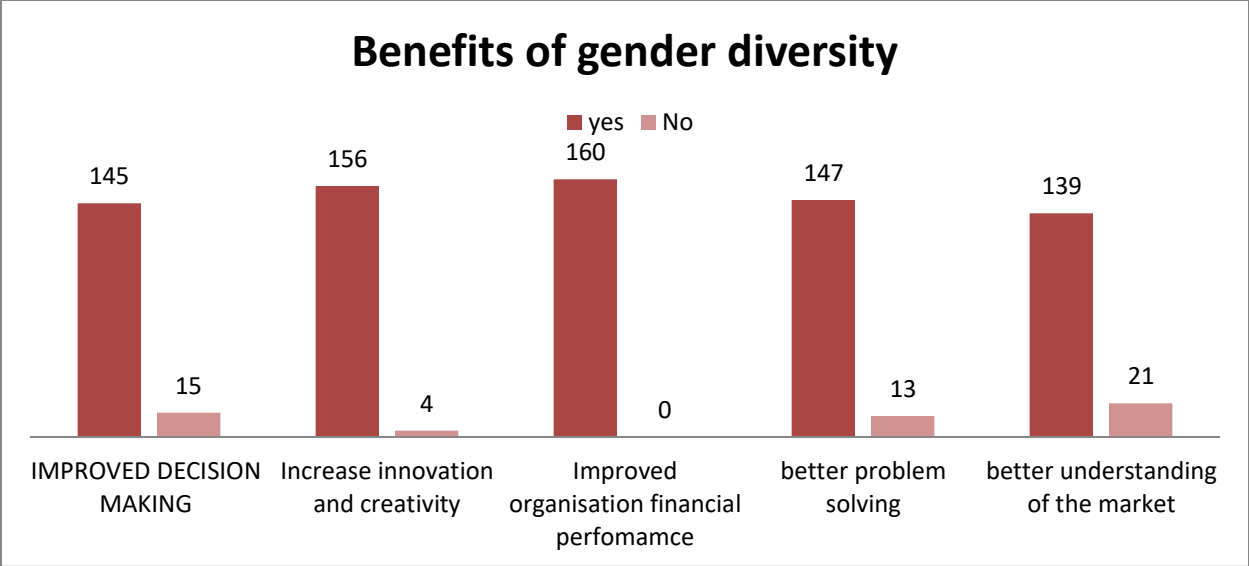
## Section B

### 4.2 Analysis of Research findings

The study recognized three types of diversity which are values diversity, skills diversity and social diversity. Section B of the study is broken down into 2 subsections the descriptive statistics and inferential statistics section.

#### 4.2.1 Identify benefits of gender diversity in leadership

The first question which was asked the respondents was if they understand well what gender diversity means at workplace. The researcher wanted to know whether it was necessary for the telecommunication company to have gender diversity in leadership.



**Figure 8: Benefits of gender diversity (source: Data analysis 2020)**

The bar graph above shows the benefits of gender diversity according to the respondents from telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe. The majority of the respondents agree with past studies on the benefits of gender diversity in leadership. The findings in this study supported the benefits outlined by Post Byron, 2015 in the following proportions, there were 90.6 % of respondents who said it improves decision making and decision quality, 97, 5% said it increase innovation and creativity ,100% said improve organizational financial performance ,91.9% said better problem solving capabilities are brought by great gender diversity in leadership and 86.9% said it leads to better understanding of the market hence company image enhanced.

**4.2.2 Social Diversity on organization performance**

The main concerns were on age, ethnicity and gender diversity with regard to employees’ social diversity. The question has a scale represented as 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. The mean was 2.999 and indication that respondents strongly agree on the social diversity indicators as an influencing factor on organization performance. The deviations from the mean were very small .It indicates that respondents that the social diversity to have strong influence on the organization performance.

The selected telecommunication companies were equally represented as shown by a mean of 3.6343 with the respondents agreeing that age diversity in their selected companies had led to

increase knowledge sharing, creativity and innovation. The majority of respondents were neutral on whether age diversity had led to increased employees conflicts as shown by a mean of 2.898. They also agreed that age diversity improved company productivity. This contradicts the social identity theory which postulates that group process tends to lead to the emergence of subgroups, thus hindering effective communication and group functioning in an organizational context (Bacharach, 2005).

The respondents strongly disagree that the selected telecommunication companies had equal gender representation as shown by the gender composition graph. They also disagreed that gender diversity had led to improved customer loyalty and retention as shown by a mean of 2.554 and that gender diversity in the company had increased employee satisfaction and retention as shown by a mean of 3.2613. However, they remained neutral that gender diversity programs had increased the number of job applicants of either gender as shown by a mean of 2.5655. This indicates that the selected telecommunication companies did not have an equal representation of either gender. The respondents perceived that their organizations had not reaped the benefits of gender diversity which according to Kochan, (2003) gender diversity had positive effects on group processes and in return team's performance which improves business performance.

