

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**



**THE IMPACT OF ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT ON EMPLOYEE  
PERFORMANCE IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY OF  
ZIMBABWE IN THE PERIOD 2020 TO 2021.**

**PRESENTED BY**

**TATENDA MUGABE**

**STUDENT NO. B1853423**

**A DISSERTATION/THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN  
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## **RELEASE FORM**

**NAME OF AUTHOR:** Tatenda Mugabe

**TITLE OF PROJECT:** The impact of organisational support on  
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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance; a research project entitled, **The impact of organisational support on employee performance in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe in the period 2020 to 2021**, submitted by Tatenda Mugabe in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Digital Marketing.

.....

(Signature of Student)

...../...../.....

Date

.....

(Signature of Supervisor/s)

...../...../.....

Date

.....

(Signature of Chairperson)

...../...../.....

Date

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(Signature of the Examiner/s)

...../...../.....

Date

## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my wife Patience (Chimushonga) Mugabe for the sterling support and encouragement in the course of my learning life and our son Ngonidzashe, for the reminders to get the work done on time. Not forgetting my parents Dr Madzviti Jacob and Beatrice Mugabe for the inspiration.

## ABSTRACT

The research was motivated by the new era of remote working as a result of the social distancing requirement during the Covid19 pandemic. The workplace was overhauled limiting the number of people who physically worked from the office, with the majority directed to work remotely. The study sought to understand the support telecommunication organisations in Zimbabwe provided to employees towards seamless customer experience. The causal research design was used. A sample of three hundred and fifty-seven fully completed online surveys were prioritised in the study. From a total of 357 respondents, 192 (53.8%) were females and 165 (46.2%) were males. The Zimbabwean telecommunications industry in particular Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne were used as the population where the sample was drawn from based on their capacity to provide virtual or remote services. A Google Forms online questionnaire was used as the primary research instrument to collect data from the sample. The survey link was shared with the Public Relations representatives of Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne for distribution among their client services personnel. Collected data from the questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. The model predicted a significant amount of variance in overall employee performance,  $F(3, 355) = 75.800, p < 0.001, R^2 = .392$ . After controlling for the other variables in the model, Management Support,  $t = 10.686, p = .000$ ; Technological Support,  $t = 6.026, p = .000$ ; and Rewards,  $t = .775, p = .439$ ; were significant predictors of employee performance. In conclusion, organisational support conditions should not be imposed but must be crafted through collaboration with employees. It was recommended that organisational support mechanisms need further review as they tend to vary depending on geopolitics and era in addition the reward systems need to be investigated in view of non-financial incentives.

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The research looked at how organizational support impacted on employee performance in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe between the year 2020 and 2021. This was the peak period for the Covid19 pandemic which distorted the people's way of life, the business environment and how employees served clients. The specific companies in focus were Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne. The section looked at employee demands for them to effectively deliver seamless client support in unique virtual based office environments. Furthermore, the theoretical and physical parameters of the study were established narrowing the focus and ensuring consistency in the findings.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Employee performance referred to an individual's contribution to the group effort in relation to a given task leading to company success which had an impact on the industry translating to positive or negative national GDP as noted by Andrade, Queiroga and Valentini (2020). Job performance was understood by distinguishing individual goal-based behaviour and the output from that behaviour. This meant that individual goals were inclined to correspond with possible outcomes from an activity. However, the environment sometimes influenced the results of an action, depending on availability of the requisite resources.

In 2019, the Industrial Psychology Consultants (IPC) conducted research on employee engagement in Zimbabwe, which highlighted three key results that inspired this current research, thus:

- The total Employee Engagement Index (EEI) was 72%. Thus, 7

in every 10 workers were happy with their company as an employer.

- The Index of Satisfaction was at 71%. According to the findings, 7 out of every 10 workers were content with their jobs.
- The Index of Commitment and Loyalty was at 68%. This meant, on average, 7 out of 10 workers were glad to work for their employers.

The results from the IPC report motivated this study titled, “The impact of organisational support on employee performance in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe in the period 2020 to 2021”. The intention was to assess how far the employee perceptions provided in 2019 were still valid in the Zimbabwean work context between the year 2020 and 2021 after the distortion of the ideal workplace caused by the Covid19 pandemic. This was backed by (Deole, Deter and Huang, 2021; Bahagia and Putri, 2021; Dapi, 2020; IPC, 2020; Mustajab, Bauw, Rasyid, Irawan, Akbar and Hamid, 2020) who argued that Covid19 and continuous lockdowns, companies revamped their traditional way of doing business in relation to emerging remote based workplace and virtual employees.

In response to Covid19, most businesses, assigned their employees to operate from home in compliance with the regulation while serving customers via remote channels. Mudzingwa (2020) noted that Econet responded by rationalising 50% of its staff, to work from home as a decongestion measure. TelOne rotated staff with another group working from office and another from home (Herald, 2021). Impromptu remote working, was a challenge for Zimbabwean businesses (Mudzingwa, 2020). Chronic electricity blackouts, lack of access to computers, social responsibilities among others contributed to challenges in service delivery.

Businesses could not fold because of Covid19. The success of companies depended on employee and organisational creativity and innovation to ensure business continuity. Innovators withstood the test of time while laggards folded. This background motivated

this study, to understand how Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne managed to keep employees engaged while consistently serving clients between 2020 and 2021.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The Covid19 pandemic gave rise to challenges on the employees' ability to provide client support in the telecommunications industry. There were high expectations on employees to deliver quality service to clients through virtual platforms. The employees became confined to their homes as the new office, with limited resources compared to the office setup. Management support assumed a new look in the Covid era. Away from the office, technological assets were not reliable. As a new phenomenon, working from home brought about unprecedented reward management systems. With all these challenges at hand, the organisations demanded employees to deliver exceptional service. The research sought to establish how organizational support affected employee performance in the delivery of competent client support between 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2021 in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The study sought to investigate the following objectives;

1. To determine the level of management support.
2. To determine the impact of management support on employee performance.

### **1.4 Statement of Hypotheses**

The study made the following hypotheses;

H<sub>1</sub> Management support has positive effect on employee performance.

H<sub>2</sub> Technological support has a positive effect on employee performance.

H<sub>3</sub> Employee rewards have a positive effect on employee performance.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The importance of the research, focused on how organisations supported their employees in the new era of remote working towards effective customer support. This led to description of measures prescribed by organisations which impacted on relationships with employees in the telecommunications industry. The study significance was assessed in relation to three critical stakeholders: the organization, academics, and the society.

#### **1.5.1 To the organization**

The study findings empowered the Zimbabwean telecommunications industry and other sectors to gauge whether the organisational support mechanisms in force were sufficient to enhance employee performance in the age of remote working. More importantly, the research helps the company to determine how to effectively implement teleworking without system downtime/failures on clients. The insights may be used for strategic initiatives that will help the company to attain a respectable position in the market.

#### **1.5.2 To the academics**

The findings help to widen understanding in the field of research and add literature to the existing body of knowledge. The suggestions were set to empower fellow academics with an understanding of how remote working manifested in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe and the effects on employees' ability to serve customers on demand. Furthermore, the study will position Bindura University of Science Education as a credible institution which strives towards excellency in research towards socio-economic growth of the country.

#### **1.5.3 To the society**

Zimbabwe hosts in excess of 14 million subscribers on both mobile and fixed telephone (Potraz, 2021). To sustain this huge client base, the telecommunications service providers required comprehensive resources (financial, technological and human capital). The study sought to enlighten the society on what happens behind the scenes in the telecommunications service centres. The findings contribute towards an

appreciation of challenges operators face while providing service in return empowering clients to make informed business decisions.

