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Nigeria's Female Entrepreneurs Within Female Entrepreneurship's Macrocosm

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Abstract

The paper examines the popularity of the female entrepreneurs and their importance in creating vitally required jobs right on demand in breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. It additionally identifies the challenges confronted by these lady entrepreneurs, by means of reviewing a number of literatures and gives some recommendation on overcoming these obstacles. Women these days have emerged as a key participant in financial improvement of the nations. Today, women have an important place in the economic development of the country. But social change is not over yet. Women entrepreneurs encounter problems not only in the process of establishing a business, but also in the process of sustaining a business. All over the world, they have become important players in promoting

social and economic development. In the last few decades, women have made significant progress in the workforce. This change is a result of equality and equal pay policies; fair work; changing social norms for women in the workplace; and organizations seeking qualified women in management positions to create a positive image. In the last few decades, women have made significant progress in the workforce. This change is a result of equality and equal pay policies; fair work; changing social norms for women in the workplace; and organizations seeking qualified women in management positions to create a positive image. Many women are learning more and the idea that women should stay at home, take care of the children, cook, go to the market, look after the children and family is not in fashion. The number of women in business is increasing day by day. Women entrepreneurs face many challenges in the process of reaching their goals. Initially they face social problems, then they face financial problems. Commercial and intellectual barriers make it difficult for them to start a business. Problems arising from their own fears and their behavior in business decisions are another important factor in the uncertainty of female entrepreneurs. However, they have proven that they can't just run a small business, they can be successful at running a bigger business. After all.

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Introduction

Half of the world population are women consequently they are known as the better half of the society. They were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities in traditional societies, but n modern societies they have come out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of business activities. Women have been performing exceedingly well in different spheres of activities like academics, politics, administration, social work and so on according to the global evidences. They have now successfully started plunging into industry also and running their enterprises.

Recently female entrepreneurs have been moving rapidly into manufacturing, construction and other industrial filed from their known traditional fashion, food and other services sector businesses. Almost in all countries, Women owned business are lightly increasing. Entrepreneurial potential of women that was hitherto hidden has gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to the role and economic status in the society in the service of man and humanity.

Running a business successfully women have the potentials, skill, knowledge and adaptability to defy all odds to succeed.

Across the globe, the rate at which females are starting their businesses is in a geometric increase. In the United States, for example, female folks own 9.1 million firms, or 38 percentage of all U.S. companies. From 1987 to 1999, the variety of woman-owned companies in the United States elevated by over 103 percent; employment with the aid of lady groups rose 320 percent; and, even greater astounding, income grew by over 436 percent. Female-owned corporations in the United States generate greater than $3.6 trillion in annual sales, and lady entrepreneurs appoint greater human beings than the whole Fortune 500.

Although the United States might also be the most stated instance of the upward shove of female entrepreneurs within the industrialized world, woman-owned organizations are on the upward jostle everywhere. In Germany, female entrepreneurs have created a 1/3 of the new organizations considering the fact that reunification in 1990, supplying 1 million new jobs and contributing U.S. $15 billion to the German gross countrywide product. Female entrepreneurs in different transition economies, like Russia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland, are making a comparable impact. In Latin America, in accordance to the World Bank, absolutely 1/2 of all economic boom in the remaining decade all through the location is attributable to the creativity and tough work of female entrepreneurs. In South

Asia, female entrepreneurs now outnumber men counterparts as commercial enterprise owners. And in Southeast Asia lady owned corporations have been at the forefront of that region's financial turnaround when you consider that the "Asian flu" arrived in 1997.

Research shows that trends in female entrepreneurs in emerging economies are similar compared to developed countries. GEM (2013.Approximately 40 percent of Nigerian female folks are entrepreneurs. The sub-Saharan region has the highest rate of female entrepreneurs worldwide (Mohammed et al., 2017).
A recent BBC survey found that around 40% of Nigerian women are entrepreneurs; this is a higher percentage than anywhere else in the world (BBC). With the rise of women entrepreneurs in Nigeria, research on these businesses has become timely, important and relevant.

The growth of women's businesses is clearly good for business. The rise of female entrepreneurs also benefits society and women themselves. Those who want to see women improve around the world have discovered that caring and supporting female's entrepreneurship is of immense value to the society. The benefits of women starting and running their own businesses are significant because: it increases self-confidence, quality of life and life expectancy, and reductions in infant mortality,

In emerging economies, research reveals comparable tendencies amongst the female entrepreneurs when compared to the developed countries. GEM (2013) in its document indicates that about 41% of ladies mounted new organizations as against to 29% amongst the men in Nigeria and Zambia.

It has been estimated that 40% of Nigerian ladies are entrepreneurs. The best possible percentage of female entrepreneurs in Sub Sahara Africa (Mohammed et al., 2017). A current survey through the BBC suggests that about 40% of Nigerian ladies are entrepreneurs and this is greater than somewhere else in the world (BBC). With the upward increase in female entrepreneurship in Nigeria, a study about of them is timely, vital and relevant.

Objective Of The Study

- To promote the idea of female entrepreneurship as a tool that may employed and deployed as a game changer towards poverty reduction in Nigeria.

- To highlight the challenges of female entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

- To mobilize the female folks for economic prosperity leveraging on female entrepreneurship.

Research Methodology

This paper adopted a qualitative research design which entailed a review of literature on the roles of female entrepreneurship in economic growth and development which could be deployed effectively to emancipate the womenfolk from excruciating poverty as a result of their entrepreneurial failures. The study adopted a conceptual approach. The use of systematic literature review.

Unravelling The Mystery Of Female Entrepreneurs

Female entrepreneurs refer only to women who are fully involved in the business, take risks, and pool resources in a special way to use insight into their environment through production and services (Chinonye & Qima, 2010). Olumide (2012) defines female entrepreneurs as women business leaders who start new businesses. In addition, female entrepreneurs accept the risks and social responsibilities involved in changing their daily activities. Women entrepreneurs are also known as women who enter business life by using their knowledge, skills and creative ideas.

Ganesamurthy (2007) defines women entrepreneurs as thoughtful and innovative private women who are required individually or through collaboration to achieve financial independence for themselves and create jobs for others. However, people initiate, develop and demonstrate a sense of adventure consistent with their family and public activities

Female entrepreneurs are women who plan and manage businesses (Pandian & Jesurajan, 2011). They generate incomes for their families and employment for their communities," Female entrepreneurs are essential for the economic development, poverty and unemployment reduction in a nation. Women entrepreneurs come to families, provide communities with products and services that add new value to business and the world around them.

"Women entrepreneurs are important for the economic development of a country and the reduction of poverty and unemployment. They have roles to play in the social, economic, and political existence of any nation. Moore and Buttner (1997) in Farr-Wharton and Brunetto (2007) described female entrepreneurs as: "women who use their information and assets to strengthen or create new enterprise opportunities, who are actively concerned in managing their businesses, own at least 50 per cent of the commercial enterprise and have been in operation for longer than a year.

Female Entrepreneurship is one of the best tools to ensure gender equality and women's advancement in society. Investing in women-specific projects can affect the country's economic development. The aim is not only to reduce the gap between women and men, but also to eliminate economic and social discrimination, programs and practices that prevent women from participating in business life.

Females' Entrepreneurial Traits

Female business owners have two characteristics (women first, business second). For this reason, Chinonye & Chima (2010) noted that the characteristics of female entrepreneurs include power and internal control, quick thinking and needing for a

long time , adaptability, innovation/creativity (Schumpeter, 1934, Drucker 1985), managing expertise, responsibility, and credit risk taking.

Concept Of Female Entrepreneurship

Female entrepreneurship is an economic undertaking that entails starting an enterprise, gather and organize each and every one of the factors of production, delegate responsibilities, bear risks and manage the economic vulnerability involved in growing a commercial enterprise.

Throughout the world, female entrepreneurs constitute themselves as significant supporters of the economy because they make their impacts felt the financial field. They contribute their thoughts and a lot of energy coupled with capital assets to their networks, and produce jobs seekers and provide   other side project business linkages.

The women business has undergone changes and has finally risen, but it still has a long way to go before it becomes a productive business. The importance of female entrepreneurship for families and businesses is well documented. Women's entrepreneurship makes a special contribution to economic growth in low- and

middle-income countries.

Women entrepreneurs around the world are important supporters of the business world due to their influence in the financial sector. They advise with energy and resources important to their networks and create jobs such as sidelines for providers and other business contacts.

They are imaginative and innovative women that are fit for accomplishing self-financial freedom exclusively or in coordinated effort, provide work openings for other people however starting, building up and showing the venture and supporting her own family and public activity Ganesamurthy (2007).

WHY FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP?
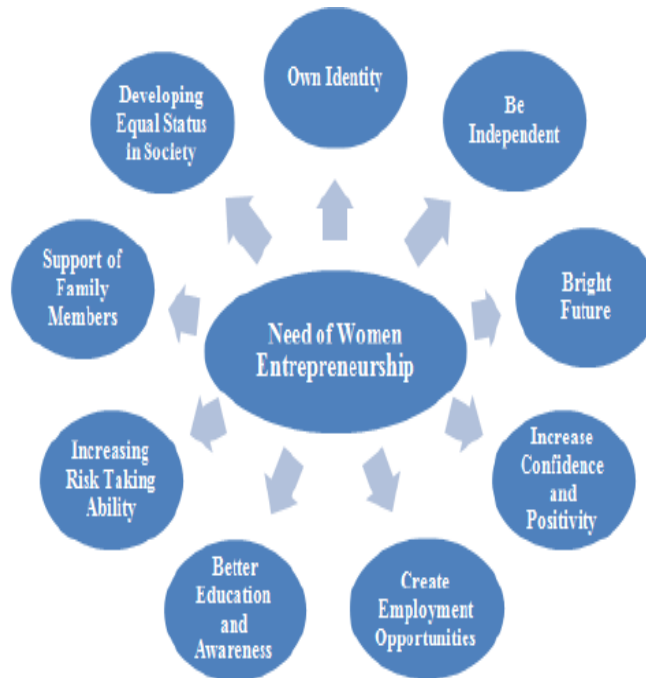
The Need of Women Entrepreneurship

Source: Sonu Garg1 andParul Agarwal(2017): Problems and Prospects of Woman Entrepreneurship. A Review of Literature.

The Attractions Of Female Entrepreneurship

Women's participation in business development has increased in the last two decades. Women's employment and personal property became a global problem (Butler, 2003).

In the United States, for example, women-owned companies have grown one and a half times over the size of other small businesses over the past 15 years and now account for about 30 percent. all businesses. Today, four out of ten business owners (40 percent) in the United States are women. Women entrepreneurs make up 8 percent of the workforce and 4.3 percent of total income (USCCF, 2016). Although women entrepreneurs are involved in economic growth and prosperity, women's business worldwide also faces challenges (Kelley et al., 2017).

Out of the 49 economies surveyed by GEM in 2018, only 6 have the same TEA rates for men and women; 2 of them are in East and South Asia (Indonesia and Thailand), 1 in Latin America (Panama) and 3 in the Middle East. and Africa (Qatar, Madagascar and Angola). Today, many women entrepreneurs are struggling with sustainability issues. They cannot reduce their costs due to business failures, which causes unemployment and poverty (Franco & Haase, 2009).

While women entrepreneurs in developed and developing countries have many characteristics, many women in developing countries are still illiterate – even without the skills, knowledge and skills – and live in poor communities. However, women have always worked in the local economy. For example, 80 percent of food in Africa is produced by women. They make up 60% in Asia and 40% in Latin America.

Most of the women not only produce food but also sell it by providing information about local markets and consumers. Most of the poor people in the world are women and children.

Some of these women work in small businesses that allow them to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families. Small businesses and micro businesses are starting to gain traction. Community organizations and nonprofits have shown that investing in women is the most effective way to improve health, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene.

The International Foundation for Community Assistance (FINCA) defines women as "the best, most productive and creative members of the poor". As the problem of women gaining skills and experience in developing countries remains, and their

full participation in the economy in their own communities has disappeared, the important thing should be to place women in the workplace and to create a humane and balanced job. Because of their unique leadership styles, women entrepreneurs often provide a caring, collaborative work environment that fosters personal growth and development. At the same time, the way women lead has proven to be unique in today's business world.

The Developing World And Female Entrepreneurs

Throughout the world, female-owned businesses represent between one-fourth and one-third of the commercial enterprise population. While female entrepreneurs in each developing nations and developed nations share many characteristics, many female entrepreneurs in the developing world stay illiterate, inexperience, lack wisdom and stay in terrible rural communities. Nonetheless, female have continually actively participated in their nearby economies. In Africa, for example, female entrepreneurs produce eighty percentage of the food. In Asia, they produce 60 percentage and in Latin America forty percent.

Women in developing countries acquire competence and experience, and as the artificial barriers to their full participation in the economic life of their

communities gradually fall, the integration of feminine values into the workplace should create a more humane and balanced work environment. Because of their unique leadership style, women-run enterprises generally provide a caring, cooperative work environment in which individual growth and development are fostered.

However, female entrepreneurs, now not solely produce meals however market it as well, giving them a well-developed know-how of neighborhood markets and customers. The majority of the impoverished in the world are ladies and children.

Nigeria' Practice Of Female Entrepreneurship

Traditionally, women are seen as housewives and caretakers in Nigerian culture. Female entrepreneurs tend to be fewer than male entrepreneurs, raise less capital through debt and equity, and rely on internal sources of finance (households, friends, and self-protection) (Adesua-Lincoln, 2012). In Nigeria, the economic performance of women entrepreneurs is lower than that of men (Ekpe, Alabo, & Egbe, 2014).

The reason for this is institutional barriers that do not allow women to participate in economic empowerment (Ekpe et al., 2014). Women are considered to be related to the family and most of the management of the house is given to them (Motilewa, Onakaya & Oke, 2015).

The widespread use of the word "sex" in the Nigerian language suggests that women should not work in stressful and high-risk jobs. This hinders many Nigerian women from starting, running and growing commercial businesses. Aladejebi (2020) found that the main problem faced by women entrepreneurs in Western Nigeria is not the general perception of social discrimination. He concluded that lack of adequate education, lack of start-up capital and inadequate family support, including spousal support, hindered the growth of women's business in the country.

The Role Of Female Entrepreneurs In Economic Growth

It is important to understand that small businesses owned by women play an important role in the world economy, hence reasons for the failure (or success) of small businesses is critical to the stability of the global economy (Titus, 2008).

Lawmakers in many countries resent the job creation potential of small businesses. The high failure rate of small businesses has caused significant waste of resources and has brought economic and human costs.

The high failure rate of small businesses has resulted in large waste products, thus incurring economic and human costs. That's why it's important to understand reasons why new small businesses fail. Most women are in small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMES), which account for more than 97% of all businesses, 60% of the country's GDP and 97% of all jobs (Ndubusi, 2004). Women's entrepreneurship mainly ranges from home-based enterprises (HBB) to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSE) (ILO, 2006). Okafor and Mordi (2010) think that women have two characteristics (ie they are women first and then entrepreneurs).

Enabling Women Through Female Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is one of the best ideas for women's empowerment and advancement in their ideas. For millions of women around the world, life is a complex web of restrictions, responsibilities and sacrifices, many of which are set from birth. The tribe or race into which a woman is born determines her rights and

freedoms.

The identity of the group is only part of the situation. Patriarchal family structures continue to determine many aspects of women's lives. Many women in developing countries have no other way to survive than to marry and have children.

Information technology as a catalyst for female entrepreneurship

The use of new information and communication technologies such as the Internet is an important factor in accessing global markets.

Female owners of SMEs can now use computers to exchange information on supply and demand, market prices /and microcredit facilities. Throughout the developed world, the Internet has proven its great potential to compete in international markets as well as local ones. ICT can also contribute to important social goals by providing women and rural families with access to basic health and education services that they would not normally have.

Challenges faced by female entrepreneurs

Globally, female entrepreneurs face almost the set of problems which include:

- LACK OF EDUCATION: the ability to find, analyze and understand ways and build a good business around them. In this sense, education is important. Experience shows that female citizens in developing countries are more educated than women in developing countries. 16 In India, 56 percent of the female population is educated, and most of them have no education outside of school. This results in businesswomen not having enough skills to understand innovation in business or business, let alone new business. Therefore, due to this deficiency, women entrepreneurs face many problems in the process of establishing and operating a business.

- SOCIAL BARRIERS: Factors such as gender discrimination, fear of social impact, family responsibilities and commitments combine to create social barriers to the way women do business. In India, women are seen as secondary workers and men's dependents, so it is decided that commerce is not a women's matter, because everything belongs to men.

Roles, responsibilities and family responsibilities are defined as barriers to women's entrepreneurship. Many studies have shown that this behavior is due to pressure from society because women should prioritize having children at home for other reasons. This phenomenon is reported in rural areas where women do not have or do not have time for work due to their traditional responsibilities and is important.

Women feel guilty when they do not fulfill their responsibilities in the family, which shows that they lack family support and commitment to the social development of women. This also prevents women from starting and running businesses, visiting banks, attending meetings and conferences as well as business training, attracting customers or finding more vendors.

- FINANCIAL PROBLEMS:

Financial problems of the business, lack of sufficient capital, difficulty in obtaining loans from banks, low risk, difficulty in disseminating financing, not knowing the necessary resources, lack of responsibility, difficulty and complexity, etc. The borrowing process is long etc. Women entrepreneurs in India have always faced the problem of insufficient and insufficient capital. Due to women's limited assets and bank balances, lack of creditworthiness

and originality, they are unable to obtain financing from other sources such as financial institutions.

Robert's research in non-OECD and emerging economies shows that 59% of respondents view the financial crisis as a major problem, followed by 41% finding it difficult to get a loan. To do. Decisions to ask for a loan from a female entrepreneur, when the female entrepreneur gives the product and a letter of approval to start a business from a blood relative or spouse or local leader. It is often assumed that feminist women cannot be dangerous. As a result, women entrepreneurs start businesses with low capital and low debt, and do not use much equity to manage their businesses due to their internal and external disadvantages. This financial withdrawal is due to both voluntary and involuntary reasons. Women entrepreneurs were voluntarily excluded from banking services due to a lack of cultural knowledge and complex and lengthy bank loan procedures. On the other hand, banks cannot exclude financial services due to high interest rates, low credit history, lack of credit history, insufficient credit and good relations with banks that are not interested in lending. Also, take advantage of a bank loan.

22 Moreover, women entrepreneurs are unaware that financial aids such as subsidies, incentives, tax payments from financial institutions and the state make it useless. This has caused women to rely more on small savings and loans from family and friends to manage their day-to-day operations, which is

not enough to keep the business sustainable.

• Personal problems: Personal problems affect the personal abilities or mental health of women entrepreneurs that prevent them from taking risks in business life. In addition, the stereotypes of society regarding female characteristics such as lack of work ability, lack of self-confidence and fear of failure, difficulty in gaining trust and support from other businesses, lack of cooperation with colleagues, etc., also personal. block.

• CONFIDENCE AND FEAR OF FAILURE - a common feeling around the world that men are more optimistic and confident about business and entrepreneurship than women.

Lack of self-confidence is the biggest barrier for women to enter small and micro businesses.

Women have been shown to have lower self-esteem than most women. However, trust levels vary from person to person and situation to situation, so this may not be true when it comes to trust in competitive business. However, according to research by Halkias et al., there is a fear of failure that affects the social and economic conditions women business owners face. Many studies have shown that women can overcome this problem and increase their self-

confidence by participating in various business education, training and seminars from government and projects.

- LACK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP - A lack of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes is a personal barrier to starting and growing a business venture. In general, women are not as good as men in terms of business sense, so they do a lot of business development and training, workshops, conferences, etc. Only some women start their own business and develop their negative thoughts or misconceptions to start a business and improve their risk and performance.

- BARRIERS TO MARKETING: Marketing is an organization that creates, communicates and delivers value for customers. However, intense competition, weak markets, weak sales, slow payments from customers, less information in the industry and rapid demand changes. Technology is an important factor forcing women's businesses to respond quickly to changes in the economy.

Overall, female-owned SMEs have survived intense competition from manufacturers and male entrepreneurs on the basis of price, quality, standards and meeting users' needs. There is also the experience of businessmen, business knowledge and the use of new technologies in production. However, women do not have enough money to advertise their products and services, as

they start businesses with little savings and little investment. Therefore, the commercial activities carried out by women entrepreneurs are limited and rely only on intermediaries, that is, intermediaries.

Distributors, retailers etc. Try to capture most of the profit, which makes profits low for the company. This has resulted in less money for expansion and modernization. Weak and inefficient technology leads to low quality products, high prices, making them uncompetitive in the market, which is one of the main causes of job loss.

Building links on your own social network is another way to market your products because it's cheaper and has an impact on the mind. It will also increase their access to information and facilitate women entrepreneurs' access to customers, suppliers and financial resources through networking.

- IMPACT OF SKILLS: Skills and general management are qualities that entrepreneurs acquire in their lives through past work and management, as well as through job education and training. This enables business people to identify and take advantage of better business or business opportunities. However, women entrepreneurs in India and many other developing countries face significant skills barriers.

- ACTIVITY BARRIERS: Many organizations have business plans to start new businesses, but when starting a business, women entrepreneurs are left to compete on their own in an uneven environment. Women entrepreneurs do not have work experience, so consulting, training, coaching and mentoring can help them overcome the problems they face in running a business that requires hard work and success. complete.

Other problems: These include:

- Technological obsolescence/technical development issues
- Legal formalities
- Raw material shortages
- Lack of government support / government job
- Lack of incentives
- Direct and indirect tax-related issues
- Tax-related issues

Conclusion

Support for female entrepreneurs can meet many needs of the economy by creating new jobs.

Women entrepreneurs face many difficulties in achieving their ambitions. They face social problems at the beginning of the enterprise, followed by financial problems. Commercial and intellectual barriers make it difficult for them to start a business. Problems arising from their own fears and their behavior in business decisions are another important factor in the uncertainty of women entrepreneurs. But, despite all, they have proven not only their ability to run a small business, but also their ability to turn it into a large one.

A good environment can solve many problems with the support of the community (not only their families) and the government, so the government has implemented many ideas and projects to help women in business overcome these problems. There are many ideas that women can get more benefits/advantages/helps support agencies and foreign governmental organizations. Also, with higher education and better literacy, society's perspective on women entering the business world has changed. During the transition period, the government should not only widely publicize various initiatives for women entrepreneurs, but also set up a special

center to assist women entrepreneurs.

In addition, a window has been opened for women entrepreneurs with knowledgeable and talented people who can help women entrepreneurs manage important processes of the state and solve problems related to tax and legal compliance. In addition, a window has been opened for women entrepreneurs with knowledgeable and talented people who can help women entrepreneurs manage important processes of the state and solve problems related to tax and legal compliance.

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An Exploratory Study of Membership Scheme Design in Recuring Crowdfunding

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Abstract

With rapid development of information technology, it is less costly and more convenient to generate and distribute digital content over Internet. While creating digital content provides an exciting opportunity for entrepreneurship, it is challenging for creators to establish sustainable long-term financial support. Recently, recurring crowdfunding has become a new channel for creators to collect continuous funding. Nevertheless, little research attention has been paid to this new

form of crowdfunding. To fill this research gap, our study aims to explore key drivers of performance of recurring crowdfunding, especially the membership scheme design. Drawing from literature of versioning strategy of information goods, we develop a conceptual model with a set of testable hypotheses. Using a unique data set of 228 recurring crowdfunding campaigns, we conduct an empirical analysis to test our hypotheses. The results are consistent with most of our theoretical expectations and demonstrate the critical role of membership scheme design. Our findings also provide useful practical applications for digital content creators and managers of recurring platforms.

1. Introduction

Digital content is defined as "all digital content which consumers can access either online or through any other channels such as CD or DVD, and other services which the consumer can receive online" (Helberger et al. 2013). With rapid development of information technology, it is less costly and more convenient to generate and distribute digital content over Internet (Chen 2019). As a result, the amount of digital content grows rapidly. For example, according to an industry report from Statista, there are more than 50 million channels in the popular digital content

platform YouTube in June 2022. For every minute in June 2022, more than 500 hours of digital content are uploaded to that platform.

Not surprisingly, creating digital content provides an exciting opportunity for entrepreneurship (Suhat et al. 2021). Nevertheless, it is a challenging task for creators such as musicians, comedians, and podcasters to monetize their contents for long-term sustainable support (Bertini and Reisman 2013). Recently, a new form of crowdfunding, recurring crowdfunding, emerges as a promising channel to collect continuous funding. Crowdfunding is an innovative and effective way of collective funding for entrepreneurs and start-up firms (Belleflamme et al. 2014, Mollick 2014, Burtch et al. 2018, Murray et al. 2020). There are four major forms of crowdfunding: reward-based crowdfunding, donation-based crowdfunding, equity-based crowdfunding, and debt-based crowdfunding (Lukkarinen et al. 2016). Different from existing forms of crowdfunding which focus on one-time projects or short-term requirements of funding, recurring crowdfunding provides long-term continuous support by attracting backers to contribute periodically, usually once a month.

While providing long-term funding has become a popular request to support digital content creators such as musicians and artists (Baker 2019), little research attention has been paid to recurring crowdfunding. In practice, we observe that almost all recurring crowdfunding campaigns offer multiple membership levels to attract

potential backers. Naturally, it is crucial for creators to examine and design appropriate membership scheme to achieve better performance. Yet there is a lack of rigorous research on the role of campaign design, especially the membership scheme, not to mention delivering useful managerial insights and operation policies. Our research aims to fill this gap by investigating the role of the design of membership scheme.

Providing multiple levels of membership in recurring crowdfunding is similar to offering multiple versions of information goods. Drawing from prior literature of versioning strategy of information goods, we strive to provide an understanding of how membership scheme design might influence performance of recurring crowdfunding. In particular, we developed a set of hypotheses related to the impact of key factors of membership scheme on campaign performance.

Using a unique dataset of 228 recurring crowdfunding campaigns, we carry out an empirical analysis to test our hypotheses. Our main findings are as follows. First, the number of membership levels has a significant impact on campaign performance. Larger number of membership levels contributes to better performance in terms of number of backers. Second, performance of recurring crowdfunding is strongly associated with prices. We find that the price of recommended membership level and the discount of bottom membership price over recommended membership price are key drivers of campaign performance.

Lower price of recommended membership and larger discounts help attract more backers. Third, the limits setting of top membership level does not exert significant impact, which implies that the scarcity strategy might not have a significant impact in the recurring crowdfunding setting.

The contributions of our research are three-fold. First, we add to the emerging literature of recurring crowdfunding. While there are several studies related to the reward design of reward-based crowdfunding (Zhang and Chen 2019, Yang et al. 2020), little attention has been paid to the design of recurring crowdfunding campaigns, especially the membership scheme design. Our study provides more knowledge of the campaign design in the research stream of crowdfunding.

Second, different from prior studies, we develop a set of hypotheses based on theoretical research of versioning of information goods. In addition, we carry out an empirical analysis of membership scheme design using real data of 228 recurring crowdfunding campaigns. Our findings demonstrate that proper design of membership scheme and prices help improve the performance. To the best of our knowledge, our research is the first study using this research direction in the crowdfunding literature.

Third, our analysis provides useful practical implications for creators of recurring crowdfunding. Based on our findings, we recommended practical policies on

crucial factors of membership scheme design such as the number of membership levels and prices of recommended and bottom membership level. In addition, our results suggest that category of campaigns plays a critical role. Consequently, creators should develop specific strategies for different categories of projects. The recurring crowdfunding is undergoing a rapid development. Our research can help digital content creators better design their campaigns.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the theoretical background and relevant research in the literature. In Section 3, we develop a set of hypotheses of the impact of membership scheme design on the performance of recurring crowdfunding. In section 4, we first describe our data. Then we test the proposed hypotheses and present the results of our regression analysis. The paper concludes with limitations and future research directions in section 5.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Recurring crowdfunding

According to the crowdfunding platform StartSomeGood, recurring crowdfunding is a form of crowdfunding which "is ongoing, allowing you to build a reliable

support base over time" and "focused on building a long-term community and creating a long-term impact, not just achieving an immediate fundraising goal" (Startsomegood.com). Recently, recurring crowdfunding has become an effective channel of financing for digital content creators (Dredge 2014). Success stories of digital content creators have been reported (Hern 2018). Popular recurring crowdfunding platforms in the current market include StartSomeGood, Patreon, Ko-fi, Tipeee, Flattr, etc.

While recurring crowdfunding shares many features in common with reward-based crowdfunding, there are several major differences between them:

➢ Recurring crowdfunding aims to support creators for a relatively long time, while reward-based crowdfunding focuses on short-term projects.
➢ Recurring crowdfunding does not have a fixed time duration of fund raising; while reward-based crowdfunding usually has a fixed time duration of fund raising such as 60 days.
➢ Recurring crowdfunding only uses Keep-it-All model; while reward-based crowdfunding platforms can choose either Keep-it-All model or All-or-Nothing model.

Not surprisingly, several research findings of reward-based crowdfunding do not apply in the recurring crowdfunding setting. For example, using data from

Indigogo, Cumming et al. (2020) showed that entrepreneurs can benefit from adopting All-or-Nothing model of reward-based crowdfunding if they provide more innovative projects. However, as mentioned above, the All-or-Nothing model doesn't fit recurring crowdfunding. In addition, Kunz et al. (2017) found that reward delivery time negatively influences the success of reward-based crowdfunding projects. However, creators of recurring crowdfunding deliver their content through online channels, not off-line channels. Thus, delivery time is not an issue in recurring crowdfunding.

Consequently, it is important to investigate key factors that influence performance of recurring crowdfunding campaigns. To the best of our knowledge, our study is one of the first efforts to explore the impact of campaign design, especially the membership scheme design on the performance of recurring crowdfunding.

2.2 Versioning

Versioning of information goods refers to the strategy of producing and pricing information goods with quality-based differentiation or vertical differentiation (Varian 1997). Usually, firms will choose a basic version of information good, and then generate versions of higher quality with more attributes and versions of lower

quality with fewer attributes (Wei and Naut 2013, Cox 2017). Versioning has become a widely adopted strategy in digital economy. For example, software ventures often provide software products of different versions such as low version and high version (Shivendu and Zhang 2015). The contents of recurring crowdfunding campaigns including online videos, images, audios, and live streams are all distributed in digital format. Therefore, we argue that they can be considered as information goods as well.

