BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTANCY

THE IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON MODERN ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS. A CASE STUDY OF TELONE ZIMBABWE

BY

B193403B

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DECLERATION

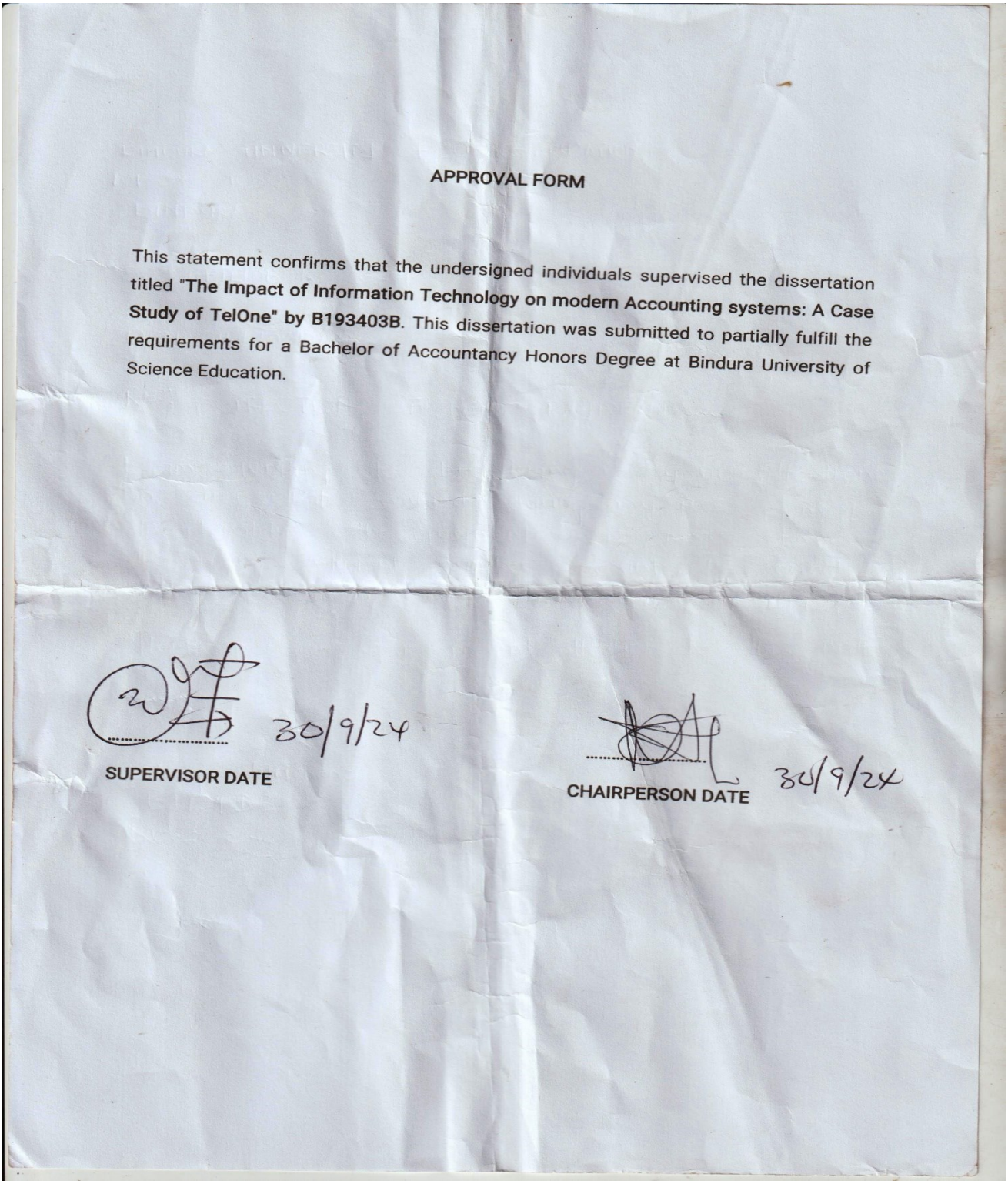
I**, B193403B,** confirm that this thesis is entirely my own original work. Any consultations or external contributions that influenced this work are properly referenced and cited. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis has not been submitted, either in its entirety or in part, for any other degree program at any other university or institution.

DEDICATIONS

To the loving memory of my mother, whose unwavering support, guidance, and unconditional love have been the driving force behind my academic journey. Her selflessness, kindness, and wisdom have inspired me to reach for my dreams, and I hope this work makes her proud. May her legacy live on through me and may I continue to make her memory a blessing.

My gratitude goes to my father and siblings for their support financially, spiritually, emotionally and physically throughout my years of my study.

APPROVAL FORM



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This statement confirms that the undersigned individuals supervised the dissertation titled **"The Impact of Information Technology on modern Accounting systems: A Case Study of TelOne" by B193403B**. This dissertation was submitted to partially fulfill the requirements for a Bachelor of Accountancy Honors Degree at Bindura University of Science Education.

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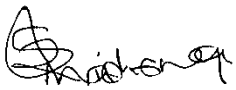

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems, using TelOne Finance Section as a case study from 2020-2024.The study aimed to identify the nature and forms of information technology at TelOne Finance, evaluate its impact on the accounting system, and identify solutions to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. The researcher conducted descriptive research on a sample of TelOne participants to derive conclusions based on primary data results.I used observation, questionnaires, and interviews to get our conclusions. The study found that information technology enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of modern accounting systems. It is important to invest in IT infrastructure and provide ongoing formal training for accounting staff to fully utilize its potential in the modern world. In today's environment, it has been recognized that IT has a significant impact on current accounting systems; hence, it is critical to any modern accounting system. The poll gathered original data from chosen TelOne members. The sample frame of 30 respondents was generated using both non-probability and probability-based (stratified random sampling) procedures. The study's main suggestion was that TelOne invest heavily in IT infrastructure and accounting staff training in order to fully realize the benefits of contemporary accounting systems.

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I would like to acknowledge God for His grace, eternal love, divine guidance during my academic years, and for helping me become the person I am today.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In this section, the researcher introduces the background of the study, showing a gap to reveal that there is need for research. It will also look at the significance of the study, research questions to answer derived from the objectives and the key assumptions of the research. Limitations and delimitation of the study are also presented and explained. Finally, the meaning of terms and the chapter summary.

1.1Background of the study

Information technology has played a significant role in the evolution of accounting practices in countries at various stages of economic development. Information technology has revolutionized accounting practices in countries at various stages of economic development, altering how accountants operate and the tools they employ to handle financial information. This study investigated on how information technology has transformed modern accounting systems, identifying key benefits and challenges of technological advancements in the accounting industry, and emphasizing on the significance of integrating technology for enhancing financial management.

Before computers, businesses kept track of their finances using manual systems. In traditional manual accounting systems, bookkeepers meticulously recorded daily transactions by hand. Accountants manually prepared crucial financial statements, like the balance sheet and income statement, ensuring accuracy and compliance with accounting standards (Linus 2012).These systems were prone to errors and took a lot of time to maintain. The implementation of coefficient accounting systems, which utilised software to automate manual tasks based on predetermined

formulas and coefficients, revolutionized the efficiency of business financial management. This made the process much faster and more efficient.

Information technology has revolutionized the field of accounting by streamlining processes, increasing efficiency, and providing real-time data analysis. With the rapid advancements in technology, accountants could then take advantage software and tools to automate tasks, reduce errors, and improve decision-making. This was particularly crucial in the fast-paced business environment where real-time data analysis is essential for decision-making. In a global context, African countries, including Zimbabwe, are also recognizing the significance of integrating IT into their accounting practices to stay competitive and compliant with international standards.

The adoption of IT in accounting has not only improved the speed and accuracy of financial reporting but has also facilitated remote work and collaboration among global teams. As technology continues to advance, it is important for accountants worldwide to stay updated on the latest tools and software to remain relevant in the ever-evolving industry. In a worldwide setting, a notable company that has successfully integrated IT into their accounting practices was Deloitte, a multinational professional services firm. According to a report by Deloitte in 2020, their use of advanced technology has allowed them to streamline processes, enhance data analysis capabilities, and provide more timely and accurate financial information to clients. This has demonstrated the significant impact that IT can have on modern accounting practices and the importance of staying current with technological advancements in the field.

The impact of information technology on modern accounting systems in Africa may differ from those in developed economies. In African countries, information technology was increasingly utilised in accounting to streamline processes, enhance data accuracy, and facilitate remote collaboration. Despite faced challenges such as limited access to reliable internet infrastructure and cybersecurity concerns, many African accounting firms had successfully integrated IT solutions to improve their services and stay competitive in the global market. This demonstrated the growing importance of embracing technology in accounting practices across different regions to drive efficiency and innovation.

Locally in Zimbabwe, accounting firms have also recognized the benefits of incorporating IT in their operations. By leveraging technology, they have been able to automate tasks, improve reporting accuracy, and provide clients with real-time financial insights. This shift towards digital transformation has allowed Zimbabwean accounting firms to adapt to the changing business landscape and deliver higher quality services to their clients. This has resulted in a number of benefits for organisations, including improved efficiency, reduced costs, and increased accuracy in financial reporting. The technological advances that have led to the computerisation of accounting systems have also affected TelOne.

TelOne has encountered several obstacles throughout the years, including a lack of investment, an inefficient business strategy, and fierce competition from private carriers. These problems have hampered the company's ability to innovate and improve its financial performance. However, the corporation has been working to turn things around, and technology has been an important element of that approach. The company's financial department had previously used a paper-based system that was time-consuming and prone to errors.

1.2 Problem statement

Despite the existence of information technology and its positive impact on modern accounting systems, TelOne's Finance section was still using manual processes that were slow, vulnerable to manipulation, and did not provide timely information for decision-making. This hindered the Finance section's ability to efficiently manage financial resources and accurately report on the company's financial performance. Upgrading to modern accounting systems would streamline processes, enhance data security, and improve overall financial management at TelOne. The company was not taking full advantage of the potential benefits of its accounting system. It was important for TELONE to have made effective and efficient use of information technology in its accounting system in order to demonstrate its value to the organization. Without this, it was possible that managers would not have seen the benefits of IT and may not have supported its use.

1.3Research Objectives

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, it seeks specifically to:

- Examine the nature and forms of information technology used at TelOne in the finance section.
- Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology in the accounting system at the TelOne Finance Section.
- Identify the solutions that can be adopted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of information technology in the TelOne Finance Section.

1.4 Research questions

- What are the forms of information technology being used at the TelOne Finance Section?
- How effective and efficient is information technology in the accounting system and procedures at the TelOne Finance Section?
- What are the problems encountered at the TelOne finance section in the computerised accounting system?
- What solutions can be adopted in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of IT in the accounting systems at the TelOne Finance Section?

1.5 Importance of the study

1.5.1 The researcher

The study assisted the researcher in connecting theoretical knowledge learned in class with actual implementations of IT and accounting systems in the real world. This also helped the researcher obtain a better knowledge of the relationship between the two regions. Furthermore, the research process allowed me to build and enhance my research abilities while also learning about the significance of information technology in accounting systems.

1.5.2 Employees

The study's findings may help TelOne's top management better grasp the influence of information technology on the company's accounting system. It may also be used to inform future technological investments. The findings of this study enable TelOne staff understand the benefits and drawbacks of employing information technology in their accounting system. Furthermore, the insights help businesses prepare and store financial records and reports in an effective and reliable way.

1.5.3 The government legislatures

The study's results also inform government legislators of the need to develop a legal framework that will guide the policy and practice of financial statement processing, storage, and retrieval.

1.6 Assumptions

- The respondents provided truthful and reliable responses, which allowed for reasonable conclusions to be drawn.
- The respondents completed and returned the questionnaires that were sent to them.
- The primary data collected was relevant and useful for the research.
- That the role of each department is well understood and taken into account.
- The research will be conducted in an ethical and unbiased manner. That the conclusion drawn from the research will be valid and relevant.

1.7 Delimitations if the study

The information was gathered in Zimbabwe, namely at Runhare House, TelOne's corporate headquarters. The researcher focused his analysis to TelOne's headquarters, focusing only on the organization's finance departments that employ accounting systems. The research concentrated only on the impact of information technology on accounting processes and did not include other parts of the organization, such as human resources or marketing. The study stretches from 2020 to 2024.

1.8 Limitations

- The respondents may have failed to provide important information for the research because of corporate confidentiality purposes. However, the researcher had convinced TelOne that the data gathered would be held in confidence and used for academic purposes only.
- The fact that technology was constantly evolving, made it difficult to get a complete picture of the current impact of IT on modern accounting systems.

- Different organizations had different approaches to implementing and using technology, so it was hard to make generalisations about the impact of IT across the board.
- The geographical distance between the researcher's location and the study areas posed some logistical challenges in terms of data collection and analysis.

1.9 Definition of terms

This section will outline the definitions of key terms adopted in this study.

1.9.1 Information Technology

According to Greenstein et al. (2008), Information technology is defined as the hardware and software products, IT oversight frameworks, information system operations and management procedures, and people who have the abilities needed to develop, use, and govern these products and processes in order to provide the essential data.