### **1.6 Assumptions**

The feedback provided was assumed to be accurate. The findings were presumed to be valid and generalisable in different settings. Collected data was assumed to be relevant. The approach used was appropriate for the subjects under investigation. Furthermore, the content analysis resources were adequate to offer a basic summary of the organisational collaboration in Zimbabwe's telecommunications business.

### **1.7 Delimitations of the study**

The study's physical boundaries were centred on customer service centres of Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne who were major players in the sector. The target sample was 357 call centre employees from a population averaging 6000 across Zimbabwe. In the telecommunications, insurance, and banking industries, Zimbabwe had about 36 Contact Centres with over 6000 personnel (Munhende, 2019). The population were individual employees who served to provide first line support to client enquiries over digital media (email, Twitter, Facebook, website and voice call) from each sector.

The conceptual boundary of the study was hinged on the organisational support theory. The study looked at the influence of organizational support on performance of employees in a work-from-home environment. The findings of the study were drawn from employees at Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne all being telecommunications organisations. The period under review was 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2021.

### **1.8 Limitations**

The general findings of the study should not be treated as company specific but industry based because all the four companies had different levels of financial, technological and human capacity. The workplace was redesigned due to Covid19 and employees moved from the official company premises to work from home. The findings were relevant in



the virtual working period of 2020 to 2021 because few people were working from the office. There were delays in feedback by the respondents and consistent follow ups with company representatives appealing for support ensued. The online questionnaire was deployed from March 2022 to May 2022.

### **1.9 Definition of Terms**

Chisi, Madziyire, Mhlanga, Kwandayi and Makombe (2000) argued that dictionary meanings do not serve adequately in defining research terms. The reason being, variables to be considered were observable or measurable and prone to scientific manipulation. The operational definitions of the following words were supplied for the purposes of this investigation.

**Covid / Covid19** corona virus pandemic of 2019

**Decongestion** is reduction in number of staff expected in office at any given time

**Digitalisation** the use of internet-based technology to address customer enquiries.

**Employee** any person providing labour in return for remuneration or reward.

**ICTs** equipment and services such as computers, social media and internet

**Impact** the advantages or disadvantages'

**Organisation** a formal business employing people and paying them as agreed

**Performance** the ability to carry out assigned tasks as agreed

**Remote / virtual working** doing daily job tasks away from the workplace at home

**Rewards** monetary and non-monetary incentives given to employees for work done

**Social distance** maintenance of a minimum of one I metre distance from next person

**Support** provision of resources which enable employees to serve clients daily.

### **1.10 Summary**

This chapter established the key objectives of the study. With employees having been confined to their homes as the new office, with varied resources compared to office setup, organisational support became an issue of concern. The study established that issues of management support, technological support and rewards variations took a new turn compared to the office environment. At the same time, organisations demanded

employees to deliver exceptional service. This gave a precedent to Chapter 2, which looked at the literature in the context of the research, concentrating on theoretical and empirical data. In Chapter 3, the research approach was identified on how to collect the data. Chapter 4 dealt with data presentation, analysis, and discussion of the findings, while Chapter 5 was for the study's summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The section links to previous findings on the influence of organizational support on employee performance. Seliger and Shohamy (1989) in Masuku (1999) noted that literature review broadened knowledge and perspective of the topic. It involved identification, interpretation and contextualisation to establish data links.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Literature**

The theoretical literature presented a list of concepts that back the influence of organisational support factors on employee performance. The conceptual perspective was a complicated mental construction of reality through modification of models employed in earlier empirical projects (Chinn and Kramer, 1999).

##### **2.1.1 The nexus between Management Support and Employee Performance**

In explaining the relationship between management support and employee performance the organisational support theory (OST) was used. Employees created beliefs about how considerable an organization valued their input and cared about their welfare, according to the organizational support theory (OST) proposed by (Eisenberger, 2022; Eisenberger and Stinglhamber, 2011; Shore and Shore, 1995; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986). Additionally, Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart and Adis (2015) used the OST to examine the employee-organization interaction from the perspective of the employees, resulting in what was termed as perceived organizational support (POS). POS was linked to impartiality, promotion opportunities, work motivation, quality of work life, management styles, and ability to do the job, according to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002). The relationship of these variables revealed that employee performance was influenced by an organization's capacity to provide supportive systems.

More so, Kurtessis et'al (2015) noted that, organisational support theory, depended on the employees' acknowledgement of the organization's resolve through favourable or unfavourable treatment. POS, on the other hand, created a social exchange process in which employees felt bound to participate in the organization's aims and objectives in the hope of receiving incentives for putting in more effort. According to Kurtessis and his colleagues, POS met employees' prosocial requirements, resulting in entrenched sense of belonging, willingness to help the business flourish, and gain more understanding of its welfare.

### **2.1.2 The relationship between Technological Support and Employee Performance**

Technology simplified the way of doing business in the contemporary workplace. The relationship between technological support and employee performance was explored through Rogers' (1962) diffusion of innovation theory. Diffusion of innovation focused on how the production and distribution processes of products and services were altered through the adoption of technology (Johne 1999) in Omar and Soar (2016). Automation, e-commerce, data processing and business models gave rise to the emergence of innovation (Slappendel 1996; Paap and Katz 2004). These different forms of innovation showed the distinction in how technology was incorporated into the organisational ecosystem. Technological integration took place at various levels thus, personal advancement for individuals, process improvement at department level, new models for products or services at company level, while breakthroughs were common at industry level (Edquist 1997) cited by Omar and Soar (2016).

Rogers (2003) noted that technologies from decades back, were usually perceived as new as a result of failure to diffuse the technology among various clusters thus, innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards. Covid19 became a moment of enlightenment as organisations began to realise the potential of technology at their disposal resulting in adaptation in the quest to evade organisational decay. Scepticism caused most people to shun technology which saw overcrowding in the last four clusters of innovation with only a few eager to secure a position in the innovators league (Rogers, 2003). Communities were not prepared to risk the uncertainties perceived to be associated with innovations. They were ready to adopt an innovation

after witnessing the consequences on innovators. This is the reason why majority of organisations were reluctant to interact on social media for fear of reprisals on poor service delivery while innovators grabbed first mover advantage.

The ideal workplace was renowned for having employees coming through physically on a daily basis to provide labour to the employer. With the introduction of technology this was no longer the case as staff could work remotely away from the office but providing the same service with more efficiency, based on Ottenbreit-Leftwich and Kimmons (2020). Innovations helped in connecting the clients and their service providers, making business transactions efficient. Rogers (2003) noted that, Diffusion of Innovations became rampant as a result of communication channels where the sender and receiver were able to exchange the message remotely until they reached a mutual understanding. Technology brought about the phenomenon of omnipresence bridging the distance and time barriers. Connectivism held that employees were networked and connected to databases and other resources through electronic devices, such as smartphones or laptops over the internet (Ottenbreit-Leftwich and Kimmons, 2020). The connectivity perspective emphasised that technology was instrumental in improving experiences and distribution of information among people.

### **2.1.3 The relationship between Rewards and Employee Performance**

Employees had a tendency to put more effort when there were promises of rewards and conversely they slacked when their efforts were not being recognised. The relationship between rewards and employee performance was explained through the attribution theory and the social exchange theory.

Fritz Heider's 'Common Sense' Theory suggested that people observed and analysed behaviour to come up with common-sense interpretations of results (Kendra, 2022). Heider (1958) noted that individuals had a natural habit of trying to figure out causes of significant events in their lives. Hereby employees used causal attributions to describe a certain phenomenon in a work environment. A wide array of causal attributions related to ability, effort, luck and difficult tasks, as noted by (Weiner et'al, 1971).