Most research of versioning focuses on whether it's optimal for firms to use versioning strategy and what price to charge for each version (Bhargava and Choudhary 2008, Chellappa and Mehra 2018). One group of studies examine the factors related to information goods vendors including firm's market share of different versions (Bhargava and Choudhary 2008), firms' offering experience information goods (Wei and Nault 2013), firms' development cost and versioning cost (Chellappa and Mehra 2018), etc. Another group of studies checked key factors from the side of consumers including consumers' perception of fairness (Gershoff et al. 2012), consumers' group taste (Wei and Nault 2014), consumers' disutility of using different versions of information goods (Li et al. 2013, Shivendu and Zhang 2015), etc.

There are not many empirical studies in this line of literature. Cox (2017) studied prices of second-hand video game software. He found that versioning strategy is an

effective method for firms to exploit consumers' various evaluation and increase revenue. Kanuri et al. (2017) examined different versions of newspaper subscriptions. Their proposed approach increases the vendor's profit. Our paper expands the application of versioning strategy into the context of recurring crowdfunding.

3. Hypothesis development

Based on relevant research of versioning of information goods, we explore the impact of key factors of creators' membership scheme design. We first check the number of membership levels. Prior research suggests that versioning of information goods is an efficient strategy of increasing firms' benefit (Varian 1997). One key reason is that versioning strategy can effectively distract the maximum price close to customers' willingness to pay (Cox 2017). As discussed above, we regard digital content recurring crowdfunding campaigns as one type of information goods. Thus, creators can improve performance of their campaigns by setting multiple membership levels (versions) of digital content.

In addition, Wei and Nault (2013) claimed that it is an optimal strategy for firms to offer multiple versions of information goods when consumers have different group tastes. In practice, backers of recurring crowdfunding might have various levels of expectation. While some backers just want to learn some basic knowledge, some other backers are interested in becoming experts in that area. As a result, creators can better satisfy backers' heterogeneous needs with multiple levels of membership. Generally, a positive relationship is expected between the number of membership levels and the performance of recurring crowdfunding campaigns. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1. Performance of recurring crowdfunding campaign is positively associated with the number of membership levels provided by the creator. The higher the number of levels of memberships, the better performance will be.

On the website of Patreon, creators of recurring crowdfunding campaigns usually highlight one membership level as the recommended level. They often distinguish this level from other levels using terms such as "recommended" and/or "most popular" or using different background colors. Consequently, potential backers will consider quality of content of the recommended level as a standard. Prior studies found that the price of standard version of information goods is a critical factor for attracting consumers (Wei and Nault 2014). Gershoff et al. (2012) showed that the effect of versioning strategy will be lessened when consumers

thought the price of versioned products is unfair. Naturally, when potential backers see a lower price of recommended membership, they are more likely to establish a perception of fairness.

In addition, Shneor et al. (2022) reported that trust is a key factor to encourage participation of reward-based crowdfunding. We argue that similar impact exists in recurring crowdfunding. A lower price of the recommended membership helps build trust and encourage backers' participation in the recurring crowdfunding campaigns. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2. Recurring crowdfunding performance is negatively associated with the price of recommended membership level. The lower the price is, the better performance will be.

Another key factor of membership scheme for creators is the role of bottom/lowest-price version of their digital content. Bhargava and Choudhary (2008) showed that firms can better segment market by adding a low-quality version of their current information goods. For the experience information goods, Wei and Nault (2013) showed that firms can use a strategy of "versioning to upgrade" to attract customers try a version of information products with lower price and then upgrade to versions of information products with higher price.

The digital content in recurring crowdfunding is similar to experience information goods. For those backers who are not familiar with the creators, they might want to first try the membership with lower prices, especially the bottom membership with the lowest price. Therefore, a lower bottom membership price helps attract potential backers with interests. Since the recommended membership price is often regarded as a standard, it is natural for backers to compare the bottom membership price with it. In practice, we have observed a large variation of the recommended membership price (between $2 and $50). To control the potential influence of this wide variation, we investigate the impact of discount of bottom membership price over recommended membership price and propose the following hypothesis:

H3. Recurring crowdfunding performance is positively associated with the discount of bottom membership price over the recommended membership price. The larger the discount is, the better performance will be.

Next, we focus on creators' strategy related to the top/highest-price membership. In particular, we want to investigate the impact of introducing limits of participants of that membership. Chellappa and Mehra (2018) claimed that firms may charge higher price for high-type consumers due to versioning cost. In practice, we observed that creators often charged more than 10 times of the recommended level price for the top membership level. For example, the price of the recommended level in one campaign is $5, but the top membership will cost $120.

To offset the discouraging effect of high price, some creators set limits of participants to the top membership level such as "only 5 of 10 members left". In the context of reward-based crowdfunding, Kunz et al. (2016) suggested that funders will evaluate the quality of projects by their availability. Consequently, reward limits serve as a signal of value of the project to potential funders. We suggested a similar effect exists in the recurring crowdfunding setting. The limit of top membership signals high quality of the campaign, making it more attractive to potential high-type backers. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4. Recuring crowdfunding campaigns will have better performance when there is a limit of number of participants in the top membership level of the campaigns.

Our hypotheses are presented in the following conceptual model (Figure 1). To test these hypotheses, we collected data from a popular recurring crowdfunding website (Patreon) and conducted an empirical analysis. Our regression analysis is presented in the next section.
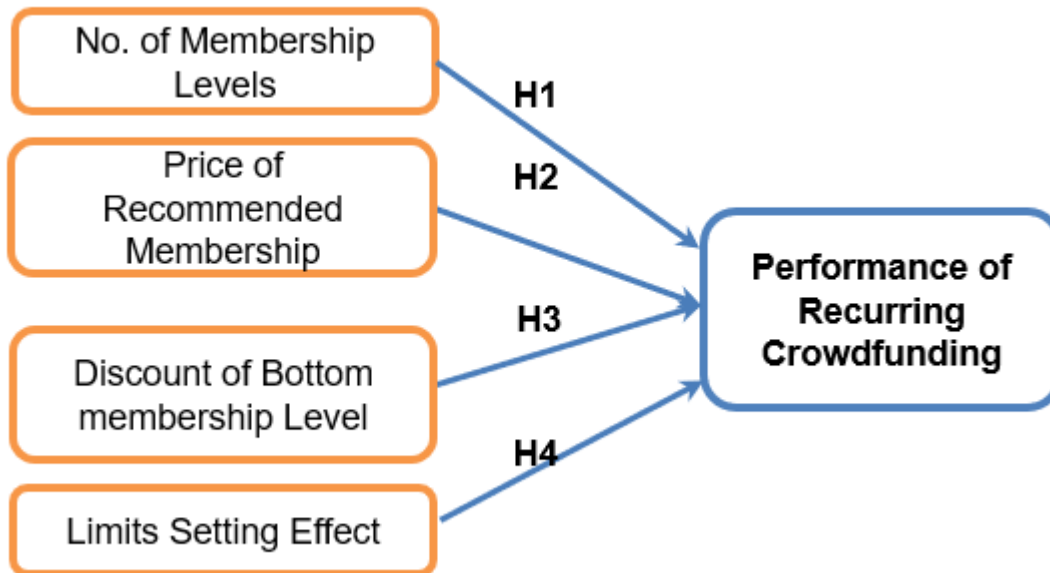
Figure 1. Conceptual model

4. Empirical analysis

4.1 Data

To test our proposed hypotheses, we carry out an empirical analysis. We collected data of 228 recurring crowdfunding campaigns from Patreon in January 2023.

Patreon is a popular online platform for recurring crowdfunding creators including musicians, educators, comedians, podcasters, etc. (Dredge 2014, Hern 2018) So far, Patreon has funded more than 250,000 creators with over eight million patrons, and the total funding raised for the creators exceeded $3.5 billion. Figure 2 below presents a snapshot of an example of recurring crowdfunding campaign. The sample size of our dataset is consistent with prior studies. For example, Shi (2019) used 219 reward-based crowdfunding campaigns to investigate the impact of reward structure on consumers' responsiveness. Chen (2022) used 205 reward-based crowdfunding projects of independent movies to analyze the impact of entrepreneurs' preparedness on the performance of projects.
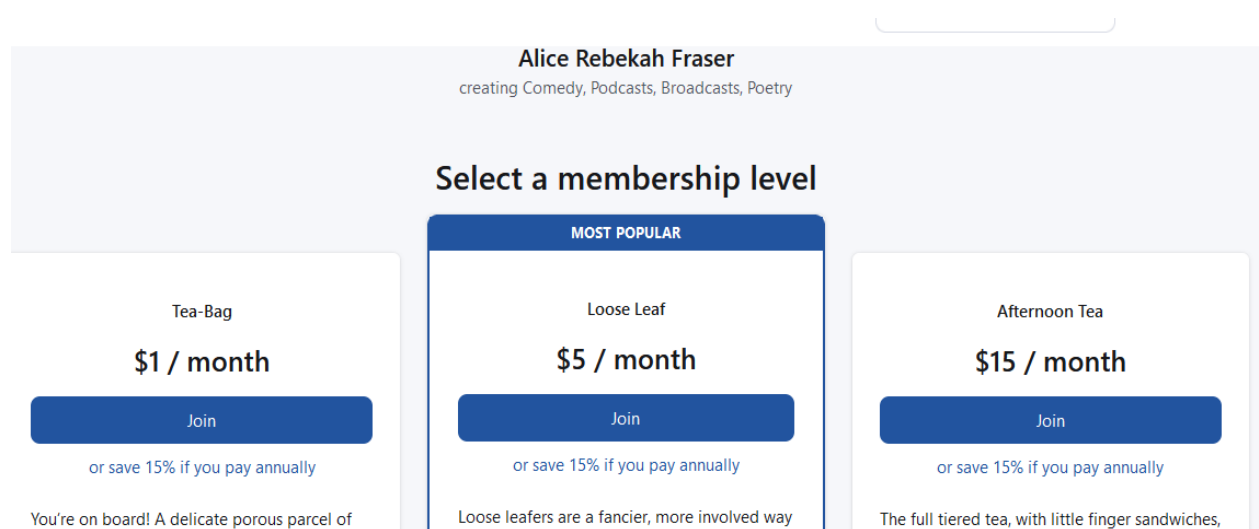
Figure 2. Snapshot of an example of recurring crowdfunding campaign on Patreon

In line with prior research, we measure the performance of recurring crowdfunding campaigns by the number of patrons attracted (Yang et al. 2020, Shneor et al. 2022). We use log format of the number of patrons as the dependent variable to reduce skewness (Chen 2022). Usually, creators will display the number of patrons on the webpage of their campaigns. The amount of funding raised is not used as dependent variable in our paper because it is not listed on the webpage of many campaigns of Patreon.

The independent variables include the number of membership levels, the price of the recommended membership level, the discount of the bottom membership price over the recommended membership price, and whether the top membership limit is adopted. To test hypothesis 3, we use the discount of bottom membership price over the recommended membership price. For example, if a creator offers the recommended membership level with $10 and the bottom membership level with $5, then the discount is 50%. To test hypothesis 4, we use a dummy variable LimitDum which equals one if a recurring crowdfunding campaign uses limit setting on the top membership level, and zero otherwise.

Following the literature, we include two control variables that might potentially influence the performance of recurring crowdfunding. At the creator level, we

introduce a dummy variable GroupDum which equals one if the creator of a recurring crowdfunding campaign is a group of people, and zero otherwise. At the campaign level, we control the category of the recurring crowdfunding campaigns. In our dataset, we have three categories of campaigns: 78 music crowdfunding campaigns, 80 education crowdfunding campaigns, and 70 comedy crowdfunding campaigns. Table 1 below presents the summary statistics of our data.

Table 1. Summary statistics

	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Standard deviation
Member_Level	4.592	11	1	1.775
Price_Recom	7.294	50	2	5.402

Discount_Bottom	0.618	0.900	0.000	0.167
LimitDum	0.175	1	0	0.381
GroupDum	0.355	1	0	0.480

Then, we have calculated the correlation among the independent and control variables. Table 2 below presents the matrix of the correlation values. From our results, we can see that there is no extremely high correlation (the absolute values are all lower than 0.23), which implies no too close relationship exists between these variables.

Table 2. Correlation of variables

	1	2	3	4	5
Member_Level	1				
Price_Recom	-0.221	1			
Discount_Bottom	0.206	0.066	1		
LimitDum	0.178	0.180	0.100	1	
GroupDum	-0.052	0.056	-0.053	-0.029	1

4.2 Results

Our model is as follows:

$$Performance = \beta 0 + \beta 1 * Member\_Level + \beta 2 * Price\_Recom$$

$$+ \beta 3 * Discount\_Bottom + \beta 4 * LimitDum + Control + \varepsilon$$

To evaluate the robustness of the hypotheses, we conduct regression analysis of two models with varying sets of control variables. Model 1 only includes the control variable of campaign category. Model 2 includes both control variables. For both models, we have calculated Variance inflation factors (VIF). All VIF values are less than 2.0, which suggests that multicollinearity is not a concern here (Wooldridge 2002). Our regression results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary of linear regression (Standard errors in the parentheses)

	Model 1	Model 2
Intercept	5.766 (0.363)***	5.656 (0.356)***
Member_Level	0.089 (0.044)*	0.091 (0.044)*
Price_Recom	-0.028 (0.014)*	-0.029 (0.014)*
Discount_Bottom	0.884 (0.441)*	0.900 (0.441)*
LimitDum	0.132	0.125

	(0.200)	(0.200)
GroupDum		0.176
		(0.156)
Adgusted R-square	0.2154	0.2164

Note: *** p<0.001 ** p<0.01 * p<0.05

We first examine the impact of creators' membership scheme design in terms of the number of membership levels. we find that this factor exerts a significant and positive effect on campaign performance (p<0.05 for both models in Table 3). Therefore, H1 is supported. Analytical models of prior research also found that adding versions of information goods increases the vendors' revenue (Li et al. 2013, Wei and Nault 2014). In an empirical study of technology reward-based crowdfunding, Zhang and Chen (2019) reported that the number of rewards has a positive impact on the performance of crowdfunding projects. This finding implies that creators of recurring crowdfunding should consider the number of membership

levels as a crucial factor for the campaign design. Furthermore, they need to have a better idea of how their target market is distributed.

Regarding the price of recommended membership, our results show that it is a key driver of better performance in terms of attracting patrons ($p<0.05$ for both models in Table 3). The lower price creators charged for the recommended membership; the more patrons attracted. It offers support for H2. Gershoff et al. (2013) reported that consumers will evaluate benefit-to-cost ratio of versioned goods before they make purchase decision. Apparently, a lower price of recommended membership increases benefit-to-cost ratio, thus encouraging backers' participation. Our finding indicates that creators of recurring crowdfunding need to consider the price of recommended membership level as a promotion strategy.

Then we analyze the impact of discount of bottom membership price over recommended membership price. There is evidence that shows the discount size is a critical driver of performance ($p<0.05$ for both models in Table 3). Offering large discount does lead to a significantly higher number of backers. Therefore, it offers support for H3. Greenstein and Markovich (2012) reported that e-business service providers used price discount to attract potential consumers when they do not have the brand name to charge premium price for high-quality version. Our finding demonstrates the similarly vital role of price discount in recurring crowdfunding. One corresponding recommendation is that creators might consider offering larger

discounts to attract potential backers in case it is difficult to decrease the price of recommended membership.

Regarding the factor of limits setting on the top membership, the results show positive but not significant impact in both models in Table 3. While the direction of the coefficient of this hypothesis is the same as our expectation, the strength is not. Therefore, H4 is not supported. There may be several reasons for this result. One reason might be that only a small segment of potential backers is interested in getting top membership, especially when the price is extremely high. Another possibility is that the content of top membership level is similar to other levels, making potential backers less interested. Interestingly, our finding is different from those of prior research of reward-based crowdfunding. For example, Kutz et al. (2015) and Yang et al. (2020) showed that the limits setting has a significant positive impact on reward-based crowdfunding projects. Our recommendation is that creators should be conservative about the effect of limits setting strategy.

Another interesting finding is that category of recurring crowdfunding also plays an important role. It reflects that comedy campaigns have attracted higher numbers of backers than the other two categories (education campaigns and music campaigns). Our corresponding recommendation for creators is that they may consider different strategies across categories. Overall, our results are consistent

with most of the proposed hypotheses. Table 4 below summarizes the results of hypotheses testing.

Table 4. Summary of hypotheses testing results

Hypothesis	Results
H1. Performance of recurring crowdfunding campaign is positively associated with the number of membership levels provided. The higher the number of levels of memberships, the better performance wish will be.	Yes
H2. Performance of recurring crowdfunding campaigns is negatively associated with the price of recommended membership level. The lower the price is, the better performance will be.	Yes
H3. Recurring crowdfunding performance is positively associated with the discount of bottom membership price over the recommended membership price. The larger the discount is, the better performance will be.	Yes

H4. Recuring crowdfunding campaigns will have better performance when there is a limit of number of participants in the top membership level of the campaigns.	No

5. Conclusion

Creating digital content brings exciting opportunities for entrepreneurs in digital economy (Kraus et al. 2019). Nevertheless, content creators often find it difficult to maintain long-term support from monetizing their contents (Bertini and Reisman 2013). Recently, there is growing acknowledgment that recurring crowdfunding can serve as an effective method of developing sustainable financial support. However, extant research has not paid much attention to this new type of crowdfunding. Our paper attempts to shed light on the impact of recurring crowdfunding design, especially the impact of membership scheme design on its performance.

Building upon the literature of versioning of information goods, we developed a conceptual model with a set of hypotheses. Using a unique dataset of 228 recurring crowdfunding campaigns, we test our proposed hypotheses. Our results are consistent with most of our expectations. We believe our results have reflected that

membership scheme design is a crucial driver for the performance of recurring crowdfunding campaigns. To sum up, our research will be of interest to academics as our results adds knowledge to the current understanding of recurring crowdfunding. It also provides a basis that both theoretical and empirical research in the future can build upon. Based on our findings, managers of recurring crowdfunding platforms can further tailor their platform policies to attract backers and increase financial support for digital content creators.

There are several limitations of this research. First, we do not have information of the amount contributed from each backer for each recurring crowdfunding campaign. If this data is obtainable, we can better understand the impact of membership scheme design on backers' contribution behavior. Second, the communications between the creators and the backers are not open to public. Otherwise, we can investigate the effect of the creator-backer interaction on the performance of recurring crowdfunding campaigns. Lastly, our paper assumes that creators mainly get their financial support from recurring crowdfunding. In practice, we observe that a small portion of creators also gain revenue from other channels such as YouTube.

Future research can be carried out in the following aspects. First, we have focused on one platform (Patreon). Creators of recurring crowdfunding might choose different strategies on other platforms. Therefore, researchers might collect data

from other recurring crowdfunding platforms for more empirical analysis in the future. Second, our data collection is limited to the information provided on patreon.com. If more information such as the number of backers of each level of membership is accessible, future research might incorporate more factors in the analysis. Third, researchers can explore other important factors of recurring crowdfunding creators' strategy using controlled experiment. It will be interesting to see what will happen in that setting. Lastly, future studies can examine whether creators will change their campaign design over time. For example, will they change the number of membership levels over time?

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Exploring the Influence of Organisational Culture on Staff Retention in Professional Services Organisations in the New Zealand Construction Industry

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Chapter 1   Context of Study

1.0 Introduction

The New Zealand construction sector has many challenges, but as one of the most labour-dependent industries, companies struggle to attract and retain top talent (MBIE, 2021). For this research project, I will focus only on the construction

industry's professional services, including Project Management, Quantity Surveying, Engineering, Design and Architecture and related consultancy firms.

In a very tight labour market, companies are finding it harder than ever to retain and attract top talent. One of the key considerations for job seekers today is the organisational culture (OC) as a possible attractant or deterrent to accepting an offer of employment. It is even more important to the existing staff when they weigh offers from competitors on whether to remain or leave. A report published by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment in 2021 identified that "the largest number of vacancies are for engineers at 26%, most of which need 5-10 years of experience" (MBIE, 2021, p. 16).

But it is not only the retention or attraction of talent that firms must be concerned about. Organisational culture has been directly linked to business performance through extensive research and the results have been very clear. Virtually every aspect of business performance is impacted by the firm's organisational culture, and this translates into bottom-line success or failure of an enterprise (Afzali, 2023). Employee engagement and performance greatly impact operational business performance, success, and sustainability (Li et al., 2021; Seppälä & Cameron, 2015). The literature review chapter will provide more detail on how OC impacts business performance.

I aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of how much attention professional services firms pay to OC and whether retention and attraction of talent are linked. My research study has examined quantitative and qualitative data to result in recommendations on how organisations can impact their OC and, by extension, increase retention rates, as well as business performance and success.

1.1 Relevance and importance of the study

The New Zealand Construction Industry (NZCI) is continually hampered, in part, by a shortage of skilled workers (MBIE, 2022). This phenomenon has never been more noticeable than after the COVID-19 pandemic. The sector experienced global supply chain disruption and inflation of building materials, but also an extreme scarcity of highly skilled professional staff. Costs rose at a pace not seen before in recent decades, and project completion timelines and budgets were severely affected. Immigration of skilled workers came to an abrupt halt, further adding to the stressed state of the already-constrained talent pool. This set the scene for a highly competitive labour environment of high demand versus low supply, increasing salaries to a point previously thought impossibly high.

Firms depend on experienced and skilled professionals, and it becomes more important than ever to retain the talent they already have (MBIE, 2021). However, employees are approached daily by recruiters to accept roles offered by competitors, often accompanied by substantial sign-on bonuses and role/salary jumps. So what makes the employee decline the offer despite these enticements? This study examines whether OC could be the deciding factor when workers receive competing offers. And if so, what can an organisation do to assess and effect changes to its culture? High attrition rates present several difficult challenges to a business, aside from the direct recruitment cost of replacing the employee. Loss of tribal knowledge, opportunity constraints, the additional workload on existing staff, and employee morale are only a few of the consequences attrition has on a company (Brassey, Coe, & Dewhurst, 2022; De Smet et al., 2021; Marsden, 2016; Simon et al., 2023; Wallace, 2023). Each of these leads to further obstacles and difficulties to remain competitive, increase market share, and provide client satisfaction.

This topic is also highly relevant to me in my current professional arena. As a manager in the industry, I have had extensive opportunities to observe the varied importance businesses typically place on their existing OC. I currently work in a professional consultancy firm as a Business Support Manager with a primary focus on enhancing OC and creating a better employee experience. Personal observations in past business management roles have given me insight into how

OC is regarded from a firm's strategic and operational perspective, as well as the employee's point of view. I have observed and experienced the effect OC has on retention, organisational performance, client satisfaction, productivity, and the climate experienced in the workplace.

Ultimately, success in an environment which depends on human capital as its prime asset base depends on how well the organisation understands and addresses what matters most to the people. What makes the difference is often not a tangible reward such as money, but something much harder to define, assess, and influence: organisational culture. This study explores OC in detail and provides recommendations based on extensive research which will answer both of the research questions in the next section.

1.2 Research Questions

To understand organisational culture and its impact on professional services firms in the New Zealand construction industry (NZCI), this research will focus on answering the following questions:

1. How important is organisational culture to job seekers and existing employees in the professional services firms of the New Zealand construction industry?

2. How can professional services firms in the New Zealand construction industry improve the organisational culture to attract and retain talent?

1.3 Organisational Environment

The built environment is a cyclical, highly fragmented industry, typically split into four major parts: residential building; non-residential (commercial) construction; civil engineering; and construction services.

While all are elemental to the industry, this study will only focus on the professional services organisations contained in the construction services sub-sector, which represented a 61% share of all firms in the NZCI in 2021, including more than 70,000 business entities (Figure 1).   The sub-sector does include generally subcontracted services such as plumbing, electrical, and carpentry services as well as consulting firms.

Number of construction businesses by sub-sector
(as at February 2011 - 2021)

Source: Business Demography Statistics, Stats NZ · ■ Residential buildings · ■ Non-residential buildings · ■ Heavy and civil engineering construction · ■ Construction services
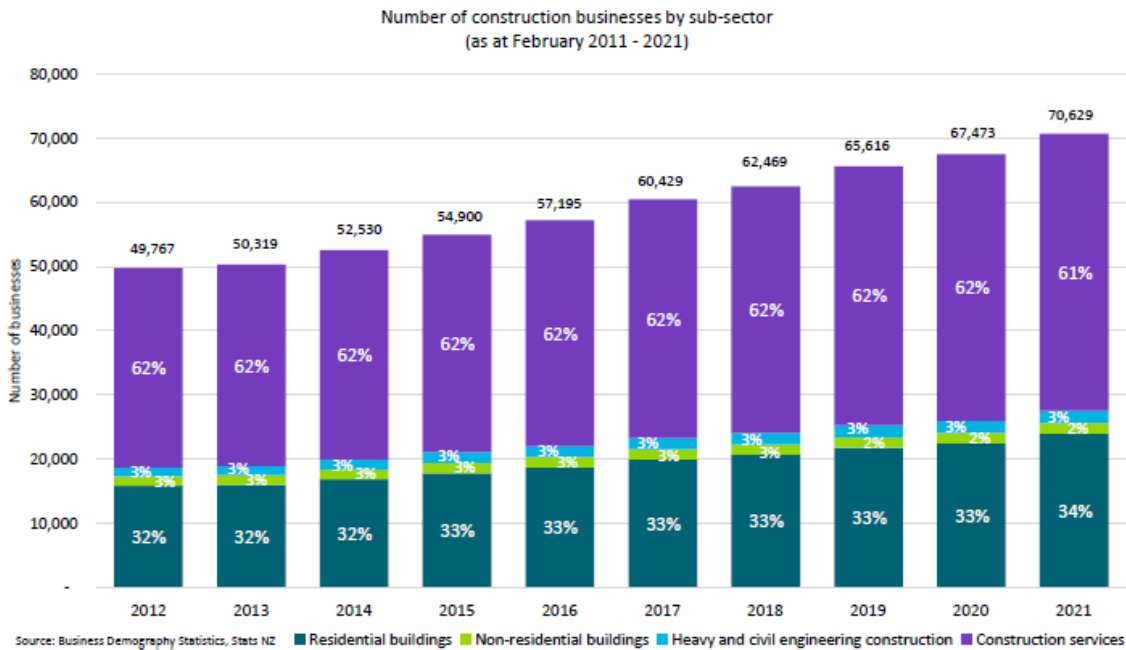
Figure 1: Building and Construction Sector Trends - Annual Report 2022

(MBIE, 2022)

Professional Services Firms (PSFs) in this construction services sub-sector are typically of a consultant nature and support the other sectors with technical and professional skills. These include engineering, project management, architectural and design, quantity surveying, environmental consultants, procurement assistance, etc. The firms generally charge for their services on an hourly basis or as a fixed-fee project. They are engaged by major stakeholders in the construction project such as the owner or sponsor of the project, the contractor undertaking the work,

other consultants, or special interest participants such as iwi or government regulators. The services generally are provided before and during the lifecycle of a construction project, and even beyond the close-out phase.

The size of these organisations ranges from very small boutique firms to multi-national corporations. Some focus on one aspect of a speciality, such as architecture, while others offer a variety of professional services such as multi-disciplines engineering or project management.

Since the majority of these firms supply services provided by employees in exchange for fees, their main asset base consists of staff with specialist knowledge and skills. It is therefore imperative to retain and attract skilled people for firms to remain competitive in the market and offer the types of services clients want to pay for. Business success directly hinges on the quality of employees these companies can attract and retain. "The professional services sector is knowledge-intensive and relies on the skills, competencies and knowledge of its people" (Clark, 2022, p. 10).

Candidates generally have a highly skilled technical background and often possess a tertiary education level, which constricts the talent pool further for firms seeking qualified staff. A recent qualitative study conducted in a major Australian city found the shortage of Project Managers (PMs) and the high turnover rate to

severely impact companies' competitiveness (Borg & Scott-Young, 2022). This type of constraint is not unique to Australia. New Zealand's smaller population size makes finding qualified staff even harder for professional services firms here, especially when we consider that construction services comprised a total of 55% of the annual sector employment in 2022 (Figure 2).

Annual construction sector employment (year ended June 2012 - 2022)

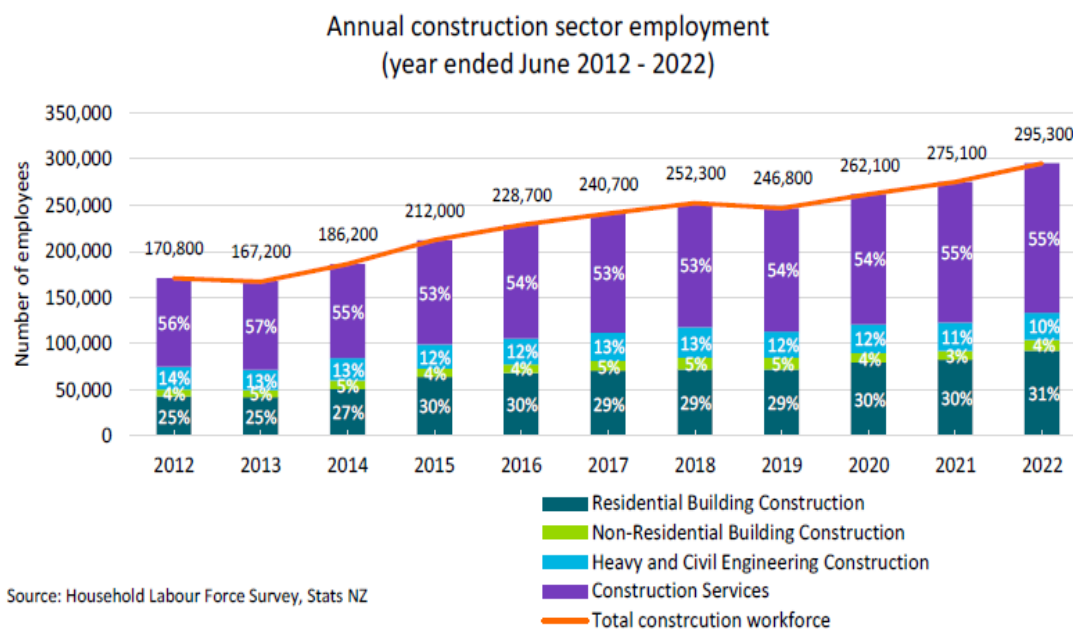Source: Household Labour Force Survey, Stats NZ

Figure 2: Building and Construction Sector Trends Annual Report 2022 (MBIE, 2022)

High employee turnover rates are seen across the industry (Ayodele et al., 2022). To address the issue, it is important to understand what factors employees consider

when they decide on whether to remain in an organisation or whether to move on to other opportunities. Knowing what weighs in the decision-making process and how these factors correlate with the organisational culture is key to developing a strategy to change the outcome. Job seekers are in a position to make careful decisions in this competitive environment and the OC is one of the key considerations that differentiates employers (Borg & Scott-Young, 2022; Paul & Raj, 2014).