1.9.2 Accounting systems

The free dictionary (2021) defines an accounting system is a collection of manual and computerized accounting processes, procedures, and controls designed to collect, record, classify, analyze, summarize, interpret, and present accurate and timely financial data for management decisions. Accounting systems have progressed from predominantly manual to primarily automated, reflecting technology advancements over time.

1.10 Summary

This chapter established the study's basis by outlining the motivating elements, background and problem statement, research aims, research questions, significance, delimitations, limitations, assumptions, and definitions. The next chapter will look at the literature that is pertinent to this topic

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter examines the theoretical and empirical literature on the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems. The researcher will explore the implications of information technology for the future of accounting and conclude with a summary of the main points and a preview of the next chapter

2.1 Conceptual framework

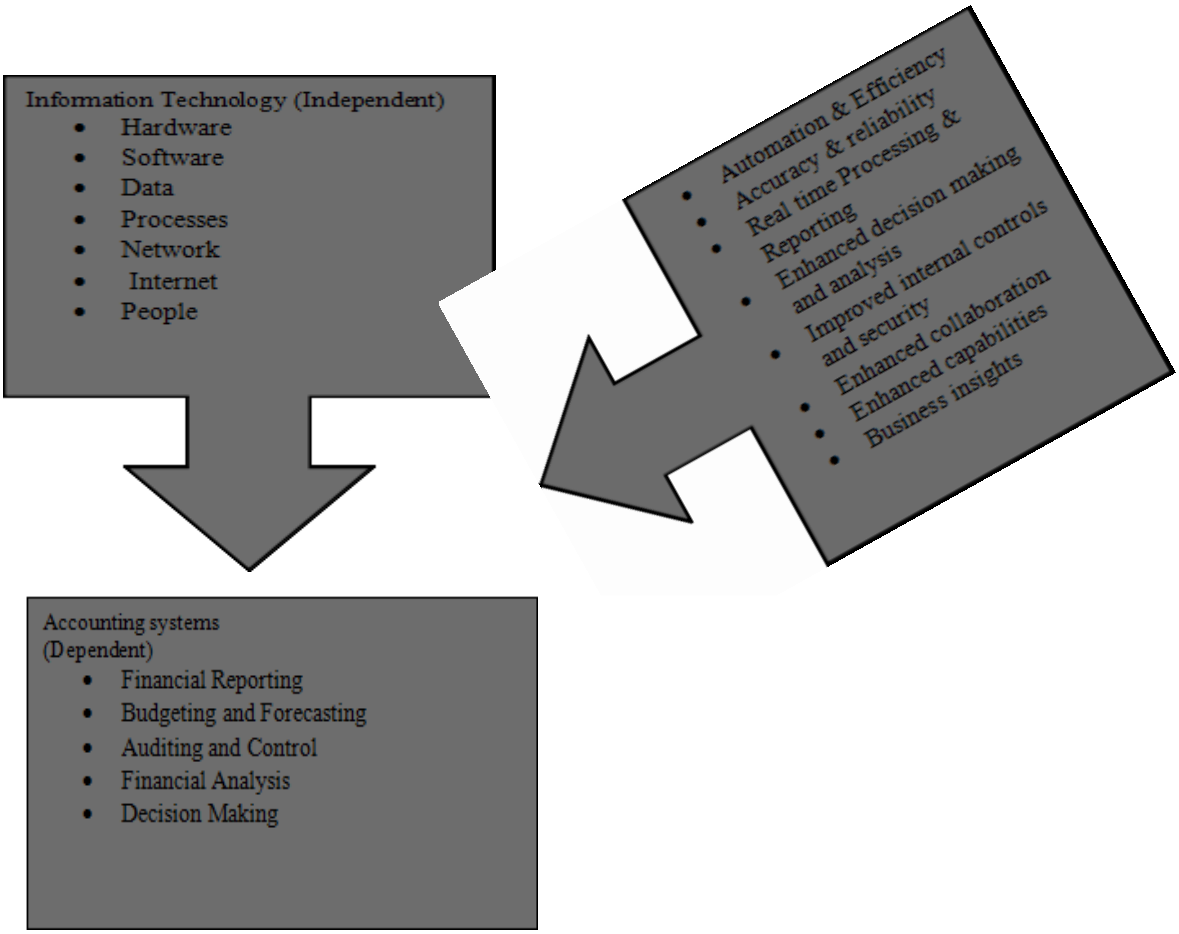

Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Source: Self-adaptive

2.2.1 Information technology

Information technology (IT) is the storage, retrieval, transmission, and manipulation of data for a variety of uses using hardware, software, networks, and computers. (Techopedia 2021). Given that it is up to date and covers everything related to information technology, this definition is appropriate. IT specialists do a variety of jobs, from designing complex computer networks and databases to installing software. IT experts may perform a variety of duties, including data management, networking, computer hardware engineering, database and software development, system management, and administration. There is a growing need for information technology professionals as the field is expanding beyond traditional personal computers and networks to include an increasing number of integrations with other technologies, including televisions, cars, cell phones, and more.

2.2.2 Components of Information Technology

There are five primary components of information technology (IT) that function together to manage and process data, which are hardware, software, data, processes, and people.

2.2.2.1 Hardware

Neuman (1945) defines hardware as physical components of a computer system, including the Central Processing Unit (CPU), memory (RAM), main circuit board (motherboard), data storage devices, visual and audio output devices (graphics and sound cards) and the outer casing (computer case). This is referring to the visible, tangible parts of a computer system. The central processing unit (CPU), RAM, hard discs, solid-state drives, displays, keyboards, printers, and networking hardware, including switches and routers, are among its main components.

2.2.2.2 Software

What commands the hardware to perform is known as software. Two main types can be distinguished from it:

- **System Software** - This controls the resources of the computer and offers a platform for executing additional applications. Device drivers and operating systems (Windows, macOS, and Linux) are two examples.
- **Application Software** - This enables users to carry out particular actions. QuickBooks accounting software, Chrome and Firefox online browsers, Microsoft Word, word processors, and games are a few examples

2.2.2.3 Data

Information that is stored and processed digitally on computer. Computers store and work with data, which is unprocessed, raw information. Any type of information that can be digitalized can be used, including text, numbers, pictures, music, and video. Big data is managed and organized with the use of databases.

2.2.2.4 Processes

The established rules and regulations that specify how IT systems are to be used are called processes. They guarantee that work is done effectively and reliably. Data entry, security measures, system backups, and disaster recovery plans are a few examples of these activities.

2.2.2.5 Network/ Internet

Network is a group of computers connected together to facilitate resources sharing, file transfer and communication while internet according to Cerf and Kahn (1999) is a worldwide network of linked computers and gadgets that communicate with one another through defined protocols, allowing for global communication, information sharing, and data exchange.

2.2.2.6 People

In IT, the human factor is essential. IT systems are created, developed, implemented, maintained, and used by people. Additionally, they interpret findings, evaluate data, and make defensible conclusions using the knowledge they have acquired

2.2.3 Accounting systems

A collection of controls, procedures, and methods used inside an organization to oversee and record financial occurrences and transactions. According to Ama (2004), an accounting system is

a formal framework for locating, quantifying, gathering, analyzing, producing, interpreting, and disseminating accounting data about a specific business to a specific audience. When we refer to an accounting system as formal, we mean that it operates according to established policies, guidelines, practices, and procedures. It is also an automated system that follows a routine.

There are two different types of accounting systems: computerized accounting systems and manual accounting systems.

- Manual system, this type of accounting is done with pens and paper. One of the earliest methods of bookkeeping, this approach does not require a computer or accounting software. Source papers are manually uploaded to sales, cash receipts, and other kinds of journals in manual systems. After then, the general ledger is manually updated with the journal totals. After then, reports are manually generated using either a working trial balance or data from the general ledger.

  Transactions with manual systems are easily traceable from the source document to the general ledger, diary, and printed reports. It is possible to foot subsidiary ledgers and compare the totals with control accounts. The auditor can visually see the entire process to ascertain whether the correct protocols are, being followed (Watne and Turney, 1990). However, Lim (2013) claims that because manual systems rely on human processing, they are labor-intensive. Manual systems may be more prone to error since they rely on human processing.

- Computerised system, Meigs et al. (1998) define a computerized system as one that employs computers to enter, process, store, and output accounting data for financial reporting. Data processing in computer-based accounting systems is nearly identical to that of manual methods. Initially, transactions are manually put into source documents. The information from these documents is then keypunched onto punch cards that the computer can read. The computer processes the data and performs conventional activities such as generating financial statements and reports, posting to ledger accounts, calculating account balances, and printing journals. (Ware, 2015).

2.2.3.1 Financial reporting

It involves preparing and presenting financial information to stakeholders including investors, creditors and management to provide a clear understanding of financial situation and performance. This information is typical presented in financial statements such as balance sheet and income statement and is intended to facilitate informed decision-making, maintain transparence and accountability and comply with regulatory requirements. The majority of accounting systems are built around this. It makes it possible to keep track of earnings and expenses, record financial activities, and produce financial statements. Xero, Zoho Books, and QuickBooks are considered popular software choices to prepare and present financial information.

2.2.3.2 Budgeting and Forecasting

These are vital financial management tools that help organisations to plan, manage and optimise their financial resources. By creating a comprehensive budget and forecasting future outcomes, organisations can anticipate and prepare for potential challenges and opportunities. They make it possible to track real performance versus budget and plan scenarios. Budgeting and forecasting features are included in Oracle NetSuite, Anaplan, and Adaptive Insights.

2.2.3.3 Auditing and Control

These tools can guarantee adherence to accounting rules and support internal audits. Data analysis and risk assessment are two duties that they can automate. ACL from Galvanise, Caseware's TeamMate, and AuditBoard are a few examples of such tools.

2.2.3.4 Financial analysis

It involves examining and interpreting financial data to gain performance, position and prospects. It involves using various tools to evaluate company financial healthy, identify areas for improvement and make informed decision about investment, funding and other business activities. This process empowers stakeholders, including investors, creditors and management, to grasp a company’s financial strength and weakness, evaluate risks and opportunities and make informed decisions that drive business success and profitability. For the purpose of clearly presenting financial information, they frequently provide data visualisation tools. BI tools with accounting apps that are well known Tableau, QlikView, and Microsoft Power BI.

2.2.3.5 Decision making

Information Technology (IT) has revolutionized accounting decision-making by providing a powerful toolkit for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting financial data.

IT has become an indispensable tool for informed accounting decisions. By leveraging its capabilities, businesses can gain a deeper understanding of their financial health, optimize resource allocation, and make data-driven decisions for sustainable growth.

2.2.4 Accounting systems on computers

The ability for firms to design and use computerized systems for tracking and documenting financial transactions has had the greatest impact on accounting. Computer systems that can quickly depict individual transactions in financial reporting have supplanted manual spreadsheets, paper ledgers, and handwritten financial statements. The most widely used accounting applications can also be tailored to specific enterprises or areas of the economy. Businesses can quickly and simply create particular reports to help with managerial decision-making. An overview of the extra benefits of computerized accounting systems is as follows:

2.2.4.1 Automation and Efficiency

The software automates repetitive processes such as data entry, computations, and report preparation, allowing accountants to save significant time. This enables them to concentrate on more strategic financial activities like analysis, planning, and budgeting. Automation decreases errors caused by manual data entry, which is a significant issue in traditional accounting methods. The program handles computations and data entry, reducing the odds of human error and resulting in more accurate financial results. The combination of automation and higher accuracy leads to greater efficiency in accounting procedures. Businesses save time and money by completing activities more quickly and with fewer errors.

2.2.4.2 Accuracy and reliability

Traditional accounting involves manual data entry, which is prone to errors. This process is automated using computerized technologies, which dramatically reduces errors. The software can also do data validation checks, detecting errors before they reach the system. With a computerized system, all of your financial information is stored in one area. This minimizes the possibility of

data loss due to misplaced paper documents or accidental damage. Access controls can also be installed to prevent unauthorized alterations, ensuring the security of your financial information.

2.2.4.3 Real time Processing & Reporting

With the use of computerised accounting systems, accountants can quickly and effectively process vast volumes of financial data. The time required to close off each accounting period has decreased because of faster transaction processing times. Accounting departments may find month- or year-end closing periods to be particularly demanding, resulting in longer hours and increased labor costs. Cutting this period short helps businesses reduce costs, which boosts overall business productivity,

Accounting methods has improved reports sent to stakeholders and outside investors. Investors can ascertain whether a firm is a viable investment for growth opportunities and may be able to be a high-value company through improved reporting. These investors can provide companies with financial money, which they can use to expand.

2.2.4.4 Enhanced decision making and analysis

Unlike manual systems, which generate reports on a regular basis, computerized systems allow real-time access to financial data. This enables managers to make informed decisions based on current facts. Consider having real-time visibility into your cash flow or inventory levels. Accounting software provides comprehensive reporting and analytics tools. You may create a variety of reports, dig down to specific sections, and run trend analysis. This enables you to discover trends, measure performance indicators, and receive vital insights into your company's health.