Attributions, like other perceptions, did not always mirror one's actual reality as noted by Harvey and Dasborough (2006). Abramson, Seligman and Teasdale (1978) cited by Harvey and Dasborough (2006) found that different people had different attribution styles, in which they made ascriptions for outcomes throughout time and in different situations. The inclinations usually influenced attributions in situations characterized by ambiguity. For example, fast rising female employees in an organisation tended to be attributed to gender based stereotypes. However, naturally based on gender characteristics females were submissive compared to males and of late they have become competitive to their men counterparts.

Furthermore, Weiner (1985) discovered that symbolic meanings were connected to emotional reactions. Emotions were a product of responses to the causes of events people held, according to Weiner et'al (1982). Therefore, attributions to causal effects aroused emotions in employees thereby impacting on performance depending on individual emotional intelligence to interpret the situation. Emotional maturity was a major aspect of the attribution process, according to Harvey and Dasborough (2006). As a result, the extent to which individuals created attributions in certain circumstances were influenced by their level of commitment. Emotional intelligence was linked to potential mediators and helpful causal styles, which encouraged positive responses to occurrences. The rationale behind this assumption was that social skills enabled people to properly deal with unpleasant events (Harvey and Dasborough, 2006).

The social exchange theory was credited to (Blau 1964, Homans 1961; Thibaut and Kelley, 1959) as noted by Davlembayeva and Alamanos (2021). They were interested in the psychology of small groups with the intention to understand interpersonal relationships in communities and dyadic relationships (Emerson, 1976). Homans (1961) used a reductionist approach to explain the relationships between people through reinforcement mechanisms, where the behaviour of social actors was reinforced by reward and inhibited by punishments (Delamater, 2006).

The social exchange theory argued that motivation in an organization was possible

through different social exchanges. The theory supported that, when the manager trusted employees, the workers reciprocated the gesture by putting more effort. The motivation contributed to positive attitudes towards work and increased commitment by the employees resulting in high performance levels (Davlembayeva and Alamanos, 2021).

The theory added that, line managers were there to manage human resources with the objective of attaining organizational performance as noted by Satyendra (2021). Management rewarded employees for their value addition to the organization and ensured that welfare was sustained towards consistent productivity. Through employee engagement with the office environment, the workplace environment had a beneficial effect on job performance (Kendra, 2022). Kurtessis et'al (2015) summarized that perceived organizational support was inspired by the exchange theory where employee commitment to the company was in anticipation of compensation for performance. Pleasant feelings were linked to positive outcomes such as growth, engagement, autonomy and good mood. Bad feelings and emotions, on the other hand, have been proven to predict a wide range of adverse consequences, including anxiety, turnover, decreased earnings, and even violence in the workplace (Bagozzi, 2003).

#### **2.1.4 The theory driving Employee Performance**

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory was used to contextualise employee performance in an organisation. Maslow noted that behaviour was best understood by identifying motivational factors such as physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1948) in Perone (2005). Based on Maslow's pyramid, at the bottom, the basic needs were physiological and safety needs. Psychological needs alleviated physical discomfort such as access to food and water after which employees worked hard for the organisation to gain safety in the form of job security and shelter translating to cultivation of a sense of belonging (Perone, 2005). For example, a company which introduced staff shareholding schemes as a retention incentive tended to retain and motivate its employees compared to those who just paid the agreed remuneration. Needs theories were understood to drive team performance, by Peters, (1997) and employee productivity (Ajila, 1997) cited by Perone (2005).

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

According to findings by (Kendra,2022; Satyendra,2021; Popa et'al,2020; Victoria,2019; Kurtessis et'al, 2015; Saeed, et'al,2013), management support, technological support and rewards in the workplace influenced employee performance.

### **2.2.1 Relationship between Management Support and Employee Performance**

Satyendra (2019) noted that, employees needed recognition for being part to the organization, not merely as workers in the workplace. With a sense of belonging, employees worked harder and produced quality results. Innovations grew as workers came up with new concepts which had a beneficial impact on production towards the company's growth, cited by Satyendra, (2019). Staff were more likely to put in their maximum performance if the working conditions were pleasant and leadership exhibited the openness that they frequently required from their staff (Victoria, 2019; Fernández, 2003). The difficulties brought about by the employment landscape and the organizational climate were genuine. Dramatic shifts, according to Victoria (2019), demanded experienced and informed people who were agile, dynamic, and future-oriented in the workplace. As a result, dealing with the issue of poor performance necessitated active and forceful action on both sides of the workforce (Webster, 2008).

Dos Santos, Arachchilage and Jonsson (2020) studied service delivery in the Swedish banking industry where they found out that the managers who acted as leaders influenced employee engagement at work by involving them in crafting internal objectives. Furthermore, Arinanye (2015) found that management had a vital influence in motivating workers by offering them a chance to express themselves and collaborate at Makerere University's College of Computing and Information Sciences in Uganda. Leadership approach, corporate values, and workplace norms were all found as factors influencing achievement (Omollo, 2015; Saeed et'al, 2013; Zahargier and Balasundaram, 2011; Nassazi, 2013 and Amari, 2014). According to Saeed et'al (2013), there was a favorable association between management disposition and staff performance in Pakistan's banking industry.



Employees in the travel and tourism institutions of Amman in Jordan often mimicked the dedication, work ethic and actions of their managers which they incorporated into their own conduct (Alfandi, 2019). For instance, when a manager in the call centre ensured that each daily task was completed at the end of each day, the attitude had a trickle-down effect in the workplace thereby positively influencing employee performance. Whymark (2012) added that, managers were concerned with organising programs into systems of work and ensure organisational goals were met. Managers, according to Krot and Lewicka (2018), had the authority to make decisions that significantly influenced subordinates. Employees in turn looked up to supervisors for task delegation, performance reviews, and upgrading.

Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) noted that, managers were institutional actors, and by according favours to staff led to employees perceiving it as organizational support. Employees' perceptions of supervisor conduct were influenced by how they viewed the supervisor as the company representative (Eisenberger et al, 2002). A survey of Pakistani teachers, revealed that a business leader got work done through inspiring staff as noted by Shahzadi, Javed, Pirzada Nasreen and Khanam (2014). Furthermore, research in Pakistan's banking industry revealed that managers' attitude caused a lot of challenges, including increased staff turnover (Asrar-ul-Haq and Kuchinke, 2016).

### **2.2.2 Relationship between Technological Support and Employee Performance**

The findings by Lemarleni, Ochieng, Gakobo and Mwaura (2017) in Kenya identified technology as crucial to the success and growth of the Nairobi police services.

A research by Nyandara, Ngacho and Yambo (2017) at the Sony Sugar Company in Kenya found that information systems were at the core of its daily activities empowering workers to implement the corporate strategy. According to Imran and Maqbool (2014) in their study of the banking industry in Pakistan, observed that the advent of technology transformed the way tasks were undertaken and massively enhanced organisational productivity within a short space of time. Abbas, Muzaffar and Mahmood (2014) noted that technology helped in productivity of the Allied Bank of

Pakistan and reduced client service time thereby reducing the employee workload and gave them control over errors and frauds. Abbas et'al (2014) added that, organisations embraced modern techniques, processes and procedures to sustain operations and fulfil client expectations while retaining relevance in the global village.

According to Frey and Osborne (2017), around 47 percent of the US working population held occupations that will be automated in the next several decades leading to job losses. Further reports throughout the European Union have validated these findings, ranging from 6% in Finland and Estonia to about 12% in Austria, Germany, and Spain (Arntz, Sarra Berlingieri, 2019; Sorgner et'al, 2017) quoted by Pena-Casas, Ghailani and Coster (2018). A study by Das and Hilgenstock (2018) cited by Shapiro and Mandelman (2019) revealed that, the adoption of automation technologies may replace certain tasks, occupations and jobs thereby contributing to labour market disruptions and greater unemployment. Personnel lacked confidence on leaders as they had authority on resources with a likelihood of abusing it, affecting performance as observed by Krot and Lewicka (2018) at Gaia lingerie firm in Poland.