1.4 Industry Review

Construction Industry – Sector Specifics

Unlike other industries, the construction sector is quite different in many respects. Some key facts and figures below paint a picture of the distinctive ecosystem. The construction environment has seen steady growth spurred by population increase in New Zealand (MBIE, 2021), as well as in other areas of the world (Barbosa et al., 2017). In a detailed McKinsey & Company report on the global construction industry, total sector spending contributed to 13% of the world's GDP, while only experiencing a 1% increase in productivity growth over the past two decades (Barbosa et al., 2017) (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Construction as a contributor to the world economy (Barbosa et al., 2017)
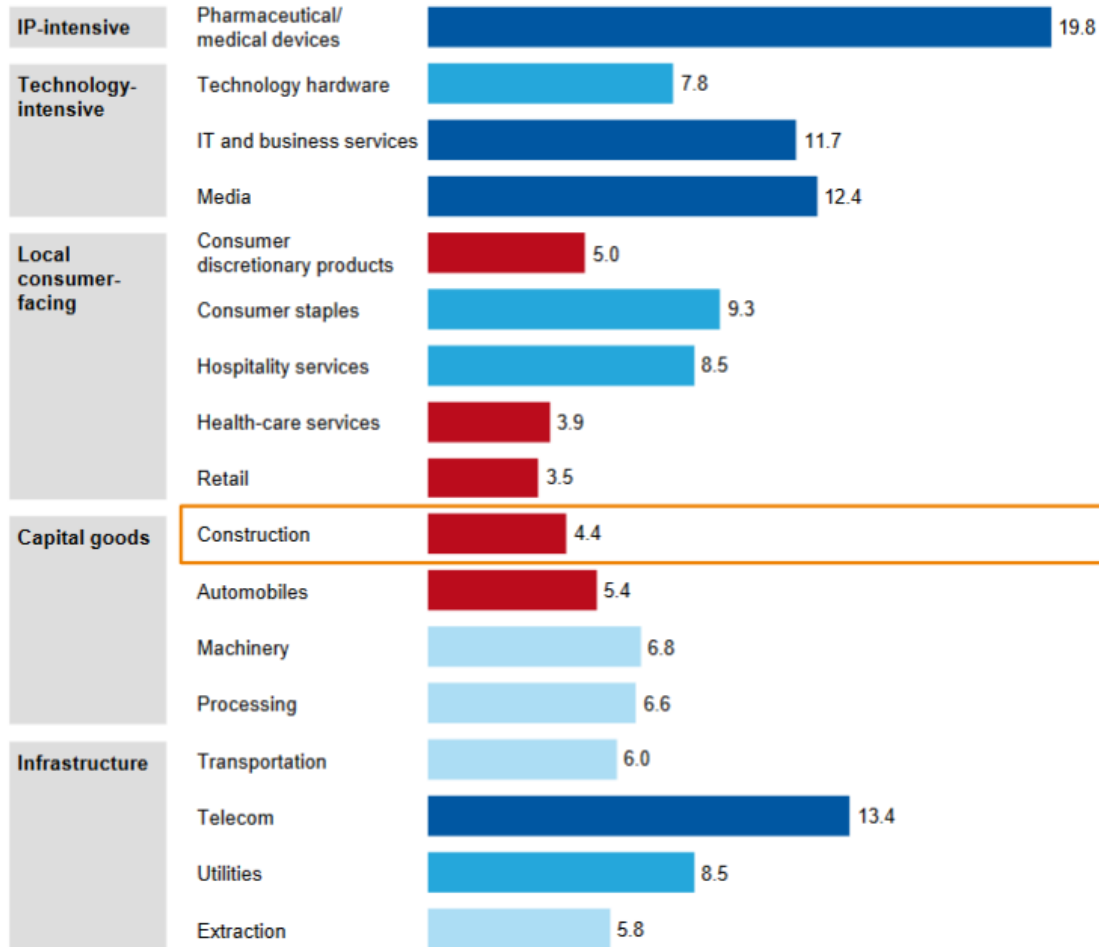
The article further identifies the productivity level is trapped at the same level as it was in the 1950s, while profit margins place the industry at the bottom quartile over sales, at a mere 4.4% (Figure 4).

The construction industry has bottom-quartile profit margins

Average profit margin NOPLAT over sales, %

■ Top quartile ■ Second quartile ▢ Third quartile ■ Bottom quartile

Category	Industry	Value
IP-intensive	Pharmaceutical/medical devices	19.8
Technology-intensive	Technology hardware	7.8
	IT and business services	11.7
	Media	12.4
Local consumer-facing	Consumer discretionary products	5.0
	Consumer staples	9.3
	Hospitality services	8.5
	Health-care services	3.9
	Retail	3.5
Capital goods	Construction	4.4
	Automobiles	5.4
	Machinery	6.8
	Processing	6.6
Infrastructure	Transportation	6.0
	Telecom	13.4
	Utilities	8.5
	Extraction	5.8

SOURCE: McKinsey Corporate Performance Analysis Tool; IHS; US Bureau of Economic Analysis; US BLS; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

Figure 4: global profit margins of construction industry comparison   (Barbosa et al., 2017)

In New Zealand, the numbers are equally dismal. In the 2022 annual report published by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment the sector was identified as the country's third largest employer and fifth largest contributor to the local economy measuring 6.7% of real GDP in the year. Yet, here too, the productivity level growth averaged only 1% since 1996 (MBIE, 2022) (Figure 5).

Labour productivity and GDP growth (1996-2021)

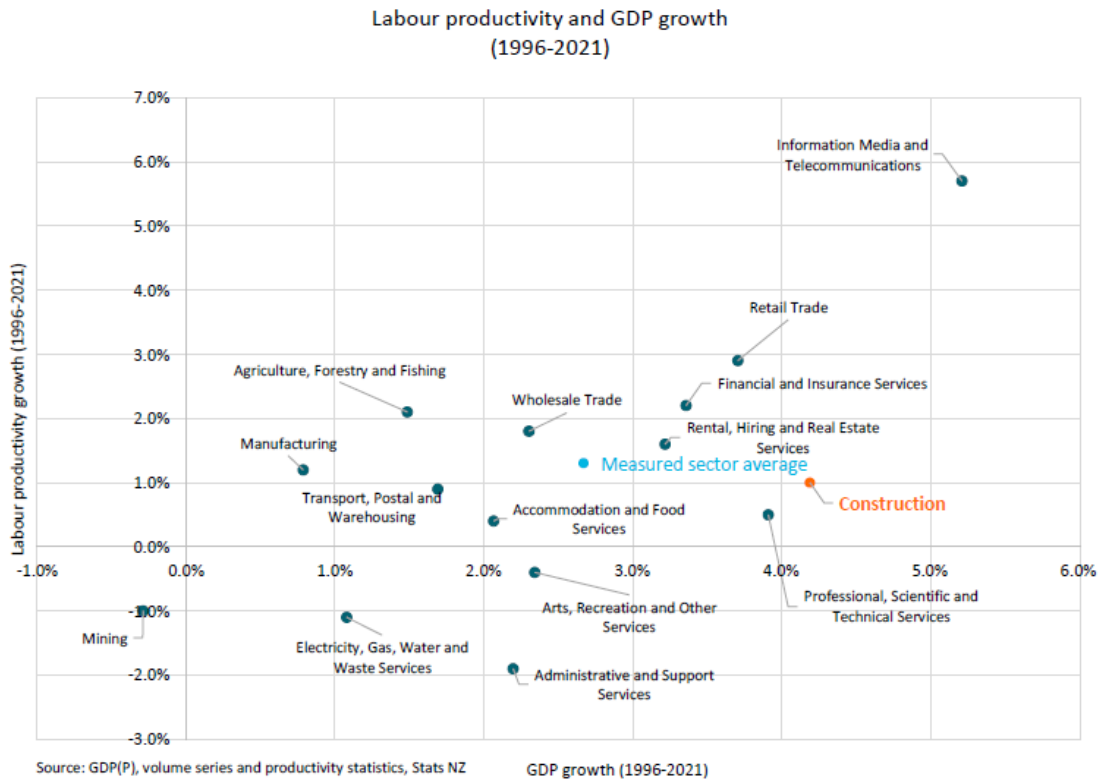Source: GDP(P), volume series and productivity statistics, Stats NZ

Figure 5: NZ labour productivity and GDP growth 1996-2021 (MBIE, 2022)

Further unique aspects are the high dependency on labour (Borg & Scott-Young, 2022), the cyclical demand and project-based environment (Dainty et al., 2007), low profit margins (Smithers & Walker, 2000), and the high ratio of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (MBIE, 2022). These elements apply across the entire industry and are not unique to New Zealand. Specifically relevant to the research questions which guide this study is the reference to the demand for employees. In New Zealand alone, more than 295,000 people were employed in construction at the end of 2022, this makes up about 10.5% of the entire workforce (MBIE, 2022). Yet, the labour inputs, productivity and output levels have shown a decline in recent years and even negative growth in 2021 (Figure 6).

Growth in construction labour inputs, labour productivity and outputs
(year ended March 1996-2021)

Source: Productivity statistics, Stats NZ

Labour input   Ouputs (Value added)   Labour productivity

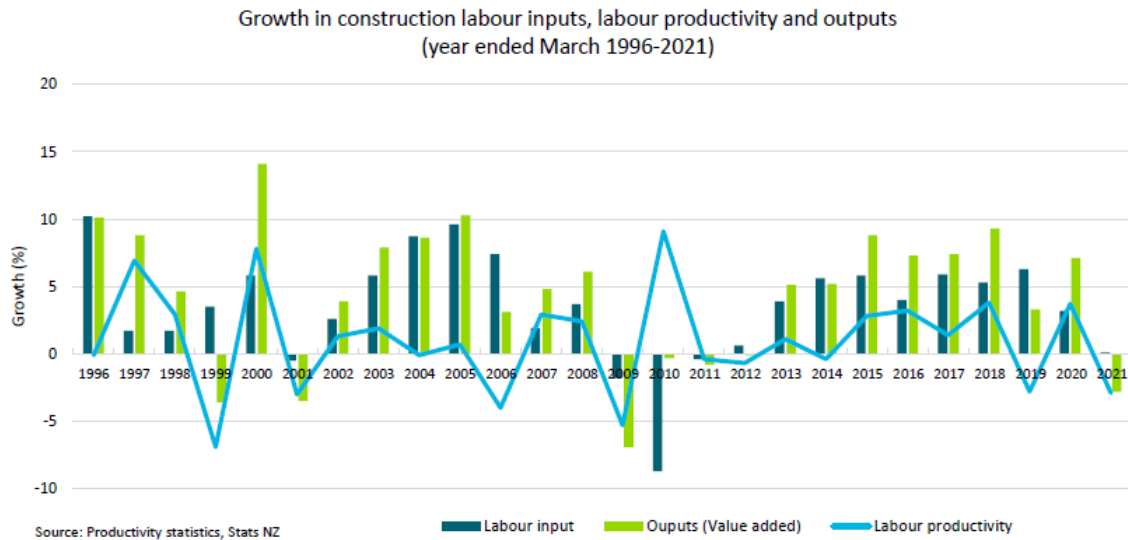Figure 6: Building Sector as a major contributor to nz economy   (MBIE, 2022)

NZCI - Professional Services Specifics

Professional services firms in the construction market segment achieved an estimated turnover of 8.4 Billion dollars in New Zealand in 2020 (Clark, 2022). Firms in the built environment made up approximately 30% of all professional services firms in New Zealand (Figure 7).
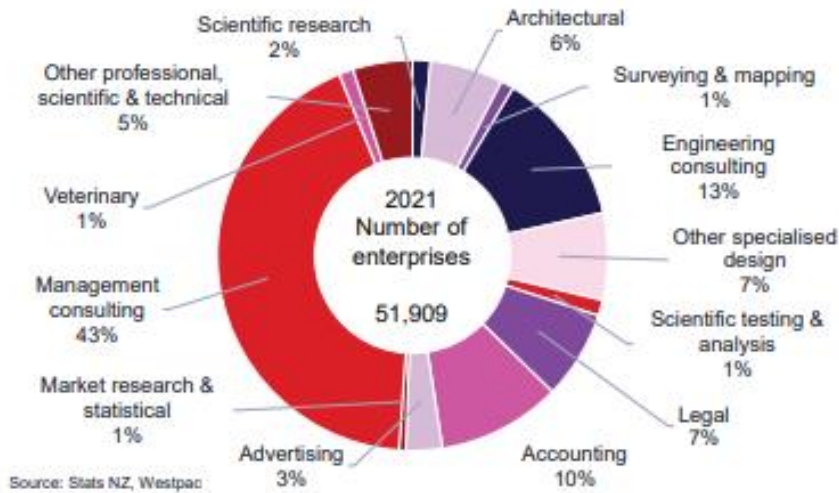
Figure 7: Number of enterprises by sub-sector 2021 (Clark, 2022)

The demand for services continues to increase in step with the demand for housing, infrastructure, commercial, and other construction activity in New Zealand. Clients who procure professional services consider a multitude of factors when selecting firms. Typically, these include price, skills, competencies of staff, established relationships, value perception, past performance, and firm reputation (Figure 8). But they also consider the cultural fit of the firm as it relates to the client organisation.
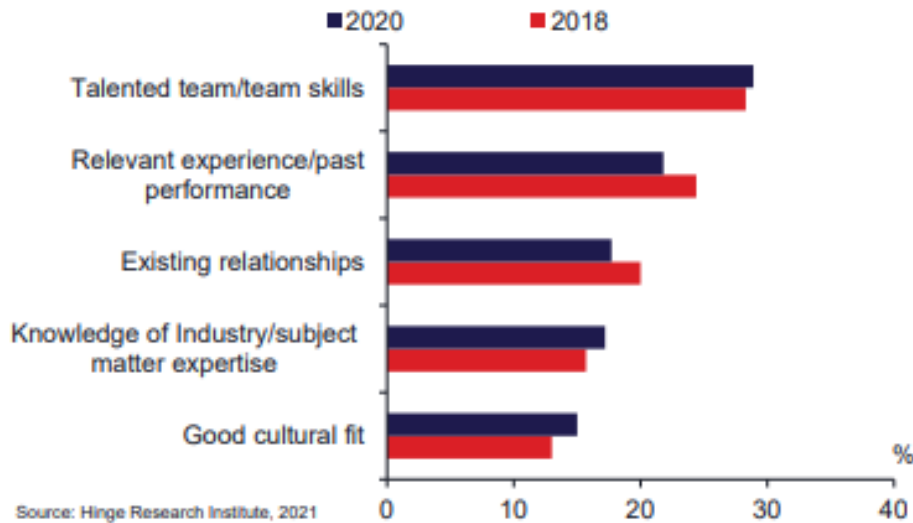
Figure 8: Top 5 deciding factors for selecting a professional services provider (Clark, 2022)

As Figure 8 above shows, the top criteria are the skills and competencies of the staff directly involved in delivering the service. The sector is labour-intensive and depends on access to human capital that can provide the expertise customers require. Firms compete on their capacity and capability to perform the work. This in turn hinges on the quality and quantity of staff with the requisite skill set and expertise. "A recent KPMG study highlighted that accessing talent was the most significant concern for firms in the professional services sector" (Clark, 2022, p.

20). Virtually all of the firms find it either moderately difficult or severely difficult to access skills (Clark, 2022) (Figure 9)

Figure 9: Professional services firms finding it difficult to access skills (Clark, 2022)
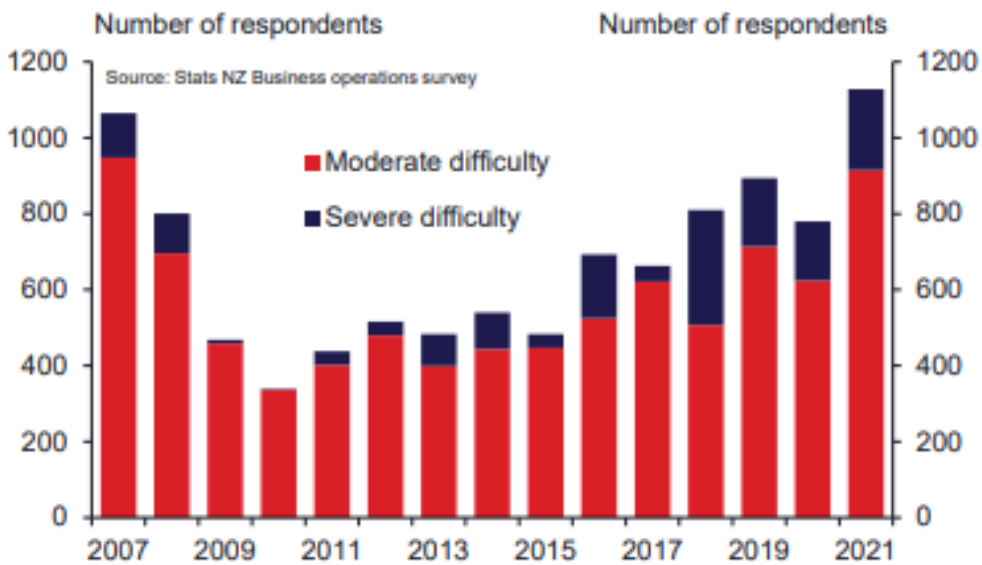
Turnover rates are relatively high in this environment. Compared to other industries, the construction sector has unique stressors negatively affecting employee well-being and job satisfaction, key contributors to attrition (Ayodele et al., 2022; Borg & Scott-Young, 2022). An Australian study investigating motivational factors via survey data collection and analysis concluded that demotivating factors included long hours, chaotic environments, lack of recognition, and aggressive management style in a male-dominated environment (Smithers & Walker, 2000). It is easy to understand how these aspects might lead employees to entertain leaving the organisation in search of a better one.

Chapter 2   Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This literature review section will evaluate relevant texts which have an explicit impact on the research questions identified in section 1.2. The topic of organisational culture and related subjects has an immense scope, but a summary of the definitions, measurement or assessment theories found in the vast literature is necessary to provide an overview and understanding for the reader of why organisational culture is such an important, yet often overlooked, aspect of

organisational management and strategy.

2.1 Definition 'Organisational Culture' (OC)

Throughout this paper, the reader may find inconsistencies in the spelling of the word 'organisation' and its derivatives. For clarification, the common spelling method used in New Zealand is the British version of 'organisation', but on occasion, the American spelling 'organization' has been adopted as it is originally referenced in the study being discussed.

The topic of organisational culture (OC) has been extensively researched and documented. Many theories have been established and become influential in organisational management practices over previous decades. However, none of these theories have arrived at a commonly accepted definition of what constitutes organisational culture. Multiple studies on the topic have found some common elements which are identified as inherent in OC (Deal & Kennedy, 1988; Denison & Mishra, 1995; Handy, 1993; Kotter & Heskett, 1992; Schein, 1990):

Shared Meaning encompasses the principal components of OC, such as values, norms, beliefs, and behaviours.   The works identified socialisation as the main

mechanism for the transmission and reinforcement of OC through daily individual interactions across the organisation.   The authors further shared the view of the importance of OC on the influence of behaviour. Behaviour guides the way internal and external interactions with fellow employees as well as with stakeholders are shaped but also impacts the processes of decision-making and problem-solving. By extension, OC's influence on behaviour is directly affecting organisational success. Control and stability are further concepts identified in the above-referenced literature. OC shapes acceptable norms and expectations and provides consistency across the company. Leadership and communication are universally accepted elements crucial to the development and evolution of OC. Leaders' modelled behaviours cement expectations and shape OC over time. This sets the stage for what is acceptable across the organisation. Lastly, strategic alignment is the platform on which organisational success and OC intersect. Organisational goals and strategy are directly linked to the OC through several outcomes, which will be further discussed in a subsequent paragraph.

It is necessary to clarify that the above commonalities in the key literature lend varying degrees of importance to each, or the combination of multiple, elements. Additionally, the existence of subcultures in the context of OC has been identified in multiple texts

(Coffey, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Peter T. van den Berg et al., 2004), suggesting that an organisation may be comprised of multiple organisational culture facets. In a recent article on cultural change, Fuchs and Shehadeh (2017) highlight that whatever the existing culture of an organisation may be, change is slow and incremental and requires time, energy, and dedication.

A more contemporary definition of OC was expressed in an article on the topic recently published in Forbes Magazine. In it, Larry Light describes it as "The culture of an enterprise reflects its achievements, its understanding and appreciation of its achievements, its social institutions, its values, what it values and its people" (Light, 2020, p. 3).   For this review, Light's description above will be used as a fitting representative definition of OC.

2.2 Assessing and Measuring OC

Despite the plethora of literature on the topic of OC, no one definition has yet been agreed upon and this complicates the task of assessing and measuring the very thing. As we have seen when we try to define OC, varying frameworks and models have been developed over the years (Ghinea & Bratianu, 2007), but no particular one has been agreed to be the 'standard benchmark' for assessing and

measuring OC. We can inspect Denison's Organisational Culture Model (Denison & Mishra, 1995), O'Reilly and Chatman's Organizational Culture Profile (O'Reilly III et al., 1991), Deal and Kennedy's Organisational Culture Model (Deal & Kennedy, 1988), or Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Model (Cameron & Quinn, 2011) as representative examples of the various concepts of how to approach the task of assessment and measurement of OC. The samples listed are variations of a theme, but they all have one particular element in common: they rely on the gathering of data through an internal process, usually through surveys or questionnaires, and the subsequent interpretation and plotting by company management (Peter T. van den Berg et al., 2004).   Management then concludes within the various frameworks to 'assess' or 'measure' the OC. In his study on the subject van den Berg diverts from previous approaches and recommends the "inclusion of organisational work practices does not neglect the employee's points of view" (Peter T. van den Berg et al., 2004, p. 3). He concludes that the OC can be better measured through organisational practice assessment. The question he puts forth is whether the management of the organisation is the best evaluator of the state of OC or whether an employee perspective might render a different point of view which might prove useful. All of these models, however, rely on internal members of the organisation and their possible bias in interpreting the data they have gathered. This proves to be a weak point since subjectivity is always likely to skew the resultant assessment.

In complete opposition to previous models of measuring culture, a new way has recently been researched, which may be revolutionary in this regard. A study conducted by Kai Li et al.,(2021) developed a model of measure using a machine-learning approach to gauge OC. The method involved creating a dictionary of words and phrases that express common values of S&P 500 firms, such as integrity, quality, innovation, respect, etc. The association between these value terms and descriptors in the developed dictionary was assessed to empirically establish the most relevant words and phrases and representative scores were derived. The study was tested on 209,480 call transcripts and the authors found that organisational culture correlates with business outcome and firm value, and they concluded that machine learning is useful for measuring corporate culture. This study is a defector from the previous methods and may gain momentum in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning. Despite the many interpretations and theories on OC, one important point is that every organisation has a distinct culture which is unique to that firm, for better or worse, with either a positive or negative impact (Cameron & Quinn, 2011; Paul & Raj, 2014). This brings up the next logical question: Why is so important and why does an organisation need to be concerned about its OC?

2.3 Impact on Business Performance

In simple terms, organisational culture impacts every aspect of the organisation and its success and subsequent value (Li et al., 2021). But the aspect most directly affected is the Human Capital of an enterprise. In any organisation, there is a need for people to develop strategy, make operational decisions, create, and improve processes, deliver a service or product, and satisfy the client or buyer. This is where the greatest impact of OC on business performance is felt and can quite easily be observed in the success of employee engagement and retention. But staff attrition is more than just an inconvenience to the company. The cost associated with high turnover is frequently underestimated and we must take into consideration both direct and indirect costs. The author of a recent Harvard Business Review article states that employees make up 70% of the costs in a business and it is imperative for the company to understand why people are leaving (Marsden, 2016). But there is not only the direct cost of recruiting a replacement to consider, but a far greater loss can also be seen in the indirect costs, which include loss of productivity, and remaining employee burnout due to increased workload (Brassey, Coe, & Dewhurst, 2022), the departure of tribal knowledge which leaves with the employee (Wallace, 2023), additional time and effort expended on the interview and selection process of a replacement (Marsden, 2016), and finally the cost of training the new person until they become proficient (Wallace, 2023). Wallace makes the point in his article that a retention-focused

enterprise can create an efficient people strategy to drive success over the long term. Marsden explains the concept of calculating both direct and indirect cost of attrition to a conservative 1.2 times the employee's annual salary for first-year-of-service turnover (Marsden, 2016, p. 1). He also cites a previous study by Harvard Business Review that estimated up to 80% of employee turnover is attributable to bad hiring candidate selection, and further puts urgency on the necessity for organisations to prevent "bad hiring" in the first place, while also understanding the reasons people choose to leave (Marsden, 2016). He emphasises that the 'cultural fit' is often to blame and to address cultural fit, the company must understand its shared values, and consider the candidate's fit and alignment with the organisational values. In other words, firms must look to thoroughly understand their organisational culture and its components, such as values and beliefs, to evaluate whether a candidate shares these or whether there is a poor alignment.

Michelle Maher (2000) opines that managing the culture is a prerequisite to an organisation's success in today's world. There are many examples of empirical research documenting the areas of organisational success which are contingent on a positive culture, such as financial performance (Afzali, 2023; Guiso et al., 2015), innovation (Li et al., 2021), corporate sustainability and resilience (Seville et al., 2008), community-, environmental-, and social responsibility (CSR/ESR), reputation (Siyal et al., 2022) and competitive advantage through human capital

(Simon et al., 2023). These are only a few examples where studies have clearly shown the effect of organisational culture on the many performance areas through which a business's value may be established. This research report is focused on human capital and its relevance to ensure corporate success and sustainability by providing a clear competitive advantage. This association has been established and highlighted in a recent journal article published in the Research Journal of Social Science and Management where the authors clearly state that the determining factor of a company's growth is directly related to its ability to attract and retain a unique labour force (Paul & Raj, 2014). The authors go on to assert that the OC is a direct driver of the retention of employees and cite the statement made by Rama V. Devi in 2009 that "organizational culture characterised by teamwork, pleasant working conditions, considerate treatment of employees, growth opportunities, flexible-working practices, and good leadership and management practices foster employee retention" (Paul & Raj, 2014, p. 173). When we apply the commonly accepted elements defining OC, such as values, beliefs, behaviours, and norms, it is easy to understand the connection to factors impacting the retention and attraction of talent. In a mixed-method approach study recently completed, the authors reference multiple empirical studies documenting the importance organisational culture plays in employee turnover (Ayodele et al., 2022). The study revealed through multiple interviews that employee welfare and employee

experience might be used in developing retention strategies promoting "a sense of belonging between employees and an organisation" (Ayodele et al., 2022, p. 612).

2.4 Factors Contributing to Retention Challenges

The literature is replete with studies analysing the subject. For example, in his article researching the high employee turnover rate, Ayodele followed the mixed-method approach and analysed the captured views of 157 construction workers in New Zealand (2022). He also included a comprehensive table of relevant literature reviews on the topic and summarised the findings to include stressors negatively affecting employee well-being and job satisfaction in the New Zealand construction sector. A report by McKinsey and Company brought up an incisive possibility: Employers do not fully understand why employees are leaving. To illustrate the point, the authors provide a table visualising the incongruence in understanding what employees want and what their employers think they want (De Smet et al., 2021, p. 6). The study lists factors such as feeling valued by the organisation and by the manager, having a safe environment, the potential for advancement, and having caring and trusting teammates as features highly valued by the employee, but often employers fail to realise the significance. The above factors largely depend on the health of the organisational culture to facilitate them,

particularly through the behaviour and the mode in which people interact with one another (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Guiso refers to the OC as a representative of the implicit mode of communication between members of an organisation, an agreement that coordinates approaches and practices, which could resemble the rules of the road (Guiso et al., 2015). Of course, several other contributors increase the rate of attrition, but Jennifer Paul (2014) emphasises that culture is a set of values that shape the Employer Brand associated with the organisation, the basis of which is the way the company is perceived as a 'place to work' (Paul & Raj, 2014, p. 176).

Throughout the review of relevant literature, I am not aware of any texts that dispute the association of organisational culture and its impact on retention, and it can be safely concluded, based on the empirical evidence, that a healthy organisational culture has a favourable impact on employee retention because it provides the fertile ground to grow trusting and ethical relationships between employer and employee.

The connection of the effect of organisational culture on the retention of valued staff is becoming clear and is therefore relevant to the first research question this Applied Business Project (ABP) is aiming to answer. A case could be made for the possibility of using staff turnover as a proxy measure for the organisational

culture, which directly points back to the two research questions identified for this ABP in Chapter 1.