2.2.4.5 Improved internal controls and security

Accounting software can automate a variety of internal control activities. For example, the system can enforce user access restrictions, run reconciliations, and detect questionable transactions. This lowers the likelihood of human error and streamlines the internal control process. Strong security features are provided by the majority of accounting systems to guard your financial information against illegal access. Furthermore, automatic backups guarantee that in the event of a system breakdown, important data is not lost.

2.2.4.6 Enhanced collaboration

Accounting software frequently enables multiple access to and editing of the same data by many different people, enhancing departmental and team cooperation. This can be especially helpful for teams that are spread out geographically.

2.2.4.7 Enhanced capabilities

Accounting departments have become more functional because of the greater availability of accounting information offered by computerized accounting systems. Improved financial data timeliness allows accountants to generate operations assessments and reports that offer management with a clear view of current operations. Furthermore, computerized systems have expanded the number of financial statistics available, including market share, departmental profit and loss, and cash flow statements.

2.2.4.8 Data visualisation and business insights

Data visualisation tools are frequently included in accounting systems, enabling you to display financial data as graphs and charts. This can facilitate the process of seeing patterns, comprehending your financial results, and gaining an insightful understanding of the company

2.2.5 Accounting process software tools

The usage of digital tools has become essential in today's accounting procedures. These tools can be generally classified into numerous groups based on their use for various accounting functions. Modern accountants must be familiar with the technological tools accessible to them in order to do accounting jobs more successfully and effectively. The following is a summary of various key accounting software tools:

2.2.5.1 General ledger accounting software

The majority of accounting systems are built around this. It makes it possible to keep track of earnings and expenses, record financial activities, and produce financial statements. Xero, Zoho Books, and QuickBooks are considered popular choices. 2.6.2 Accounts payable and receivable software these tools control payments that come in and go out. They automate accounting for past-

due accounts, tracking payments, and sending bills. FreshBooks, Wave, and Bill.com are a few examples.

2.2.5.2 Payroll software

The process of computing employee salaries, deductions, and taxes is streamlined by payroll software. Moreover, it automates payroll tax filing and paycheck generation. Paychex, Gusto, and ADP are a few well-known examples.

2.2.5.3 Tax preparation software

By walking users through the procedure and automating computations, these apps make tax filing simpler. For this reason, rather than filing taxes by hand, businesses can use computer software. Computers can therefore do even complex calculations quickly. TurboTax, H&R Block, and Drake Software are a few examples.

2.2.5.4 Expense tracking software

These tools support the tracking and grouping of business expenses. For automated data entry and receipt management, they often interface with bank accounts and credit cards. The most common examples include Shoeboxed, Zoho Expense, and Expensify

2.2.5.5 Graphics software

Graphics software can be used to prepare graphics. Images can be seen on slides, transparency, and photographs or they can be printed on paper. Graphing the data in financial accounts and reports is a common task for auditors and managerial accountants using graphics software.

2.2.5.6 Auditing and compliance software

These tools can guarantee adherence to accounting rules and support internal audits. Data analysis and risk assessment are two duties that they can automate. ACL from Galvanise, Caseware's TeamMate, and AuditBoard are a few instances.

2.5.6 Budgeting and forecasting software

These resources assist companies in forecasting and creating budgets so they may make plans. They make it possible to track real performance versus budget and plan scenarios. Budgeting and forecasting features are included in Oracle NetSuite, Anaplan, and Adaptive Insights.

2.2.5.7 Financial reporting and business intelligence (bi) tools

These resources support the analysis of financial data, report generation, and performance analysis of businesses. For clearly presenting financial information, they frequently provide data visualisation tools. BI tools with accounting apps that are well known include Tableau, QlikView, and Microsoft Power BI.

2.2.6 Challenges in the adoption and use of information technology

Although IT has significantly improved accounting systems and organizational effectiveness, there are still certain limitations. Adopting and using IT in businesses might provide obstacles (Eija, 2011). These are as indicated below.

- **Infrastructure:** Setting up an information technology system requires all of the Information technology components are necessary. IT infrastructure comprises IT experts who can Design, build, repair, maintain the systems and special IT personnel to maximize the Use these technology and methods, and even train others. A firm that is unable to create such infrastructures cannot benefit fully from adopting IT. The lack of necessary parts, such as communication and computer Technologies in organizations make IT adoption challenging.
- **Flexibility and responsiveness:** Investing in staff training can improve qualifications, but it is up to people to adapt and respond positively to changes. If employees are resistant to change and apathetic, it can lead to decreased productivity and undermine the benefits of implementing IT.
- **Training and Qualification:** Many organizations invest heavily in IT, necessitating employee training and qualification to effectively utilise emerging technologies. Continuous staff training is costly for organizations, and lack of needed qualifications and abilities can hinder IT implementation.
- **Management Systems:** IT adoption might be challenging in organizations with inflexible management structures. The management lacks the willingness to adapt to changing

circumstances. These organizations typically lack an IT system. Continued poor management can lead to a corporation losing relevance and competitiveness. To prevent this, a volatile management structure can positively influence lower-level individuals to pursue IT careers.

- **Cost:** ICT is a tremendous investment. It entails investing money, time, intelligence, and others. Purchasing hardware and software components incurs costs. Such components and pieces require maintenance, which costs money. Additional costs are spent while hiring IT specialists and training staff. Using computers and electronics to automate tasks can lessen the requirement for staff. Workers in such organizations may experience dislike to change, low job security, and low morale, resulting in unproductive and inefficient performance. Inefficient labor can negatively affect a company's profitability and success. Adopting and implementing IT may be costly for both businesses and employees, as well as the economy. When robots replace workers, they lose their jobs and contribute to the economy's unemployment rate.

2.2 Theoretical Review

This chapter serves as a springboard for the research by providing a critical analysis of existing literature on the topic (Galvan & Galvan, 2017). A literature review serves two key purposes. First, it identifies areas where current research may be lacking or outdated. Second, it highlights potential new avenues for investigation. By examining both theoretical and empirical studies on the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems, this chapter will conduct a thorough gap analysis. This analysis will lay the groundwork for the current study's objectives.

2.2.1 The Technological Organisation Environment (TOE) Theory

The TOE framework is a framework that is commonly used in the field of adopting technology. It has been applied to clarify the adoption of innovations across numerous industries. (Mishra et al. 2007). It divides influencing factors for adoption and use of technical advancements into three main categories:

2.2.1.1 Technological context

It investigates the characteristics of the IT being used, such as its complexity, compatibility, and usability; as a result, it encompasses all technologies relevant to the firm, including those that are now in use at the company and those that are available on the market but have not yet been implemented. Existing innovations that have not yet been implemented by the company have an impact on innovation because they demonstrate to enterprises how technology may help them adapt and change, as well as establish the bounds of what is conceivable.

Incremental changes

The most prevalent kind of innovation involves the enhancement or improvement of already-existing technologies, services, or procedures. It is comparable to giving a product a makeover or a few additional features. For the adopting organisation, these gradual improvements entail the least degree of risk and change thus, because they set a high bar for the amount and pace of technological change that a company can pursue, the current technologies are important in the adoption process. Tushman and O'Reilly (1996) distinguished three types of external innovations: incremental, synthetic, and discontinuous. These innovations may lead to little improvements or major disruptions, among other kinds of changes.

Synthetic chances

This type of innovation integrates pre-existing technologies, products, or services to create something new. It is similar to crushing two objects to create a hybrid product. Thus, creative solutions involve the creative fusion of pre-existing technologies.

Discontinuous changes

It signifies significant changes to current technology or practices. Leading to the creation of entirely new services, technologies, or methods that diverge greatly from those that are now in use. Think of it as a means of removing the old and bringing in the new. Therefore, businesses that demonstrate technology breakthroughs that lead to gradual or even created change are allowed to adopt at a regulated pace. Organisations that are characterised by abrupt changes in technology must act fast to maintain and strengthen their competitive advantage.

2.2.1.2 Organisational context

The organisational context refers to the characteristics and resources of the company, including its capabilities, policies, procedures, and leadership, in addition to its structure, culture, and capabilities. The setting in various ways influences adoption and implementation decisions.

Organisation structure

According to Sorensen and Sorenson (2014), there is a correlation between a greater adoption of new technologies and organic and decentralised organisational structures. An amazing degree of flexibility and adaptability are possible with an organic framework. It might be easier for new ideas to develop and flourish because there are fewer procedures to deal with. In a decentralised organisation, different departments or groups share authority. This can encourage innovation because people can now make their own decisions and take risks without waiting for approval from above.

Communication and leadership

According to Nalebuff and Ayres (2019), organisational communication is a crucial element of innovation in the modern day. By encouraging an organisational culture that welcomes change and gives priority to ideas that further the company's main objective and vision, top management may promote innovation. To encourage this innovative mindset, an organisation must have a culture that rewards staff members for taking chances and experimenting with new concepts. Highlighting the history of innovation within the company, emphasizing the role of innovation within the organisation's overall strategy, demonstrating to subordinates the significance of innovation, rewarding innovation both formally and informally, and assembling a capable executive team capable of crafting a compelling future vision for the company are all examples of top management leadership behavior and communication processes.

Informal linking agents

One of the techniques for fostering innovation is the connecting of the organization's internal divisions or the crossing of internal barriers. Adoption has a relationship with the existence of unofficial connecting agents like gatekeepers, boundary spanners, and product champions. Other

examples of such systems are cross-functional teams and individuals who have formal or informal relationships to other departments or to other value chain partners.

Slack and size

Firm size and spare resources have an intriguing impact on IT adoption. Slack is desirable and useful, although innovation can occur in the absence of this component. The presence of slack does not always lead to invention; hence, it is neither essential nor sufficient for innovation to occur. In terms of scale, large organizations are more likely to accept innovation because they have the resources to invest in complicated IT solutions and dedicated IT professionals for implementation and maintenance. They can afford to take risks with new technologies.

2.2.1.3 Environmental context

Environmental variables can affect IT adoption in a variety of ways, including the industrial structure, the presence or lack of technical service providers, and the surrounding laws and regulations.

Competition pressure

The adoption of IT can be significantly influenced by competition. In an example, intense competition encourages innovation adoption (Mansfield et al., 1977). As a result, others may feel under pressure to adopt comparable technology in order to stay competitive if rivals are utilising IT to obtain an advantage. Cook and Prescott (2021) claim that businesses with dominating positions within their particular value chains has the ability to exert a major impact over other chain participants. Throughout the chain, innovation can be encouraged and supported by using this influence. Dominant companies can improve the overall competitiveness and performance of the value chain by fostering innovation in their partners.

Government regulations

Industries, governments have the direct authority to require the adoption of particular IT solutions. Regulations mandating, for instance, the electronic filing of tax returns would force companies to install the required IT infrastructure. To encourage industries to embrace IT solutions, the government may provide subsidies, tax exemptions, and other incentives. This may increase the appeal of making the initial IT investment. Furthermore, funds from the government can be used

to construct necessary infrastructure in underserved areas, such as high-speed Internet connection. This enhances the region's overall technological landscape, increasing the viability of IT adoption for local firms.

Industry life cycle

Businesses are generally more open to implementing new technology in the early phases of an industry's life cycle in an effort to obtain a competitive edge. Additionally, since the sector is still growing, there is a sense of pressure to innovate. It is suggested that companies in industries that are expanding quickly tend to develop more quickly in terms of the industry life cycle. However, innovation is not always evident in developed or failing businesses (Tornatzky and Fleischer 1990). Businesses may adopt a more cautious stance when they reach the mature stage. This is a result of their increased experience and decreased propensity for risk-taking. More so, IT adoption can decelerate dramatically in the decline period. Businesses could be hesitant to spend money on new technologies as they focus on maintaining profitability and reducing cost.

2.4 Empirical evidence

Studies and articles, which discuss the influence of information technology on modern accounting systems, vary. The following studies are applicable to the objectives of this research:

2.4.1 Objective 1: Examine the nature and forms of information technology used at TelOne in the finance section.

Chukwudi et al. (2018) used survey-based descriptive research show how AI affects accounting tasks. According to this study, accounting practices in South-east Nigeria are now more efficient because to the use of AI. The study aimed to determine the effect of AI on the performance of accounting operations and the impact of expert systems and intelligent agents on accounting functions. A survey approach and descriptive research design were employed in the study to gather data from 185 managers and accountants in the states of Anambra and Enugu. The results showed that artificial intelligence (AI) greatly enhances the performance of accounting functions resulting in better data based systems, less paper use, more flexibility, efficiency and higher accuracy and speed of reporting both internally and externally. The research concluded

that AI has a positive effect on accounting operations and recommended that accountants and accounting companies should always increase the understanding of AI.

Yadav, 2016 investigated the impact of information technology on the modern accounting systems, Pune region. Information and communication technology (ICT) has improved performance, dependability, efficiency, and effectiveness in business operations, according to study findings. The study's goal was to present IT software solutions for accounting systems and to discuss the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems. A descriptive research strategy was adopted, with a survey conducted among accountants and managers in enterprises in the Pune region. Structured questionnaires were utilized to collect data, which was then evaluated statistically. The inquiry discovered that the use of IT has enabled businesses to create and implement computerized systems for tracking and recording financial transactions, reducing the time required to prepare and present financial information. The study also discovered that IT has raised the performance and efficiency of the financial systems and structure to ideal levels. The study also advised that this is the right moment to look beyond the obvious and make sure information and communication technology is properly installed and maintained.