Kissflow, (2020) noted that digital workplaces offered a central platform for accessing the company's systems and helped manage tasks, saved time, increased productivity and improved employee experience. Al-Hawary and AlDafiri (2017) concurred that when Kuwait's Interior Ministry incorporated ICTs into its operations, that significantly accounted for an upsurge in personnel productivity. Studies revealed that technology was important in enhancing performance, since it connected multiple processes and avoided redundancy and duplication. It also decreased mistakes and costs, resulting in improved efficiency towards organizational productivity. According to the research at the Shahr Bank of Iran by Rezaei, Rezaei, Zare, Akbarzadeh and Zare (2014) concluded that, the workplace became dynamic, fast and complex and the associated challenges demanded the adoption and implementation of new concepts and strategies.

According to the findings of Gerten, Beckmann, and Bellmann (2018) on the German Linked Personnel Panel, the influence of technology in businesses was fundamentally

clear. The widespread use of technology made it feasible to keep track of how employees were conducting their duties without deviating. Additionally, automation enabled personnel to operate independently leading to the cultivation of quality culture. Research by Yuvaraj and Nadheya (2018) in India found that, employees were satisfied with technology and willing to adopt it, to increase their performance level and keep up to date with technologies towards mastery in their professions. Employees showed a positive attitude towards technology as it did not constrain their work and made it easy for them to finish their tasks in time. Increase in output was not only attributed to systems but also to how they were incorporated into the business by Gagnon and Dragon (nd). Therefore, this meant that after adopting the technology, the whole organisational ecosystem needed to be merged into the network to ensure the establishment of a seamless cyber community.

Performance of employees depended on job satisfaction, reward plans, modern tools, techniques and sophisticated technologies according to Brhane and Zewdie (2018). Technologies were the greatest element that evolved frequently and had a beneficial impact on staff effectiveness in Kenya's Postal Corporation (Karanja, 2015). The findings by Dampana and Agbeyegbe (2017) in the Nigerian banking sector showed that Information and Communication Technology improved the skills of workers thereby improving the employee's performance. In the Malaysian manufacturing business, Baskaran, Lay, Ming and Mahadi, (2020) noted that automation had a significant impact on productivity, ensuring minimal discrepancies, boost growth, and improve communication. In Nigeria, findings by Agboola, Akinbode, Segun-Adeniran, Dibia, Oloruntoba, Dinyain, Fabunmi, Funsho, Akinde and Betek, (2019) revealed that motivation towards innovation adoption was aimed at reducing the time staff took to resolve client enquiries and increase company profitability while exciting personnel.

### **2.2.3 Relationship between Rewards and Employee Performance**

Through employment perks and benefits, personnel experienced a successful and worthwhile workplace culture (Satyendra, 2019). Personnel attitude, performance, and participation all improved when the workers were rewarded. As a result, the company became more profitable and work engagement substantially improved.

Employees were involved with the firm and their career, owing to remuneration or benefits, according to findings by Mohd, Shah and Zailan (2016) in studies at an Indian telecommunication company. By defining the conditions of trade, the incentive system distinguished the link between the company and individual employee (Kerr and Slocum, 2005). Employees needed to be rewarded and compensated in order to encourage them to work effectively and devote more time to their jobs. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) examined more than 70 papers on personnel perceptions about employer concern over their contribution and welfare. Transparency, role clarity, and organizational benefits reflected a positive treatment of workers, which resulted in employee dedication and job success.

According to the findings of Saeed, et'al (2013) in Pakistan's banking industry,

"Money related elements were critical in improving employee performance. Monetary incentives helped in achievement of excellence because economic rewards were crucial in improving work engagement."

Personnel interpreted their employers' capacity to compensate performance, according to the organizational support theory (Chen, Eisenberger, Johnson, Sucharski and Aselage 2009). Encouraging employee participation resulted in awards being issued for supporting the wellbeing of the organisation (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Findings by Njanja, Maina, Kibet and Njagi (2013) at the Kenya Power and Lighting Company noted how management established that rewards in their organization such as cash bonuses increased employee performance through real time support. Shahzadi et'al, (2014) found that motivating factors had a strong association with the performance of employees in their study of Pakistani teachers. More so, a study on twelve global banks by Gungor (2011) revealed that, employees were motivated to expend more effort on their work when they felt their past efforts resulted in them being rewarded.

Several researches reveal that another important factor influencing employee performance was the incentives system (Taufek, Zulkifle, and Sharif, 2016; Srivastava

and Bansal, 2016; Omollo, 2015; Anitha, 2014). Employee achievements deserved compensation in either physical or intangible incentives, according to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002). Hence, external factors on the company were not necessarily the only causes of incentive provision. There were also consequences from contractual obligations, role expectations, government laws, and social standards whose breach would result in negative exposure.

A comprehensive analysis of literature revealed how vital the appropriate balance of rewards was to an organization's effectiveness (Murphy, 2015). According to Karami, Dolatabadi and Rajaeepour (2013) compensation procedures had a favorable and substantial impact on employees at the Isfahan Regional Electric Company in Iran, while incentives had a moderating effect. The perks were established in a manner that they enhanced both the company's and employee profits (Karami et'al, 2013). The primary goal of an incentive system was to heed the worker's demands and distribute awards fairly in and out of the organization (Laler et'al, 1975). Reciprocal exchange of resources and effort was a priority.

Employee motivation was a result of internal factors, as a mental process that affected how personnel engaged with their work situation, according to Satyendra (2019). Mohd et'al (2016) revealed that the work atmosphere and rewards improved staff motivation and productivity. Aropah et'al (2020) noted that, Indonesia issued Circular 19 of 2020 promulgating work from home policy as a reward for performing employees during the Covid19 pandemic. Family demands, increased employee enthusiasm to do their best at work (Bahagia and Putri, 2021).

#### **2.2.4 Contextualising Employee Performance**

Employee performance was understood from the model of Sonnentag and Frese (2002) with two approaches thus, task-oriented performance and context-oriented performance. Task oriented was focused on operational issues relating to how inputs were processed leading to outputs then profits. For example, the production line of leather into shoes and belts until they are sold on the market. Whereas context-oriented

performance was tied to the organisational environment and its support structures which contributed to employee effectiveness. For example, level of technological investments, type of equipment and company strategies among other variables which had an effect on role execution. The model closely tied in to other performance predictors such as job satisfaction and company environment from findings in Brazil by Paula and Queiroga (2015) cited by Andrade et al (2020). Task performance was skills based towards productivity and profits while context performance was about social and employee identification with the organisation (Sonnentag and Frese, 2002).

### **2.3 Justification of the study**

Findings from studies in the following countries: Austria, China, the European Union, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. Furthermore, because the majority of the investigations were conducted in the service sectors, the review narrowed down to establish how organisational support impacted on employee performance under virtual working conditions in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe. The main gaps identified in the empirical evidence were to do with management support towards employees, challenges in technological capacitation and rewards variations. The current study went on to unpack how telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe managed to empower employees and ensure that client support was readily available without leaving the burden on the employees.

### **2.4 Summary**

The literature review was examined in this chapter in terms of the existing theories and research findings that supported the investigation. There was a thorough review of previous research papers that demonstrated the influence of organizational support on employee performance. In addition, the justification to the current study highlighted gaps in past researches which it focused on unveiling. The research approach used in the study was the subject of Chapter 3.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter focused on establishing the best tools and techniques to unpack the study objectives through evidence-based research. Tools and techniques such as Cronbach's alpha, Saunders model, Eisenberger's measurement scales and ethical considerations were thoroughly discussed to ensure consistency in the whole project.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The causal research design was used. Organisational support had a causative effect on the resultant employee performance in the Covid era between 2020 and 2021. Studies by Mohd et'al (2016) in the Malaysian telecommunications and a study on banks in Nigeria by Obiageli et'al (2015), used causal analysis on a quantitative survey questionnaire and correlation and regression analysis to test hypothesis and also in Jordan (Bataineh, 2019 and Karami et'al, 2013) on influence of work environment on productivity. These past studies were carried out in related work environments to current study though this research was in the Zimbabwean context but with the same variables, making the research design relevant.