2.5 OC Elements Relevant to Retention and Attraction of Talent

If staff turnover may be indicative of the health or state of the company's organisational culture, consideration must be given to the specific features to which employees attach particular importance.   New rules of attraction, retention, and attrition have been examined in recent literature, especially the phenomenon of 'quiet quitting' as it presents the biggest challenge to any business regardless of industry or geography (Simon et al., 2023). So what makes people quit? According to Simon, 35% of European attrition is caused by unsustainable performance expectations by the employer, other factors such as work-life balance, lack of professional development opportunities, and not feeling valued by the organisation. However, Simon goes on to explain that employers don't seem to understand their staff, and vastly underestimate how many employees are planning on leaving at any point in time. According to previous studies referenced by Simon, this figure (measured across seven countries) reached 39% of employed staff who are planning on leaving their job within the next six months. The disconnect between the employees and organisations must be addressed to

effectuate change in attrition, especially when we consider the extensive costs, both direct and indirect, to the business. Simon makes the point in his article that only 10% of companies studied have successfully built a human capital model and these types of organisations have more consistent earnings than competitors, and by extension, it becomes a competitive advantage. A successful human capital model does require leadership across the organisation. Leadership, like OC, has many theories in the literature and has been frequently studied, and the topic is too broad to discuss in detail as part of this review. However toxic leadership and management practices are often cited by employees as a prime motivator for leaving employment (Brassey, Coe, & Dewhurst, 2022). According to Brassey, a toxic workplace is strongly implicated in employee burnout and leads to a contaminated workplace climate. Effective leadership may take many shapes and is largely situation-dependent. Ashforth & Humphrey stated in their publication that the values held and modelled by the chief executive officer (CEO) of a company are "baked into the very DNA of organizations" and form the culture and climate across the whole (Ashforth & Humphrey, 2022, p. 24). They further discussed the evidence that authentic leadership was found to promote trust and positive emotions. Guiding principles of authentic leadership are the inherent values of the leader, and their application creates the environment to build mutual trust and understanding (Ashforth & Humphrey, 2022; Schweitzer, 2023; Simon et

al., 2023). Even so, authentic leadership is not the predominant type of leadership applied in the New Zealand construction industry.

The leadership style and resultant employee performance outcome were studied in a very recently published article and the authors found that transformational leadership was the most predominant style found in the NZ construction environment (Rotimi et al., 2023). The authors examined data collected via Multifactor Leadership Questionnaires (MLQ) and limited their study to transformational, transactional, and Laissez-Faire leadership theories. Transformational leadership in conjunction with Emotional Intelligence in the NZ and United Kingdom (UK) construction industries was the main topic of a published thesis (Potter, 2015). Potter studied Project Managers in both countries and administered questionnaires which, in part, examined the type of leadership self-reported by the subject studies. 73% of them favoured transformational leadership.

However, one must consider that leadership is not a topic that is commonly taught or included in career development topics in the construction sector. Since career advancement to construction management is mostly accomplished through technical achievements involved in project delivery, the development of soft skills essential to good leaders and managers is often overlooked entirely, or only perfunctorily addressed (Alqudah, 2022). And yet leadership is interwoven into

the OC and vice-versa; healthy OC is dependent on positive leadership which motivates followers to align their goals to the goals of the organisation (Fasaghandis & Wilkinson, 2019; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2021; Oyewobi et al., 2016; Paul & Raj, 2014).

Employees want a trusting and positive relationship with their employers (Ashforth & Humphrey, 2022) with learning opportunities (Chinowsky & Carrillo, 2007), career advancement (Potter, 2015), well-being (Brassey, Coe, & Dewhurst, 2022), healthy work-life balance (Borg & Scott-Young, 2022; Emily Morrison & Derek Thurnell, 2012) and overall positive employee experience (Paul & Raj, 2014) in an inclusive work environment (Brassey, Coe, & Giarola, 2022). Can these be delivered by creating a positive OC? This is the question that circles back to the research questions stated in the Introduction of this literature review.

2.6 Summary of Literature Review

The literature examined in this review makes a compelling argument that it is good business practice to pay attention to the OC to reap the resultant benefits such as improved financial and operational performance, innovation, reputation, CSR, corporate sustainability, and especially employee retention. It also is the primary

way to infuse organisational values and create a sustainable and positive work climate. The empirical literature further substantiates the need for employers to create greater awareness of why people leave in the first instance, and how this may be addressed to staunch the tide of turnover. In the present age of online information sharing the brand an employer creates is easily researched by job seekers through services such as Glassdoor. Existing and former employees become spokespersons of the employer's brand and organisational culture, whether favourable or unfavourable. Improving the OC is undoubtedly an endeavour well worth the investment of commitment, time, and energy and the return on that investment has been documented in this review.

However, the literature did not answer whether the findings equally apply to professional services firms in the NZ construction industry. This identified gap in the literature led to the exploration of the topic for this applied research project: to understand how empirical research evidence, augmented by qualitative data collection and analysis, can be utilised to increase retention rates by enhancing the organisational culture of the companies and to suggest ways to improve the existing culture to achieve the positive outcomes and results associated with positive OC. Qualitative research has been incorporated into this study to further explore what relevance OC holds in the eyes of current professionals who are directly affected. Interviews and thematic analysis provide additional factual evidence and proof of the importance of OC as discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3   Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This research project has utilised a change-orientated, model-building approach comprising the multi-phase research process explained in the figure below (Figure 10).
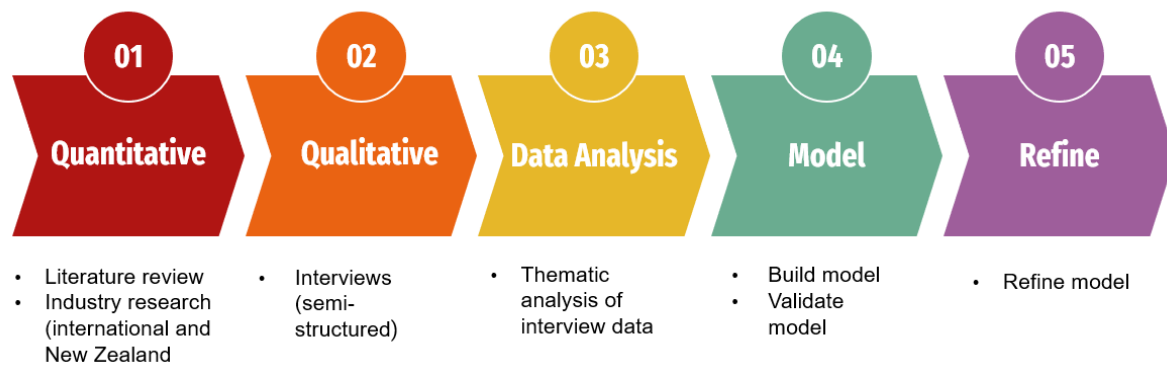

Figure 10: model building

The objective of the change model was to develop a guided framework to examine, and effect change in the organisational cultures of professional services firms in the New Zealand construction industry.

In the first phase involved the literature review of the relevant topics as they apply to the research questions. An overall understanding of the empirical definition, assessment, and change recommendations of organisational culture was needed to relate it to the retention and talent acquisition challenge identified in the research questions. Additional research of the particular industry, locally and abroad, provided the necessary context to apply the concept of OC in this arena and addressed any gaps in the empirical material to date.

Phase two involved qualitative data collection through stratified random sampling of the population. In this case, this was narrowed down to the professional services sector of the NZCI. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and included a representative number of participants of both genders, age ranges, and professional disciplines, as well as tenure in the industry. All of the strata (engineering, project management, quantity surveying, design/architecture; and other related) were adequately sampled, rendering this an efficient probability design for this study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019).

Next, phase three facilitated a deeper understanding of how participants interpreted OC, and how it relates to their experiences in various organisations. It also specifically provided valuable information to answer Research Question 2. Understanding what matters to employees, and business managers/owners, in the research strata proved invaluable in addressing what recommendations for change might be considered.

The findings of phases one through three laid the foundation for the model with recommendations for analysing and affecting change to OC in NZCI professional services entities. In phase four a validation step was incorporated and the data was found to be reliable (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). With phase four complete, a refining of the model was the final step in developing a framework with recommendations relating back to the identified research questions examining two points for PS firms in the NZCI: how important OC to job seekers and existing employees is; and how can firms improve the OC to retain existing and attract new, talent.

3.1 Qualitative Data Collected Through Interviews

14 individual face-to-face (four via virtual method) interviews were conducted with professionals in the relevant professional services environment. The questions were grouped based on two sub-sections, business managers or owners, and employed staff. This was strategically important to understand whether there is congruity between the two groups on the topic of OC and what are important factors for consideration for job seekers. Female and male ratios were fairly evenly distributed with eight male and six female participants. Ages ranged from mid-20s to mid-50s, and varied backgrounds included native NZ-born as well as immigrants. Cultural and ethnic diversity was spread across the strata sample. Figure 11 below identifies the ratio of participants across the various disciplines, with a fairly accurate representation of the ratio found in the overall PS sector in the NZCI.

Interviewee Disciplines

- Project Mgmt
- Engineering
- Architecture/Design
- Quantity Surveying
- Other related
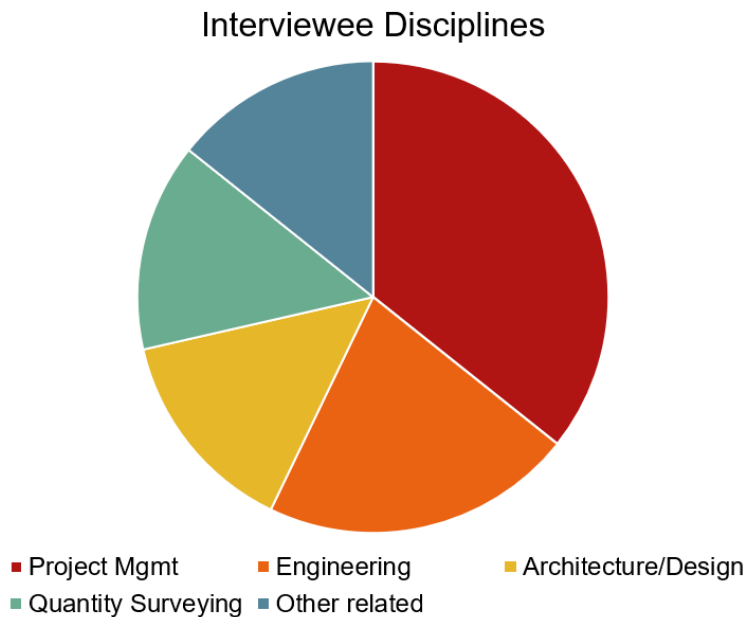
Figure 11: Interviewee Disciplines

Each participant was assigned a randomly selected identifier starting with X1 to X14, further enhancing the validity of the data obtained through anonymising the transcribed interviews.

The questions posed during the semi-structured interviews had been prepared in advance, and tested before starting the data collection. Participants were issued an information sheet with the relevant study details, including the ethics approval issued by Massey University (Appendix 1). Each participant was provided with a

copy of the transcript and permission was obtained to use the data obtained in preparation of this study report.

Lastly, the participants' activity in their professions in New Zealand was captured and identified in Figure 12 below, ranging from 1 to 10+ years in the local industry.

Tenure in NZ Construction Industry

- 0 to 1 years
- 1 to 3 years
- 3 to 5 years
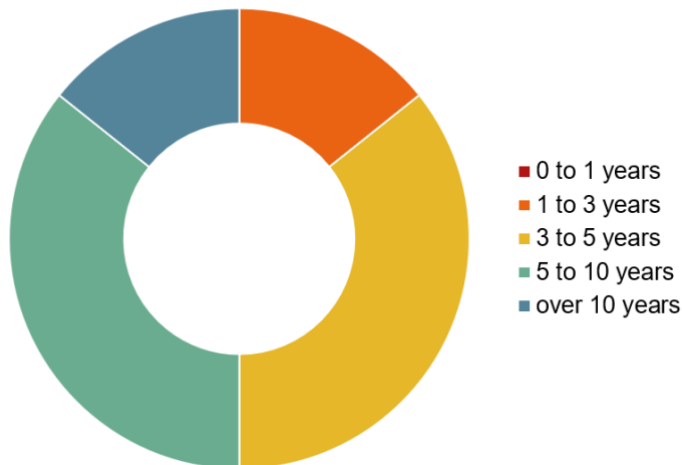- 5 to 10 years
- over 10 years

Figure 12:   participant tenure in new zealand construction industry

3.2 Validation of Data

Validation of the data collected in this study involved testing for factorial validity. The data was submitted to an independent expert in the field of research to confirm that the theorised dimensions developed as described above. Key thematic analysis factors were submitted to participants after the initial interview for review and validation of content. Each of the participants did verify that the sub-themes and identified definitions were indeed true and accurate.

Qualitative data studies are used to better understand a question or challenge. In this study, the mixed method approach of qualitative and quantitative analysis was used to gain a thorough understanding of the research aim previously identified. Findings from both literature and collected data were triangulated for both method and data, further adding confidence to the robustness of the research and the validity of the findings and conclusions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019).

Chapter 4　　　Thematic Analysis of Collected Data

4.0 Introduction

Thematic analysis of the interview data was utilised to classify, analyse, and narrate the themes and patterns identified from the collected data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019).

Sub-themes across the data sets were noted, especially related to experienced workplace behaviour, desired attributes of employment environments, and which elements were deemed most important to job seekers and current staff from their perspective.

The table below identifies the sub-themes and their relevance to the research purpose of this study.

Sub-Theme	Definition	Relevance
Definition of OC	Participant's interpretation of the term OC	Understanding of OC
Current role and organisation	• What attracted employee? • Description of climate • Pre-employment research conducted (Glassdoor, etc) • Has experience matched expectations?	Deciding factors for accepting current employment
Past and current	• Organisational awareness of its culture	What experiences have been noted in past and current

Sub-Theme	Definition	Relevance
experience of OC	• High Stress • Work satisfaction • Bad workplace behaviour • Able to be true self at work • Feel valued and recognised • Career progression and development opportunities • Innovation	organisations and how did they impact perceived OC
Retention	3 Contemplating a switch in the next 6 months? 4 If so, why, or why not?	Risk of attrition and identified reasons for leaving. What are employees looking for when

Sub-Theme	Definition	Relevance
	5 Current attrition rates and reasons 6 What is highly valued by employees	contemplating a switch?
Leadership	• Leadership skills of Line Manager • Leadership training provided • Non-technical training opportunities provided • Line Manager relationship (trust and authenticity) • Who is responsible for pastoral care and welfare?	Employee direct management style and capabilities. Leadership style and focus.

Sub-Theme	Definition	Relevance
OC as a strategic focus	- Main focus of organisation - Productivity - Client satisfaction - Employee experience - Org. growth and success - Executive Leadership awareness and approach to OC (strategic focus)	Awareness of OC and its impact on the performance of the business by the Executive Management Team. Is paying attention to OC a strategic focus for the company and what is being done?
Employee Experience /	Do companies understand what employees value?	Examining the congruence, or incongruence, of understanding

Sub-Theme	Definition	Relevance
Employer Brand	• What employees value compared to what companies offer • Willingness to recommend the organisation as an employer	between employer and staff. Employees as brand ambassadors for the organisation.
Values	• Are values important in organisations, and are they part of the daily business activity? • Do leaders act with values in mind and lead by example? • Are company values genuine or lip service?	Are values identified and do organisations use them as guides in practice? Employee perception of values and behaviour. Which values do

Sub-Theme	Definition	Relevance
	• Examples of how values are ignored or eschewed	employees identify with and want to see in their organisations?
OC evaluation and assessment	• What organisations are doing to assess OC • Active measures to address OC	Identifying what companies are doing to assess their OC and what actions are identified to improve OC.

4.1 Findings and Discussion

Organisational culture is often treated as a side project, lacking the attention generally paid to other major business initiatives. Both literature and collected data analyses have identified that organisations are not as aware of their internal cultures as they might think they are. The perspective of a business manager or owner is not necessarily aligned with the view held by employees of the company. The incongruity identified in the article by McKinsey (De Smet et al., 2021) was substantiated through the interviews with employees as they relate to this study. This recognition is the first step in addressing the aim of this research study. The sub-themes highlighted in the above table are discussed individually.

4.1.0   Definition of OC

Interview participants had varying definitions of what organisational culture is. Below are a few samples from both managers/owners and employees:

"The way the business operates"

"The way individuals operate together and support each other"

"The way the company treats staff provides opportunity for growth and development"

"The backbone…cultural organisational structure"

"Our behaviours, attitudes, the way value defines us, what we believe in"

When asked if OC could be restated as "How you feel on Sunday nights at the prospect of going to work on Monday morning," 100% of participants agreed with this definition, including business managers/owners and employees. Universal acceptance of this definition clarified the context of OC for the purpose of the data collected.

4.1.1   Current Role and Organisation

Participants identified reasons for accepting the current role in these examples:

"Opportunity to grow, culture, and fit"

"Boss connected with the team… very involved…good leader"

"Immigrated to New Zealand and expertise matched"

"Knew a lot of people working in the company… recommended"

"Industry reputation and good salary"

Most described the current climate as somewhat positive, especially in the SMEs. In the larger enterprises, the recurring comments revolved around the fact that the company was too large and there were few personal relationships or connections. The majority of people interviewed confirmed that they had done some research into the company before joining. Some had viewed comments on Glassdoor, others had spoken to past or present staff members, and a few had received some information from recruitment agents they worked with. All of them had performed some due diligence by looking at the company websites, LinkedIn posts, or press releases. In the majority of cases, the overall experience matched their expectations on some level. However, organisational culture was generally not addressed before engagement.

4.1.2　　Past and Current Experience of OC

The interview data identified that all of the participants had either experienced or observed bad workplace behaviour, high stress, and bad management. However, it also showed that most felt adequate work satisfaction and the majority felt reasonably valued and recognised. Unfortunately, only half confirmed that they felt they could be their true self at work and around their colleagues. The reasons all pointed to a lack of trust in their relationships with managers or other staff members. Career progression and development opportunities were noted as available opportunities in the majority of instances. The responses of how well the organisation understood its own culture elicited a variety of responses:

"Not at the top level… sub-culture in the region, yes"

"Somewhat ….but poorly transmitted"

"Maybe… could be much better"

"Mostly… there is a level of separation"

Inference from these responses can be made that companies are not truly aware of their OC, or the importance of the culture is not translated into the behaviours or communications perceived by the majority of the staff.

4.1.3 Retention

The responses in this sub-theme were almost equally split. Nearly half of the people interviewed stated that they were considering a switch in the next six months for a variety of reasons. Below are some sample reasons for the consideration of leaving the current role:

"Next bigger role in about a year … expanding experience"

"Bored, not challenged… lack of work satisfaction"

"Lack of trust … communication challenges with manager"

"Feel not valued … manager does not have my back"

"Terrible atmosphere at work… just focused on output"

Most participants were not aware of the current attrition rates in their organisations but identified that turnover was high across the board in the industry. A key contributor appears to be the number of available openings and the possibility of instant elevation of roles and salaries offered by competing companies. Significant

sign-on bonuses and salary negotiations favour the employee who is contemplating a change. What stood out were the responses to the question of what employees would look for in the next firm and role. The most identified criteria were the following: "being appreciated; the value to the organisation is acknowledged; work-life balance; work satisfaction; good leadership and people management; development and advancement opportunities; feeling a sense of belonging; safety; culture; tangible value (salary and time off); being part of something good." Every respondent identified that OC, as described in the restatement above, was a key consideration and not negotiable.

4.1.4   Leadership

The topic of leadership competencies and approach in interviews highlighted a common theme. Generally, there was a perception that leadership skills were inadequate in most direct managers, and the focus was transactional rather than an authentic relationship. Approximately one-third thought leadership skills were lacking or absent and nearly half had experienced toxic managers in the past. Most organisations do not provide routine training for middle managers in leadership disciplines. Most managers are promoted for technical skills and achievements alone and step into roles of managers with responsibility for leading teams and

direct reports without any type of additional training. This phenomenon is extremely common in the professional services sector of the NZCI. Nearly all of the respondents confirmed that training and development opportunities generally involved technical disciplines, and very few soft skills or people management subjects.

Yet, nearly all identified their direct line manager as the person responsible for their welfare and pastoral care and a large number felt they did not have a trusting relationship with their manager.

4.1.5   OC as Strategic Focus

When the topic of strategic focus was discussed, the vast majority of the interviewees thought that organisational culture was neither on the radar nor a key focus area of the company's strategy. The strategic focus seemed to be on either productivity, client satisfaction, or company growth and success. Only one respondent stated that their employer's strategic focus was on the employee experience over other considerations.

The majority of responses stated that the companies were not focused on organisational culture as part of their strategy and most thought that the strategic management team was not aware, and did not really care, about the OC of their firms. A common explanation was that the executive managers were too removed from the frontline employees and did not make it a priority to understand whether their culture was positive or not. Sample responses included the following:

"Not top priority in the current company"

"Not in this company, but should be a top priority"

"It should be for all companies"

"Executive team is too far removed to understand…"

Since OC is identified as a key driver of organisational success and sustainability, it is surprising to realise that it is not a strategic consideration in most firms.

4.1.6   Employee Experience and Employer Reputation

When asked about whether companies understand what is important to employees, more than two-thirds of people felt there was an absence of comprehension. Some of the responses below provide insight:

"They do surveys, but no real understanding by management"

"No, not at all"

"Somewhat, but general lack of understanding and awareness… complacency"

"Maybe on some level, but not really understanding"

It is surprising that in light of the apparent lack of awareness, 12 of the 14 interviewees would recommend their current employer to someone they cared about.   However, this is not the case for all past companies they worked for. The majority stated that they had worked for some 'terrible companies', and they could not continue, so they left. No way would they recommend some of these firms. Companies need to know what their current and former staff have to say about their experiences, this shapes the employer brand which a company is known for in

the industry. Most often, feedback from exit interviews and exit surveys is often dismissed as venting by potentially disgruntled or disenfranchised employees. But organisations ignore these comments at their peril and often at the expense of their reputation with potential job seekers who contemplate an offer of employment. This becomes a critically important point in a tight labour market such as described in this report.

4.1.7   Values

The term 'organisational values' often invokes the attributes companies place on their websites or their promotional material, words or phrases chosen to engage the user or potential client to engage them. However, values are much more important than a marketing or engagement initiative. Often founders of firms infuse their values into the company at the beginning. Yet, these values often become distorted, diluted, or even lost as the organisation goes about its daily activities. During the data collection for this study, it became evident that people felt that values were either non-existent or disregarded, as these sample statements illustrate:

"Individuals need to match organisational values, but a lot of companies don't live by their values…. Purpose drives more of the behaviour than their values"

"Distance is too great between executive management and staff – values are not translated into actions"

"I think the culture felt really toxic in terms of values…the way they've approached things or the way they think about things is very different and it's not all-inclusive"

"I have previously observed sexism, racism, being treated like an expendable object… values are mostly lip-service"

"Values need to be people-focused, everyone matters"

"Values should be transparent, people first… genuine… leading by example"

It is apparent that the values which drive behaviour are regarded as extremely important to employees but are often perceived as absent or phoney in reality. Values are at the heart of the OC and must be an integral part of the daily fabric of operations and need to be exemplified and lived up to by leaders of the firm.

Chapter 5   Discussion

Chapter 2 of this report provides a detailed review of the relevant existing literature outlining how organisational culture can be defined, past and present methods of assessment, and related the impact OC has on business performance. It further identified OC as a direct factor in the retention of employees, and the attracting of new talent. What the literature was not able to answer was how important OC is to job seekers and existing employees in the NZCI professional services firms, and how these firms can improve OC to attract and retain talent, the research questions identified in section 1.2 of this report. This prompted the topic studied in more depth in this applied business project and the findings in the literature were augmented through the data collected as part of this study. By interviewing professionals in this actual space, the gaps in the literature were addressed and important information was derived to answer the questions which had not been answered previously.

5.0 Comparison Between Literature and Collected Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data identified that organisational culture is a key element in successfully retaining staff and acquiring additional talent, a critical

success factor for PSFs in the NZCI. Interviews identified how OC is typically defined by employees, and also established the immense importance it plays in their daily lives at work. This study produced some interesting data related to what employees valued, and how they perceived their organisations. Below are the key findings from the combination of both research methods as they relate to the research questions:

1. How important is organisational culture to job seekers and existing employees in the professional services firms of the New Zealand construction industry?

The importance of organisational culture to job seekers and existing employees has been well established in the literature examined. In recent years a phenomenon named 'quiet quitting' has made headlines. In fact, according to a study recently conducted (Simon et al., 2023), the leading factors causing resignations are lack of work-life balance, professional development opportunities, and not feeling valued or appreciated by employers. These are all factors related to OC through the values, norms and beliefs practised in the workplace.

Organisational culture has multiple definitions in the literature, but the commonly accepted restatement put to the participants in the interviews was "How you feel on Sunday nights at the prospect of going to work on Monday morning." It is relatively easy to see how the factors leading to attrition as highlighted in the literature review (Ashforth & Humphrey, 2022; Borg & Scott-Young, 2022; Brassey, Coe, & Giarola, 2022; Chinowsky & Carrillo, 2007; Paul & Raj, 2014; Potter, 2015; Simon et al., 2023), can be reflected in how employees feel on a Sunday night when they think about going to work the next morning. The statements collected from interviews substantiate the importance of making people feel positive and engaged, valued, motivated, and safe, all of which are positive attributes.

When job seekers consider potential employment opportunities, they look for all of these qualities in their next role, in short, they look for a positive work climate and organisational culture. They want to align their own values with those of a suitable employer, after all, the relationship is important, potentially mutually rewarding, long-standing, and requires a certain amount of trust and connection to impart loyalty. Employers often promise all of these and more, but the reality is that they often under-deliver on these promises. Communicating what employees can honestly expect and inviting participation to achieve constant improvement in the

current climate and culture forms part of the foundation of an honest, transparent, and trusting relationship between employer and employee. Good faith stemming from practised company values will pave the way for earning the trust, credibility, and loyalty employers seek from their staff.

Employers need to begin by really understanding what makes people leave, they need to talk to their staff. The most common explanation for attrition, when companies are asked, is the enticement of increased salary and uplift in role (De Smet et al., 2021). However, the reality is very different, as the data collected for this study through interviews bore out. Staff are not leaving for increased salaries as a primary reason, but they are leaving their current situation due to negative culture and its connected factors. For example, in times of stress due to a looming deadline in a project, prolonged work hours may be necessary to complete the work in time. Staff who are recognised, appreciated, and feel they are part of the achievement have no feelings of resentment towards their company during periods of high stress. However, if this type of work environment of high stress is coupled with negative attributes such as feeling taken advantage of, being dispensable, or not valued for their contribution, employees become disengaged and feel abandoned or deceived, impacting the OC in a very negative way.

When the environment of the NZCI is considered, specifically the professional services sector, it is established through both research methods, that human capital

is a critical success factor. In light of how important organisational culture is in the eyes of job seekers and existing employees as shown above, a conclusion must be drawn that PS firms must make OC a key focus of strategic outcome to ensure a sustainably successful business performance. Inference can be drawn from the research that attrition rate may be a reliable indicator of the state of the organisational culture in this environment. While the current labour market is competitive, some companies are more successful in retaining and attracting top talent than others as identified through interview data collected, and the attraction is not salary, but the employee experience and value proposition.

2.   How can professional services firms in the New Zealand construction industry improve the organisational culture to attract and retain talent?

The improvement of organisational culture hinges on multiple factors. In the first instance, companies must be aware of the current state of the OC and the most reliable mode of gaining this understanding is talking to their employees. Most of the companies included in the data collected engage in some type of annual survey to 'measure' the culture. Surveys are quick, easy, inexpensive, and can easily compare data over time. However, there are many challenges with the approach of using surveys to understand what is not working. Employees often find the

process an arms-length approach and a less than genuine way of engaging with staff to understand what could be improved. It is also impossible to make staff feel like they are heard, and understood, and their feedback valued, especially if there are no measured outcomes from these surveys. Often, the Human Resources (HR) departments of companies are tasked with the gathering of data and interpreting it. However, data is only valuable if it is interpreted objectively and validated, and results in an objective evaluation and focused improvement initiatives. Responsibility for changing the organisational culture must sit with the executive leadership space in the first instance and require a discussion of how corporate values are communicated and incorporated into everyday business activities.

Both empirical and data collection research in this study identified that values must guide the behaviours, norms, and practices of the members of an organisation. The expectation needs to be clearly communicated and the actions demonstrated through examples from senior leaders throughout the ranks of the firm. The values must become a genuine part of the operation and strategy and infused into the daily processes throughout. Interviewed employees who identified that their managers and leaders exemplify and demonstrate the company's values are reassured that there is no double standard, and no hypocrisy, and they tend to trust their managers and leaders. Integrity, fairness, and empathy are the most sought-after qualities in their managers according to interview participants, in other words, values.

While tangible benefits are important, employees are more focused on how they feel while they are at work. Some of the most important considerations were feeling valued, appreciated, and respected, having a trusting relationship with the employer, access to learning and development opportunities along with career progression, general well-being and a safe work environment, healthy work-life balance, and work satisfaction. These attributes are achieved through the infusion of values in the workplace. These elements correlated across the literature examined and the data collected as part of this study and were found to elevate the employee experience considerably, making it a key component of employee retention and attraction.

Another component involved in improving OC is the type and quality of leadership competencies of middle- and senior managers.   In the New Zealand construction industry professional services environment, career progression is often achieved through the delivery of project deliverables and a technical standard is applied as a measure of success. As people advance through their careers, they are expected to lead teams of people, manage direct reports, and ultimately become strategic managers of the business. A challenge is often observed in their understanding and proficiencies in applying true leadership skills without having received adequate training to prepare them for their new roles. This leads to unsuccessful relationships within teams, and direct line staff, and increases the risk of attrition considerably because the employees perceive the lack of leadership competencies

in their managers. Organisational culture is dependent on middle managers and team managers to facilitate the successful transmission of the values, beliefs, and norms from the executive team. Empirical studies have shown that the most prevalent leadership styles in the industry are transformational (Potter, 2015; Rotimi et al., 2023). However, authentic leadership is a suitable alternative and utilises the organisation's and the individual's values as a principal guide (Demirtas & Karaca, 2020). This makes it a fitting style since it does not involve extensive learning of theory and is easily adapted to a technical environment.

5.1 Business Implications

In light of the illustrated association between OC and business performance, a closer examination of the connection may further identify the reason why firms must assess and actively shape their OC. The literature review addresses this topic in section 2.3 above and this section identifies the impact OC may have on PS firms in the NZCI. While this is not the primary focus of this study, the relationship between OC and business performance will briefly be discussed in this section, but future research may explore the correlation in more detail.

Financial: The staggering costs associated with attrition, both direct recruitment costs and loss of opportunities due to staff shortages, cannot be underestimated. In some instances, this may be the biggest expense a professional services firm faces, creating further stress on already small profit margins. An average salary for a professional in the industry in the discipline of project management (PM) may range around $100,000 per year. Considering that it may take more than 120% of the first year's annual salary to replace this staff member, the cost to the business is considerable (Wallace, 2023). The loss of opportunities which cannot be realised due to staffing constraints compounds this cost and may jeopardise the growth and competitiveness of the firm in the market.