#### **4.2.3 Skills diversity and organization performance**

It was also important for the study to look at how skill diversity affects organization performance. Findings indicated that a mean of 3.4545 agreed on skills diversity as an influential factor on organization performance. Standard deviations were very closer to the mean showing how important is skill diversity as a factor of organization performance. The results were in line with Cox (2001) findings. Cox (2001) found that diversity improves employee quality and performance in terms of diverse skills, creativity, problem-solving and flexibility.

The respondents were asked on the ability of skills diversity to increase organization performance. Majority of respondents represented by a mean of 3.7565 agreed that skills diversity increase telecommunication company performance. A mean of 3.2211 agreed that skills diversity increases company productivity, a mean of 3.4321 agreed that skills has led to new products development

.The selected telecommunication companies employed employees with diverse education and experience as shown by a mean of 3.9645 and these telecommunication companies had a diverse set of knowledge and expertise as shown by a mean of 3.9999.

The findings were in line with (DiTomaso, 2007) who's findings suggest that skills and knowledge diversity drives creativity and performance, on complex tasks, with equally skilled leadership, diverse teams will outperform teams that aren't diverse. DiTomaso, (2007) argue that diversity increases the opportunity for creativity and the quality of the product of group work. It is thus evident that the benefits of diversity may extend beyond team and workplace functioning and problem solving.

#### **4.2.4 Values Diversity and organization performance**

A mean of 3.567 agreed that employees from telecommunication companies have diverse personalities. Respondents agreed that values diversity increases organization team performance as shown by a mean of 3.351. A mean of 3.432 agreed that values diversity affects the quality of decisions made by the telecommunication company. This indicates that the respondents viewed employees' values diversity to have a direct effect on organization

#### **4.2.5 Organization Performance**

There are different measures used for organization performance. The study utilized three performance matrices which are market share; cost of labor reduction and employee performance .The table below shows results on organization performance.



**Descriptive Statistics on Organization Performance**  
**Employee diversity and performance metrics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Diversity and market share	160	1.00	4.00	3.6486	1.48108
Diversity reduced the cost of labor	160	1.00	4.00	3.5405	1.45717
Diversity has improved employee performance	160	1.00	4.00	3.8559	1.29928
Aggregate Scores	160				

**Source: Data analysis 2020**

**Figure 9: Organization performance**

It is evident that the respondents agreed on the organization performance indicators. From the standard deviation it is evident that the individual statements standard deviations are close indicating low variations among the respondents' responses. This shows that the respondents felt employees diversity led to improved employees performance, reduced labor costs and increased market share.

Diversity is associated with superior outcomes over homogeneity because progress and innovation is more dependent on diverse groups working together and capitalizing on their individuality than on lone thinkers with high intelligence. The best group decisions and predictions are those that draw on unique qualities.

The study respondents agreed that employee diversity had improved employee performance as shown by a mean of 3.8559, that employee diversity had increased market share as indicated by a mean of 3.6486 and that employee diversity had reduced the cost of labour as indicated by a mean of 3.5405. This is supported by the literature on the human resource base of a firm which has diverse characteristics which firms strive to harness.

### 4.3 Model Fitting

The relationship between gender diversity and organization performance can be obtained through correlation analysis, regression analysis and testing the study hypotheses.

Correlations						
			performance of selected state corporations	Skills Diversity	Values Diversity	Social Diversity
Spearman's rho	performance of selected state corporations	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.877**	.788**	.772**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	111	111	111	111
	Skills Diversity	Correlation Coefficient	.877**	1.000	.778**	.747**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	111	111	111	111
	Values Diversity	Correlation Coefficient	.788**	.778**	1.000	.484**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	111	111	111	111
	Social Diversity	Correlation Coefficient	.772**	.747**	.484**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	111	111	111	111

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

Source: Data analysis 2020

Figure 10:Model fitting

#### 4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

Spearman's correlation was conducted to test for correlation .The study found that there is a strong positive linear correlation between gender diversity and organization performance with a correlation factor of 0.877 this positive relationship was significant as the significant values were less than 0.05.The results indicated a strong positive relationship between skills diversity and organization performance .

The findings concur with the research findings by (DiTomaso, 2007) whereby skills and knowledge diversity drives creativity and performance, on complex tasks, with equally skilled leadership, diverse teams will outperform teams that aren't diverse. Diversity enhances customer

relations and increases market share; diversity enhances employee relations and reduces the cost of labour; diversity improves employee quality and performance in terms of diverse skills, creativity, problem-solving and flexibility.