#### **3.2 Target Population**

The 6000 Zimbabwean call centre representatives were the target demographic. Zimbabwe has 36 contact centres in the telecommunications, insurance, and banking industries, employing approximately 6000 people (Munhende, 2019).

#### **3.3 Sample Size**

The sample was drawn from the telecommunications industry with reference to Econet,

NetOne, Telecel and TelOne. The study's sample size was 357 at 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error based on (Saunders et al, 2005) certainty model as illustrated in table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: Sample sizes for different sizes of population at a 95% level of certainty**

POPULATION	5%	3%	2%	1%
50	44	48	49	50
100	79	91	96	99
150	108	132	141	148
200	132	168	185	196
250	151	203	226	244
300	168	234	267	291
400	196	291	434	384
500	217	340	414	475
750	254	440	571	696
1000	278	516	706	906
2000	322	696	1091	1655
5000	357	879	1622	3288
10000	370	964	1936	4899
100000	383	1056	2345	8762
1000000	384	1066	2395	9513
10000000	384	1067	2400	9595

*Adapted from Saunders et al (2005, p.67)*

The study sample was 357 employees in the telecommunication industry drawn from Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne who provided virtual support to clients over digital media (email, Twitter, Facebook, website and voice call).

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques

The approach utilised was convenience sampling by randomly selecting fully completed surveys to come up with 357 subjects. The method was cheap, efficient and simple to implement considering that subjects were geographically dispersed making the online survey effective in data collection. It involved voluntary participation without inclusion criterion identified prior to the selection of subjects (Dudovskiy, 2022). The 357 subjects were drawn from an excess pool of contact centre survey respondents in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe, which isolated the bias issue from participants across the industry. The method was complimented by the quota sampling method to ensure proportionality of subjects and objectivity in sample size. Quota sampling guaranteed that the test group reflected the chosen features of the population



(Dudovskiy, 2022). Both methods were relevant considering that the online questionnaire upheld confidentiality to guarantee honesty feedback since it excluded details about the company of origin or names of subjects.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

In this study an online questionnaire was developed on Google Forms and used as a research instrument to collect the primary data. According to Kothari (2007), research instruments were a means for gathering information and data to solve the research topic. For data collection, a standardised online questionnaire was used. Primary data was used to acquire information. Primary data, according to Kotler (2012), was information gathered for the project under investigation. Primary data assisted with establishing innovative ways to solve the problem statement of the research.

#### **3.5.1 Measurement Scales**

In order to come up with an online questionnaire, the following measurement scales to assess organisational support on employee performance were used.

##### **3.5.1.1 Management / Technological Support and Rewards Scale**

To measure management support, technological support and rewards on employee performance, Eisenberger's 36-Item organisational support scale was adapted from Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa (1986). The scale was modified to construct a 15item scale with five questions to address each variable thus (management support, technological support and rewards) independently in view of organisational support on employee performance. The scale ranged from 1=strongly disagree to 7 =strongly agree continuum. Item-total correlations ranged from .42 to .83 and mean and median item-total correlations of .67 and .66, respectively, the Eisenberger analysis yielded a reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha index of .97.

##### **3.5.1.2 Employee Performance Scale**

To measure employee performance the General Self-Assessment Scale (GSAS) adapted

from Queiroga, (2009) was used. The Sonnentag and Frese (2002), task and context model were the benchmark for employee performance, however it became an accredited instrument when the GSAS came into operation (Campbell and Wiernik, 2015). The GSAS was a 20item instrument with 11items being context related in view of organisational climate (social, strategic, psychological) and 9items related to individual requirements to accomplish tasks (skills, techniques).

Organisational climate had a significant influence on employee performance by Huang and Su, (2016). This study was context-oriented considering that the sample under study was remote based in addition to Covid regulatory issues which inhibited access to task-oriented performance. GSAS, as a psychometric instrument was applied to this context-oriented study. The 11 context-based items were reduced to only 5items closely linked to the topic, to reduce response time to the survey in addition to retain the psychometric characteristics. The scale frequency ranged from 1=strongly disagree to 7 =strongly agree. The data was reliable with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.88 for context factors. According to Andrade et'al (2020), reducing surveys by 50% contributed in inclusion of future constructs in later surveys as the field handle vast choices.

Two pre-tests were done on the questionnaire. The first pre-test was a brainstorming session with classmates and industry professionals to get feedback and ideas on the questionnaire's contents. The purpose of the follow-up pre-test was to see how well random people in the industry comprehended the questions. Unclear questions were rewritten to make them easily understandable.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

These were procedures taken while distributing tools and collecting data from respondents (Brown, 2006). The link to the Google Forms questionnaire was shared through the Public Relations representatives of Econet, NetOne, Telecel and TelOne for distribution to their teams. The questionnaires were made up of a series of questions that were used to determine the gender, residential status, occupancy at a residence and other questions addressing issues to do with management support, technological

resources and rewards of the participants. The online questionnaire was active from March 2022 up to May 2022. This space was also meant not to be pushy but allow for objective feedback to be provided.

The responses were collected from a large pool of participants by using the online questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that impartial and unbiased replies could be obtained. The questionnaire was effective in maintaining the respondents' anonymity because they were not obliged to identify themselves or companies. There was an ample time to complete the survey at their own pace. To encourage the subjects to engage with the survey, follow ups were done with firm representatives on a regular basis.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability**

The validity was analysed based on convergent validity and discriminant validity. Reliability was established based on the Cronbach alpha index as discussed below.

#### **3.7.1 Validity**

Validity was measured in terms of convergent validity and discriminant validity. Validity was described as the success of a research instrument in measuring what it was meant to assess (Field, 2013; Pallant et al., 2020). On management support variable all the items loaded significantly implying the presence of convergent validity. For rewards item RW4 did not load significantly and was excluded from further analysis. The other reward items were adequate to represent the construct and had sufficient convergent validity. On technological support items TS1 and TS 2 did not load significantly and were excluded from further analysis. The other items were adequate to represent the construct and had sufficient convergent validity. Lastly, on employee performance all the items loaded significantly implying the presence of convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was described as the degree under which items within the given construct was strongly associated with other measures of similar variable though

different from other items of another construct to which it was unrelated (Liang & Chia, 2014; Pallant, 2010). There was acceptable discriminant validity for all the four constructs in the study since there was no correlation coefficient of more than 0.9 for all the pairs of constructs.

### **3.7.2 Reliability**

The degree to which a scale gave consistent findings when repeated measurements were taken was called reliability (Middleton, 2019). Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of measurement scales. It was a metric for how closely linked objects were categorised inside the organisation. Participants were anticipated to earn comparable scores on each question if the questions all dealt with the same theme. Fornell and Larcker (1981) noted that alpha values must be more than 0.7 to suggest that the variables under research were dependable. However, in this study the alpha index of Perry, Charlotte, Isabella and Bob (2004) was used based on the .5 to .7 moderate reliability test.

## **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

To ensure the study did not infringe on the rights of other natural elements, the research was driven by three primary ethical principles: respect for humans, beneficence, and justice. Ethics were understood as what was morally, the right thing to do (Barrett-Maitland and Lynch, 2020). Ethics for this study were elaborated as follows.