2.4.2 Objective 2: Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology in the accounting system at the TelOne Finance Section.

Shamsul Nahar Abdulla, 2023, investigate on the impact of information technology on accounting systems towards SME performance in Malaysia. The study was to investigate the relationship between SMEs financial qualitative performance and their usage of technology. The study used a survey research design and a qualitative methodology. Accountants and SME owners were given questionnaires and descriptive statistics were used to assess the data. The study's main conclusions showed that information technology adoption improves the performance, dependability, effectiveness and efficiency of SMEs operations. The financial and quality performance of SMEs improves with more actual technological use. SMEs that use technology have better financial performance, including increased sales, profitability and better product quality and customer satisfaction for improved quality performance. According to the study, the information technology has enhanced SME operations' effectiveness, reliability, efficiency, and performance. It shows that the idea that "the greater the actual usage of technology, the better the

financial and quality performance of the SMEs" was generally accepted (Shamsul Nahar Abdulla, 2023)

Simon Akumbo Eugene Mbilla, Joseph Derry Nyeadi, David Amoah Akolgo, 2020, Impact of Computerised Accounting Systems on the Quality of Financial Reports in the Banking Sector of Ghana. According to the study, a computerised accounting system provides a lot more benefits than drawbacks, as evidenced by the favorable effects it has had on the banks' financial reporting. The purpose of the study was to find out how the usage of computerized accounting systems affects the dependability, correctness, timeliness and general quality of financial reports produced by banks. Banks listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange were given questionnaires as part of the survey procedure and SPSS software was used to process data. The results showed that computerized accounting systems have a positive impact on the quality of financial reports. More so, banks that use computerized accounting system have a better financial performance and are more likely to meet their goals as a result, banks need to implement computerised accounting systems. The recommendations were that, in order to increase efficiency across their people and banking operations, the banks ought to put the majority of their resources towards the education and training of bankers and accountants on technology connected to automated accounting systems, such ICT.. Additionally, because computer trends are so pervasive and ever changing. It is advised that banks switch to the computerised accounting system in particular if they are still having trouble with the manual system.

2.4.3 Objetive 2 Identify the solutions that can be adopted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of information technology in the TelOne Finance Section.

Maziar Ghasemi, Vahid Shafeiepour, Mohammad Aslani, and Elham Barvayeh (2019). The Impact of Information Technology (IT) on Modern Accounting Systems. The main objectives of the study were clarifying the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems and the advantages and disadvantages of using IT in accounting. The study found that computer systems and IT networks have reduced the time accountants spend creating financial statements. The study demonstrated both the advantages and disadvantages of integrating information technology into accounting procedures. It was suggested that businesses using computerized systems for production systems might as well use them more successfully. Electronic cash

transfers and data interchange are two examples of solutions that can help businesses use production systems more profitably and efficiently.

2.5 Research gap

Prior studies on the influence or impact of IT on accounting systems were conducted outside the SADC region. The researcher had the chance to investigate a number of countries that do not have a similar background to Zimbabwe, which is currently subject to sanctions imposed by the Western world and other factors such as political, social and technological. These countries include Malaysia, Ghana, Barbados, and the Pune region. In addition, the majority of studies focused mostly on the private sector, whereas this study was conducted on a public sector quasi-government organisation. This study was conducted in a developing nation as opposed to the majority of previous investigations, which were conducted in developed nations. The researcher aimed to examine the influence of IT on accounting systems in a non-profit organization, although some earlier research had focused on the implications of IT on contemporary accounting systems in profit-making organizations. The researcher in this study also went above and above in identifying potential ways to improve modern accounting systems.

2.6 Summary

The majority of the chapter was spent reviewing the literature on the current area of investigation. It started with an introduction that employed highlights to emphasise previous heading. The theoretical framework emphasizes the benefits that can be gained by providing some background and current information on information technology, its use, and its impact on accounting systems. The findings of previous studies shed light on how later scholars researching the same topic came to grasp the impact of IT on modern accounting systems. The scholar was able to explain why he chose to undertake research on the subject in the justification for the current study. The chapter ended with an explanation. The following chapter will focus on the methodology employed in gathering research information.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section describes the research approach used to explore the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems, using TelOne as a case study.. It describes the research strategy, approach, and methods for gathering and analyzing information, in addition to the sample criteria, research procedure, ethical issues, and study limits. In essence, this chapter provides a full explanation of how the research was carried out, including the procedures and strategies utilized to collect and interpret data.

3.1 Research methodology

Creswell (2003) describe research methodology as a deliberate and systematic approach to gathering and interpreting data, which includes a clear plan, specific procedures, and underlying philosophical principles that shape the research investigation and guide the entire research process. Saunders et al. (2007) Research Onion model depicts the layered stages involved in conducting research, providing a structured framework for implementing a research project, from the outer layers of research philosophy and approach, to the inner layers of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. According to Bryman (2012), this approach is flexible and practical, making it suitable for various research methodologies and adaptable to different research settings, allowing it to be applied in a wide range of contexts and situations. Saunders et al. (2012) suggest that when using the Research Onion, the researcher should start with the outer layers and work their way inward, layer by layer, to get to the heart of the research. Exploring the onion's layers will yield fresh revelations at every turn, as each uncovered layer gives way to new depths and discoveries.

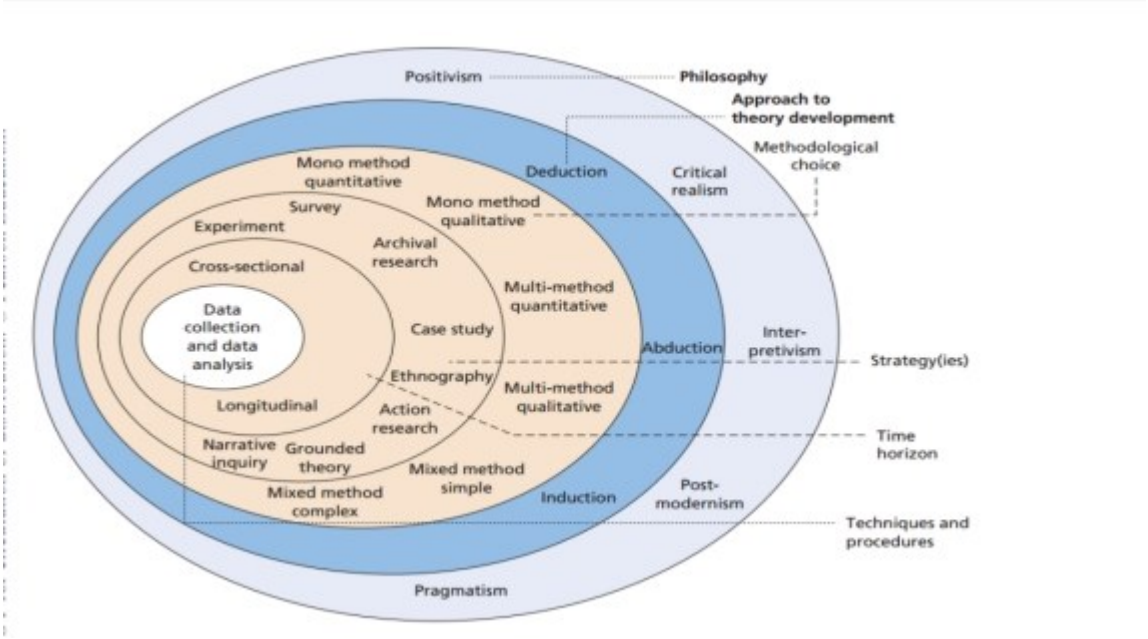

Figure 3.2: The Research Onion

Source: Saunders, Lewis and Thorn hill (2015)

3.1.1 The research philosophy

The top layer of the research onion, research philosophy, is concerned with a certain technique of creating knowledge. It is linked to preconceptions, knowledge, and the nature of the research. It focuses on the origins, nature, and evolution of knowledge. To put it simply, research philosophy is a set of views about how evidence on a topic should be obtained, assessed, and applied. Researchers may have varied goals and methodologies, but three fundamental philosophies affect the research process: ontology, epistemology, and axiology. This research focused on epistemology, delving into fundamental problems about knowing, such as what constitutes knowledge, where it comes from, and its bounds.

3.1.2 The research approach

After selecting the research philosophy, the following step was to select a research approach.. There are two primary sorts of research approaches: deductive and inductive, and this study used the latter. Unlike the deductive methodology, the inductive method does not begin with established assumptions. Instead, it starts with open-ended research questions, goals, and objectives that guide the investigation and lead to results and conclusions as it goes.

3.1.3. Research strategies

The next step was to devise the research strategy. The research strategy describes the specific research design and data collection and analysis methods, which may include approaches such as empirical study, action research, case studies, interviews, surveys, or a systematic review of existing literature, as defined by Saunders et al. (2007).To gain a thorough and detailed understanding of the research issue, this study employed a case study design, focusing particularly on TelOne's financial sector and collecting data through employee opinions and experiences.

3.1.4 Research choices

This step contributes to the definition of the research framework, which is divided into three categories: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research, each with its own strategy and technique. A mixed-methods research methodology was utilized to investigate the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems, with TelOne serving as a case study. This approach enabled the collection of both numerical and narrative data through questionnaires and interviews, resulting in a comprehensive comprehension of the research issue.

3.1.5 Time horizon

Data collection procedures, such as surveys and interviews, were used at a single moment in time instead of over a long period, resulting in a design for cross-sectional research that provided a picture of the participants' reactions and experiences at a given time.

3.2 Research design

The researcher examined TelOne as a case study. Copper and Schindler (2011) define research design as a process of data gathering, measurement, and analysis. In the same line, Harper (2008) describes a research design as a set of parameters for data collecting that aim to combine relevance to study aims. In other words, Agbaje and Alarape (2006) define a research design as a scientific investigation of what constitutes a constructed building plan. There are several research designs,

including the standard ones, such as quantitative and qualitative data analysis, exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive research designs by research purpose, and survey and case study research designs for data collection (Saunders et al, 2009).An investigator's study design is largely dictated by the nature of the inquiry, its aims or purpose, the availability and cost of data collection (Bryman and Bell, 2011), and the research questions and problems (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). The study was designed using a descriptive research method.

3.2.1 Advantages

- The researcher employed a descriptive research design to investigate the impact of IT on modern accounting systems at TelOne Finance section. The survey method was chosen for its ease of administration, as it did not require complex equipment to record responses. This approach also allowed for a large sample size and enabled the researcher to explore intangible factors and relationships. More so, the descriptive survey method provided a wealth of information that can used for future research purposes.
- •The researcher chose a descriptive study design, which incorporates both primary and secondary data, because it provides a holistic approach to comprehending the topic under investigation.According to Leedy (1980), this method is grounded in reality in the sense that it accepts what is observed at any given time as typical and repeatable elsewhere under the same conditions.
- According to Pennerselvan (2004), descriptive research aims to achieve particular goals and produce tangible findings. In this, study the researcher utilised questionnaires with carefully crafted questions to ensure clear communication with participants and minimize misinterpretation. This approach enabled the researcher draw meaningful conclusion from the data collected.

3.3 Population

Best and Khan (2005) defined a population in the context of research as any group of people who share at least one or more traits important to the researcher. Wegner (2013) defines population as the collection of all observations of a random variable under consideration. The research sample includes 60 Finance personnel from the Central Business District TelOne Harare location.

3.4 Sample

A sample is a subset of the overall population that represents the desired population (Makore and Rukuni, 2000). The main traits and typical characteristics of a population should be reflected in a good sample. According to (Makore and Makuni, 2000), a well-chosen sample will reflect the population, from which it was obtained confirming any findings. A sufficiently large sample size is required to accurately represent a population. Unless the entire population is studied, the results may not adequately represent the population.

The participants were selected via stratified random sampling. Lipsey and Crystal (1963) define a random sample as one that is picked using a rigorous procedure that provides equal opportunities of selection for all individuals in the population, thus ensuring a representative and unbiased sample. The population was divided into three strata, Accounting department, Financial Budgeting and Planning department and Auditing department.

3.4.1 Justification of sampling

- Due to smaller number of participant, the data collection and analysis process was significantly accelerated enabling the researcher to obtain and interpret the results more quickly.
- Sampling proved to be cost efficient approach significantly reducing the research expenses, as it allowed the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions without the need to study the whole population.

3.4.2 Shortcomings of sampling

- Samples vary from one another, making it difficult to locate a sample that accurately reflects the complete population's features.
- A sampling error may have happened. Because of cost limits and the fact that data was not gathered from the target demographic, there is a chance of sampling error.

3.5 Sampling procedure

Borg and Gall (1999) defined sampling as choosing of a particular number of people from a certain group to represent that population. Stratified random sampling was one of the methods used to select sample units. Respondents were divided into three main strata, which are Accounting

department, Financial Budgeting and Planning department and Auditing department. After grouping everybody as described above, representatives were picked from each stratum.