The study also found a strong positive relationship between values diversity and organization performance of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe .this is indicated by a correlation coefficient of 0.788. Employees’ values will determine their overall involvement in the organization and the quality of value addition to their employer. This value is the source of creativity, innovation, effectiveness and efficiency in the organization which translates to the organization bottom line through increased revenues and market share growth (Bacharach, 2005).There was also a strong positive correlation reviewed by the study which is between social diversity and organization performance in the telecommunication sector in Zimbabwe with a coefficient of 0.772.

#### 4.3.2 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the effect of the independent variables (Social diversity, Skills diversity and Values Diversity) on performance of selected state corporations. The results obtained were as follows;

Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.756 <sup>a</sup>	.789	.619	.56578

a. Predictors: (Constant), Skills Diversity, Values Diversity, Social Diversity

Source: Data analysis 2020

The coefficient of determination explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables or the percentage of variation in the dependent variable (performance of selected state corporations) as explained by the three independent variables (Social diversity, Skills diversity and Values Diversity. The three independent variables that were studied, explain only 75.2% of the effect of employee diversity on performance of selected telecommunication companies as represented by the adjusted  $R^2$ .

## Regression Coefficients

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.300	.229		-.875	.003
	Skills Diversity	.341	.057	.435	6.862	.000
	Values Diversity	.410	.074	.318	5.026	.000
	Social Diversity	.237	.064	.271	4.502	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

**Table 2::Regression coefficients**

a. Dependent Variable: Y

$$Y = (-0.30) + 0.341X_1 + 0.410X_2 + 0.237X_3$$

### 4.5.2 Testing the Regression Model for Significance

This was done to see if the statistical relationship between values diversity, skills diversity, social diversity and organization performance as given by the above regression model was, a genuine relationship or was it due purely to chance.

#### Null and alternative hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub>: Gender diversity in leadership does not increase organization financial performance of companies in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

H<sub>a</sub>: Gender diversity in leadership increases organization financial performance of companies in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe.

**Hypothesis Test on Gender Diversity and organization  
Performance**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
4	Regression	75.458	4	75.458	468.376	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	64.602	407	.565		
	Total	456.764	440			
a. Dependent Variable: Performance of State Corporations						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Skill Diversity						

**Source: Data analysis 2020**

**Figure 11: Hypothesis testing**

Testing at 5% significant level it has been found that the value of F-calculated was greater than the critical value ( $F_c = 468.376 > F_o = 2.7$ ), the value of significance (p-value = 0.000) was less than 5%. At 5% significance level we reject  $H_0$  and conclude that there is enough evidence that gender diversity increase organization performance. sample evidence indicates that there is a genuine strong positive statistical relationship between gender diversity and organization performance. The findings are in line with Carter et. al. (2003) found a positive relationship between the proportion of female board directors and firm value measured in Tobin's Q. This is supported by Erhard, Werbel and Shrader (2003), who observed an increased effectiveness in the monitoring function of gender diverse boards of US companies as well better firm performance. Another study drawing on a sample from the 1990s found a positive relation between the percentage of female directors and Tobin's Q of Spanish firms (Campbell, Minquez-Vera, 2008).

## **Chapter 5**

### **Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented the study results, analysis and discussion of the empirical findings from the study. This is the last chapter of the dissertation. This chapter is comprised of summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

#### **5.1 Recap of research objectives:**

The study objectives as outlined in chapter 1 were:

- i To establish the effect of women's skills diversity on organization performance of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe.
- ii To assess the effect of women's values diversity on organization performance of telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe.
- iii To determine the effect of women's social diversity on organization performance of Telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe

#### **5.2 Summary of findings**

The main objective of the study was to assess the relationship between gender diversity in leadership and organizational financial performance in the telecommunications sector in Zimbabwe. The majority of respondents from the telecommunication companies were women who constituted 63% of the respondent's. The study revealed that the majority of respondents were highly educated with master's level qualification and the majority of the respondents were below the age of 20 years.

##### **5.2.1 Effect of Skills Diversity on Organization Performance**

The study found that skills diversity increases company performance. Correlation analysis indicated a very strong positive linear relationship between skills diversity and organization performance. According to Bunderson & Sutcliffe, (2002) teams composed of individuals with a

breadth of functional experiences are well-suited to overcoming communication barriers because team members can relate to one another's functions while still realizing the performance benefits of diverse functional experiences. This is similarly supported by DiTomaso, (2007) who argue that diversity increases the opportunity for creativity and the quality of the product of group work. Study results showed employees with diverse education and experience as a result broad base of knowledge and expertise. Respondents strongly agreed that skills diversity had increased organization performance significantly through innovation and creativity

### **5.2.2 Effect of Values Diversity on Organization Performance**

The study found that value diversity had a significant effect on organization performance and had a strong positive linear relationship with organization performance. Data analysis concluded that all respondents strongly agreed that employees from different telecommunication organizations had diverse personalities .and attitudes. The findings were in conformity to the similarity-attraction theory which is applied when observing groups with regard to their composition. The framework projects the argument that when group members feel similar to others, a mutual attraction is established that leads to positive communication and group integration processes.