### **3.8.1 Respect for persons**

There was protection to those with limited autonomy such as the illiterate, disabled and others. Respondents were advised on what the data will be used for in addition to associated privileges they held in relation to the data they provided including right to edit, withdraw or deletion of the information.

### **3.8.2. Beneficence**

There was maximization of benefits and minimized harms to environmental factors

through acts of kindness that go beyond call of duty. This entailed, doing no harm, preventing harm, preventing evil and promoting the good. All these ethical issues were applicable to humans and non-human elements whichever was applicable in the study. The hazards, on the other hand, were insignificant in comparison to the advantages. Contradictions were also controlled to prevent prejudices.

### **3.8.3 Justice**

The costs and benefits of the study were distributed fairly. By differentiating between procedural and distributive justice, people were treated equitably. Chisi et'al (2000) stated that vulnerable participants were not to be chosen because of vulnerability.

## **3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis**

To analyse the data from the questionnaire, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme was used. There was an assessment of the correlations using multiple regression statistics because of the software. Data analysis, according to Khan and Best (1993), included reducing a large amount of data to a manageable size, producing summaries, looking for patterns, and using statistical tools. For ease of comprehension, data was provided in the form of tables and figures. Data was interpreted and analysed using descriptive statistics, mean, and standard deviations. It also assisted in determining the link between two or more independent variables by using multiple regression analysis, which was applicable when two or more independent variables were present (Wegner, 2006).

### **3.10 summary**

The research design provided leads into the nature of the target population which was narrowed down to a sustainable sample size of 357 subjects. These subjects participated in the primary data collection process. All the methodological techniques were discussed to elaborate how the information collection and processing will ensue. Ethical issues were outlined to manage professionalism and protect the integrity of the participants. The presentation of data, analysis, and discussion of the research became the focus of Chapter 4.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This unit was guided by the previous section that was highlighting the research design, data collection, analysis and presentation techniques. The focus was on data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. Tables and figures were used to present data, descriptive statistics were used to analyse data and structural equation modelling was used to test hypotheses.

#### 4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

##### 4.1.1 Response Rate

A total of 357 fully completed online questionnaires were adopted for data processing. The effective response rate was 100 per cent and these questionnaires were coded and analysed for this study. Table 4.1 exhibits the response rate percentages.

**Table 4.1: Details of response rate**

Item	Frequency	Percent (%)
Distributed	357	100
Returned	357	100
Correctly answered	357	100
<b>Effective response rate</b>	<b>357/357</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data (2022)

According to Table 4.1, the response rate was highly pleasing at 100%. This was due to the use of online questionnaires targeted at respondents with access to the internet.

#### 4.1.2 Demographic Profile

The descriptive statistics covered gender distribution, residential status and number of people who shared residences. Table 4.2 below illustrated the demographic summary.

**Table 4.2: Demographic information**

Demographic variable		Frequency	Percent %
Gender of respondents	Female	192	53.8
	Male	165	46.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Residential status	Ownership	54	15.1
	Offspring	103	28.9
	Tenant	112	31.4
	Other	88	24.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Residential sharing	0	26	7.3
	1	31	8.7
	2	81	22.7
	3	92	25.8
	4	75	21.0
	5	52	14.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A total of 192, representing 53.8 per cent of the survey's respondents were female, while 165 (46.2%) were male. Therefore, from this study females dominated in participating compared to their male counterparts. The majority residential status was tenant with 31.4%, followed by offspring with 28.9%, followed by other with 24.6%. Then at the bottom was ownership with 15.1%. Therefore, the study revealed that the majority of the respondents were tenants.

The majority of the respondents shared residences with other families and those who share with three families constituting 25.8%. Then those sharing with two families constituted 22.7%, followed by those who shared with four families constituting 21%. Those sharing with five families or more constituted 14.6%. Sharing with one family constituted 8.7%. Those staying alone constituted 7.%. Hence, most of the respondents shared residence with other families.

### 4.1.3 Convergent Validity

Validity was described as the success to which a research instrument measured what it was meant to measure (Field, 2013; Pallant et al., 2020). Table 4.3 below reflected the validity of findings from the dependent variable, employee performance and its independent variables thus, management support, technological support and rewards.

On the management support variable all the items loaded significantly implying the presence of convergent validity. For rewards item RW4 did not load significantly and was therefore excluded from further analysis. The other reward items were adequate to represent the construct and had sufficient convergent validity. Focusing on technological support items TS1 and TS 2 did not load significantly and were therefore excluded from further analysis. The other items were adequate to represent the construct and had sufficient convergent validity. Furthermore, for employee performance all the items loaded significantly implying the presence of convergent validity.

**Table 4.3: Items, standardized factor loadings**

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
MS1 <--- MS	1.000				
MS2 <--- MS	.782	.111	7.055	***	
MS3 <--- MS	.832	.111	7.483	***	
MS4 <--- MS	.775	.101	7.694	***	
MS5 <--- MS	.965	.150	6.434	***	
RW1 <--- RW	1.000				
RW2 <--- RW	1.059	.165	6.434	***	
RW3 <--- RW	.209	.069	3.026	.002	
RW5 <--- RW	.171	.069	2.500	.012	
TS5 <--- TS	1.000				
TS4 <--- TS	2.964	.549	5.395	***	
TS3 <--- TS	2.643	.520	5.087	***	
EP5 <--- EP	1.000				
EP4 <--- EP	1.409	.259	5.440	***	
EP3 <--- EP	1.093	.234	4.668	***	
EP2 <--- EP	1.888	.348	5.430	***	
EP1 <--- EP	2.118	.383	5.524	***	

Standardized factor loadings were used to determine convergent validity as presented



in table 4.3 above. According to (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Hair et al., 2006; Liang and Chia, 2014; Pallant, 2010; Yong and Pearce, 2013; Wixom and Watson, 2001), the standardised factor loadings below 0.05 implied convergent validity of the constructs. The study results showed that management support, rewards, technological support and employee performance constructs had convergent validity because they loaded significantly. The P (\*\*\*) value was 0.01 less than 0.05 threshold across all the constructs confirming convergent validity of the variables after loading significantly.

#### 4.1.4 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was described as the degree under which items within the construct were strongly associated with other measures of similar variable though different from other items of another construct to which it was unrelated (Liang & Chia, 2014; Pallant, 2010). There was acceptable discriminant validity for all the four constructs in this study since there was no correlation coefficient of above 0.9 for all the pairs of constructs. Results in Figure 4.1: measurement model indicated that conditions essential for fulfilling discriminant validity were satisfied by the available correlation coefficients in the current study.