The total population had 60 finance workers with 30 of them from Accounting department, 18 from the Budgeting and Planning department and 12 from Auditing department. According to Kumar (2020) a sample size must be at least 30% of the overall population, but the researcher chose to increase it by 20% to 50% because 30% is an assumption and estimates are, by definition, not accurate predictions. To improve the study's accuracy. They involve assumptions and may not account for unforeseen circumstances. Each stratum was then multiplied by 50% to get representative from stratum. The table below indicates that the sample is comprised of the entire population with all members or case included, essentially making the sample a complete presentation of the population.

Table 3.5.1: Representatives from each stratum

Department	**Total population**	**Calculation**	**Representative (sample)**
Accounting	30	30*50%	15
Budgeting and Planning	18	18*50%	9
Auditing	12	12*50%	6
Sample size			30

Source: Primary Data

Population (P) = 60 Sample size(S) = 30

Random sampling was then used to choose the representatives, ensuring that each member in the representative sample had an equal or '50-50' chance of being chosen. It also helped to reduce the use of a biased sample. The technique entailed randomly choosing the names of workers from the organisation's registry. The author used the stratified random sampling technique on purpose since it allows the researcher to assure that each unit in the population has a separate representative.

3.6 Sources of data

The researcher used both primary and secondary data. As previously, indicated, primary data were collected by direct observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The researcher employed secondary procedures to review material from various authorities on the research subject.

3.6.1 Primary sources of data

According to Gregory et al. (1993), primary data are measurements collected individually to serve the purposes of a certain research project. Peterson (2000) defines primary sources as guided descriptions or reports of events. The researcher gathered information through observations, questionnaires, and interviews. As noted by Goodwin (2012), there are advantages and downsides to using primary data, which will be described further below.

3.6.1.1 Advantages of primary data

Primary data was beneficial to the researcher because it was gathered for a specific purpose under investigation. In essence, the researcher's questions were designed to acquire data pertinent to the study. Another advantage is that it provided accurate information because the data was collected for the first time on the issue under discussion.

3.6.1.2 Primary data disadvantages

Primary data collection was time-consuming because the researcher had to distribute questionnaires, collect them, conduct interviews with participants, and monitor portions of the sample. The data was collected with a specific goal in mind: to solve the situation at hand.

3.6.2 Secondary sources of data

Aggrarwal (2010) defines secondary data as existing data obtained for purposes other than the current study question. In this study, thse researcher used secondary sources such as financial reports, newspapers, office statistics, and government statistics to assess and interpret information on the entity under review.

3.6.2.1 Secondary data advantages

According to Aggrarwal (2010), secondary data offers several advantages, including being cost-effective, readily available, and potentially more accurate. Additionally, secondary data facilitates comparison with other research that has utilized the same data. For the researcher, secondary data provided the only means to examine historical evidence related to current research questions. Moreover, it offered a broader and alternative source of information on the topic, providing a comprehensive understanding.

3.6.2.2 Disadvantages of secondary data

Secondary data could not be relevant for current research objectives due to compatibility issues, outdatedness, and inconsistent reporting formats, which can include differences in measurement units, definitions, and data aggregation levels, as highlighted by Mooi (2011).

3.7 Research Instruments

This study's key research instruments were observations, questionnaires, and interviews, as specified by Rusere (2012). These methods are useful for acquiring data that is not generally available to the public as well as gaining varied opinions on an issue (Creswell, 2012). In this situation, the questionnaires and interviews enabled the researcher to elicit information from TelOne employees pertinent to the study. Analyzing the various perspectives on the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems

3.7.1 Direct observation

This a research method involves collecting data by observing participants or phenomena in their natural setting without interrupting or influencing their behavior or actions, allowing for genuine and unbiased observation of their natural habits and behavior. Observation research findings are considered highly reliable and accurate as they are based on direct observation of respondents in their natural environment, unfiltered by external influences or biases, there by strengthening the validity of the results. Trochim (2009) notes that validity refers to how well a research finding or conclusion accurately reflects the real situation or phenomena being studied and the closest possible representation of the truth. Observation research is considered highly valid because it allow as researcher to gather rich and detailed information about a specific phenomenon such as the use of computers and related technologies in the finance sector at TelOne.

3.7.1.1 Advantages of direct observation

- High validity - based on firsthand information, lowering the likelihood of biased or erroneous data.
- Background insight - observing in a natural environment provides abundant contextual knowledge about the place and conditions.

- Secretive - the researcher observed without affecting the behavior of the participants, ensuring a more authentic understanding.
- Cost effective – It was less resource demanding.

3.7.2 Questionnaires

According to Oppenheim (2013), a questionnaire is a research instrument designed to gather and document information to address specific research questions. It comprises a series of questions, accompanied by clear instructions and sufficient space for respondents to provide their answers. Due to their cost-effectiveness and efficiency, questionnaires are an ideal tool for collecting data from a large sample size, enabling researchers to reach a broader audience and gather a substantial amount of data. The researcher issued questionnaires to selected finance departments at TelOne.

3.7.2.1 Advantages of questionnaires

- Questionnaires proved to be a highly cost-efficient data collection method compared to face-to-face interviews, offering a significant reduction in expenses while still gathering valuable insights from participants.
- The questionnaire data was straightforward to analyze, and the survey results were easily tabulated and summarized, making it a convenient and efficient process for extracting insights from the collected data.
- Questionnaires are a widely recognized and familiar data collection tool, and most individuals have had prior experience completing them, which makes them feel comfortable and non-threatening, reducing the likelihood of anxiety or apprehension.
- Anonymity was ensured.

3.7.1.2 Disadvantages of questionnaires

- There was no way to confirm whether the respondents accurately comprehended the questions being asked, which may have potentially affected the accuracy of their responses.
- Eye contact accounts for about 99% of all interactions. Gestures and other visual cues are not present with questionnaires.

3.7.3 Interviews

As defined by Saunders et al. (2012), an interview is a dynamic dialogue between individuals, which can occur either physically or electronically. In this research, face-to-face interviews were chosen, and to maintain consistency and organization, an interview guide was utilized to steer the conversations and ensure a standardized approach. The researcher employed interviews as a supplementary data collection tool to complement the questionnaires, with the aim of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem and achieving a more complete and nuanced exploration of the topic.

3.7.3.1 Advantages of interviews

- Questions with multiple possible meanings or interpretations could be explained or elaborated upon to ensure understanding.
- Face-to-face interactions provided richer and more in-depth qualitative data compared to other data collection methods.
- The interviewer asked follow-up questions to gather more information and clarify the interviewee's response, seeking additional details and insights.
- Interviews produced a high response rate

3.7.3.2 Disadvantages

- Some responses were unclear or disjointed likely due to respondents being rushed or not having sufficient time to thoughtfully consider their answers.
- Conducting interviews was a labor-intensive and time-demanding process that had required a significant amount of time and effort to prepare, schedule, and carry out.

3.8 Data collection procedures

The researcher used a random sample procedure to distribute questionnaires to respondents and scheduled deep discussions with TelOne's finance section, allowing for a comprehensive and structured data collection process.

3.9 Administration of questionnaires

The researcher individually distributed questionnaires to a target sample of respondents, which included 15 Accounting employees, 8 Budgeting and Planning employees, and 7 Auditing

employees. To ensure a high response rate, the researcher made several follow-up visits to collect completed surveys from respondents.

3.10 Administration of interviews

To ensure a thorough understanding of the research problem, the researcher organized appointments in advance with respondents from the finance sections, giving them enough time for in-depth interviews. These interviews were combined with questionnaires to create a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of the subject under examination.

3.11 Reliability and validity of research instruments

Validity and reliability are measurements used to assess a research instrument's effectiveness and consistency, ensuring that it accurately measures what it is designed to measure and yields consistent outcomes. Cook and Campbell (1979) define validity as the extent to which a study finding or conclusion correctly reflects the true state of events, indicating the closest feasible estimate to the truth or falsity of a specific claim or inference. Reliability is a research method's ability to provide consistent and reproducible results, ensuring that other researchers will reach similar conclusions and make comparable observations when utilizing the same methods and processes. In other words, dependability refers to the accuracy and consistency of research findings, as well as the stability of the data collection procedure, which yields same results even when undertaken by multiple researchers in the same conditions.

To ensure validity and reliability, the researcher conducted a thorough literature study and used existing questionnaires from similar studies to create the research instrument. This strategy aided in establishing face validity (making sure that the questions appear relevant and acceptable) and content validity (ensuring that the questions measure the intended concepts), hence reducing bias and ensuring that the instrument accurately measures the desired content.

3.12 Data presentation

The data was then displayed in a variety of formats, including frequency tables, bar graphs, pie charts, and percentages, to provide for simple and concise presentation. Furthermore, Microsoft Excel was used to enhance data presentation and analysis, resulting in an accurate and orderly display of the research findings.

3.13 Data analysis

The researcher employed statistical tools to summarize and describe the quantitative information, such as frequency, percentage, mean, and the standard deviation. The data was presented in a plain and visually appealing manner, including tables, bar graphs, and pie charts complemented with explanatory text. Descriptive analysis was performed to investigate the distribution and range of responses for each variable, identify skewness in the data, and calculate percentages in order to analyze and understand the findings.

3.13 Ethics

Throughout the study, the researcher made ethical conduct to protect the participants' well-being and rights. The responder provided informed consent, and their participation was voluntary. To protect secrecy, respondents' identities was ensured, and their responses were kept secret. Furthermore, the researcher correctly cited and recognized all sources of material, following academic ethical standards and avoiding any potential harm or misuse of information. This method guaranteed a reliable and responsible research process.

3.14 Summary

This chapter explains how the researcher decided to conduct the study and the tools used to gather information. It discussed the advantages and disadvantages of these tools. The next chapter will focus on what the researcher learned from the information they collected. This chapter acted like a building block for the research project. Choosing the right methods was crucial to getting accurate results that answered the research question. The chapter ended by explaining how the information collected would be analysed. The next chapter presented the research findings.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This section examined, provided, and discussed data collected from TelOne's several finance departments via surveys and interviews. To explore the research findings, numerical representations such as tables, pie charts, and bar charts were chosen. Where the data did not lend one another to statistical analysis, content analysis was used. The study's results are shown below.

4.2 Response rate on responses

Table 4.2 Response rate

Technique	Actual	Out of	Percentage of response
Questionnaire	30	30	100%
Interviews	6	3	50%
Total	36	33	91.70%

Source: Author (2024)

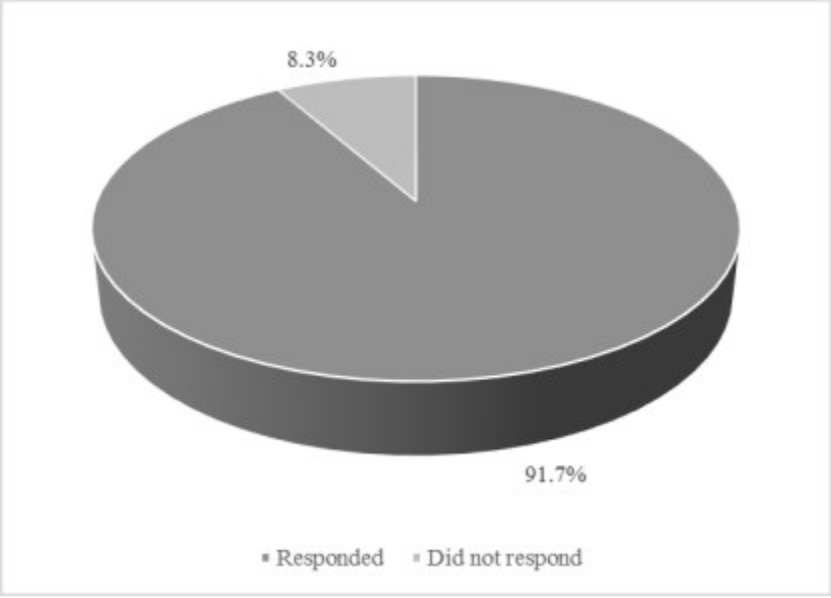

Fig 4.1 Response rate

Figure 4.2 shows that the researcher distributed 30 questionnaires to TelOne's finance employees. Questionnaires were distributed to Finance division workers. About 30 questionnaires sent out were successfully completed and returned. The researcher intended to conduct six interviews with managers from each department, but only three were successful. This was due the other three responders were not at work and were on a business trip outside of Harare, resulting in a 50% response rate.

The data in table 4.2 show an overall response rate of 91.7%, which is sufficient to support the research findings. The results of the surveys and interviews were sufficient to confirm the validity of the data obtained. . According to Sounders (2003:14), a response rate more than 50% verifies the conclusions concerning the topic.

4.3 Demographic Information

The goal of this study was to learn about the member's background, including gender, department in the finance division, qualifications, and duration of employment at TelOne.

4.3.1 Responses to gender

Table 4.3 Responses to gender

Responses to gender	Respondents	Percentage
Males	24	80%
Females	6	20%
Total	30	100%

Source: Author (2024)

Out of the 30 respondents, 24 were men and 6 were women from various finance departments. This suggests that males made up the biggest share of responders, with 80% versus 20% for females. This leads to the conclusion that men most likely dominate TelOne’s finance sector. This was not an accurate representation of gender diversity in finance departments since women were underrepresented, resulting in a lack of diverse ideas and experiences.