### **5.2.3 Effect of Social Diversity on Organization Performance**

This study found that social diversity affects the organization performance of the selected telecommunication companies with a strong positive correlation. This is supported in literature by (Cox, 2001) who suggests that having diverse employees leads to increased market share and increased sales to minority-culture groups. Diversity contributes to increased market share because it enhances an organization's ability 'to deal more sensitively with multicultural domestic and foreign customers, thereby increasing customer satisfaction, keeping and gaining market share (Bhadury, 2000). The research findings indicated that social diversity increased customer satisfaction and loyalty .

### **5.2.4 Employee Diversity and Organization Performance**

Three common metrics used to measure organization performance were used. The study found that gender diversity affects customer satisfaction and market share, employee satisfaction and labor

cost. The results found that diversity in skills increases creativity and problem-solving Literature shows that diversity enhances customer relations and increases market share; diversity enhances employee relations and reduces the cost of labour; diversity improves employee quality and performance in terms of diverse skills, creativity, problem-solving and flexibility (Cox, 2001). It's also argued that, with declining homogeneity in the employee, it has become crucial for

### **5.2.5 Correlation and Regression Analysis**

The study came out with the following regression model:

$$Y = (-0.30) + 0.341X_1 + 0.410X_2 + 0.237X_3$$

The study found that holding all independent variables constant, there will be a negative effect on telecommunication company performance of (-0.30) A unit increase in the skills diversity will lead to an increase in performance of selected telecommunication companies by a factor of 0.341; a unit increase in values diversity will lead to an increase in performance of selected telecommunication companies by a factor of 0.410. Further, a unit increase in social diversity will lead to increase in performance of selected telecommunication companies by a factor of 0.237.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The study found that skills diversity, social diversity and value diversity has a strong positive effect on organization performance as measured by market share, labour costs. The correlation between organization performance and social diversity, skills diversity and value diversity was found to be a strong positive relationship. It was found in the study that social diversity enables a telecommunication organization to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study noted the need to balance gender representation within telecommunication organizations in Zimbabwe.

The study also found that skills diversity influence organization performance of the telecommunication organizations. Diversity in terms of education and skills was found to influence innovation and creativity. Study results showed that telecommunication organization in Zimbabwe are employing diverse skills and expertise within their organizations

Finally, the study found that value diversity affect organization performance .The selected telecommunication organizations had diverse personalities and attitudes that was found to affect



team performance as a result .Diversity in Personality and attitudes was found to affect teams performance .Overall gender diversity was found to affect customer satisfaction and market share, employee satisfaction and labour costs, employee quality and performance with the most significant impact being on employee quality and performance in terms of diverse skills, creativity, problem-solving and flexibility.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

The study made the following recommendations to the telecommunication organizations in Zimbabwe:

- i Telecommunication organizations should make effort to make gender diversity a top priority within their organizations as this will increase their organization performance.
- ii Telecommunication companies should focus on promoting social diversity, skills diversity and value diversity within their organizations to improve team performance.
- iii To harness age diversity as it is the greatest source of knowledge.
- iv Telecommunication companies need to improve their gender representation

### **5.4.1 Theoretical contributions**

This research`s contribution is that women should have a significant representation in the leadership of any organisation given that results show that the performance of an organisation. It highlighted key areas where companies were lacking success because of an absence of women in the different sectors of companies in the organisation.

### **5.4.3 Limitations of the study**

The study was conducted under a number of limitations:

- i. Due to Covid 19 it was not easy to get respondents to participate in the study.
- ii. Covid 19 regulations resulted difficulties in getting access to organizations premises
- iii. Challenges in travelling from one place to another due to the need to have clearance letter
- iv. A lot of respondents were not willing to take part in the study

## **5.5 Areas for Future Research**

The study variables contributed about 75.2% to performance of selected telecommunication companies. Further studies can be carried out on the other 24.8% aspects. Further studies need to be carried out using other metrics on organization performance example financial performance. The other area of study will be on gender diversity and organization performance if companies in different industries.

## **5.6 Chapter summary.**

This chapter is a summary of the research paper and brings to a conclusion the research paper by drawing conclusions and recommendations have been given in respect to the research topic and questions that were raised. A recap of the objectives of the research was given and the outcome of the research, drawing to conclusions and recommendations essential to the topic. Research supported through evidence the conclusions made and the recommendations were that a more deliberate effort should be made in telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe to include women in leadership. Further areas for research were suggested in the end.

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