Human Capital: higher turnover puts added stress on the remaining staff to cover deliverables on existing projects. Aside from the feeling of the additional performance pressure, the increased workload will compound any feelings of dissatisfaction which may already be present in the rest of the staff. They may feel underappreciated and may even think of leaving themselves. Added stress also has an impact on mental health and well-being, which may lead to increased absenteeism and grievances (Seppälä & Cameron, 2015).

Flow of Communication: The flow of information and communication is disrupted when employees leave (Chinowsky et al., 2007). Projects they worked on need to be reassigned and may create delays while the new team member comes up to

speed. Stakeholders are unfamiliar with the newly assigned replacement further disrupting communication and information flow. Projects are generally time-bound by a programme and delays to these time constraints may incur monetary penalties or risk a client's dissatisfaction with the performance.

Operational: Construction projects often involve a team of people to deliver particular elements of the work (Olanipekun et al., 2014). When a staff member leaves, team efficiency becomes severely compromised as does the team synergy. A new member will require a period of bedding into the project and the tasks before they become proficient and deliver at the required level. Aside from delays, the quality of the project may be diminished due to disruption and loss of tribal knowledge of the project and environment (Wallace, 2023). This may lead to additional costs to the business or diminished profit margins to cover the disruption and train replacement staff to the same level of competencies. Each firm has particular processes and ways of operating which require a certain time for new staff to familiarise themselves with. During this time, billable time is lost, and profit margins may be impacted.

Client and Stakeholder Certainty: the impact factors identified above may reduce the feeling of certainty and confidence a client or stakeholders have in the firm (Watson & Chileshe, 2001) . As discussed in section 1.4 of this report, clients select professional services firms for their reputation and their capabilities, and

especially the competencies of their staff. Frequent staff changes may risk repeat engagement due to the disruptive impact on the project. Relationships between stakeholders or clients and the staff of the firm may cease with the departure of the employee and may even cause the client to reconsider following the employee to a new firm.

Innovation: staff who are disengaged and feel underappreciated may not feel inclined to find innovative solutions or seek ways to improve current processes and procedures. This hampers innovation considerably, especially when workers feel their contributions or suggestions are not valued (Cheung et al., 2012). Innovation in a technical field is especially important to progress new ideas of adding value to clients and stakeholders.

Leadership: in the case of senior staff members departing a firm, matters may be complicated on two levels. It is not only much harder to find replacements for senior staff with appropriate technical expertise and experience, but it also disrupts the leadership structure in a business (Durth et al., 2023). Direct reports and teams may feel uncertain about their future and the replacement manager, disrupting project delivery. It also impacts the situational element of leadership. For the team, there is no leader to follow, and the situation may feel unreliable and cause further adverse consequences to OC. Motivation may drop off and performance can decrease.

Chapter 6   Recommendations

6.0 Introduction

This study has identified the benefits of a positive OC on attrition rate and the ability to attract new top talent to PSFs in the NZCI. Findings from the literature, data collected, and subsequent analysis have identified the importance of assessing and shaping OC to keep personnel and draw additional high performers to the company. This chapter will address specific recommendations that enhance the six key elements of OC which have been concluded as the most dominant focus points through empirical and data research performed in this study.

6.1 Organisational Commitment

Change must start at the executive level of the organisation but impacts every single person connected to the working environment. As Figure 13 below illustrates, values are the catalyst for changes in culture. Values determine behaviour and over time behaviour results in a mindset conducive to learning and developing. Part of this development is the leadership aspect of managers with the responsibility to lead and engage teams and individuals. Through better leadership

competency follows authenticity and genuine relationships between employees and managers. Over time, this ultimately increases the level of trust, which deepens the connections between people, resulting in a genuine feeling of belonging and being part of the organisational fabric. The element of trust paves the way to a heightened sense of loyalty.

For any change to be sustainable and effective buy-in and commitment from the executive leaders are essential. Without the recognition and acknowledgement from the C-suite that change is necessary, any initiative is destined to fail and may be seen as yet another 'tick-box exercise' or failed attempt to improve culture and climate, resulting in the opposite of the intended outcome. Buy-in requires a reflective exercise by the senior leadership team and executives, and where applicable even the board, to accept that OC is an essential part of the intended business success, and that total commitment is needed to make meaningful improvements (Fuchs & Shehadeh, 2017). Changing culture is not a short-term exercise. The existing culture developed over time and lasting and effective improvements will equally take place over months and possibly years. OC is an ongoing project which requires iterative changes as the company adapts to changing market conditions and macroeconomic fluctuations. The transformation will require this unwavering dedication to invest time, effort, and resources in this essential ingredient to commercial success.

Figure 13: CULTURE FRAMEWORK BY ULI JOHNSTON (AUTHOR'S WORK, 2023)

The following recommendations apply to the collective organisation as well as the individual. Enhancing and improving the following six components of organisational culture will make a vast difference. Each organisation must take stock of which of these require the most attention and focus. This will require a very open and honest assessment of where improvement is needed to accomplish a desired culture change. Since all of the components are connected and play a vital part, evaluation may best be performed by an independent outside party who conducts one-on-one interviews with employees. In larger organisations, a random sample representative of the organisational will be sufficient to draw reliable conclusions for assessment purposes. Retention initiatives must start with understanding why employees leave and facilitating open and honest conversations before the exit interview takes place.
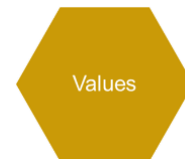
Values

1. VALUES: Review and define core values of the organisation

Founders of the firm, or the executive-level leaders, need to take the initiative and the first step by reviewing and clearly defining the company's core values which translate into its purpose and operational beliefs (Watson & Chileshe, 2001). These are not just words or catchphrases, but they need to speak to the identity and ethos of the company (Simon et al., 2023). These values must act as principles

underpinning all decisions and actions and become a representative roadmap of how the company conducts its business (Guiso et al., 2015; Light, 2020; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2021; Paul & Raj, 2014; Watson & Chileshe, 2001). Behaviour on a collective and personal level will be shaped by the values communicated internally and externally. Clients and stakeholders will be able to judge whether their values align with those of the organisation and result in better relationships and outcomes.

Values must then be transmitted throughout the firm not just in communication, but also through demonstrated behaviour and practices. They need to become an integral part of the strategic development activities. Corporate strategy is the activity which creates a plan to achieve a competitive position by choosing a set of activities to deliver a particular value to stakeholders and clients. OC should be an integral focus when planning a strategy for the business considering the multi-faceted impact it has on the performance. The executive leadership team, or in certain organisations the Board of Directors, must consider the core values and the connected OC when making strategic decisions. Staff retention is directly linked to OC and for PS firms in the NZCI, this is a core success criterion at a strategic and operational level and should therefore be included in the strategic planning

VALUES - Action : Review mission and vision statements

❖ Establish a committee of diverse senior internal stakeholders, including founders or people involved in the initial formation, to review existing vision and mission statements

❖ Provide the background information for context, including the firm's history, current strategic objectives, and relevant changes in the industry or business environment

❖ Set a target time for initial drafts to be reviewed and collect feedback on the draft from employees and leadership to ensure the values resonate with a wide audience

❖ Integrate feedback and finalise the revised mission and vision statements, ensuring they represent the company's purpose, inspire, and motivate stakeholders, and align with the current strategic plan

❖ Set a schedule for periodic monitoring and iteration to adjust statements as needed to ensure they remain aligned with the organisation's evolving environment and goals

Behaviours

2. BEHAVIOUR: transmission of values

Behaviour is the most direct and important transmission of values through role modelling (Field et al., 2022; Schein, 1990). Managerial behaviour and ethical standards are directly influenced by Values and OC (Paul & Raj, 2014). Renee Jaine – Behaviour Scientist at Martin Jenkin, identified the alignment between values and behaviour as "it's important to embed values and behaviours like we do the right thing even when no one's watching, and we take responsibility for our actions even if it costs" (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2021, p. 2). How behaviour is observed and perceived by employees is a massive contributor to attrition rates. All of the interview participants reported having observed bad behaviour workplace during their career in the NZCI, which is considered to be a major contributor to employees leaving a company (Borg & Scott-Young, 2022; Brassey, Coe, & Giarola, 2022; De Smet et al., 2021).

A code of conduct to promote professional behaviour is often included in a company manual, but this is not an effective way to communicate the expectations of what acceptable behaviour should look like. The most successful way to enforce and reinforce desirable behaviour is for managers and leaders to model it daily in all aspects of the work environment. A thorough understanding and belief

in the core company's core values will guide the managers and leaders to incorporate these values in how they act and the decisions they make. Observing staff will gain respect for the leaders and emulate their behaviour in how they engage with each other and outside stakeholders and clients. Behaviour is infectious, both good and bad. Unchecked bad behaviour leads to distrust and uncertainty for employees, contributing to the risk of attrition.

BEHAVIOUR - Action: Communicate intended values and behaviour

❖ Conduct interviews with employees at various levels to gather feedback and understand how well the values are communicated, and whether they see them reflected in daily behaviours

❖ Engage an independent professional to assess the alignment of leadership values with the organisation's values. Include 360-degree feedback and direct observations of behaviour and actions in various contexts.

❖ Evaluate the onboarding processes of new employees to ensure that orientation materials explicitly communicate the expectations of behaviour and the importance of the organisational values

❖ Conduct observations of daily interactions and examine staff members' behaviours. Evaluate whether the behaviour corresponds with the values and address any deviations immediately, but ensure privacy is observed and empathy is applied when feedback is issued.

Mindset

3. MINDSET: developing the learning mindset

Over time, the values and behaviours modelled daily in the workplace precipitate a shift in the overall mindset of the staff (Chinowsky & Carrillo, 2007; Fuchs & Shehadeh, 2017).   Just as habits start with repeat actions, repeat observed and practised behaviour leads to a new norm. What is acceptable and unacceptable will no longer need to be analysed or discussed, but it will become part of the cultural standard. This shift will be fertile soil for learning and development initiatives to be embraced. The desire to uphold and improve a positive climate and culture leads to the appeal of learning, adopting new initiatives, and becoming

innovative (Fasaghandis & Wilkinson, 2019; Field et al., 2022; Light, 2020; Zulu et al., 2023).   Learning and development, as well as career progression opportunities, were listed as some of the most common sought-after criteria by interview participants in this study.   Organisations can make opportunities available, but without the proper mindset and OC, the uptake and engagement with the teaching are negatively influenced. The desire to take advantage of the opportunities comes from the mindset of the members, which is directly linked to the behaviours and values discussed above.

MINDSET - Action: foster a passion for learning

❖ Ensure that leaders in the organisation model continuous learning and upskilling, share their knowledge and experience, and prioritise employee development. Leadership must visibly commit to a learning mindset and act as examples for staff.

❖ Establish a practice and method for recognising and rewarding employees who actively engage in learning opportunities. This can include a financial contribution to secondary or tertiary education and public acknowledgement of achievements. Illustrate growth in individuals who have embraced a learning mindset.

❖ Embrace mistakes as learning opportunities by reviewing what went wrong and identifying what can be done to ensure a better outcome in the future. Encourage employees to share their errors and identify lessons learned. Reward innovation of processes to prevent error repetition.

❖ Establish mentorship and career progression programs. Encourage experienced employees to guide less experienced colleagues and share their knowledge. Provide the time resources required to the learning partners to establish this mode of transfer of institutional knowledge.

Leadership

4. Leadership: the conduit to transmitting values

Leadership is a topic that is ubiquitous in the people management space and there are many ideologies and styles to suit specific situations (Demirtas & Karaca, 2020). The very people-centric environment is the focus of this study and requires a leadership style that is ideally suited to professionals with a technical background, such as engineering, architecture, and project management as an example. These disciplines generally do not include an extensive subject matter related to people and interpersonal relationships, but these skills are essential in the space of managing teams, direct reports, and stakeholders.

Leadership which is based on authentic and genuine interactions with people builds trust and allows for deeper connections, which has been identified as a high-ranking criterion for employees and job seekers (Ashforth & Humphrey, 2022). Leaders who are open, transparent, fair, and empathetic are what interview participants in this study revealed as a major factor for remaining in the company, despite other negative factors such as intermittent high stress, elevated workloads, or long hours. Great leaders inspire loyalty and employees describe feeling proud to be associated with their leaders (Potter, 2015). Workers also feel more engaged in their work and environment, and are more committed to the firm, a significant element in increasing retention (Paul & Raj, 2014). Leaders also act as the primary conduit for communicating the values throughout the company and demonstrating the incorporation of the core values into daily processes and communications. They model the desired behaviour and are experts in self-leadership, inspiring others to be leaders of themselves through inspiration and motivation (Field et al., 2022). Good leadership principles have a profound impact on how people feel about their work culture and climate, contributing massively to the employee experience, and directly affecting retention rates. Leadership development should start before management responsibilities become part of the role. Acquiring good leadership skills takes time and practice and, ideally, an inspiring role model. Investing in fostering good leadership skills in

staff is a high-yield initiative and companies will see the change in OC and climate.

LEADERSHIP - Action: develop leadership principles in all employees

❖ Understand and commit to the adoption of a leadership style (ethical, authentic, transactional, situational, servant, etc.) which is best suited to the values, vision, and mission of the organisation.

❖ Provide training to existing leaders and managers focusing on the adopted leadership style and the approach. Ensure that continuous learning becomes a key performance indicator (KPI) for managers and that opportunities are offered to deepen leadership skills.

❖ Incorporate self-leadership principles into the training and learning pathways for all staff, including junior and new entrants to the industry. Self-awareness training and other related soft skills also benefit junior staff and provide a refresher for more seasoned employees.

❖ By clearly communicating the leadership expectations and values throughout the organisation makes certain that leaders at all levels understand and personify these expectations. Implementing coaching and mentoring support for staff in day-to-day situations where additional expertise might be valuable.

Authenticity

5. Authenticity: the ideal path to trust and connection

Authenticity sets the stage for trust and confidence to take root and grow (Ashforth & Humphrey, 2022). Authentic people are seen as being open and showing their true selves to those around them, including their imperfections and areas they are trying to improve. It makes them relatable, and people feel drawn and connected to individuals who do not fake behaviour or exhibit a disconnect between words and actions. Self-awareness, courage, and humility are embedded in authenticity. It is not easy to 'open one's kimono' and allow people to see the real person and their vulnerabilities, especially in a leadership environment. But this is precisely the objective of leadership: to engage followers to join them. Followers must make the decision and cannot be forced to follow a leader. Leaders who inspire and motivate are far more successful in their space than those who 'manage' people through processes and punishments (Kelley, 1992; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). Honesty, openness, and transparency create a high degree of buy-in and

trust. Empathy, sincerity, and a culture of forgiveness instil a sense of respect and acceptance in employees, an immense foundation of a good organisational culture. Authenticity starts with making allowance for mistakes and accepting imperfection in oneself and others, effectively banishing the often-observed blame culture in the workplace forever.

AUTHENTICITY - Action: improve authenticity and create a transparent workplace

❖ Encourage your leaders to openly share their thoughts, experiences, and vulnerabilities. To foster an environment of open communication and engagement, leaders set an example by being genuine in their daily interactions with everyone in their space.

❖ Emphasise the importance of open, honest, and respectful communication at all times, providing a continuous mode of transmitting the core values. Addressing issues when they arise in a constructive, inclusive, and respectful manner is a productive and effective conflict-resolution pathway.

❖ Share successes and challenges alike. Leaders and teams benefit from openly discussing what worked well, and what did not work. Making allowance that

mistakes lead to learning creates a place where employees feel they can be their true selves.

❖ Share plans and strategies through open and transparent communication with everyone. Understanding where the company is headed, which goals are the focus, and what changes may be coming up allows employees to ask questions, seek reassurance, and provide feedback as well as gain ownership. People will feel they are part of the organisation, a great motivator and driver of success.

6. Trust: it takes courage to trust and integrity to be trusted

Trust is a critical component of employee engagement and motivation. According to the literature, trusting employees are 260% more motivated and 50% more inclined to remain in the organisation (Reichheld & Dunlop, 2023). Employees spend the majority of their time at work and their success, development, and career progression is partially dependent on managers and leaders they do not necessarily trust. Lack of trust is a destructive obstacle in an organisation and is often undervalued in importance. Employees who are trusted by their employer are

much more likely to extend trust in return.   Trust starts with allowing people to be themselves and be autonomous as much as possible. Workers have reported that empathy and kindness (humanity); the open sharing of information, motivations, and decisions that affect them (transparency); a healthy work environment and adequate resources (capability); and consistency and dependability in the delivery of promises made (reliability) are major factors in fostering trust in their employers. Some systematic actions may create a solid foundation for trust. Companies must remember that workers are humans before anything else. If we think of personal relationships, trust facilitates a deeper connection, loyalty, and goodwill. But trust requires certain behaviours from the company, including leaders and managers, to facilitate its development: trustworthiness, integrity, honesty, and authenticity (Gillespie et al., 2021). Trusting a team to help achieve a goal, a supervisor to support and help an employee, a director to make the best decisions for the company and its internal stakeholders, and a coworker to deliver on a promise, are all examples of everyday instances where trust is required. Yet, more than 65% of the people interviewed for this study reported not trusting their manager and having experienced being let down by the company on promises made. Trust does depend on all of the previous elements (values, behaviour, mindset, leadership, authenticity) to grow. Employees who accept a role in a company largely extend trust and blind faith that the firm will deliver what it promised from day one. When this is not the case, it provides a very strong and

compelling reason for employees to leave and invest their time, effort, and value in a more suitable company. A culture without trust is like a car without wheels – it goes nowhere. Companies can take some steps in establishing trustworthiness: never over-promising and under-delivering; being consistent and holding themselves accountable; respecting people; doing what they say they are going to do; showing humility and leading by example. The construction industry is a team environment in which people depend on others to perform and advance in their careers. Trust is the ingredient that makes teams excel and propel the organisation above competitors. Trust is essential in a positive organisational culture.

TRUST - Action: elevate the level of trust through daily interaction

❖ Empower employees by trusting employees to make decisions within their roles, promoting a sense of ownership and accountability. This extends to a flexible working environment, where employees working remotely are trusted to complete the work to a high standard without monitoring.

❖ Focus on transparency by communicating upcoming decisions early and clearly. By sharing the rationale behind decisions the organisation signals that they respect staff and desire to keep them in the loop.

❖ Ensure consistency in applying rules and policies, treating all employees fairly provides reassurance that double standards or preferential treatment of individuals or groups is not acceptable or tolerated. Lead by example and model behaviour consistent with the values.

❖ Engage in open communication. Encourage staff from all areas of the organisation to engage in dialogue with the key decision-makers. Actively listen to staff and seek dialogue to understand what employees need, want, and suggest. Respond to concerns and ensure follow-up takes place.

6.2 Implementation of change

Successful change initiatives start with a thorough understanding of the problem a company is trying to fix, culture is no exception.   Once a thorough assessment of the existing culture has been performed and objective analysis has identified which elements might be addressed to achieve a better cultural environment, the motivation and the plan need to be openly and honestly communicated to everyone in the firm. As previously identified, transparency and sharing of motivations and decisions in itself builds trust and greatly enhances buy-in from employees. Consideration of whether employees' feedback and input might be useful, especially in the case of attempting to change the culture. Having ownership of the

initiative increases the chances of successful implementation and outcome. The leadership team needs to convey their commitment to change and improve the OC. Leadership acknowledgement that improvements are needed signals humility, again enhancing the trust element, but they also need to communicate and exhibit changes in their own space and lead the teams. It must also be communicated that these desired changes will take time, effort, and commitment from everyone and will undoubtedly encounter setbacks, but the company is determined to invest.

6.3 Monitoring

The transformation will take place slowly and possibly even somewhat unnoticed. Incremental change will happen over time. A monitoring of the progress is advisable to keep the momentum going and the commitment strong. To compare the before and after, it would be logical to repeat the same mode of assessment as previously. A very strong indicator of OC must be the effect on the attrition rate, which is easily measured. One-on-one conversations and interviews with employees further shed light on whether changes are being perceived as intended. Iterate amendments to the change model may be advisable if there is either no improvement or a deterioration noted in the monitoring results.

Culture transformation is not a sprint, it is a marathon, but like all running sports, it starts with putting one foot in front of the other.

6.4 Limitations of the study

Despite the important findings, this study was limited in scope to address the importance of OC in the space of professional services firms in the New Zealand construction sector and the relationship to affecting retention rates in this space. The topic of OC is broad and there is a vast quantity of research relevant to the subject. This study was time-constrained due to the limited course span to complete this project and did not include an extended examination of OC on business performance.

It was further limited by potential subjectivity on behalf of the interview participants on their past and present experiences. While steps were taken to ensure a representative sample for the collection of data, the information obtained has not been verified due to the importance of maintaining the anonymity of the participants.

6.5 Suggestions for future research

Recommendations for future research include the detailed analysis of the recommendations identified in this study after implementation to determine the extent of the impact changes had in an organisational setting on retention. A follow-up study is proposed to include case studies of recommendations over two years post-implementation. An additional area of future research would be to examine the effect the changes had on the business performance beyond retention. Future research might examine whether there were any improvements in operational, financial, innovation, or other areas of business performance noted which correlate to the improvement changes made to enhance the organisational culture. Additional future research may include applying the improvement model outlined in this study to a broader section of the New Zealand Construction Industry and expanding testing to the site-based and subcontracting sectors.

Acknowledgements

Glossary

OC Organisational Culture (alternative spelling – Organizational Culture)

PSF   Professional Services Firm

PM   Project Management or Project Manager

QS   Quantity Surveying or Quantity Surveyor

NZCI New Zealand Construction Industry

MBIE Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

SME   Small and medium-sized enterprises

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APPENDIX 1

Exploring the Influence of Organisational Culture on Staff Retention in Professional Services Organisations in the New Zealand Construction Industry: A Comprehensive Analysis

Information Sheet

Researcher Introduction:

I am Uli Johnston, an Executive MBA Student at Massey University and an employee at The Building Intelligence Group (TBIG). I have been at TBIG since 2021 and am currently working in a people development and culture enhancing role in the Northern Region, based in Auckland. I have been employed in the New Zealand construction industry for the past six years and have lived here in since 2009.

Project Description:

This research project aims to investigate the extent of influence organisational culture has on retaining existing staff and attracting new talent for professional services firms in the NZ construction sector. Understanding the importance job seekers and employees place on a positive organisational culture is a valuable insight from a business perspective since organisational culture plays a role in every aspect of business performance.

Participant Identification and Interviews:

May aim is to interview 10 to 15 professional service employees from various disciplines, including project management, quantity surveying, engineering, and design consultancy. A cross-section of age demographics and tenure in the industry will be invited to answer questions that provide insight into the topic of research from their own personal and professional experience. Participants will be offered a copy of the final report that summarises the findings if requested.

Project Procedures:

A semi-structured interview methodology will be used, and each participant will be interviewed for a maximum of one hour.

Data Management:

Interviews will be conducted either in person or via Teams and I will transcribe a recording of the dialogue. All data will be retained on my laptop for the duration of this project. My research project supervisor will work with me in the analysis phase to assess data validation. For any presentations or publications based on the data, names and identifying information will be omitted or changed to preserve confidentiality and anonymity.

Participants' Rights:

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question
- withdraw from the study before the information you provide is used in a report
- ask questions about the study at any time during participation
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded if requested ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview, if any recorder is used

University Ethics Approval:

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named in this document is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Jens Mueller, J.mueller@massey.ac.nz or 021 516 326.

Project Contacts:

If you have any questions, comments, or corrections, you may contact me, Uli Johnston, at ulijohnston@gmail.com or 021 077 3887.

Page 1 of 1

APPENDIX 2

Findings from the data collected as part of this study

OC Elements	Findings and Observations
Values / Trust / Behaviours	• Shared meaning (values, norms, beliefs, and behaviours) • Identify and infuse values into business processes • Communicate values across business • Guide behaviour and actions • Transparent and identifiable • Are a genuine part of the operation and strategy • Genuinely guide daily actions
Leadership / Authenticity	• Authentic and ethical leadership styles form trust-based relationships

	• Understanding of leadership versus management • Leadership skills as part of the development pathway • Fundamental part of OC in direct line management • Leadership models values and cement culture • Leaders exemplify behaviour and foster growth in others • Advancement through technical achievement alone is not enough to ensure successful leadership
Mindset Retention - Employee (needs and wants)	• Feel appreciated and respected • Trusting and positive relationships with employers • Learning and development opportunities • Well-being and safe work environment • Career advancement • Healthy work-life balance • Inclusive work environment

	• Work satisfaction and feel valued • Feedback and encouragement • Competent and authentic leadership • Salary and benefits

APPENDIX 3

OC Impact on Business Performance and Assessment of OC

OC Impact	Findings and Observations
Business performance	- Financial (sales and revenue) - Sustainability and resilience (growth, competitive advantage) - Cost containment (direct and indirect as related to attrition) - Productivity (client satisfaction) - Innovation (invested employees seek improvement) - Client satisfaction (confidence) - Brand and reputation (employer brand, industry reputation) - Equity value (capital structure) - Operational efficiencies (certainty to fulfil deliverables) - Human capital (no loss of opportunity due to shortage)

OC Assessment	Findings and Observations
Surveys	• Surveys are the most used method to gauge OC but often paint an incomplete picture and are subject to misinterpretation (organisational bias and subjectivity) • Employee perception – arms-length and not genuine • Unreliable (data collection and comparison flaws)
Business Performance Review	• Financial – cost related to staff turnover (direct and indirect) • Human Capital - high turnover, absenteeism, grievances • Communication – poor flow of information and efficiencies

	• Operational – lack of team synergy, delays, poor quality • Client and stakeholders – lack of confidence • Innovation – disengaged staff, unmotivated • Leadership – (Leader / Follower / Situation) motivation
Alternative	• Multiple frameworks (limited by organisation bias, subjective) (Cameron & Quinn, 2011; Deal & Kennedy, 1988; Denison & Mishra, 1995; O'Reilly III et al., 1991; Peter T. van den Berg et al., 2004) Machine learning models • Machine learning model (Li et al., 2021)
Attrition Rate	• Examining the attrition rate may in itself be an assessment of the organisational culture

Environmental Sustainability: An Exploration of Sustainability Actions to Conserve and Protect the Environment

Olufemi Omisakin, Indrapriya Kularatne

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Abstract

This study examines the environmental sustainability actions/activities undertaken by individuals and communities to ensure that the environment is conserved and protected. The actions and activities have been evaluated in relation to the extent of engagement in minimising environmental waste, water conservation, energy saving, effective transportation methods and tree planting. The study adopted a quantitative approach. Survey questionnaires were used to collect data from participants. Qualtrics application was used to design the questionnaire, and a link was posted to various social media platforms to enable willing participants to take part. Descriptive

analysis was used to analyse the data collected. This enabled the research to use numbers to describe its quality data set and condense data sets to sample and compact forms. The study found that participants to a very great extent agreed that the prescribed action/activities raised with them were necessary for communities as well as individuals to engage in conservation and protection of the environment.

Introduction

According to Khan et al. (2021), sustainability is the process of maintaining equilibrium between human activities taking place to meet human needs, and ecosystem services. The focus of this study was exploration of environmental sustainability problems and their effects on conserving and protecting the environment, and possible sustainability actions which can enhance a sustainable environment. These actions are discussed, reviewed, evaluated, and analysed from the following conceptual perspectives: waste minimisation; water conservation; energy saving; use of effective transportation methods and tree planting. Similarly, Corral-Verdugo et al. (2010) suggested that individuals should possess pro-ecological behaviours that focus on environmental activities that can ensure natural resources are conserved and protected. To achieve these environmental outcomes, researchers argue that pro-ecological activities should include among others: recycling, composting, solid refuse control, water conservation, energy-saving actions, pro-

ecological persuasion to others, promoting pro-environmental policies and promoting pro- ecosystem conservation (Carrus et al., 2008).

This research will help to determine the level to which each of the common actions examined will help conserve and protect the environment. The researchers believed that all actions have equal importance to environmental conservation and protection. However, findings indicate the level at which people and communities practise and engage in each environmental sustainability action presented to them. At the end, findings and recommendations will be made available to local authorities, government, community based environmental sustainability organisations and policy makers to improve their policy development processes. Additionally, this research may expand the understanding of what environmentally sustainable actions are common in society and what areas need further promotion and improvement.

Literature Review

Sustainability is mostly viewed from three perspectives: economic, social and environmental. To achieve complete sustainable development, all three must ensure a balanced sustainable interactive relationship. Each of these components is defined by members of various professions within the context of their professions and professional expectations. For instance, Upreti (2023) viewed ecological or environmental sustainability (ES) from a conservation perspective of meeting human

needs without compromising the health of ecosystems. Similarly, Vos (2007) argues that environmental sustainability results from the resilience actions taken by society (man) in the process of meeting human needs without harming the ecosystem. According to Rothenberg (2007), economic sustainability aims at reducing social expenditures and protecting environmental resources and sustainable use of resources. From an economist stance, Abramovich and Vasiliu (2023) stated that current economic activities should not unreasonably burden future generations. McKenzie (2004) defined social sustainability as a positive condition within communities, and a process within communities that can achieve that condition. Similarly, Khan et al. (2021) claimed that social sustainability is the availability of positive conditions in the community that enable people meet their needs without affecting their livelihoods. However, Hojo et al. (2021) regarded environmental sustainability management as maintaining natural capital as the provider of economic input as well as absorber of economic output. Corroborating this, Uralovich at al. (2023) concluded that protecting the natural resources and system is a component for the global system to attain an economic, social, and sustainable environment. To avoid environmental sustainability challenges, Fisher et al. (2021) suggested that attainment of environmental sustainability requires planning to ensure that we live within the limit of the biophysical environment.