4.3.2 Responses to departments

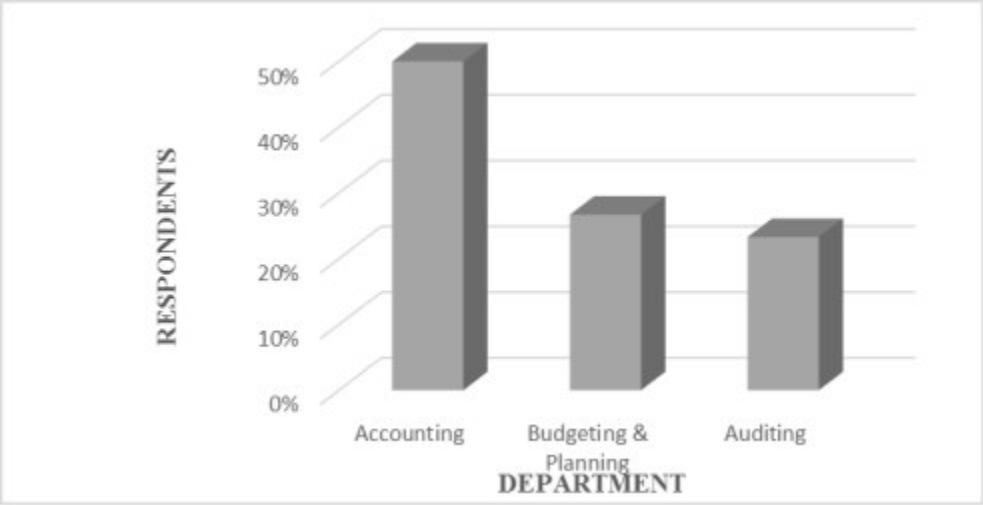

Fig 4.2 Responses to departments

The sample represented multiple departments within Telone's finance area, offering a diversified perspective on the influence of information technology. Fifty percent came from the Accounting department, 27 percent from the Budgeting and Planning department, and 23 percent from the Auditing department. This demonstrated that TelOne's finance segment is most likely dominated by the accounting department. The Accounting department supplied useful information about IT's impact on financial reporting, accounting methods, and systems. The other two departments shared their perspectives and threw light on IT's position in budgeting, forecasting, and strategic planning.

4.3.3 Responses to length of working at TelOne

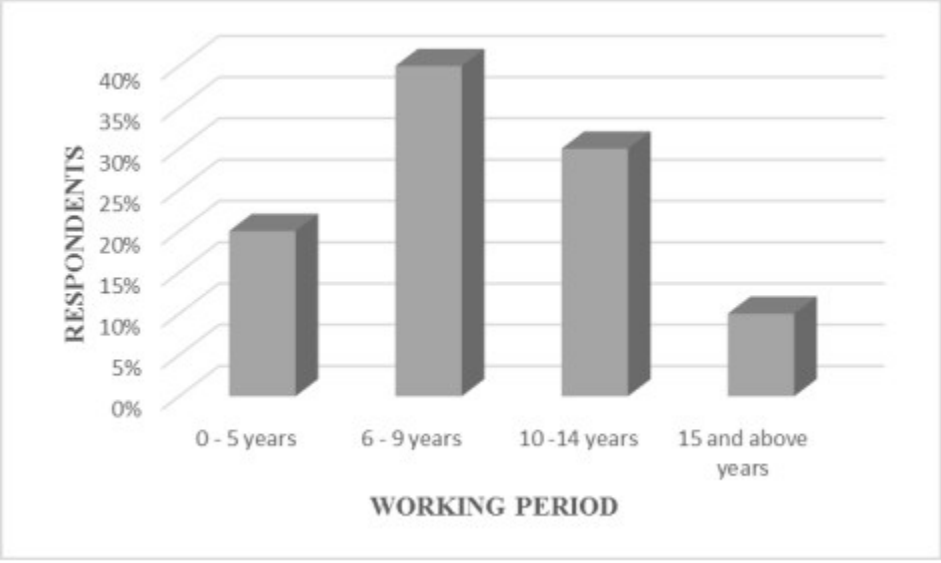

Fig 4.3 Responses to length of working

The graph above reveals that forty percent of the respondents have six to nine years of experience working in TelOne's finance area. Only 30% have employment experience ranging from 10 to 14 years. These findings indicated that the majority of respondents had a sufficient awareness of TelOne's IT and accounting systems, as well as all of the procedures involved, to provide trustworthy information. The remaining 20% went to those with 0 to 5 years of experience, while those with 15 years or more received 10%.

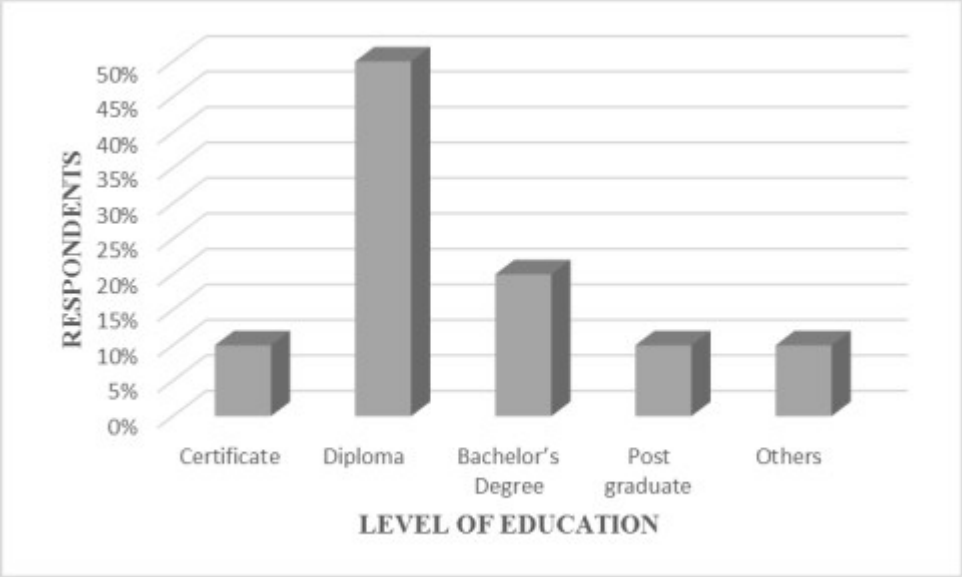

Fig 4.4 Responses to level of education

The findings revealed that 3/30 (10 percent) had a certificate, Diploma 15/30 (50%), an undergraduate degree, a master's degree, and other qualifications. The bulk of respondents had a good education, therefore the results were more accurate than dealing with illiterates.

4.4 Examine the nature and forms of information technology used at TelOne in the finance section.

4.4.1 Forms of IT tools used at TelOne

Everyone who responded agreed that the TelOne Finance department used devices, accounting software, accounting procedures, accounting spreadsheets, the internet, point of sale (POS), plus EDP (Paynet) for their accounting tasks. Nzomo (2013) agreed, adding that the accounting system consists of accounting software, data, procedures, computers, method and education, and internal

controls. This indicates that the section is moving in the right direction in terms of information technology.

4.4.2 Answers concerning if the types of IT employed at TelOne's finance section are adequate for modern accounting systems.

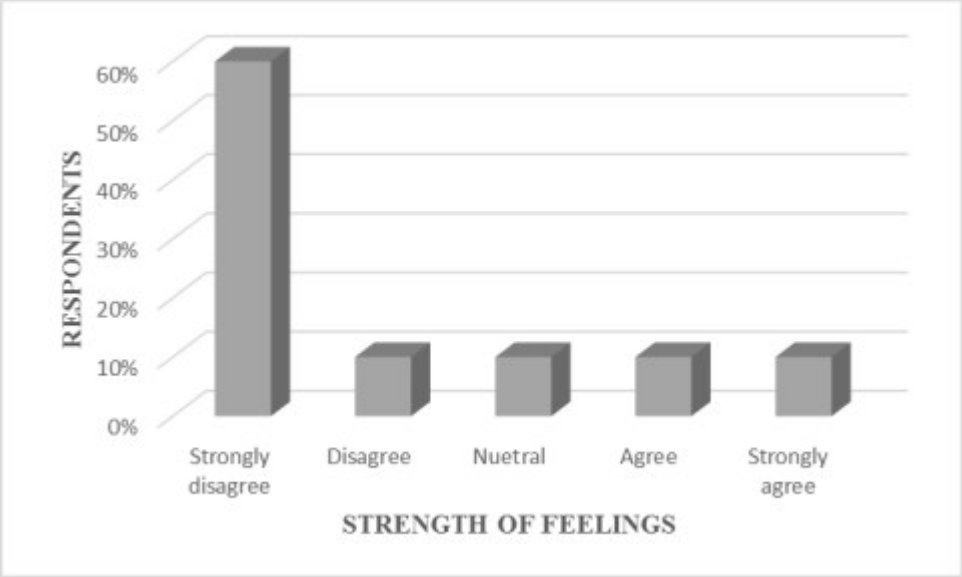

Fig 4.5 Answers concerning if the types of IT employed at TelOne's finance section are adequate for modern accounting systems.

70 percent of responders ten percent disagree and sixty per cent strongly disagree) stated that the IT systems employed by TelOne Finance were adequate to support all accounting activities. Ten percent strongly agreed that various types of IT were sufficient, whilst ten percent agreed to the previous statement. Ten percent were unsure whether to agree or oppose with the supplied opinion. According to Eija (2011), in order for a company to maximise its use of IT, significant investment in IT infrastructure is required.

4.4.3 Responses on are you staying up-to-date with the latest technological advancements, or are you missing potential improvement.

Table 4.4 Responses

Strength of feelings	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	12	40%
Disagree	9	30%

Neutral	6	20%
Agree	3	10%
Strongly agree	0	0%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Source: Author (2024)

4.5Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology in the accounting system at the TelOne Finance Section?

4.5.1 Responses to whether IT increases the efficiency and effectiveness of accounting system.

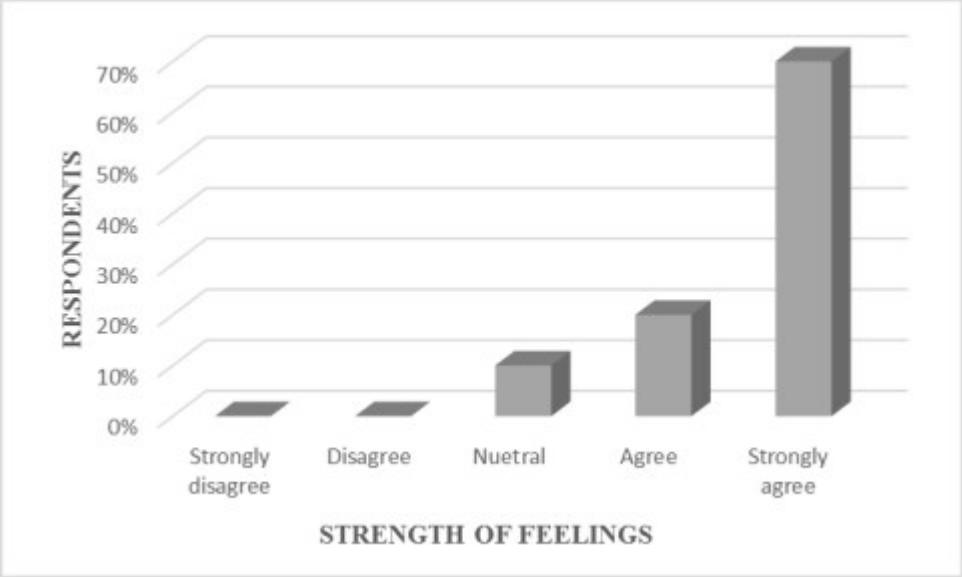

Fig 4.6 Responses to whether IT increases the efficiency and effectiveness of accounting system.

Ninety-three percent of respondents across departments believed that IT increases the efficiency and effectiveness of their accounting systems. They argued that computers improved audit efficiency, despite not being used to their full capability. However, only 10% were neutral about the premise that utilizing computers increased the efficiency and effectiveness of accounting processes. Francis (2013) agreed that employing IT can boost the effectiveness of an accounting system.

4.5.2 Responses on whether Information Technology (IT) improves the accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of financial reports and statements.