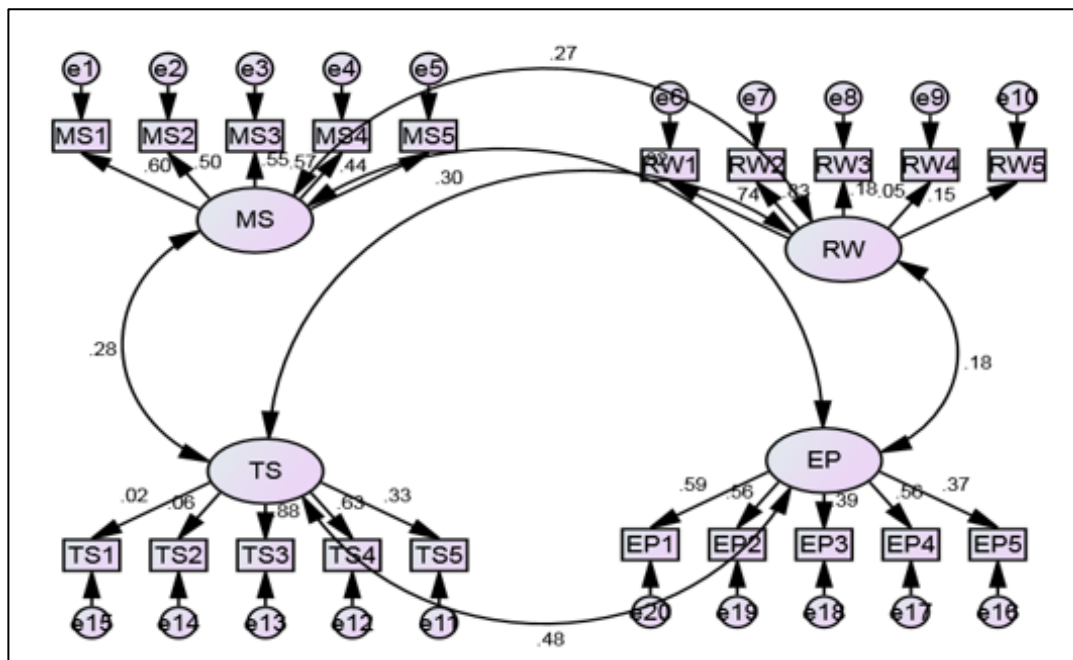


Figure 4.1: Measurement Model

#### 4.1.5 Reliability

The reliability of each construct was illustrated below in table 4.4, using Cronbach's alpha index. The generally accepted alpha rating was 0.7. However, this depended on various factors including size of scale and number of items. Halim (2022) argued that, Cronbach's alpha was also dependent on the field under investigation which made it vary. Perry, Charlotte, Isabella and Bob, (2004) noted that an alpha index ranging from .5 to .7 had moderate reliability. Therefore, findings in the table 4.4 below were valid.

<b>Table 4.4: Reliability</b>		
<b>Construct</b>	<b>N0. Of items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Management support	5	.640
Technological support	4	.519
Rewards	3	.197
Employee performance	5	.505

The study findings in table 4.4 reflected that there was moderate reliability according to Perry et'al, (2004). This was so in view of management support (.640), technological support (.519) and employee performance (.505) while rewards at (.197) revealed low reliability. Hence, the measurement scale was reliable, since majority of the items had indices above 0.5 threshold according to Perry et'al (2004) alpha index.

#### 4.1.6 Hypotheses Testing

The research sought to establish the impact of organisational support on employee performance in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe, hence testing hypotheses was unavoidable. Hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis. The assumption of normality was deemed to have been met in the research study since the sample size used was above 30.

##### 4.1.6.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.5 below illustrated the metrics in relation to how respondents agreed or disagreed with the study hypotheses in view of mean and standard deviation.

<b>Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics</b>			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Employee Performance	5.7051	.71827	356
Management support	4.8281	.70034	356
Technological support	5.5000	.79730	356
Rewards	2.9263	.72482	356

From the study findings, organisational support positively influenced employee performance with a mean (5.7051) based on the 7likert scale it meant that respondents *slightly agree* with the hypotheses. However, there was positive deviation in support of the hypothesis,

Management support had an effect on employee performance with an average (4.8281) which implied that respondents *neither agree nor disagree*. The positive deviation supported.

Technological support mean was (5.5000) which reflected that the feedback from the respondents *slightly agree* with a positive deviation in support of the hypothesis.

Rewards mean (2.9263) was fairly balanced in between *moderately disagree and slightly disagree* since the mean could easily be rounded off to the nearest whole number 3. However, the positive deviation implied that the sentiment of the respondents supported the hypothesis.

It is important to note that table 4.5 was reflective of the importance of organisational support on employee performance as confirmed by the positive deviation of all variables above 0.7.

#### **4.1.6.2 Regression Analysis**

A multiple regression analysis was used to examine management support, technological support and rewards as predictors of the employee performance. The results were illustrated in Table 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6: The impact of organisational support dimensions on employee performance**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.919	.259		7.402	.000	1.409	2.429		
Management Support	.488	.046	.476	10.686	.000	.398	.578	.870	1.149
Technological Support	.242	.040	.269	6.026	.000	.163	.321	.868	1.152
Rewards	.034	.043	.034	.775	.439	-.052	.119	.898	1.113

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The model predicts that a significant amount of variance in overall employee performance,  $F(3, 355) = 75.800$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = .392$ . After controlling for the other variables in the model, Management Support,  $t = 10.686$ ,  $p = .000$ ; Technological Support,  $t = 6.026$ ,  $p = .000$ ; and Rewards,  $t = .775$ ,  $p = .439$ ; were significant predictors of employee performance.

#### 4.1.7 Hypotheses Decisions

The hypotheses were summarised below as follows.

**Table 4.7: Hypothesis Decision**

Hypothesis	Causal Path	Verdict
H1	MS -----> EP	Supported
H2	TS-----> EP	Supported
H3	RW----->EP	Supported

#### H1: Management support had a positive impact on employee performance

Figure 4.1 showed that hypothesis H1 was below the 0.9 threshold of discriminant validity and table 4.4 estimated a Cronbach alpha index of reliability .640 indicating a positive relationship between management support and employee performance (Perry et al, 2004). A mean value of 4.8281, was high with a positive deviation of .70034 in table 4.5 while convergent validity P-value (\*\*\*) was 0.01 less than 0.05 threshold and thereby loaded significantly in table 4.3. In addition, the 95% confidence level existed at .488 between lower and upper bands with a linearity tolerance of .870 in table 4.7. As a result, H1 received a lot of statistical support.

## **H2: Technological support had a positive impact on employee performance**

Figure 4.1 revealed that hypothesis H2 was below the 0.9 threshold of discriminant validity and table 4.4 estimated a Cronbach alpha index of reliability .519 indicating a positive relationship between technological support and employee performance (Perry et'al, 2004). A mean value of 5.5000, was high with a positive deviation of .79730 in table 4.5 while convergent validity P-value (\*\*\*) was 0.01 less than 0.05 threshold and thereby loaded significantly in table 4.3. In addition, the 95% confidence level existed at .242 between lower and upper bands with a linearity tolerance of .868 in table 4.7. Therefore, hypothesis H2 received a lot of statistical support.

## **H3: Rewards had a positive impact on employee performance**

Figure 4.1 illustrated that hypothesis H3 was below the 0.9 threshold of discriminant validity and table 4.4 estimated a Cronbach alpha index of reliability .197 indicating a relationship between rewards and employee performance (Perry et'al, 2004). A mean value of 2.9263, was fair with a positive deviation of .72482 in table 4.5 while convergent validity P-value (\*\*\*) was 0.01 less than 0.05 threshold and thereby loaded significantly in table 4.3. In addition, the 95% confidence level existed at .067 between lower and upper bands with a linearity tolerance of .898 in table 4.7. Therefore, hypothesis H3 received statistical support.

## **4.2 Discussion of the Findings**

The following was a discussion of the findings in relation to existing literature:

### **4.2.1 The impact of management support on employee performance**

Hypothesis H1 was empirically supported, implying that positive management support had a statistically significant impact on employee performance. The findings were supported by earlier studies (Fernández, 2003; Kelidbari et al., 2016; Victoria, 2019). Satyendra (2019) noted that, employees worked harder towards quality deliverables when they felt appreciated by the organization, as its critical elements and not merely as workers. As a result, employees became innovative and those ideas contributed towards company growth and productivity as noted by (Satyendra, 2019). Additionally,

Victoria (2019) stated that, organisational transformation required skilled and knowledgeable staff who were keen, flexible, and with a clear vision. Hence, to address the performance issue required active and aggressive interventions from both the managers and the employees (Webster et al, 2008).