Development and sustainability could be in the juxtaposition with the two having counterproductive effects (Sharpley, 2000). Lele (1991) argues that there is no

contradiction between development and sustainability if measurement of social welfare relative to economic output does not indicate increase in economic output leading to excessive growth in the use of physical and energy material. However, there will be no development without sustainability (Sachs, 2010). Nevertheless, human activities in their quest for development over the last decade have negatively impacted on the environment, endangering human survival and the survival of future generations (Klarin, 2018). The situation has necessitated needed behavioural changes towards more rational, effective, and efficient sustainability management of all resources to reduce pressure and less negative impact on the environment being the ground centre of all human activities. Sutton (2004) considers environment to constitute physical surrounds to something such as land, waters, physical resources, buildings, farms and living areas, biological elements, and ecological communities both human induced and natural. Sutton argues further that for environment to be sustainable, people are required to continue to maintain qualities of the environment, and therefore, their ability to maintain things that are valued in the physical environment will promote environmental sustainability.

Halkos (2018) suggested that environmental problems and their societal implications should not be the concern of policy and decision makers only, but also the populace in general. However, Valadbigi and Ghobadi (2010) argue that environmental conservation should be of serious concern to governments, environmentalists, educational institutions where it should be included in postgraduate learning curricula

(Omisakin & Kularatne, 2022), and those services that are involved in ensuring sustainable environment either at the national, regional and or global levels. Watson (2020) argues that environmental protection will require individuals biking to work, using rail and bus services, sharing rides with a co-worker, shopping virtually and telecommuting to avoid the daily office drive. Similarly, Sua´rez (2010) suggested that the current global environmental crisis including climate change demands positive sustainable behavioural practices in the form of pro-ecological activities such as engaging in global warming mitigation through planting trees, recycling, conserving water and energy use, protecting the ecosystem, persuading others to be pro-ecological and lobbying and promoting sustainable building design. However, Corral Verdugo et al. (2010) submitted that voluntary, deliberate, and proactive decision making (frugal behaviour) by individuals could help reduce their consumption of certain products and change their way of living. This could include buying reusable products, consuming environmentally friendly products and riding a bicycle and or walking rather than driving.

Several studies had argued that engagement in environmentally sustainable activities or actions requires educating people on environmentally sustainable development management. According to Omisakin & Kularatne (2022), acquiring environment management knowledge contributes positively to engagement in environmentally sustainable activities. Similarly, Akintunde (2017) argued that societies educated in management of environmental and ecological issues engage in appropriate actions to

manage and resolve such issues. However, Rahman et al. (2012) maintained that sustainability knowledge acquired by people drives a positive willingness in them to engage in environmentally sustainable actions.

This study views environmental conservation as pivotal to sustainable environmental management. Saunders (2003) sees environmental conservation as including human actions with low-impact behaviour on the environment such as recycling, using energy efficient technologies such as solar panels and or electric cars (Saunders, 2003). This must be done to the best of people's ability. Karlin et al. (2014) classify environmental conservation behaviour into two dimensions: curtailment behaviours such as engaging in low-cost behaviour like turning off lights when not in use, and efficiency behaviours such as purchasing energy-efficient appliances or increasing home insulation. Only when these activities are implemented to the greatest extent will tney result in conserving and protecting the environment. However, Dietz et al. (2009) argue that engagement in efficient behaviour such as driving fuel-efficient vehicles and upgrading home heating and cooling equipment would have a more positive impact on the environment than engaging in curtailment behaviour actions because they require less monitoring and in the long run will produce more substantial gains in energy savings. Although efficient behavioural actions such as purchasing fuel-efficient vehicles are often costly and difficult to achieve, there is a regulatory policy in New Zealand to promote this behaviour through financial incentives (Dietz et al., 2009) through provision of rebates to buyers of low emission

vehicles effective from April 1, 2022 (Drive Electric, 2023). This study maintains that there must be incentives to motivate people to engage in low-carbon energy systems and actions, as well as adoption of environmentally friendly technology. This will help towards addressing climate change challenges (Drive Electric, 2023; Zhang et al., 2022).

According to Sutton (2004) environmental sustainability actions could include among others reduction in the use of physical resources, recycling everything, buying recycled products, use of renewable rather than depletable resources, redesigning production processes devoid of toxic materials and protection and restoration of natural habitats and environment. While advocating for these actions to enhance environmental sustainability, Sutton (2004) pointed out the following problems mitigating against attaining environmental sustainability: destruction of the natural habitats of native species, discharging of chemicals and other pollutants into the environment, emitting of greenhouses gases into the atmosphere and use of low-cost oil and other fossil fuels. Auckland Council Transport (2021) found that environmental sustainability is attained when communities and people embark on the following environmental sustainability actions: living close to work and or walking to work, biking, or using public transport. Engaging in these actions will help save energy and reduce greenhouse gases. When people use ultra-efficient hybrid petrol/electric vehicles to move around, such action will help reduce greenhouse gases and petrol consumption and will reduce toxic pollutants. Buying products made

of recycled materials will help save materials and energy and reduce greenhouse gases and toxic pollution. Using environmentally sound design and lower impact materials to build or renovate a house and using 5+ star appliances produce positive impacts on most environmental issues. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2022) found re-using and recycling human use products can help in reducing global warming. The authors suggested that recycling paper will help in reducing tree felling in the production of paper. When more trees are available in the environment and or community, the trees available will absorb carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and reduce global warming. Similarly, Waheed et al. (2019) concluded that because of globalisation, there has been huge deforestation and consumption of non-renewable natural resources and fossil fuel. This occurs mostly through imports and exports for commercial gains. For instance, trees are needed for housing, construction, furniture and paper among others. The demand for trees is higher than the supply while it takes years for tree to attain maturation. Therefore, both legal and illegal deforestation for profiteering will continue. Environmental destruction will lead to non-conservation of the ecosystem. Therefore, ecosystem and biodiversity must be conserved; without this living organism will cease to exist. It is obvious that resources available are quite limited to people's needs. Over utilisation of these resources has continuously led to over exploitation resulting in environmental destruction. For individuals, community, and policy makers to develop a sustainable environment, exploitation of natural resources must be done within the supplying capability of the earth (Kanie & Biermann, 2017).

Similarly, Molinoari et al. (2019) argue that development activities must take place with the consideration of the earth's capacity. It is suggested that to attain a sustainable environment, we must have and greatly use alternative sources of energy such as solar, and we must refrain from depending on heavy use of petroleum products and hydroelectric. However, to enhance continuous sustainable environment, society must devise more indirect monitoring and regulation on environmental management (European Commission, 2015). As well, to enhance maximum environmental sustainability, greater emphasis must be placed on reduction of the use of virgin material and on promoting energy and material efficiency. This will help with reduction of the problem of widespread environmental degradation (Heshmati, 2017).

Motivational Theories for Sustainable Actions

This section of the study provides a platform for discussing and explaining related motivational theories to support participants' sustainability actions to protect the environment. These theories are applied to establish the connection between

participants' behavioural motivation that drives their sustainability actions/activities towards conserving and protecting the environment.

Solomon et al. (1999) define motivation as what makes individuals or people behave the way they do. Their environmental behaviour could be subjected to societal norms, values, and culture referred to as Value Theory. Gatersleben et al. (2017) suggested generic motives as the drivers to promote environmentally sustainable behaviour. Oyserman (2009) identified identity-based motivation theories as the core drivers of behaviour towards environmentally sustainable actions. However, the Self-determination Theory (SDT) provided intrinsic, extrinsic motivation and lack of motivation as the link to some environmentally sustainable behaviours. While intrinsic motivation is based on individuals' personal interest, extrinsic motivation is based on external factors relative to the social and cultural environment (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Application of SDT theory to this study will enable it to determine if participants have chosen voluntarily, based on interest, to embark on certain environmentally sustainable actions or whether external factors pushed them to do them.

Planned behaviour theory (Ajzen, 2002) in association with reasoned action theory (Hammond et al., 1995) demonstrated that attitude, social norms, and behavioural control could affect people's intention to actualise certain behaviour. However, Chen & Tung, (2010) and Fielding, McDonald, & Louis, (2008) applied planned behaviour

theory to their study to ascertain environmentally sustainable behaviour that enhances sustainable environment like the current study. However, McKercher and Tse (2012) argue that intention to behave may not translate to behaviour.

Another important theory related to this study is the value-belief norm theory of environmentalism which emphasises that the connections between one's values, beliefs about the environment, one's concern for environmental welfare and norms may promote one's pro-environmental behaviours (Stern, 2000). This theory claimed that two beliefs (norms and ascription of responsibility) could affect the pro-environmental behaviours. While norms make people aware of the consequences of their behaviour on what they value, ascription creates belief in people to protect what they value so highly. However, this theory is applied to this study to help ascertain if people ascribed some responsibilities to themselves towards attaining a sustainable environment or maybe they need to engage in environmentally sustainable activities because of the consequential effects of not engaging in them.

Research Aim

To identify, discuss and analyse the extent and effects of common sustainable actions carried out in society, the reasons for these actions, and the impact of these actions on the environment.

Research Questions

1. What are the common sustainable actions taken by communities to conserve and protect the environment?

2. To what extent do communities engage in sustainable actions?
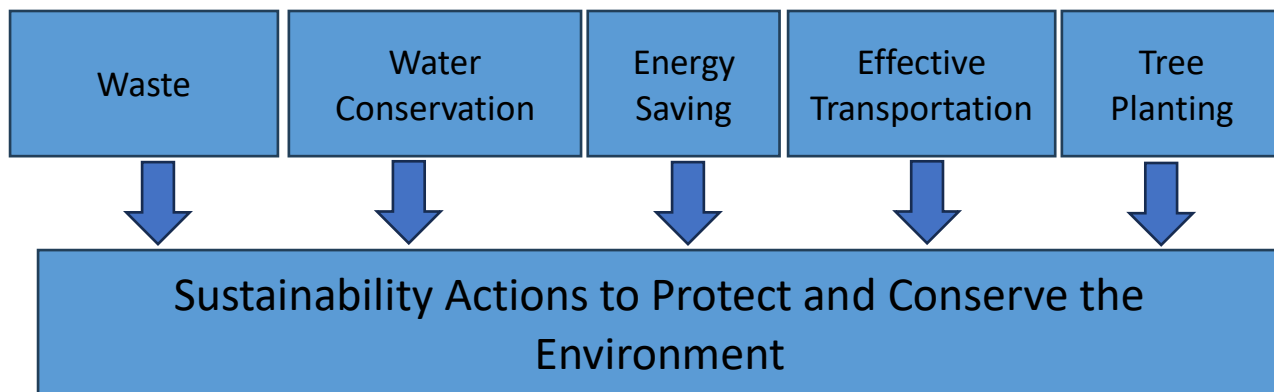
Methodology and Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research method, and a survey questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents about their sustainable practices and the reasons for these actions. The convenience sampling method was used to identify where the population sample was recruited from. Participants were recruited through social media. This study adopted Qualtrics application to post the questionnaire on to social media platforms such as ResearchGate, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Respondents voluntarily completed the questionnaire and submitted it to Qualtrics.

The constructs in the questionnaire were organised to collect data from five main environmental sustainability action areas, namely waste minimisation, water conservation, energy saving, effective transportation methods and tree planting. Five statements relating to extent were placed under each sustainability action and responses to each item were measured by the Likert scale using five options ranging from 1 To a small extent, 2 To some extent, 3 To a moderate extent, 4 To a great

extent, 5 To a very great extent. An online survey was used via Qualtrics for participants to complete the survey questions. Researchers personally invited participants through their personal links to participate in the research. However, data collection only commenced after ethics approval had been gained from the ethics committee of Otago Polytechnic Auckland International Campus (Reference Number: AIC73).

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework

Waste	Water Conservation	Energy Saving	Effective Transportation	Tree Planting

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Sustainability Actions to Protect and Conserve the Environment

Results, Analysis, and Discussion

Results

Data information was obtained from 240 participants who willingly took part in completing the survey questions sent to them. There was an equal gender distribution in the collected sample (male 48.8% and female 49.1%); however, 2.1% of the respondents did not disclose their gender. The majority of the sample represents the age group of 20 to 29 years, with 36.7%, and 4.6% above 50 years. The demographic details of participants are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1

Gender Distribution of the Participants

Description	Frequency (%)
Male	117 (48.8%)
Female	118 (49.1%)
Prefer not to say	5 (2.1%)
Total	240 (100%)

Table 2

Age Distribution of the Participants

Age group	Frequency (%)
20-29 years	88 (36.7%)
30-39 years	79 (32.9%)
40-49 years	62 (25.8%)
above 50 years	11 (4.6%)
Total	240 (100%)

Analysis and Findings on Participants' Minimisation of Environmental Waste

Table 3 of the study presents data collected from participants on the extent to which they agreed that minimisation of environmental waste will help conserve and protect the environment. Data was collected using 5 Likert scale questions. Mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) for each question were calculated for analysis as presented in Table 3. The mean of participants' scores on statements 1 to 5 on the extent to which they minimise environmental waste are 4.0, 3.8, 3.6, and 3.8 as presented in Table 3. The standard deviation results indicate that participants' perceptions of minimising environmental waste are 1.09, 1.05, 1.13, and 1.12 as presented in Table 2. This means that each score on each of the statements deviated from each mean by more than 1 point on average. This means that most of the participants tended to agree on these statements (minimisation of environmental waste) from "To a Great Extent" to "a Very Great Extent" All these statements had a mean of more than 3.6 which is near 4. This is synonymous with Corral Verdugo et al.'s (2010) suggestion that greater waste minimisation activities such as using reusable shopping bags, lunchboxes, compostable coffee cups; reusing, giving away and or outright sales of unwanted household items; buying recycled products and or second-hand items; de-composting food and garden waste help conserve and protect the environment and reduce household and environmental waste.

Table 3

Participants' Responses on Various Actions of Waste Minimisation

Do you agree with the statements below?	Mean (SD)
Using reusable shopping bags, lunchboxes, compostable coffee cups will help reduce household and environmental waste.	4.0 1.09
Reusing, giving away and or outright sales of unwanted household items will help reduce household and environmental waste.	3.8 1.05
Buying recycled products and or second-hand items would help reduce the volume of household and environmental waste.	3.6 1.13

| De composting food and garden waste is a viable way to reduce environmental waste. | 3.8 1.12 |

Note: n=240; SD = standard deviation

Figure 2

Percentage Distributions of Participants' Responses to Survey Question on Waste Minimisation
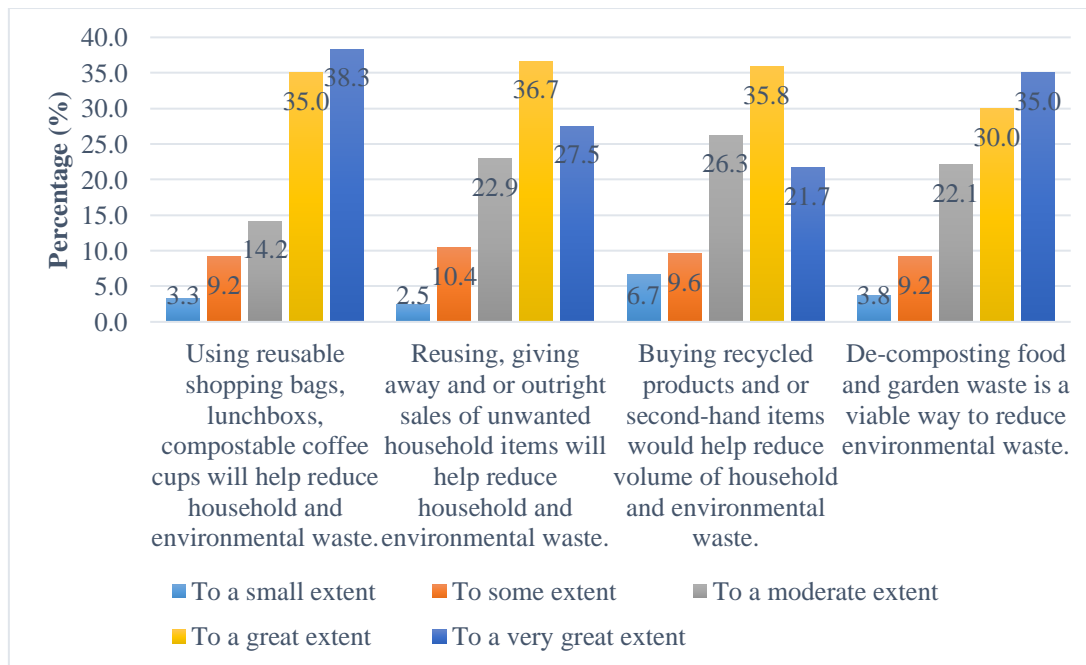
Table 2 presents data collected from participants on to what extent they agreed on the four statements that waste minimisation activities will help reduce household and environmental waste leading to environmental conservation. Response percentages were determined on data collected on each of the four statements and analysed as presented in Figure 2. Participants' response distribution to each statement shows a similar pattern indicating low agreement to "To a small extent" and "To some extent". All four statements recorded the sum percentages of 73.3%, 64.2%, 57.5% and 65% on "To a Great Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent". Findings here can be interpreted that participants to a very great extent agreed that various waste minimisation activities are needed by people to conserve and protect the environment. According to Zhang et al. (2022), re-using and recycling used products is one of the sustainability actions to conserve and protect the environment. Like Sutton's (2004) finding on environmental sustainability actions to help conserve and protect the environment, findings here include among others reduction in the use of physical resources, recycling everything and buying recycled products. However, statement 3 recorded the lowest percentage (21.7%) on "To a Very Great Extent". This could be because some participants are not used to buying recycled products, second hand items or outright sales of unwanted household items. This study indicated that participants might not be involved in this activity because of perceived risk associated with recycled or second-hand items; no awareness of the importance of the buying and selling of recycled and second-hand items; limited shops to buy

and sell recycled and or second-hand items. However, Likert scales 1,2,3 recorded lower percentages put together meaning an insignificant number of participants agreed "To Small, Some and Moderate Extents".

Analysis and Findings on Participants' Actions for Water Conservation

Table 4 presents data collected from participants on the extent to which they agreed that engaging in water conservation actions would help in conserving and protecting the environment. Data was collected using five Likert scale questions. M and SD for each question were calculated for analysis as presented in Table 4. The mean of participants' scores on statements 1 to 5 on the extent of their conserving water activities were 4.1; 3.5; 4.2; 4.0; and 4.0. Four statements recorded a mean of more than 4, and the remaining statement recorded a mean of more than 3.5. This explains that to a very great extent most participants engaged in environmentally sustainable actions to conserve water. Participants did this by fixing their leaking taps and toilet; using fully loaded dishwashers and washing machines; turning taps off while brushing teeth, shaving, keeping track of shower use, or installing a shower timer; using captured rainwater for garden and washing cars; using water efficient products, such as washing machines, dishwashers, shower heads, toilets, and taps. This finding is supported by Carrus et al. (2008); Drive Electric (2023), and Zhang et al. (2022), who argued that engaging in water conservation activities, energy-saving actions and adopting the use of environmentally friendly technology are some of the panaceas

towards conserving and protecting the environment. However, the SD results to each of the statements are 1.0, 1.3, 1.0, 1.2, 1.1 as shown in Table 3. Statistically, each score on each of the statements deviated from each mean by little more than 1 point on average, indicating most of the participants agreed on the five statements on water conservation from "To a Great Extent" to "a Very Great Extent".

Table 4

Participants' Responses on Various Actions of Water Conservation

| Do you agree with the statements below?	Mean	SD
Fixing leaky taps and toilet cisterns will help reduce water waste.	4.1	1.0

Using fully loaded dishwashers and washing machines will help reduce water waste.	3.5	1.3
Using water wisely such as turning taps off while brushing teeth, shaving, keeping track of your shower, or installing a shower timer will help reduce water waste.	4.2	1.0
Capturing rainwater for use in the garden and for washing cars can help reduce demand for town supply water.	4.0	1.2
Using water efficient products, such as washing machines, dishwashers, shower heads, toilets and taps to save water will help reduce water waste.	4.0	1.1

Note: n=240; SD = standard deviation

Figure 3

Percentage Distributions of Participants' Responses to Survey Question on Water Conservation

Figure 3 presents data collected from participants on how they conserve water.
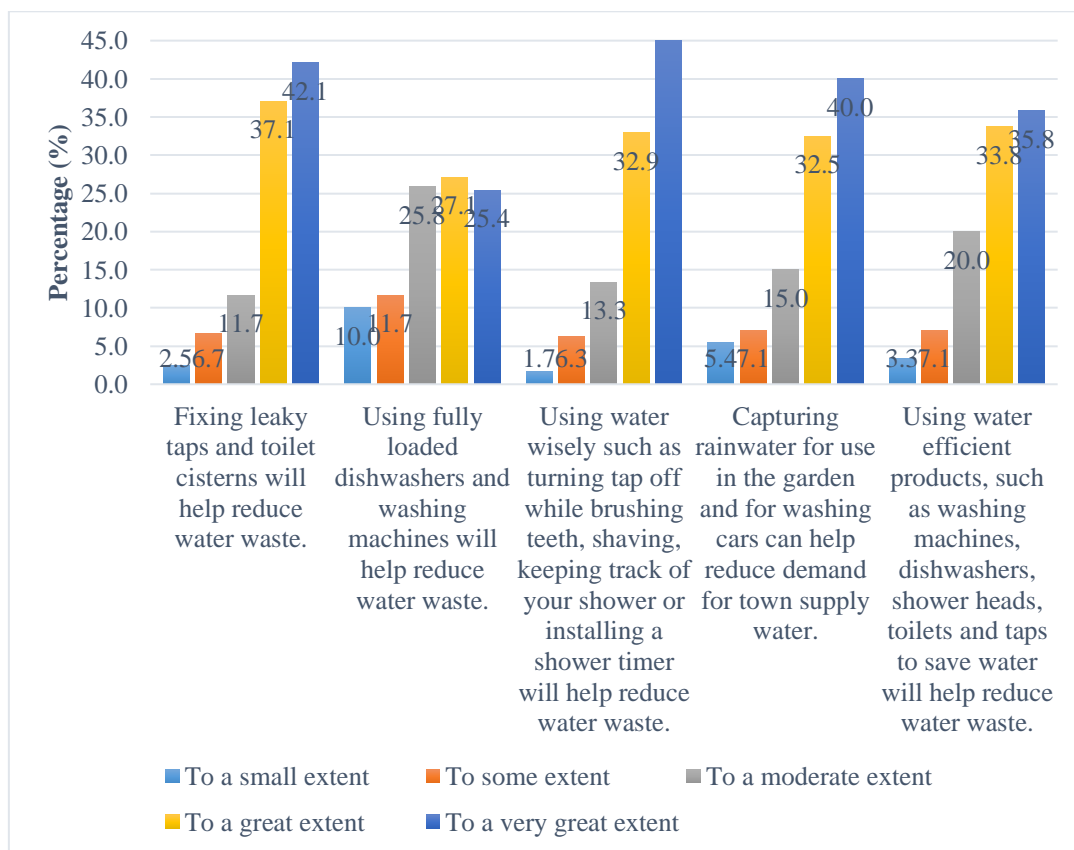
Five statement questions were put across to participants on the extent to which they engaged in water conservation activities. Response percentages were determined on data collected on each of the five statements and are presented in Figure 3. Participants' response distribution patterns to the five statements are same. Statements 1- 5 recorded between 52.5% to 79.2% on "To a Great Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent". Statements 1,3,4 recorded 79.2%, 78.7%, 72.5% and 69.6% being sum of "To a Great Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent" respectively. This indicated that most participants agreed that for the environment to be conserved and protected, people must engage in the five environmental sustainability actions as presented in Figure 3. These findings were synonymous with Corral-Verdugo et al. (2010) and Carrus et al. (2008) who suggest that pro-ecological activities must include among others water conservation actions. However, statement 2 shows a lower competing percentage response on "To a Greater Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent" with the sum average of 26.3%. This could be because participants could not really reflect how using fully loaded dishwashers. Though washing machines helps in reducing water waste when participants knows how to adjust the amount of water to be used for a wash. This is dependent of quantity of wash. In all, the five statements recorded very low percentages on "To a Small Extent", "To Some Extent", and "To a Moderate extent" except statement 2 that recorded 25.8 on "To a Moderate extent".

Analysis and Findings on Participants' Energy Saving Practices

Table 5 presents data collected from participants on the extent to which participants use effective energy saving methods. M and SD of data collected on each question were calculated for analysis as presented in Table 5. Mean scores of each participant's responses to statements 1 to 5 on the extent to which they use effective energy saving methods were calculated and presented in table 5 as follows: 4.3; 4.0; 3.7; 4.1; and 4.0. The table indicated that each of the statements had a mean of 4. The SD results on table 5 (various actions for saving energy) indicate 1.0, 1.1, 1.0, 1.0, and 1.1. This indicates that each score on each of the statements deviated from each mean by a little more than 1 point on average. This confirms that most of the participants agreed "To a Great Extent" or "To a Very Great Extent" on individuals' and the community's need to engage in various actions for saving energy to protect and conserve the environment. Findings show that to a very great extent most participants engaged in the energy saving activities to protect and conserve the environment. This was done by engaging in the following sustainable energy saving actions: turning appliances off and switching off lights at the wall when leaving the room/home to help reduce energy consumption; installing a solar water heating system or a heat pump water heater to help save and reduce energy consumption; investing in a power monitor or getting an energy audit of where their household uses the most power which will help their household reduce power consumption; using energy efficient products, such as eco-bulbs which help reduce energy consumption; and making the house accessible to natural heat and air helps reduce energy

consumption. This finding is synonymous to Watson's (2020) argument that protection of the environment will require people to engage in a variety of energy saving actions. Several academic articles have suggested varieties of energy saving actions. For instance, Molinoari et al. (2019) suggested that to attain a sustainable environment, people must greatly increase their use of alternative sources of energy such as solar and refrain from heavy use of petroleum products and hydroelectric. Similarly, Karlin et al. (2014) concluded that not until people engage in curtailment behaviours to a greater extent such as engaging in low-cost behaviour like turning off lights when not in use; efficiency behaviours such as purchasing energy-efficient appliances or increasing home insulation will the environment be conserved and protected. However, because this study focused on prescribed actions and activities that communities and people are expected to be engaged in, it heavily relies on behavioural motivational theory that postulates that people's motivation drives their sustainability actions/activities towards conserving and protecting the environment (Oyserman, 2009; Solomon et al., 1999). The theory of value is also applied to this research as participants' environmental behavioural activities were largely subjected to societal norms, values, culture and the community environment as well as generic motives driving participants to promote environmentally sustainable behavioural actions (De Groot & Steg 2008; Gatersleben et al., 2017).

Table 5

Participants' Responses to Various Actions for Saving Energy

To what extent do you agree with the statements below?	Mean	SD
Turning appliances off at the wall and switching off lights when leaving the room/home help reduce energy consumption.	4.3	1.0
Installing a solar water heating system or a heat pump water heater could help reduce energy consumption.	4.0	1.1
Investment in a power monitor or an energy audit of where your household uses the most power could help your household reduce power consumption.	3.7	1.0
Using energy efficient products, such as eco-bulbs would help reduce energy consumption.	4.1	1.0

Making your house accessible to natural heat and air will help reduce energy consumption.	4.0	1.1

Note: n=240; SD = standard deviation

Figure 4

Percentage Distributions of Participants' Responses to Survey Question on Energy Saving

Figure 4 presents data collected from participants on how they save energy. Five statements were given to participants on the extent to which they agreed that engaging in energy saving activities could help households and the community reduce power consumption leading to protection of the environment
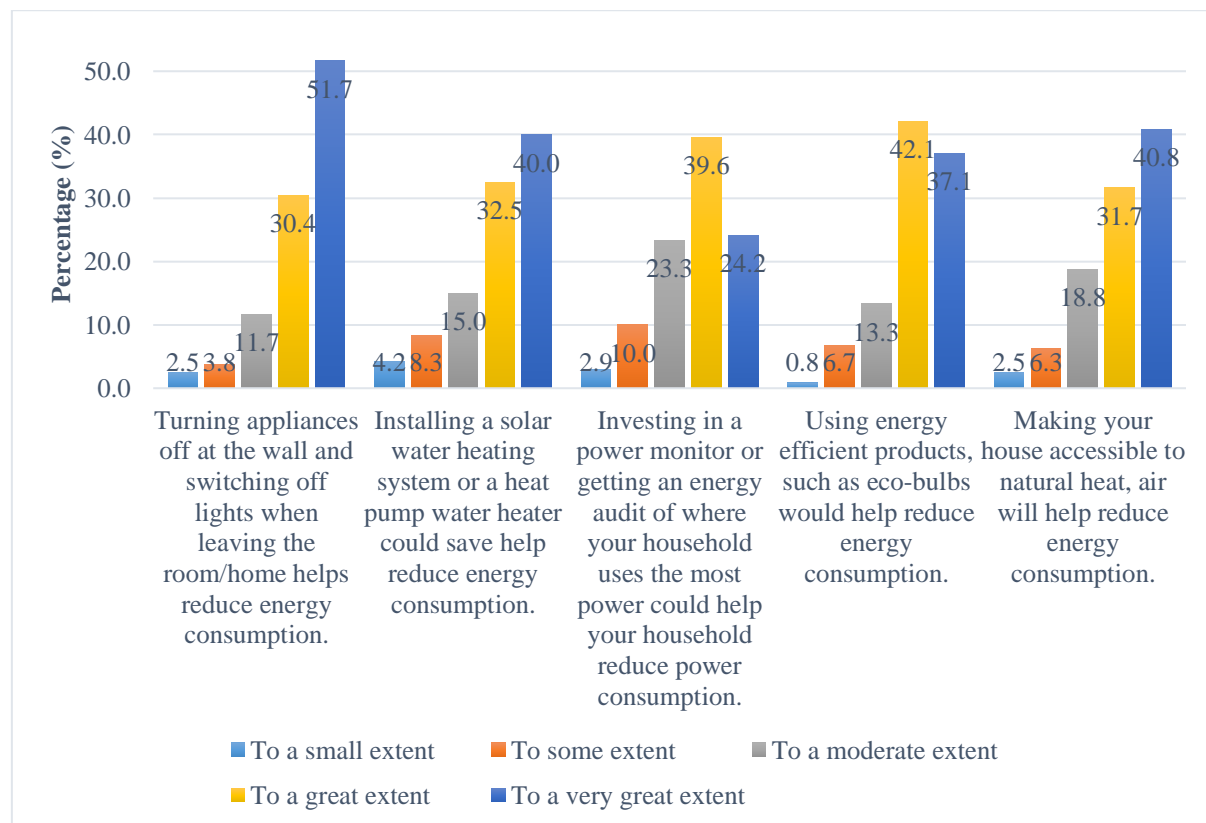
This study determined and analysed percentage responses of data collected from participants on each of the five statements as presented in Figure 4. Findings indicated that participants' response distribution patterns to the five statements followed a similar pattern of high agreement "To a great extent" and "To a very great extent". Statements 1 to 5 recorded between 63.8% to 82.1% on "To a Great Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent". The interpretation of this is that a higher number of participants affirmed that to ensure the environment is sustainably protected, individuals and communities must engage in energy saving activities. This is synonymous with Dietz et al.'s 2009 finding that efficient behaviour actions of people will promote environmental sustainability. However, statements 1 to 5 recorded relatively limited percentages on "To a Small Extent", "To Some Extent" and "To a Moderate Extent". This could be because the cost of investing and engaging in these energy saving activities is high for the concerned participants.