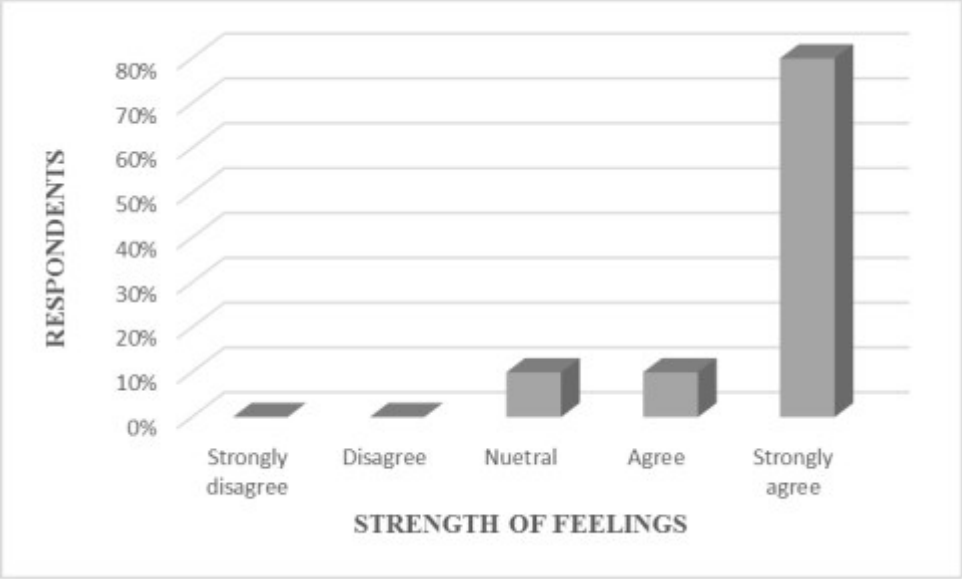

Fig 4.7 Responses on whether Information Technology (IT) improves the accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of financial reports and statements.

The investigation found that the majority of the respondents (80% (strongly agree) and 10% (agree), which when combined equaled 90%, were of the opinion that the use of computers increases the quality of accounting procedures. This suggests that IT has had a major beneficial influence on financial reporting, allowing the Finance section to create high-quality reports and statements on time. However, approximately 10% were unsure whether computers improved the quality of accounting work. Meigs et al. (1998) concurred with the majority of respondents, stating that employing computers improves accounting operations.

4.5.3 Responses to whether Accounting software generally produces more accurate, reliable, and timely financial information compared to manual accounting methods, resulting in superior financial reporting.

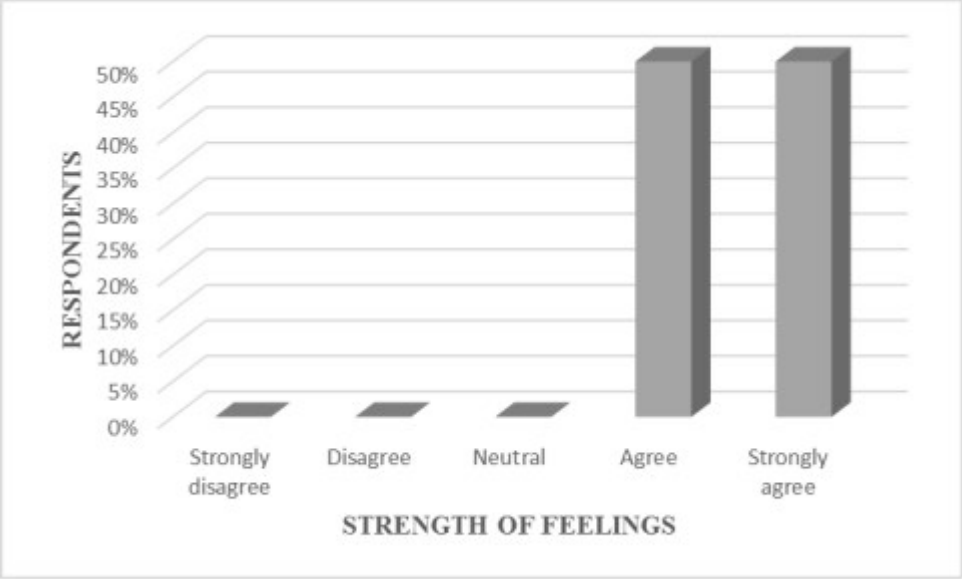

Fig 4.8 Answers as to whether the utilisation of accounting software generally deliver a higher quality accounting than the use of manual accounting systems.

The results showed that the majority of the respondents, consisting of fifty percent strongly agreed and fifty percent just agreed that accounting software normally produces relatively good quality accounting as compared Ware (2013) agreed with the majority of respondents' comments, stating that computerized accounting is more effective and efficient than traditional manual accounting systems. This suggested a higher level of confidence in accounting software's ability to improve accounting quality.

4.6 Identify the solutions that can be adopted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of information technology in the TelOne Finance Section.

4.6.1 Answers to whether formal training in the usage of and upkeep of computer hardware is required for a modern computerised accounting system to be successful.

Table 4.5

Strength of feelings	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Agree	6	20%
Strongly agree	24	80%

Total	30	**100%**

Source: Author (2024)

Results demonstrated that the majority of the participants (100%) believed that formal training is required to operate and maintain computer hardware for modern accounting systems. Eija (2011) advocated that accounting professionals receive training and certification in order to effectively use new technology.

4.6.2 The reactions on if formal training in the use of accounting software is always required for accountants.

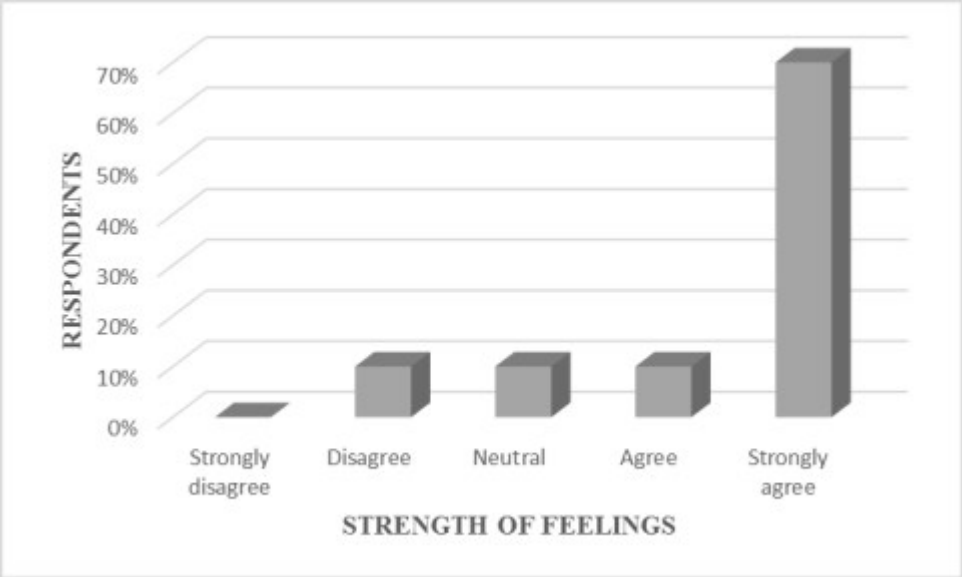

Fig 4.9 Response as to whether formal training in the use of accounting software is i necessary for accountants.

Eighty per cent of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that formal training in the usage of accounting software is required in order to realize its benefits. However, 10% disagreed with the previously stated opinion, while 10% remained neutral. The high percentage suggested that the majority of respondents believed formal training was required to maximize the use of accounting software.

4.6.3 Comments on IT as a practical method of performing accounting tasks

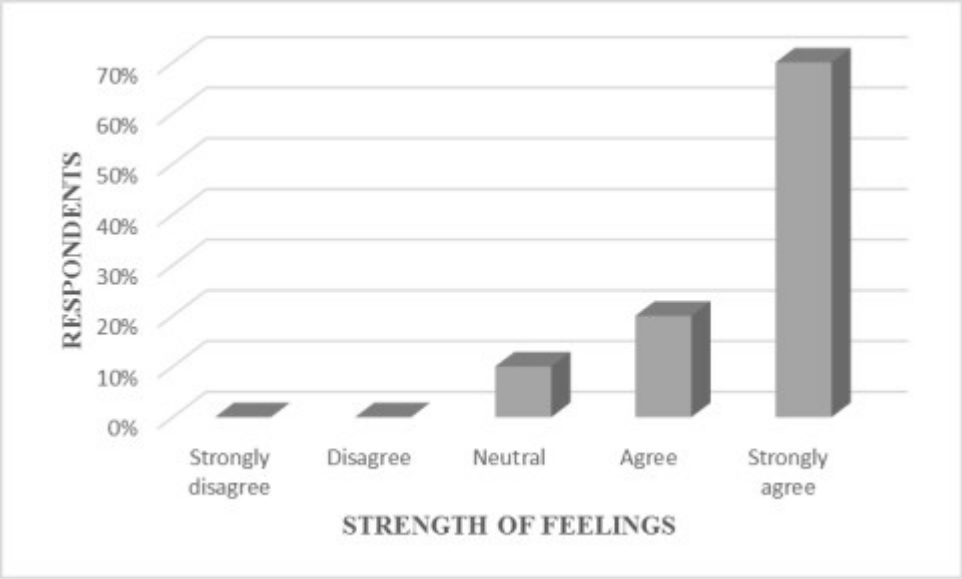

Fig 4.10 Responses to Responses on IT as a practical way of doing accounting processes.

In general, 90% of respondents (70% strongly agree and 20% agree) feel that information technology will be the sole viable option for completing accounting activities. However, 10% were unsure whether they agreed or disagreed with such opinion. Taiwo and Agwu (2016) proposed that the usage of computers enhances the accuracy, precision, and efficiency of data processing in today's environment. This is consistent with the majority of respondents, who believe that IT is the most practical way to carry out accounting duties.

4.6.4 Opinions about if the IT at the disposal is fully used.

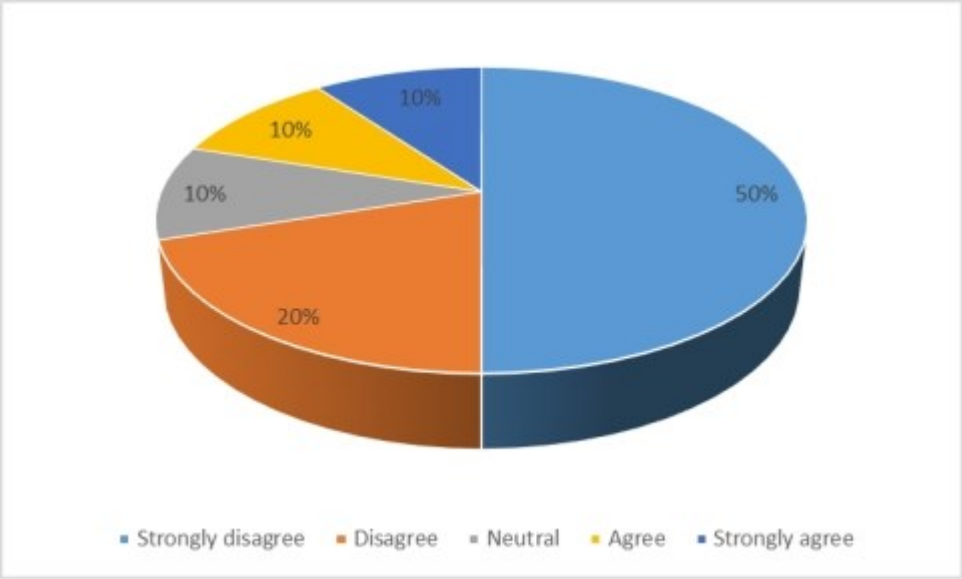

Fig 4.11 Responses on whether the IT at the disposal is being utilised fully?

Twenty percent of respondents strongly agreed and indicated that they were utilizing the technology at their disposal to its full extent, while three concurred with the prior statement. Ten percent questioned if it was being exploited to its full potential. Twenty and fifty percent of respondents strongly disagreed with the idea that computer technology was being used efficiently. This appears to contradict what Eija (2011) advocated, which stated that in order to reap the maximum benefits, all of the infrastructure must be used.

4.6.5 Thoughts regarding if IT is of critical importance in modern accounting

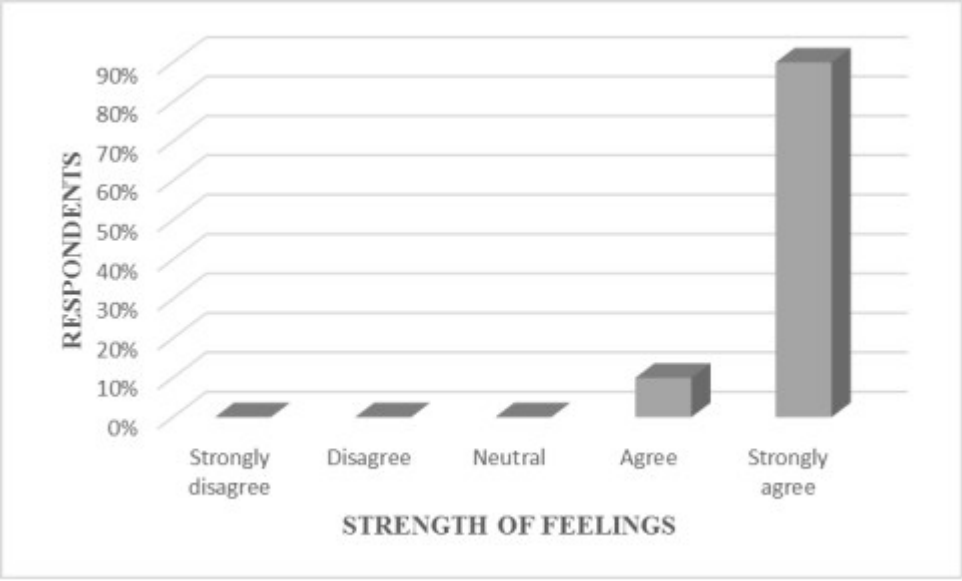

Fig 4.12 Responses as to whether IT is of paramount to modern accounting

All respondents strongly agreed that IT is crucial to the modern accounting system. This statement underlines the importance of information technology in accounting processes. Francis (2013) concurred with the respondents who stated that information technology is critical in today's accounting systems, offering various benefits to support this view.