Analysis and Findings on Participants' use of Effective Transportation Methods

Table 6 presents data collected from participants on the extent to which they agree that the use of effective transportation methods reduces pollution so would help conserve and protect the environment. M and SD on data collected on each question were calculated for analysis as presented in Table 6. Mean scores of each

participant's responses to statements 1 to 5 on the extent to which they agree that using effective transportation methods were calculated and presented in Table 5 as follows: 3.4; 4.1; 3.8; 4.03; and 4.03. The table indicated that each of the statements had a mean of more than 4 for statements 2, 4 and 5. Findings show that most participants agreed that engaging in the use effective transportation methods helps conserve and protect their environment. Effective transportation methods engaged in by participants included: combining short trips into one big trip through personal driving; sharing car trips, using their car less, engaging in neighbourhood or workmates' travel and organising carpools; using public transport. Standard deviation results for each of the statements are1.2, 1.0, 1.1, 1.0, and 1.0 as shown in Table 6. Each score on each of the statements deviated from each mean by little more than 1 point on average. This means that participants agreed on "To a Great Extent" To a Very Great Extent" on the five statements on use of effective transportation methods given to them.

Table 6

Participants' Responses to Effective Transport as a Means of Protecting the Environment against Pollution

| Do you agree with the statements below?	Mean	SD
Combining short trips into one big trip through personal driving would help reduce environmental pollution.	3.4	1.2
Walking or cycling would help reduce environmental pollution.	4.1	1.0
Sharing car trips, using your car less, neighbourhood or workmates' travel and organising carpools would help reduce environmental pollution.	3.8	1.1
Using public transport will help reduce carbon emissions and environment pollution.	4.03	1.0

Using eco-friendly cars will help reduce environmental pollution.	4.03	1.0

Note: n=240; SD = standard deviation

Figure 5

Percentage Distributions of Participants' Responses to Survey Questions on Effective Transportation Methods

Participants were asked to what extent they agreed on the five statements that engaging in effective transportation actions/activities would help reduce environmental pollution leading to environmental conservation and protection. Response percentages were determined on data collected on each of the five statements and are presented in Figure 5.
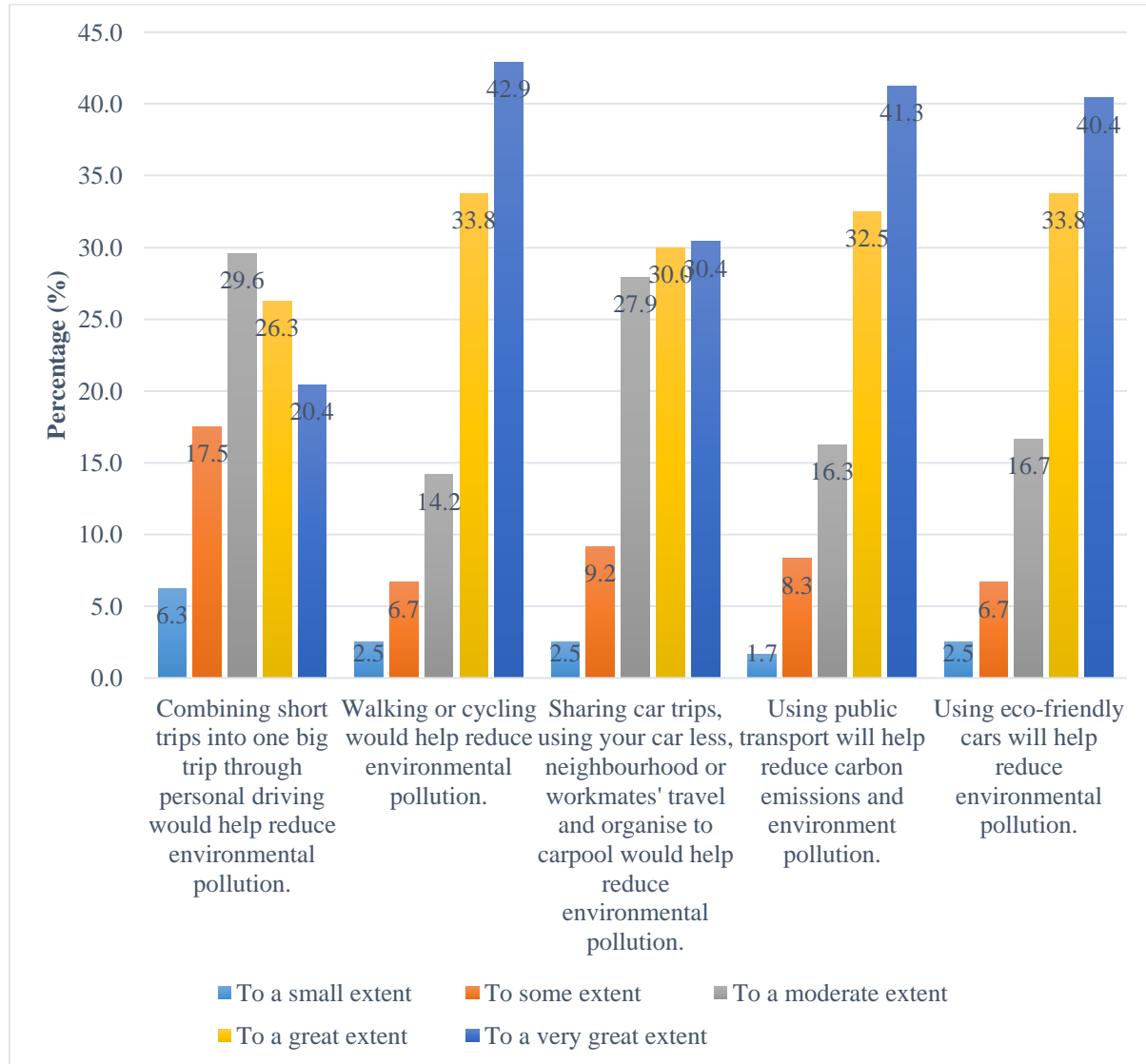
The sum percentage of participants' responses of "To a Great Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent" to the four statements (2, 3, 4, and 5) indicated very high percentages of between 60.4% to 76.7%. Findings set out in Table 6 and Figure 5 on the use of effective transportation methods indicated that the mean of each statement is more than 4, while percentage responses on Figure 5 indicated that more than 60% of participants agreed that that the environment would be better off if or when people engage in effective transportation activities. These findings were similar to Auckland Council Transport's (2021) conclusion that environmental sustainability would only be attained when communities and people live close to work or walk to work, bike or use public transport. Engaging in these actions would further help save energy and reduce greenhouse gases. However, statement 1 recorded 46.7% sum percentage response on "To a Great Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent". This could be due to lack of flexibility, not a convenient option for some people, difficulty in finding people with similar intention and lacking privacy and ownership control. Participants' choice of "To a Small Extent"," To Some Extent" and "To a Moderate Extent" were relatively limited across all the five statements.

Analysis and Findings on Participants' Views of Tree Planting

Table 7 presents data collected from participants on the extent to which planting trees helps in protecting and conserving the environment. Data was collected using 5 Likert scale statements. M and SD for each of the 5 statements were calculated for

analysis and are presented in Table 7. The mean of participants' scores on statements 1 to 5 on the extent to which planting trees helps conserve and protect the environment are: 4.4; 4.5; 4.2; 4.14; and 4.14 as presented in Table 7. Each of these statements had a mean of 4 and above. This shows that to a very great extent most participants agreed that planting trees enhanced environmental protection and conservation. From the findings, this study concluded that participants believed that planting trees and plants had environmental, economic, and social benefits as planted trees help to improve air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, providing a less polluted environment; that planted trees help combat the greenhouse gas effects; planted trees help reduce pressure on heating and cooling and save energy; and that trees protect against climate change, natural disasters, and catastrophes. From Table 7, the standard deviation results for each of the means to each five statements are: 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, and 1.1. This indicates that each score on each of the statements deviated from each mean by 1 point on average. This means that most participants agreed "To a Great Extent" or "To a Very Great Extent" on the need to plant trees to ensure the environment is protected and conserved.

Table 7

Participants' Responses to Various Actions on Tree Planting

| Do you agree with the statements below?	Mean	SD
Planting trees and plants has environmental, economic, and social benefits.	4.4	1.0
Planted trees help to improve air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. enhancing a less polluted environment.	4.5	1.0
Planted trees help combat the greenhouse gas effects.	4.2	1.0
Planted trees help reduce pressure on heating and cooling and save energy.	4.14	1.0

| Trees could protect against climate change, natural disasters, and catastrophes. | 4.14 | 1.1 |

Note: n=240; SD = standard deviation

Figure 6

Percentage Distributions of Participants' Responses to Survey Questions on Tree Planting

Data collected from participants on how tree planting could help conserve and protect the environment. Five statement questions were given to participants on the extent to which they agreed that engaging in tree planting activities could help protect and conserve the environment. Response percentages were determined through analysis on data collected on each of the five statements as presented on Figure 6 with findings.
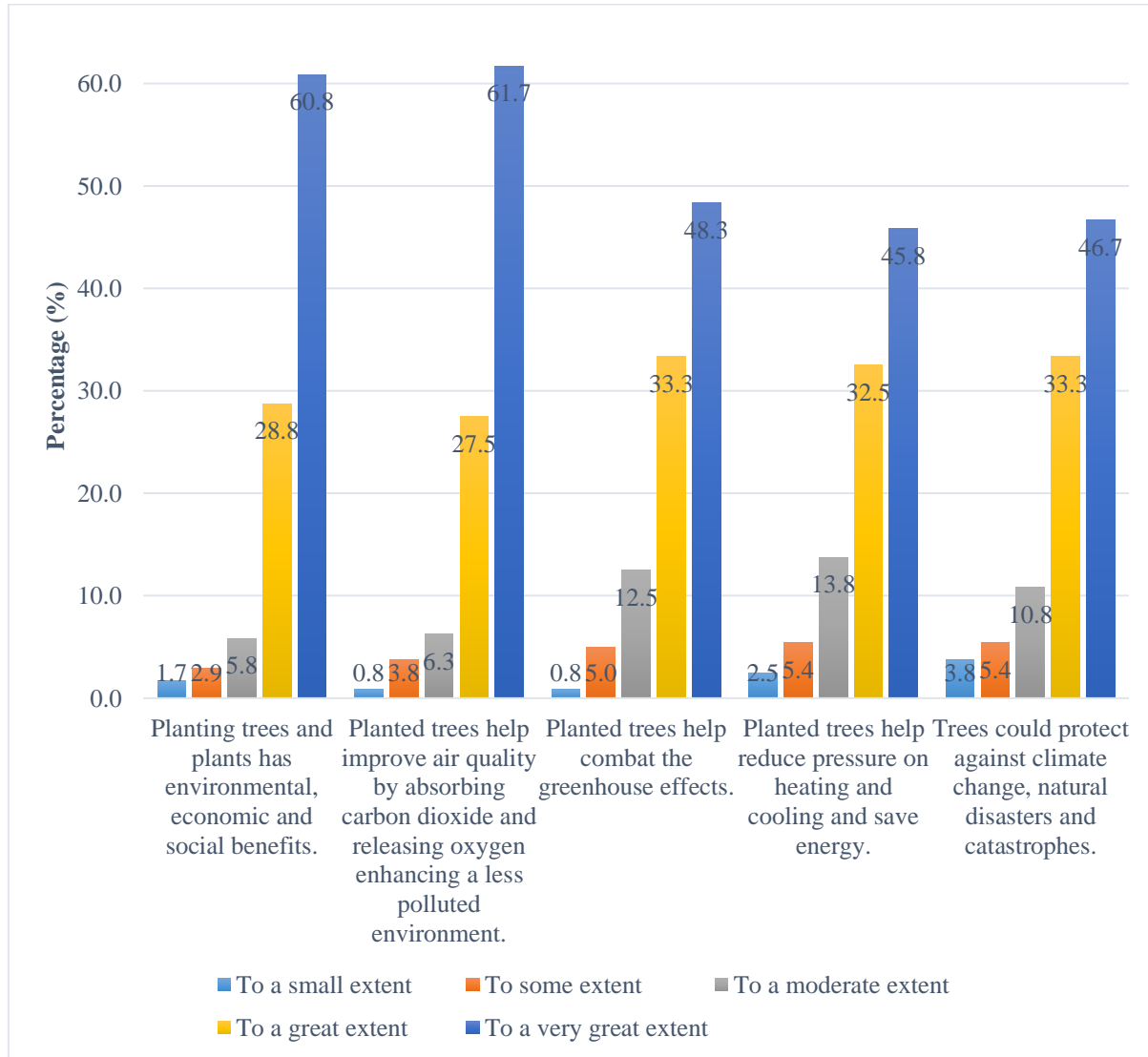
Participants' response distribution patterns to the five statements are similar. Statements 1to 5 recorded percentage sums of between 78.2% to 89.6% on "To a Great Extent" and "To a Very Great Extent". From the above analysis of the table and

figure, participants to a very great extent agreed on the importance of plants and planting trees which are necessary for environmental protection and conservation. As concluded by Zhang et al. (2022) recycling paper will help reduce tree felling to produce paper and that when more trees are available in the environment and or community, the tree available will absorb carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and reduce global warming. However, sum percentage responses to the five statements on "To a small Extent", "To Some Extent" and "To a Moderate Extent" are between 19.4% to 21.7%. This means that about 22% of participants did not agree to a great extent that planting trees could help conserve and protect the environment. This could be because they lack awareness of the benefits of planting trees.

Conclusions

The researchers are of the opinion that this study contributes to the existing related literature on environmental sustainability actions expected from communities and individuals to conserve and protect the environment. The research focused on the following conceptual perspectives: waste minimisation; water conservation; energy saving; use of effective transportation methods and tree planting. Participants were asked about the extent to which they agreed to the implementation of some activities or actions expected of people to engage with waste minimisation; water conservation; energy saving; use of effective transportation methods and tree planting. The research found that participants to a very great extent agreed that the prescribed action/activities suggested to them are necessities for the community as well as

individuals to engage with to realise a well conserved and protected environment. Participants to a very great extent agreed among others that re-using and recycling human use products is one of the sustainability actions to conserve and protect the environment. This corroborates Zhang et al.'s (2022) finding. Other findings in this study are that community and individual engagement in various water conservation activities, energy-saving actions and adoption of environmentally friendly technology are some of the panaceas agreed on towards conserving and protecting the environment. This finding is synonymous with Carrus et al. (2008); Drive Electric (2023) and Zhang et al. (2022). This study also found that creating, conserving and protecting the environment relate to various sustainability actions and activities in which communities and individuals are engaged. This occurs especially when such environmental conservation behaviours or activities by communities and individuals are focused on curtailment behaviours such as engaging in low-cost behaviour such as turning off lights when not in use and efficiency behaviours such as purchasing energy-efficient appliances or increasing home insulation (Karlin et al., 2014).

Limitations

Each research may have its peculiar limitations either from the perspective of the research or the researcher. Ross and Bibler Zaidi (2019) see research limitations as factors beyond the control of researchers, and such could influence the outcome of

the study. However, the authors suggested researchers need to highlight such limitations in their research.

A few of the limitations of this study are use of descriptive statistical analysis and the number of participants. However, use of descriptive analysis enables this research to use numbers to describe quality data sets, reduce large data sets to sample and compact forms for easy interpretation and enables use of data virtualisation tools such as tables, graphs, and charts. This is still limited because it does not provide a more scientific statistical analysis on the data collected which could make the findings of this research somehow limited. Another limitation is that there were only 240 participants. It could be better to have higher number of participants which will help provide stronger and more reliable research findings which are more generalisable.

Recommendations

Once these limitations are taken care of, we recommend a similar study be conducted with a higher number of participants and use of more sophisticated and scientific statistical analytical tools such as Partial Lease square (PLS) and Structural Equation Model (SEM). Once these are done, findings will be more generic. This research is manly focused on five main environmental sustainability action areas. namely waste minimisation, water conservation, energy saving, use of effective transportation methods and tree planting. However, it can be expanded to other areas such as energy

generation, deforestation, sustainable industries, agriculture, land use practices, and sustainable cites.

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The Dynamics of Gender Equality in Land Ownership Policy in Matrilineal and Patrilineal Families in Tanzania: Implications on Women Land Ownership Rights in Selected Regions

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the dynamics of gender equality in land ownership policy in matrilineal and patrilineal families in Tanzania. The rationale for this study was derived from the 2030 agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on inclusivity and which insists among other reducing gender gap in land ownership. In Tanzania, despite equal right in land ownership stipulated in the Land Act Cap 113, the Village Land Act Cap 114 of 1999 and Land Policy (NLP) of 1995, women are marginalized. Gender inequality in land ownership is indicated by

women owning land alone are few i.e. 9% while 25% of women own land jointly with men. This paper had the following objectives: to examine the state of gender gap in the land ownership in Tanzania; to investigate the factors for the gender inequality in land ownership; to examine the effect of gender inequality on income generation to women and men, and; to explore the ways to reduce gender inequality in land ownership. To explain how cultural norms undermine women land ownership in Tanzania, the article paper was guided by historical legacy and cultural modernity perspectives. The author used both qualitative and quantitative approaches and case study design. The data were collected through interview and document review. Sample size was 180 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Content analysis and descriptive statistics were used in data analysis. The findings indicate that the major factors contributing to gender inequality in land ownership were lack of awareness on land laws, cultural norms and traditions anchored on patriarchy systems. Furthermore, the study findings revealed specific effects of gender inequality in land ownership within patrilineal and matrilineal systems. These were women oppression, stressful life and family conflict. Based on the study findings, this paper suggests the ways to curb gender inequality in land ownership in Tanzania which include promoting awareness on land ownership laws and rights to both men and women.

1.0 Introduction

Globally women own less land and have less secure rights over land than men (United Nations, 2017). On average, women provide an estimated 43 percent (more than 400 million) of the agricultural labour force but less than 20 percent of women hold land titles (United Nations, 2017). In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, 60 to 70 percent of employed women works in agriculture. Yet, despite women's crucial role in agriculture, food production, and land-based livelihood, there is no consistent national or global data on the overall scope of women's land rights or access to land to that would enable them monitor and enforce their rights (United Nations, 2017).

In sub-Saharan Africa, land is central to economic and social development and land-based livelihoods contribute to a major share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Tanzania and elsewhere in developing countries, investments related to land ownership in both rural and urban areas has been a major concern. Thus, efforts have been done to improve land tenure for investment and sustainable land management (HAKIARDHI, 2011).

According to HAKIARDHI (2005) the land policy reforms that strengthen tenure security, to inform other options available for policy and legal change that contribute to tenure security, improve access to land and natural resources and play

a part in poverty reduction, on-farm investment and employment creation. This is especially relevant in sub-Saharan Africa, where land is central to economic and social development and where land-based livelihoods contribute a major share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Tanzania, land ownership related to investment in both rural and urban areas have been a major concern and elsewhere in developing countries, thus, efforts have been done to improve land tenure for investment and sustainable economic development (HAKIARDHI, ibid).

Inclusive economic growth is one of the 2030 agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Elson & Seth 2019). Women's economic inclusion involves reducing the gender gap in the economy and assert ownership (Ritter-Hayashi, et al.2019). Nevertheless, across Africa, there are profound differences between men and women in ownership, use and control over assets and wealth (Gaddis, et al. 2018). Gender gap emerges prominently in ownership of land and housing property, which are important assets for the poor in Africa and the primary means to store wealth (ibid). The African population data indicate less than 13 percent of African women (aged 20-49 years) claim sole ownership of land, compared with 36 percent of African men. The gender gap remains significant at 38 percent of African women owning a land (alone or jointly), compared with 51 percent of African men (Peterman 2012; Lambert and Rossi 2016). A report by Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2017) documents that Zimbabwe is a home to around 587,000 widows and that most women aged 60 and over were widowed. There are

also several cases in Zimbabwe and other parts of Africa such as Uganda and South Africa, of widows being evicted from their marital home after the death of their husbands and left with no assets and income sources to support them (Dillon and Voena, 2017). Across the globe, access to and use of land is subject to a broad range of legal and customary land tenure arrangements (ibid).

In Tanzania, studies by Moyo (2017) and Nyamwesa et al. (2022) on Women's Access to Land, and Gender Gap in Assert Ownership in Tanzania respectively found that the majority of women is illiterate and lacks awareness on land ownership. Also, Women are generally under-represented in assert ownership (Ritter-Hayashi et al. 2019) while only 9 percent of women own house or land. The women are reported to be prone to gender-based challenges that undermine investment in productive assets and human capital capabilities (United Republic of Tanzania (URT, 2018). On the other hand, Barasa (2020) notes that female-owned enterprises face an 18.1 percentage point lower probability of innovation when compared to male-owned enterprises. However, these studies did not explain the factors for gender gap in land ownership and its effects on income generation among women which this project seeks to unravel.

In fact, the Tanzanian government has taken measures to address gender gap land ownership by enacting Land Act No. 4 of 1999 which provides right of every adult woman to acquire, hold, use and deal with land. Also, Village Land Act No. 5 of

1999 Cap 114, S.3(2) guarantees, the rights of every woman to acquire, hold, use and deal with land. Also, the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977, article 15 (1) stipulates equality between men and women before the law.

Despite the above-mentioned measures to curb it, gender gap in land ownership in particular is still prevalent in Tanzania. For instance, the 2015-16 Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey and Malaria Indicator Survey (TDHS) indicates that 34 percent of women reported that they own land jointly while only 9 percent of women own a house or land alone (URT, 2018). Men aged 15-49, are slightly more likely to own a land (37 percent), either alone or jointly, than women. Unlike women, 30 percent of men own land alone (ibid). This paper explored why was it so.

Therefore, the research questions this study aimed to ponder were: to what extent gender gap still exist in the land ownership in Tanzania? If so, what factors contribute to the gender gap in land ownership? What is the effect of gender gap income generation to men and women? This study makes several contributions. Firstly, it adds to the growing body of literature concerning the gender gap in land ownership. Secondly, this study sheds light on specific factors constraining gender equality in land ownership. Lastly, this study promotes the debate on mainstreaming gender perspectives in the formulation and implementation of laws and policies concerning land ownership.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

For more than a decade, the Government of Tanzania has been taking measures to curb gender inequality in land ownership. The measures include enacting the Land Act No. 4 of 1999, Village Land Act Cap 114 of 199 and formulating the National Land Policy. However, Tanzania is still experiencing gender inequality in land ownership and in other sectors as she has a gender inequality index score as high as 0.539 (in 2017) ranking 130 out of 159 nations. Evidence from the National Bureau of Statistics in 2023 shows that gender inequality exists in land ownership whereby only 9% of women own land alone, while 25% of women own land jointly with men. On contrast 30% of men own land alone (Statista, 2022). The recent gender gap index score in Tanzania has been kept stable from 7.0 in 2016 to 0.72 in 2022, meaning that females were 28 percent less likely to have the same opportunities as males in the Country (Statista, 2022). Tanzanians women still suffer from discrimination in both laws and practices in ownership of land and other assets. The 1963 Customary Laws of Inheritance prohibits women, widows and daughters from inheriting land (URT, 2022). Besides gender gap in land ownership evidence shows that women tend to own smaller plots when compared to men. This gap is noted in house ownership whereby over 21 percent of the men own titles or deeds of houses compared to 7 percent of the women. This fact denies women access to use the property/asset for other economic activities such as accessing credit/loans (URT, 2018). In this study, Geita and Mara regions were

selected because they have high level of gender gap in land ownership. In Mara region, 7% of women owning land compared to 30% men while in Geita 8% of women owns land compared to 32% of the men (URT, 2018). This fact underscores prevalence of gender inequality especially in land ownership in Tanzania despite government policy and legal interventions to curb it. Thus, this pproject investigates why was it so. The research objectives for this study were: firstly, to examine the gender gap still exist in the land ownership in Tanzania; secondly to explore the factors for the gender inequality and thirdly to examine the effects of gender inequality on women income generation. The study also aimed at proposing the way forward.

2.0 Literature Review

A growing strand of literature on gender equality in land ownership in rural areas shows that women are not accorded the same rights as men (Sanga & Exaud, 2023). The problem of gender inequality has emerged prominently in ownership of land which is an important asset for the poor in Africa and the primary means to accumulate wealth for both men and women. Gender inequality in access to land resources especially in developing countries is widespread and is indeed a subject of serious debate. In many communities, gender disparities with regard to access to and control of land resources are linked to a norm that men, as heads of households should control and manage household properties (United Nations, 2013). The

problem is even much more pronounced and damaging when it comes to access to and control of agricultural land.

Although the importance of securing women's land and inheritance rights has been recognized in a growing number of national and international instruments, evidence from a gender perspective shows that, most land tenure systems in Africa favour men. The findings are corroborated by Moyo, (2017); FAO, (2011); World Bank, FAO and IFAD, (2009);UN-HABITAT, (2006);Tsikata, (2003);USAID, (2013) who noted that in most cases rights to own land is primarily given to through the father, husband, brother or son Under customary land law and traditions in many developing countries, women are given usufructuary rights (Leavens and Leigh, 2011). For instance, in Maasai culture (patrilinear families) in Tanzania, women are not allowed to inherit any property and are likely to lose land and livestock if their husbands die without leaving behind a male child (Tiaré Cross, 2013). In some parts of rural Moshi in Kilimanjaro region, inherited traditions and customs are reported to play a decisive role in limiting women's access to and control over land, among other resources (Asantemungu, 2011).

Few studies that conducted, in many developing countries found that gender gap in ownership of agricultural land is still wide, mainly in favour of men (Kongela,

2020) in both patrilineal and matrilineal societies. This work explored the extent of gender equality in ownership of agricultural land in Kisarawe and Mkuranga districts which are typical rural agricultural settings and mainly matrilineal. It was an attempt to examine women's benefits from agricultural activities. Respondents were randomly selected from village registers of the six villages studied.

The findings contradict the conventional narratives of gender inequality that women are discriminated in land ownership. Despite insignificant percentage of societies which embrace matrilineal system in Tanzania, the system largely seems to support women in owning land in those societies. However, a few elements of gender discrimination were noted especially for widows and divorced women. The findings make a case for more intervention in ensuring statutory and customary land tenure practices to compliment in enhancing gender equality in accessing land especially in rural areas.

This study mainly focused on gender discrimination in agricultural land ownership. That means it has not documented the factors underlying gender gap in Tanzania and their effect on income generation to women in Tanzania. Therefore, this paper unravels the factors for the gender gap in land ownership and its impact on both women and men in Tanzania.

The rationale for this study based on the fact that inclusive economic growth is one

of the 2030 agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Women's economic inclusion involves reducing the gender gap in the economy and ownership of land and other assets since across Africa, and in Tanzania in particular, there are profound inequality between men and women in ownership, use and control over assets and wealth including land ownership.

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives

2.1.1 Historical Legacies

The human development perspective and the classical modernization perspective offer theories to explain why modern societies are more conducive to gains in gender equality. The present section on cultural and institutional path dependency presents historical legacies potentially capable of affecting the improved modernization to uplift women's social and political status. The developmental trends of social modernization may face legacies of path dependent cultural and institutional organization that affect societies' abilities to improve women's lives (Skocpol, 1992). Researchers note that the emergence of institutions, whether cultural or the result of policy, sometimes consists of types of social organizations that have a continuing and somewhat determinant influence on phenomena

relevant to those institutions far into the future (Skocpol, 1992). This influence can take the form of an inertial tendency where institutions affect relevant phenomena that would have otherwise be changed due to other social forces, like modernization. This perspective considers four measures of path dependent processes capable of affecting gender equality. These are protestant religious traditions, a long tradition of female suffrage, a state tradition of investing into welfarism rather than coercive forces, and a tradition of leftist dominance in government formation. Depending on the nature of their traditions, religions vary in opportunity for women's emancipation. For instance, relative to other religious heritages, scholars find that the Protestant religious heritage improves the status of women in the country (Inglehart & Norris 2003). With its tradition of sectarianism and volunteerism, Protestantism holds a tradition particularly hospitable to democratic values, such as respect for individualism, reciprocity and popular sovereignty. Researchers also approach the impact of religious legacy on women's empowerment through measures of publics' levels of secularization (Inglehart & Welzel 2005). As societies secularize there is greater deference to rationality and expertise, and this typically gives rise to the modern state and widespread social services. The secularizing trend typically occurs from the pre-industrial through the industrializing phase of modernization. During this transition, traditional units restrictive of women's development such as the family and the church lose their authority as individuals place greater emphasis on rationality and individualism.

Scholars working with the World Values Survey have developed a value dimension for capturing this transition to secular, rational values. Studies find positive relationships between this and measures of women's empowerment (Inglehart & Welzel 2005). In addition to religion, path dependent processes with respect to women's suffrage policy may affect the potential to increase gender equality in particular societies. Suffragist policy represents instances when elites and dominant political groups open the system of political representation to former, politically constructed out-groups. Countries with earlier suffragist policies for reforming women's formal political exclusion are likely to have a stronger institutional legacy of women's formal political inclusion. Several studies hypothesize and establish a positive link between earlier suffragist policy and women's empowerment in parliament (Kenworthy & Malami 1999). State-financed welfarism policy is another tradition that research on gender equality highlights as central to societies' progress in gender equality. Much research confirms that a key barrier to women's full social inclusion and autonomy has been and continues to be institutional arrangements that restrict the state's role in caretaking and domestic responsibilities (Hirschmann 2001). Welfare policy is capable of alleviating these barriers by expanding the scope of the state's involvement in these everyday household necessities. This is possible through various ways including state supported childcare. However, investments into coercive state power are investments into activities that are largely male-dominated

(working against female empowerment) while investments into social welfare favour activities in which women play a more prominent role (Inglehart & Welzel 2005). Thus, state legacies with respect to welfare policies are an additional form of historical institutionalism that could potentially offset the empowerment modernization brings to women. Finally, an important role has been assigned to the traditional dominance of leftist parties. Through their role as gatekeepers, political parties act as mediators of women's potential to seek and win elective office (Kunovich & Paxton 2005). Party elites act as gatekeepers via the crucial role they play in the processes of candidate recruitment and selection. In evaluating characteristics of parties that impact the recruitment, selection and support of women political elites, researchers highlight the importance of party ideology and women's involvement in party leadership (Kunovich & Paxton 2005). Scholarship generally shows that leftist parties are more likely to recruit women and to adopt strategies to ensure more women candidates, which increases women in party leadership positions (ibid). Other scholars show that more women in party leadership positions associates with the adoption of more strategies to empower women within the party and the election process (Kunovich & Paxton 2005).

While it is not clear how these processes perform relative to other explanations or at what stage in gender equality factors they become relevant. For instance,

research does tell us that Protestant or secular societies should positively associate with measures of gender equality, societies with a longer history of women's female suffrage should positively associate with the three stages of gender equality, and greater welfarism should positively correlate with gender equality. This perspective is essentially based on the role of cultural and institutional organization and how they promote gender equality. This paper therefore used them to examine how patrilineal and matrilineal societies promote or undermine gender equality in land ownership in Tanzania.

2.1.2 Cultural Modernity: The Human Development Perspective.

A more recent theory emphasizes the conversion of economic development into a cultural process of human development that gives rise to an emancipative worldview, reflected in self-expression values that emphasize human choice and autonomy, including the choices and autonomy of women (Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Welzel 2003; Welzel, Inglehart & Klingemann 2003). This rise in emancipative orientations develops mass expectations targeted at making elites responsive and inclusive. In this way, rising emancipative values lead to increases in women's empowerment throughout society and in parliament (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart & Welzel 2005). At its core, the human development

perspective links social modernization to emancipative values through changes in existential constraints. The theory highlights how changes in modern societies are particularly conducive to women's empowerment and therefore establishes a link between cultural modernity and publics that value greater equality between genders. Ultimately, the modern human resources seemed crucial to the human development sequence to economic development, though in this view the effect of economic development is more indirect. Inglehart & Norris (2003) find that cultural modernity holds real, positive consequences for women. When controlling for alternative hypotheses, their measure of attitudes toward gender equality is the sole predictor of the proportion of women in parliament. In later work, Inglehart & Welzel (2005) modify these findings. It is not so much gender-egalitarian attitudes but the broad emancipative implications of self-expression values in general that positively predict gender empowerment.

In summary, modernization comes in many forms. While all the measures reviewed here relate in some fashion to women's empowerment, the strongest, most consistent findings show that gains in gender equality are most dramatic in countries with high levels of development and strong emancipative values. Thus, measures of economic development should strongly relate to the measures of women's empowerment. We also expect measures of cultural modernity to be

strongly associate with the dependent measures. With respect to relationships between these two processes, given that the human development approach stresses the role of increasing human resources in expanding the scope of social inclusion and human choice, we expect that economic modernity explain firmly the initial stage of women's empowerment while cultural modernity are central to explanations of the higher stages. This perspective emphasizes on conversion of economic development into a cultural process of human development that gives rise to an emancipative worldview, reflected in self-expression values that emphasize human choice and autonomy, including the choices and autonomy on land ownership among women.

3.0 Materials and Methods

This section presents methodological approaches used in the study. It includes sampling procedures of respondents, data collection methods and data analysis techniques employed in this study.

3.1 Research approach

This study used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches because the

information about gender gaps in land ownership in Tanzania was both qualitative and quantitative in nature.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to provide a room for a thorough analysis of the data. The quantitative approach was applied as the positive/positivist paradigm to allow the collection and conversion of qualitative data into numerical form so that statistical calculations can be made, and conclusions drawn (Jonesen & Huberman, 2003). A qualitative approach was used to allow for the collection of in-depth information about gender gap in land ownership in Tanzania and its effects on income generation to women.

3.2 Target Population

According to Adam & Kamuzora, (2008), a population is a group of individuals, persons, objects, or items from which samples are taken for measurement. The population of the study included local government authorities, policymakers, members of ward land council, men and women. The population was used purposely because it represents a majority of communities with insights and experiences with gender gap in land ownership.

3.3 Research design

The study used a case study design. Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted (Kothari and Garg 2014). A case study research design was used in this study to broaden understanding of the gender equity and inclusiveness concepts. The reason behind choosing this design was because it would enable the researcher to identify and establish the relationship existing between gender gap and income generation to women in patrilineal regions such as Mara, Geita, Arusha, Manyara regions and matrilineal regions were Lindi, Mtwara and Pwani Region. The case studied were Mara, Geita, Arusha, Manyara regions are regions where patriarchy system is highly practiced. These regions were selected because they have high level of gender gap in land ownership. The data indicate that in Mara 7% of women owns land compared to 30% men while in Geita 8% of women owns land compared to 32% of the men (URT, 2018).

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

A sample size of 160 (80 respondents from matrilineal and 80 respondents from matrilineal) was involved. The respondents were 50 women, 50 men. Among them,

10 were village chairperson, 10 village executive officers, 20 members of ward land council, 10 court magistrates, and 10 land officers. These were selected by using purposive sampling through which the researcher believed to obtain rich cases for the data required in this study. The multifaceted sample of respondents was deemed necessary in this study because they had the insights and experience necessary to meet the objectives of the study.

3.5 Methods of data collection

The data collection methods were interview and document review. The reason for using the interview method is that it conforms to the qualitative approach and facilitates the required level of interaction between the researcher and the respondents. The interview guide questions were used to collect data from members of ward land council, Village Chairpersons and village executive officers. Furthermore, documentary review was used to complement the information gaps collected through interview particularly statistical data on land ownership gap and its effects on income generation to women.

3.6 Data analysis techniques

Qualitative data analysis technique was used. In particular this paper used thematic data analysis technique which involved reading and categorising the responses and

transcribing them in a way that allowed identification of similarities and differences in order to develop themes and sub-themes relating to the research objectives, such as the extent of gender gap in land ownership and the factors for gender gap in land ownership and how such gender gap affected women in income generation as well as the ways forward. Descriptive statistics were used for quantitative data analysis.

3.7 Contribution of the study

This study has made several contributions to the existing body of knowledge and policy. Firstly, it adds to the growing body of literature concerning the gender gap in assert ownership in particular land. Secondly, this study sheds light on specific factors constraining gender equality in asset ownership between male and female. Also, this paper promotes the debate on mainstreaming gender perspectives in the formulation and implementation of laws and policies concerning land ownership. The study has further added knowledge on the extent to which gender gaps in land ownership has affected women empowerment in economy. Also, the findings will inform the policy recommendations as ways forward to curb gender gaps in land ownership in Tanzania. More specifically, this study promotes the debate on gender mainstreaming perspectives in the formulation and implementation of gender laws and policies with a view to revealing positive practices that could be applied to bridge gender gap in land ownership in Tanzania. This is because gender

inequality has received inadequate empirical studies, hence limited knowledge has been generated.

4.0 Findings and discussion

This study examined the extent of gender inequality in land ownership in Tanzania and the factors contributing to its existence. The findings are on land ownership are presented in the following sub-sections.

4.1 The extent of gender inequality in land ownership: Women Land Rights ownership

This paper examined the extent to which women accessed land in the study areas. The findings indicated that majority of women in the selected wards were did not have access to land through in face of husbands or male relatives in patrilinear families. In many cases the women ownership of land depended on their ethnic group, family relations and socioeconomic status. Generally, societal norma seemed to inhibit women from accessing and holding land. It was further noted that, land rights were endangered when a woman becomes a widow or divorced. This was not the case in matrilineal families as it is presented here under.

In patrilineal communities, it was generally seen that women had limited access to land rights as customary land tenure norms were still predominant over statutory laws in patriarchy families. Apart from women being free to buy land, gender bias against women on inheritance was apparent in the selected villages. Some women were harassed when seeking inheritance rights over their deceased husbands' properties including land. Patriarchy families, for instance, only 20 (25%) women out of 80 women had gained access to land through marriage/relatives; 10 (12.5%) had purchased it, 5(6.15%) inherited and 5(12.5%) had joint acquisition by relatives and 50 (62.5%) did not have land and for agricultural activities, they were renting from their neighbors. It should be noted that the small number of women owning land in selected villages was not isolated case. In this regard, one may argue that legal provisions were not only inadequate in addressing women's land ownership rights, but also did not effectively address customary land ownership rights for women.

On the other hand, the findings from matrilineal regions in Mtwara and Lindi regions indicated that 60 (75%) respondents reported that women possessed their land through inheritance or purchased while 20 (25%) respondents indicated that women were given land as gift. These findings were not equally the same to men whom more than 90% were reported to own land. This trend of land ownership gives implications that gender gap in landownership was higher in patrilineal

families. For instance, 62.5% interviewed women had no land while in matrilineal families 75% of women had land through purchase or given as a gift respectively.

These findings compliment Konga (2020) who noted that, 40 percent of the women gained access to land through marriage/male relatives, 26 percent through direct purchase, 31 percent through inheritance, 3 percent through joint acquisition by relatives and 1 percent through gift. It was further noted that the small number of women owning land in selected villages was not a peculiar case. Numerous literatures have reported this state. A study carried out in Uganda by Deininger and Castagnini (2006) found that, based on sole ownership only, approximately 10 percent and 47 percent of plots were owned by women and men respectively. Regardless of differences in landownership regimes and the differences between ownership and control of land, a study by Doss et al. (2015) reported that the percentage of women who owned agricultural land in their own names in different countries was 5 percent, 7 percent and 8 percent for Senegal, Lesotho and Tanzania respectively. This pattern of results is not uncommon in many villages in Tanzania.

The problem of gender inequality in access to land resources especially in developing countries, including Tanzania, is widespread and is indeed a subject of serious debate. The problem is even much more pronounced and damaging when it

comes to access to and control of agricultural land (ibid). In many communities, gender disparities with regard to access to and control of land resources are linked with the norm that men, as heads of households should control and manage household properties (United Nations, 2013).

Despite recent institutional reforms in many Sub-Saharan African countries, there are still many challenges due to the fact that issues such as marriage, divorce and inheritance rights in de facto sense, continue to be governed by customary law (Cao, 2016). Gender bias in income distribution is also common in many African customs and traditions.

For instance, in most of the West African cultures, men and their wives do not share incomes. They keep separate budgets and have different spending responsibilities (Djuikom and van de Walle, 2018). In Cameroon, some men refuse to give land to their wives, for fear of losing wives' labour in their farms or for fear of women earning their own income and thus becoming independent (Hilhors, 2000).

The position of widows' land rights differs from society to society and even across the families not only in Tanzania but across the African continent. In societies that

follow Islamic laws, widows can get either a portion of the husband's inheritance (sometimes allowed to stay in the matrimonial home with their children) or get 1/8 of her deceased husband's belongings. However, there are still some cases where widows could be evicted from their matrimonial land after the death of their husbands. However, in some parts of Senegal River and Burkina Faso for instance, when a husband dies, a widow is neither abandoned nor denied access to land. Depending on the circumstances, she either remains on the husband's land, or goes back to her father's farmland and draws her livelihood from it as long as necessary to find a new husband (Platteau, 2000).

Other studies indicate that matrilineal family relations favour gender equality. In matrilineal societies women possess the same rights over agricultural land as men and there is little interference by men when women earn income by farming family land. For instance, amongst matrilineal groups in Ghana, women are able to utilize their positions within kinship networks to negotiate secure land rights and play active roles in commercial agricultural production despite countervailing tendencies which limit land allocations from men to women (Aryeetey, 2002). A study carried out by Dondeyne et al. (2003) in one of the matrilineal villages in South Eastern Tanzania revealed that, absence of women discrimination under customary land tenure regimes as women have the same rights as men in accessing land and ownership of property. The authors provide further that, in cases of

divorce, properties are normally equitably divided. However, as marriages tend to be patrilocal, women may find it more difficult to keep control of their land.

In general, women in Tanzania spend much of their time providing labour for household agricultural production. Their control over the land use remains limited. According to the research by the Tanzanian National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 33 percent of women own agricultural land compared to 47 percent of men. Only nine percent of women have sole ownership of land, and 25 percent have joint land ownership. On the other hand, 30 percent of men have sole ownership and seven percent joint ownership. It was observed that when women own land, it's typically smaller than that owned by men and have lower yields.

Furthermore, an initiative that began in 2021 as part of the 3-year "Realizing Gender Equality through Empowering Women and Adolescent Girls" programme, funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), UN Women supported the Ikungi District Council in the Singida region to issue land certificates - Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy (CCROs) - for women's sole or joint land ownership.

The project modernized the practice of land demarcation with a gender-responsive approach and advanced technology. It first equipped the Ikungi District with a digital land use management system (ILMIS and MAST). Meanwhile, IT

infrastructure, required for more efficient data processing and the settlement of land disputes. UN Women Tanzania further trained the district and village-level land governance institutions to undertake gender responsive CCROs issuance, and sensitized communities in the district on women's right to own land and the benefits of joint land ownership.

Currently, 5,360 CCROs have been issued as a result of these interventions, with over 2,000 of these issued to women. The proportion of CCROs issued to women increased from 14 per cent prior to the programme (between 2013-2020) to 41 per cent after the programme (2021-2022), a three-fold increase. Due to advanced technologies, the land certificates were also issued faster, with more than 5,000 issued in just three months, compared to the past where it took four years to produce 1067 CCROs.

One of women who was able to obtain a land certificate, has joint ownership of her family's land, along with her husband had the following observation during an interview held with her:

" I had a decision-making power in terms of what we do with our land, how to use it, and how much we can sell our land. I am also planning to use the land as collateral to be able to get a loan to further grow my agricultural activities " (Interview, November, 2023).

The findings give impression that both government and non-government organizations have been in fore front in promoting land ownership among women in Tanzania. However, one thing to be noted from the above findings is that the gender gap in land ownership is still prevalent in Tanzania as only 9% of women in Tanzania have sole ownership of land in Tanzania while 37% have joint ownership of land in Tanzania compared to 47% of men in Tanzania. The next section explores why despite both government and none government interventions, women were still lagging behind in land ownership in Tanzania.

Table 1 below presented the extent of gender gap in land ownership in selected regions in Tanzania.

Table1: Land Ownership by Demographic Characteristics in Tanzania Zones

	Self-ownership	Own jointly with spouse	Own jointly with	Own by family member living	Own by family member not living in	Own by family member not
Males	30.3	22.2	2.9	17.0	7.0	
Females	19.0	16.4	10.0	21.9	8.8	

Single/Never married	13.9	0.0	5.3	39.2	12.6
Married/Living together	21.1	34.2	7.1	11.6	5.0
Separated	47.8	0.0	7.8	15.4	8.4
Divorced	47.8	0.0	3.5	10.9	22.8

Widowed	64.6	0.0	5.8	10.9	8.9
Urban	19.1	13.5	5.3	17.4	7.6
Rural	26.3	21.1	6.9	20.1	8.0
Central Tanzania	27.1	22.5	5.0	18.9	9.0

Coastal Tanzania	23.1	8.4	5.1	16.0	9.3
Zanzibar	34.8	0.0	5.3	41.9	11.2
Lake Zone	28.3	20.9	5.8	20.4	6.2
Southern Highlands	19.5	29.1	5.6	17.3	4.3

Northern	22.0	20.7	8.8	20.2	5.7
Southern	20.2	23.1	9.4	14.9	7.8
Western	24.8	17.9	8.7	22.2	12.9
Total	24.6	19.3	6.5	19.5	7.9

Source: Field data, November, 2023

Although land laws in Tanzania put emphasis on gender equality in accessing and owning land, gender gap in land ownership as presented in table 1 was still prevalent. For example, table 1 demonstrates that women self-owned land by 19 % only while men with sole ownership of the land were 30.3%. The findings imply that despite legal and land policy measure to eliminate gender inequality in land ownership, gender discrimination in land possession among women was significant.

5.0   Factors for the gender gap in land ownership

This sub-section examined the factors for the gender gap in land ownership in the study areas. The respondents were asked to state the factors for the gender gap in land ownership in Tanzania particularly in the study areas which were then supplemented with literature review. The findings are presented and discussed below.

5.1. Citizens' Awareness on Land Laws

This study examined the levels of awareness among respondents. The awareness of land laws was grouped into two categories: those who were aware of land related laws and the details of the laws and, those who were not aware at all. It was evident that, despite the fact that the Land laws Cap 113 and Cap 114 both of 1999

were in existence for almost two decades, only 50 (31.3%) including village executive officers, members of ward land council, court magistrates, and Land officers were aware of these laws. Only 20 out of 80 the women interviewed were aware of the existence of these pieces of legislations and their provisions on gender equality in land ownership and 60(75%) of women were not aware at all. A further question was posed to those who were aware of their land ownership rights to determine whether they had tried to acquire land in their own names. Most of them responded that they did not try. The findings corroborate with Kongela (2020) who aptly commented that apart from 34 percent who had tried to do so, 66 percent did not attempt. These findings corroborate observations made by Dery (2015) who reports that women's ignorance of their land rights is among the leading causes of limited access to, ownership and inheritance of land.

Members of the Village Councils who were interviewed indicated that, the villages did not have land allocatable to the villagers. Instead, villagers accessed land largely through buying it from individuals and through inheritance. Village Councilors were mainly responsible for verifying the true owner of the land earmarked for sale or under transaction. This was done in order to minimize land conflicts in the villages. Depending on negotiation between the two parts, in Mkuranga District prices of a plot of land measuring about 1/4 acres was being sold between Tshs. 5,000,000/ to 10,000,0000/=. One acre of industrial plot was sold between Tanzania shillings (TZs) 10,000,000/= to 15,000,000/=and a farm of

one acre was being sold between Tshs.15,000, 000/= and more. In general, the prices of land were in most cases based on negotiation between the two parties, specific land prices could not be established (Kongela, 2020).

More than 80 percent of land in the selected regions was acquired through inheritance, more pronounced to men than to women (ibid). Women were not accorded to inheritance rights from their parents because they were and could be married and hence jeopardizing their land rights ownership.

The Village Councils were also responsible for issuing Certificates of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCRO) in their respective villages. Normally, Village Councils impose a fee of 10 percent of sale price for every sale transaction. The money was remitted to the Government which then returns 2 percent of the sale price to the respective village. More than 80% of members of the Village Council revealed that chances for a woman and man to own land were not equal. There was however no case of a woman who attempted to buy or sell land restricted merely because she was a woman. Women who had attempted to acquire land in their own names also insisted that they were not perceived negatively by the society for buying land in their names. Financial position of a purchaser was regarded as the main criteria for purchasing land.

It was noted that married couples had the right of ownership of family land except for the land except for the lands owned by the husband before getting married. Members of Village Council for Msufini- Kidete insisted that they had set a rule for married couples that a woman had to be the first witness whenever her husband wanted to sell land and vice versa. It was also noted that widows were fairly treated by given a portion of the husband's inheritance. In addition, a widow would be allowed to stay in the matrimonial home of their deceased husband with her children. For the interviewed Muslim couples, Islamic law was noted to prevail in inheritance matters (Kongela, 2020). A woman would normally be entitled to 1/8 of her deceased husband's wealth. However, some elements of discrimination were noted for divorced women and widows. The treatment of a widow or a divorced woman in a polygamous marriage seem to be complex everywhere (UN, 2017).

A few gender discrimination elements were reported against widows. Nine percent of the women informants recalled some incidents of discrimination against widows who were forced to leave from their matrimonial home without being given a portion of their deceased husbands' wealth. While all men interviewed could not recall women discrimination incidents in land ownership, one member of the Village Council insisted that they had recorded a number of complaints from widows.

According to respondents, whenever the incidents of harassing widows were reported, they resolved the matter in favour of the widows. This implies that women were generally not discriminated from owning land, suggesting that lack of economic powers to purchase land and ignorance of the law were the main reasons for women not to exercise their land rights.

Consulted women were indifferent as to whether customary laws granted them legal protection in landownership. They particularly had little understood of the existence of legal redress and resolution of disputes. For instance, 60 percent of the respondents pointed out that they were aware of the presence of land courts at the village levels, while 30 percent were aware of the roles played by clan elders in resolving land related conflicts resulting from divorce and inheritance while 10 percent noted Islamic law as a means of addressing land ownership conflicts in case of divorce. Respondents also reported that clan elders were highly engaged in the process of selling or buying clan land. When asked whether they were ready to seek remedial measures when denied rights to farm on clan land, 85 percent of women indicated to be ready, 1 respondent (5 percent) was not ready while 10 percent had no opinion on this respect. The respondent who was not ready explained that she does not believe that a woman can win in such cases. This suggests limited land law awareness and self-inflicted fears amongst women in rural areas.

Regarding local government authorities in particular some Village Councils, it was noted that the requirement of The Village Land Act Cap 114 of having at least 25 percent of women in the Village Council was fulfilled. The study further enquired the qualifications of the member of the village authority and found that, three members certificates holder in education and one of them possessed diploma in education, the rest of the members were standard seven leavers. Also, it was noted that, all members neither had any background on land management matters nor attended courses, seminars or workshops on land administration issues. The members normally executed their duties based on their experience and traditional ways of dealing with land issues in the society. Kongela (2020) reports that some members remain dormant; they dod not even attend the meetings. This highlights the challenges of providing awareness on land rights in both rural and urban areas.

5.2 Compliance to Land ownership laws

Land laws in Tanzania put emphasis on gender equality in accessing and owning land. For instance, mortgaging of matrimonial property requires spouse consent. It was evident from this study that, matrilineal land tenure system played a significant role in empowering women to own and have control on agricultural land and land for other uses (Interview, July, 2023). However, it was noted that without knowledge on the statutory requirements on implementing gender balanced in land ownership, some women exercise their rights freely. Although

members of Village Council did not attend any seminar/workshop/training on land administration, they generally seemed to value the rights of women; that was the reason for imposing some conditions such as women to be witnesses whenever husbands or male siblings were selling individual or family land. However, the quality of their land rights were sometimes undermined by lack of awareness on land ownership laws for some women. For example, there is one case whereby a husband revoked the land bought by his wife on the ground that it was not proper for a woman married to him to buy and own the land near his grandfather' land (Interview, August, 2023).

About 20 respondents (12.5%) of women who acquired land in their own names directly from individuals land owners revealed that, there was no any limiting factor for them to buy land. A larger proportion, accounting for 117 (73%) respondents who were interviewed both electronically and through telephone were of the opinion that, having or not having land on their own names was not a problem at all. According to them what was important was to be granted right to use family land for any economic activity such as cattle keeping and agriculture. This concurs with Doss et al. (2015) observations who report that, it is less important whether a woman's name is actually on the document, as having anyone's name on the document may provide some tenure security.

It was also noted that, majority of the members of Village Council possessed no basic knowledge on land related matters. Only 23 (14.4 %) respondents of the members out of 160 respondents were aware of the provision of gender equality in land ownership. The awareness was acquired from reading brochures obtained from the district and municipal Councils. Village Council members were informed by the land officers that whenever a woman applied for land, she had to be given a priority, of which they complied with. They further reported that, in the past 3 years, about 10 percent of women in the village had tried to buy land on their own. Village Council members further admitted that, for some families, the treatment of women especially when they became widows or divorced was not favorable.

6. 0 Effects of gender gap in land ownership in Tanzania

Analysis of effects of gender inequality in land ownership went further to analyse the effects of gender inequality in land ownership in Tanzania. Women benefited in land ownership through among other things undertaking agricultural activities, livestock keeping and that they could also lease the land for money or harvest return. Generally, when a woman was more actively engaged in agricultural activities than a man, she would reserve food for family consumption while men were selling their food for their personal needs and consumptions.

The findings of this paper have indicated that cultural change towards self-expression values is a determinant of women's achievement at this most basic stage of gender equality in particular land ownership in Tanzania. The findings have indicated that gender inequality in land ownership was partly attributed to patriarchy system in patriarchy families in Tanzania. These findings go against the Historical Legacies and Cultural Modernity perspectives used in this paper. These perspectives indicate that during the transition to an egalitarian societies with respect to literacy rates, education levels, life expectancy, and standard of living, the conditions that matter are associated with liberal institutions and, as opposed to economic modernity.

On the other hand, Kongela (2020) found that income distribution between men and women differed depending on religious beliefs. About 61 percent of women who were married to ordinary Muslim and Christian men revealed that they could freely dispose-off the agricultural produce and keep the proceeds if they had farmed alone. Approximately 23 percent of respondents reported that in some cases, men took all income regardless their dormant role in farming. Meanwhile, 16 percent of Muslim women who took part in this study revealed that much as they farmed alone, they did not get any specific share of income. The latter group received household needs required by the family. For the women who were married to husbands who strictly observed Islamic norms mentioned that the requirement of being given 1/8 share of the husbands' wealth especially in

inheritance and divorce was strictly adhered to by men. Only 11 percent of married women managed to construct their own houses using their share of income from agricultural activities (ibid). This category of women reported that they bought land from private individuals to construct houses and that those houses were rented to generate income. The observation takes note of Akter et al. (2017) who report that women invest as much as 10 times more of their earnings than men do in their families' well-being. The findings show that only a small portion of other basic family requirements were funded my men. Apart from using the income for housing improvement, much of mens' incomes were used for their own personal needs. One man from Masaki village narrated this regarding spending by women against men: men's' income is supposed to be spent on capital intensive expenditures; women should strive to support their men on household needs".

Women dependence on men was found to be another negative impact of gender inequality in land ownership. It was revealed that, for women who did not receive any share of income were denied basic household needs when requested. Others indicated that gender inequality in land ownership resulted into women's stressful life which sometime resulted into diseases. For the women who farmed alone and whose all income was taken by men felt that they were exploited.

The study found that, gender inequality resulted into marriage conflicts which eventually led to litigation, divorce and family breakdown. This was another consequence mentioned. For not having land, women were harassed when requested for share of income. Others were tempted to be unfaithful to their marriage in search for income to meet their needs. Women had the same opinion, they mentioned some of the aspects as consequences of gender inequality in land ownership. These aspects mentioned were: limited investment on land, losing property in case of divorce, failure to service loans, stealing from their husbands and, inability to take care of the family when separated or husbands died. Other consequences which are also mentioned by Kongale (2020) included the fact that women were worked to get income to take care of the family, failure to join microfinance groups to raise capital for starting small businesses and suicide attempts.

The findings are in conformity with the cultural modernity or human development perspective because they emphasize on conversion of economic development into a cultural process of human development. This conversion gives rise to an emancipative worldview, reflected in self-expression values that emphasize human choice and autonomy, including the choices and autonomy on land ownership among women. The study findings have indicated that although a few women owned land in study areas, their economic empowerment through income accrued from farming activities enabled them to be independent from their husbands, hence

reducing conflict and stress.

7.0 Conclusion:

This study has empirically shown that matrilineal land tenure system still played a significant role in empowering women ownership rights in the selected villages. Women's' contribution to agriculture and households' welfare was notable in the case study villages. The significant portion of their income was spent mainly on the households needs. From these findings, it was clear that addressing gender inequality in accessing land ownership for various uses such as agricultural uses would not only be beneficial to the women as individuals, but would make a difference to the households' wellbeing and communities at large.

This study further provides a reflection as to the benefits acquired from land ownership especially among farming activities among men and women in the case study areas. It was clear that women were highly engaged as subsistence farmers, and that when farmed alone they were free to decide on products from their farming activities. Only a few women still faced challenges in owning and having decision on the income from the farms they cultivated themselves.

The findings showed that the level of gender discrimination in owning land through direct purchase was insignificant. The concern was that there existed

discriminatory tendencies largely attributed to lack of awareness of the women's' land rights for some women. These were coupled with suppressive customs and traditions which favored men. The inequality also observed in financial position as many women did not have income to buy land for agriculture and other income generating activities such as leasing and livestock keeping.

Generally, the findings from this study elaborated that, although the National Land Policy (1995) advocates for gender sensitive land ownership, there is still a mismatch between the laws and practice. The National Land Policy (1995) puts little weight on existence and the negative impacts of the cultural and religious dimension in rural land ownership. This implies that addressing legal and customary gap was and is still necessary in enhancing gender equality in ownership of agricultural land in the selected villages and other villages with similar traditions.

One of the approaches to address the conflict between customs and traditions and the statutory land rights is by enhancing awareness to women engaged in agricultural activities at all levels. Awareness should also be provided to Village Council members who continue to address land issues in their respective village without having the basic knowledge on land management and administration. It is presumed that this process will address the loopholes that permit customary laws to discriminate women. The observation emphasizes the fact that there should be a

clear system of land rights which guarantees women's land rights. Briefly, realization of de facto gender equality in land ownership in rural areas requires public awareness and sustained campaigns.

8.0 Policy Recommendations and interventions

In addressing socio-cultural norms, traditions and attitudes, it is important for the society to be aware of the existence of laws and policies. It has also to be noted that effectiveness of the existing laws and policies largely depends on their enforcement, acceptability and respect for them. To narrow gender gap, women in the villages should be encouraged to establish networks and even social institutions/support groups to exchange ideas and share experience on success stories on land matters which have helped others. This will contribute to improved awareness on land laws, policies and rights among women and the society in general. Konga (2020) notes that Customary laws that treat women as secondary beneficiaries of family landed property should be discouraged or abolished altogether.

It is however, worth mentioning that, the findings from this study cannot be generalized to all regions in Tanzania or elsewhere, because the level of women discrimination in land ownership differs from one society to the other. In matrilineal society for instance, cultural norms that prevail and favour women.

This study was based on patrilineal and matrilineal families in Tanzania. Another study may be thought in relation to governance of land ownership in local government authorities in Tanzania.

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