4.6.7 Answers to issues encountered during the setup of IT in the accounting system.

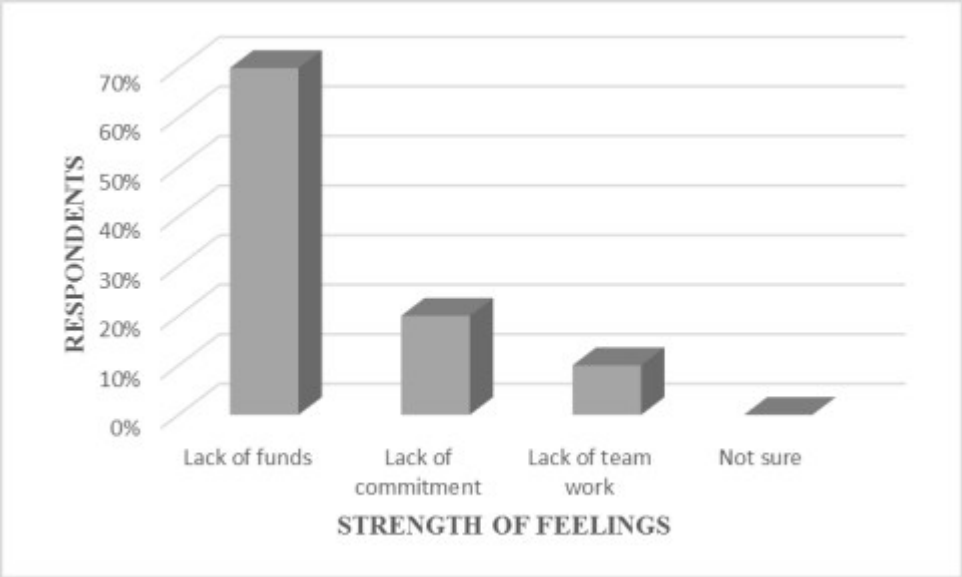

Fig 4.13 Responses to challenges faced in implementing the use of IT in the accounting system.

The vast majority of the participants (70%) agreed that the most significant challenge they face when adopting IT at TelOne Finance is a lack of funds to invest in accounting system infrastructure as required and recommended by standards. Twenty percent said the biggest issue was a lack of commitment on the part of the organisation. The remaining 10% stated that a lack of teamwork was the most major hindrance to IT deployment. Eija (2011) concurred with these comments, adding that additional money are required for effective IT adoption.

4.6.8 Comments on what you believe could be done for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the accounting system at Telone's finance department.

The bulk of the respondents regarded the following items as critical for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of TelOne's accounting system:

- Continued development in IT infrastructure.
- Seeking outstanding individuals for financial and accounting positions.
- A formal education in IT hardware and software is necessary for accounting and finance staff to fully utilize its benefits.
- Accounting staff receive regular refresher classes to stay up-to-date with evolving technology.

4.7 Analysis of interview questions

The interview was scheduled for the accounting staff and the response rate 3/6 (50%) and 3/6 (50%) were not done because the interviewee was very busy and had a tight schedule.

What role do you play inside the accounting system?

Interviewees stressed the relevance of IT systems for creating financial statements and reporting in their accounting system. Participants discovered IT roles in accounting system processes, including gathering data from source documents, the processing it, posting transactions to ledgers, preparing reports and financial statements, ensuring payments to creditors and suppliers (via Paynet), receiving payments by way of POS, and storing financial information. All of the respondents agreed on this point.

Have you received any formal or informal training in the usage of accounting software?

Most participants reported receiving no formal accounting software instruction. The majority of responders attributed their knowledge to mentoring from senior members and computer service suppliers.

Since the introduction of IT to date, what benefits are there for the organisation?

Interviewees cited several benefits of implementing IT, including faster accounting information processing, improved report quality, accuracy, reduced bank visits, reduced risk of financial statement manipulation, easy access, reliability, and security.

In spite of the benefits, what challenges are you facing?

Respondents identified several challenges, including a lack of formal training, delays due to system failures, staff adapting to changes in the accounting system, and inadequate infrastructure for full use of IT. Francis (2013) agreed with the majority of respondents' suggestions.

In your opinion, do you think IT will be the better way of conducting accounting processes other than the manual traditional system?

All interviewees agreed that using IT is superior to traditional manual accounting processes. Implementing IT in the accounting system has improved efficiency and ease of preparing statements and reports. Additionally, fully utilizing the IT system can provide numerous benefits.

What do you think should be done to improve the accounting system at TelOne Finance Section.?

Interviewees emphasized the importance of investing in IT infrastructure, training staff, establishing internal systems, receiving top management support, motivating staff, and recruiting IT specialists to improve accounting systems.

4.8 Summary

This chapter focused on data analysis and presentation of the results. This chapter looks at how raw data is transformed into valuable information, then analyzed and interpreted. I calculated percentages to give a good picture of the results. It was established that information technology can be advantageous in modern accounting systems. The findings indicate enough evidence to form conclusions and make recommendations. The following chapter summarizes the study's findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on the preceding chapter's analysis. Chapter 5 summarizes the inquiry, highlights major results, and offers recommendations..

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This research attempted to assess the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems. The research aims to determine the type and forms of information technology at TelOne Finance Section, evaluate its efficiency and effectiveness on the accounting system, and offer ideas for increasing its effectiveness and efficiency.

This chapter presents study findings, conclusions, and suggestions based on how they align with empirical data. Implementing recommendations can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology in current accounting systems for organizations.

5.1 Summary of major findings

- TelOne Finance Section's accounting system combines computer and manual processes.
- The majority of respondents believed that computerized accounting systems were superior to traditional manual accounting systems.
- Using computers in accounting has resulted in cost savings, faster completion times, improved system efficiency, and higher quality accounting statements and reports.

- The organization faces challenges such as high IT costs, machine breakdowns that disrupt accounting processes, file corruption due to viruses, and insufficient training in software and IT.
- The sector uses payment services such as point of sale (POS) machines and Paynet services.
- Accountants and auditors utilize the Internet to reference Accounting and Auditing Standards and communicate with stakeholders.
- TelOne has a defined IT policy governing the purchase and disposal of computer equipment.

5.2 Conclusion

- The study project examined the impact of IT on modern accounting systems, reviewing literature on how computers and technology may be utilized in the accounting process.
- Questionnaires indicate that investing in IT infrastructure is crucial for achieving optimal results in current accounting systems.
- Providing formal training on IT and accounting software is crucial for maximizing the benefits of current accounting systems..
- Interviews with finance staff revealed that investing in computerized accounting led to higher efficiency and lower audit costs.
- Compared to traditional manual accounting systems, computerized accounting systems perform better.
- More so, questionnaires revealed that managers and accountants saw information technology as a way to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of statements and reports, as well as provide value to the accounting system.
- Accounting organizations profit from using IT in their processes, and computerized accounting may soon become the only realistic option. The vast majority of respondents agreed that IT is crucial for modern accounting systems.

5.3 Recommendations

- To reap the benefits of computerized accounting, firms should invest in IT infrastructure on a continuous basis. Additionally, accounting software should be updated to ensure compatibility with changing client systems and packages.

- To ensure flawless accounting operations, TelOne's finance section should hire IT experts to manage unanticipated circumstances. Frequent power failures might lead to software issues.
- The section should provide both on-the-job and off-the-job training for its employees to benefit the organisation as a whole. An evaluation of systems can discover weaknesses in internal controls.
- To maximise the benefits of IT, the section should establish formal backup policies to prevent interruptions such as data loss due to damaged drives or network failures. Standby computers and software backups should also be available in case of emergency replacement.
- To meet global standards, the section and organization should prioritize the use of IT in accounting to avoid falling behind. Finance departments and corporations should implement security measures to safeguard customer confidentiality when using computerized accounting systems.
- When planning the use of computers in accounting, consider the following points:
    - Significant financial commitment will be required.
    - The IT department oversees the creation and maintenance of computer hardware and software.
    - An IT policy is necessary for replacing machines that have outlived their usefulness.
    - All accountants in the firm should be trained in the usage of computer hardware and software.

Additional research recommendations

This study suggests additional research to determine the following:

- The effect of information technology on forensic accounting investigations.
- The impact of formal IT training on the accounting profession.
- Effects of accounting software on the preparation of financial reports.

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APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNANCY

RESEARCH TOPIC:

THE IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON MODERN ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS. A CASE OF TELONE.

Dear Respondent

My name is Rodney Shirichena and I am an undergraduate studying a Bachelor of Accountancy Honors Degree at Bindura University of Science Education. As part of my degree program, I am researching the impact of information technology on modern accounting systems. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in completing the questionnaire attached to this message. It will help me gather statistics. All comments will be utilised solely for research purposes, and full confidentiality will be maintained. Please avoid from writing your name on this questionnaire to ensure confidentiality. I will be grateful for your response.

RODNEY SHIRICHENA

Contact cell: 0782 261 734 or rodneyshirichena2000@gmail.com

Instructions:

1. No name or identity on the questionnaire is required
2. Kindly indicate the most appropriate answer in the space provided using an X sign

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1.

Gender	**Response**
Male	
Female	

2.

Academic Qualifications	**Response**
Certificate	
Diploma	
Bachelor's Degree	
Post graduate	
Other	

3.

Which department do you work in within the finance section?	**Response**
Accounting Department	
Budgeting and Planning Department	
Auditing Department	

4.

How long have you been employed by Telone?	**Response**
0-5 years	
6-9 years	

10-14 years	
15-20 years	

SECTION B

1.

Which of the following IT tools does TelOne utilize for their accounting processes?	**Response**
Desktop computer/ Personal computer/ Laptop computers	
Accounting softwares	
Accounting procedures	
Internet	
Spread Sheet	
Point of sale (POS)	
Digital Payment Network	

Instruction:

In your opinion, please indicate the level of your agreement or disagreement using X on the following statements

1=strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree								
Construction	**ITEM CODE**	**ITEM DESCRIPTION**	1	2	3	4	5
Examine the nature and forms of information technology used	**OB1**	Are the current IT systems and technologies used in TelOne's finance section adequate and efficient for modern accounting practices, or are there needs for upgrades or improvements?					

at TelOne in the finance section.	**OB2**	Forms of IT being employed at TelOne finance section are sufficient for modern accounting systems.					
	OB3	Information Technology (IT) increases the efficiency and effectiveness of accounting system					

SECTION C

Instruction:

In your opinion, please indicate the level of your agreement or disagreement using X on the following statements

1=strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree							
Construction	**ITEM CODE**	**ITEM DESCRIPTION**	1	2	3	4	5
Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology in the accounting system at the TelOne Finance Section.	**OC1**	Accounting software generally produces more accurate, reliable, and timely financial information compared to manual accounting methods, resulting in superior financial reporting and decision-making capabilities for businesses.					
	OC2	Eventually IT is going to be the only practical way to perform accounting processes.					
	OC3	Information Technology (IT) increases the efficiency and effectiveness of accounting system.					
	OC4	Information Technology (IT) improves the accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of financial reports and statements.					

SECTION D

Construction	ITEM CODE	ITEM DESCRIPTION	1	2	3	4	5
Identify the solutions that can be adopted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of information technology in the TelOne Finance Section.	**OD1**	Are you staying up-to-date with the latest technological advancements, or are you missing out on potential improvements.					
	OD2	Therefore, can we conclude that IT is of paramount importance to the modern accounting systems?					
	OD3	Formal training in the use of accounting software is inevitably necessary for accountants.					
	OD4	Thorough training and understanding of computer hardware components, installation, and maintenance are essential for the successful implementation and ongoing support of modern computerized accounting systems.					

What challenges do you think are being faced by ZRP Morris Depot finance to implement the use of IT in its accounting system?

Lack of funds [ ]
Lack of commitment [ ]
Lack of teamwork [ ]
Not sure [ ]

APPENDIX 2

Interview guide for TelOne Finance section staff

Objective 1: Examine the nature and forms of information technology used at TelOne in the finance section.

1. What forms of IT are you using within the TelOne Finance section?
2. What are the IT duties within your system?

Objective 2: Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology in the accounting system at the TelOne Finance Section.

1. What role do you play inside the accounting system?
2. What benefits have IT brought to the organization since its introduction?
3. Despite the benefits, what challenges do you face?

Objective 3: Identify the solutions that can be adopted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of information technology in the TelOne Finance Section.

1. Have you received any formal or informal training in the usage of accounting software?
2. Do you think IT will be a better approach to handle accounting procedures than the traditional manual system?
3. What steps do you think should be taken to improve the accounting system at TelOne Finance Section?