Dos Santos et al. (2020) studied service delivery in the Swedish banking industry where they found out that the managers involved employees in crafting and implementing company objectives which encouraged employee engagement. Additionally, findings in Uganda at Makerere University's College of Computing and Information Sciences by Arinanye (2015) revealed that, managers gave employees opportunities to share their own ideas and participate in their execution which helped in staff retention and improved performance. Other studies identified managers' attitude, organizational culture and standards at work as some of the factors which affected employee performance (Amari, 2014; Nassazi, 2013; Omollo, 2015; Saeed et al, 2013; Zahargier and Balasundaram, 2011). Saeed et al. (2013) noted that in the Banking sector of Pakistan there was a positive relationship between the manager's attitude and the performance of the employees.

Krot and Lewicka (2018) noted that, managers had the decisive authority to determine the course of an individual employee's trajectory within the organisation. For example, employees looked up to managers for daily task allocations, performance appraisals or elevation to particular roles. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) found that, supervisors acted on behalf of the employer which resulted in employees attributing any treatment (positive / negative) to perceived organisational bias. Manager and employee relations thrived on how employees viewed the supervisor as a company representative not an ordinary individual (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Based on a study of educators in Pakistan the managers motivated their staff to get work done on time (Shahzadi et al., 2014). Furthermore, findings in the banking sector of Pakistan revealed that the managers' behaviour contributed to staff turnover among other labour challenges (Asrar-ul-Haq and Kuchinke, 2016).

#### **4.2.2 The impact of technological support on employee performance**

From the findings of this study and empirical evidence, hypothesis H2 was positively confirmed. The research confirmed that provision of technological support had a statistically significant effect on employee performance. The resource-based view theory posited that a firm was an ecosystem which thrived on physical, financial, human and intangible assets (Kelidbari et'al, 2016). The findings by Lemarleni et'al (2017) in Kenya identified the importance of technological resources in the success and growth of the Nairobi police services.

A study of the banking sector in Pakistan by Imran and Maqbool (2014) concluded that, technology revamped the way of doing business by reducing effort required and task completion time thereby improving employee performance. Abbas et'al. (2014) stated that technology increased productivity of the Allied Bank of Pakistan by reducing client support time and staff workloads making it easy to manage errors and frauds. Abbas et'al. (2014) added that to remain competitive while satisfying customer needs, businesses needed to embrace best industry practices and latest technologies.

Kissflow (2020) noted that the digital workplaces provided a smart platform where personnel accessed the company systems virtually for managing tasks in real-time while improving productivity and employee experience. Al-Hawary and AlDafiri (2017) postulated that when the Interior Ministry of the Kuwait State adopted information technology it led to statistically significant effect on employee performance. Al-Hawary and AlDafiri (2017) further found that the technology linked numerous departments with each other and eliminated duplication of tasks. Errors and effort reduced as a result of technology and efficient processes leading to employee productivity due to informed administrative decisions (Kissflow, 2020). Based on the study of the Shahr Bank of Iran, Rezaei et'al (2014) concluded that the workplace had become a fast and complex system whose success could not be possible without technology.

Findings by Gerten, Beckmann and Bellmann (2018) on German Linked Personnel Panel, revealed that the impact of ICT in the workplace had become ambiguous. For instance, technology made it possible to monitor professional conduct remotely. On the

other hand, technology empowered employees to customize work schedules in case of power outages, network challenges or other unforeseen circumstances. Research by Yuvaraj and Nadheya (2018) in India revealed that workers were contented with technology and adopted it to improve performance, while keeping abreast with latest technologies for compatibility at work.

Performance of employees was dependent on contemporary tools, methods and new technologies (Brhane and Zewdie, 2018). Technology greatly changed and positively influenced employee performance in the Postal Corporation of Kenya (Karanja, 2015). The findings by Dampana and Agbeyegbe (2017) in the Nigerian banking sector, employee skills improved as a result of ICT leading to commendable staff performance. Baskaran et'al ( 2020) found that human error reduced, productivity increased, and the speed of communication increased in the Malaysian manufacturing industry as a result of technology. More findings by Agboola, et'al (2019) in Nigeria established that, work processes became faster and easier while the organization's economic efficiency improved through the use of technology.

#### **4.2.3 The impact of rewards on employee performance**

The rewards construct findings from the study and empirical findings positively supported the hypothesis H3. The results demonstrated that rewards had a statistically significant impact on employee performance. These findings were supported by existing literature (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Brief and Motowidlo, 1986; Etzioni, 1961; Gould, 1979; Levinson, 1965; March and Simon, 1958; Mowday et al., 1982; Organ and Konovsky, 1989; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Steers, 1977). Satyendra (2019) added that employees yearn to be more productive when they receive rewards and incentives from the organization. When recognized for good performance, employee morale tended to increase while developing a sense of job satisfaction and involvement in the workplace. As a result, organizations experienced efficiency and improved productivity (Satyendra, 2019).

Findings by Mohd et'al (2016) in an Indian telecommunication company, compensation



or rewards led to employee engagement with the organization. Rewards and compensation were essential elements for staff motivation towards improved performance and paying attention to their duties (Mohd et'al., 2016). Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) revealed that employee commitment and job performance were a result of supervisor support and rewards.

Findings by Saeed et'al. (2013) in the banking sector of Pakistan revealed that financial rewards were vital in enhancing the productivity of employees. Njanja et'al (2013) in a study at the Kenya Power and Lighting Company established that real-time customer support improved when employees were rewarded with a cash bonus. A study on teachers in Pakistan by Shahzadi et'al (2014) found that intrinsic rewards had a positive and significant correspondence to employee work output. More so, a study on twelve global banks by Gungor (2011) revealed that workers tended to put extra effort on the realisation that past efforts were rewarded.

Employee performance was attributed to reward systems in other further studies by (Anitha, 2014; Omollo, 2015; Srivastava and Bansal, 2016; Taufek, Zulkifle and Sharif, 2016). Murphy (2015) noted that the correct mix of rewards enhance employee performance in the workplace. Furthermore, a study by Karami et'al (2013) at Isfahan Regional Electric Company in Iran observed that, positive and significant employee performance was a result of sound reward management systems.

### **4.3 Summary**

The collected data was processed, presented and interpreted in this chapter. It was established that the findings positively and statistically supported the hypotheses H1, H2 and H3. Hypotheses testing and descriptive statistics were also performed using multiple regression technique. Finally, there was a discussion of the findings. To conclude the research, the study summary, conclusion, and recommendations were presented in the next chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter summarised the study findings. Then conclusions were drawn about the problem and hypotheses to the topic. These lead to defining of recommendations on the findings in relation to the impact of organisational support on employee performance.

#### **5.1 Summary**

The data was collected using an online questionnaire on Google Forms and was processed using the SPSS software and a report was generated to highlight the major findings. Convergent validity existed in all the constructs which were included for analysis. There was acceptable discriminant validity for the four constructs since the correlation coefficient was not above 0.9 for all the pairs of constructs. The Cronbach alpha index used was based on moderate reliability margin of .5 to .7.

There was a 95 percent confidence level, because all variables fell between the upper and lower boundaries. Then, a discussion of the findings revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between employee performance and management support, technological support and rewards. From the study findings it was discovered that employees positively and statistically significantly required management support, technological support and rewards to be able to efficiently serve the clients. Overall, hypotheses testing confirmed that employee performance was positively and statistically dependent on management support, technological support and rewards.

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

The conclusions on the impact of organisational support on employee performance in

the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe revealed that:

- The employees positively and statistically significantly believed that management support tended to have an effect on their performance. The reason given was that when managers exhibited a positive attitude towards employees in addition to co-opting them in the crafting of work objectives as well as their implementation, they established a sense of belonging. Hence, they nurtured the relationship to retain involvement in the company's strategic, tactical and operational successes as a way of personal branding through association.
- A close relationship between technological support and employee performance was also established. The increased efficiency in service delivery was attributed to centralisation and decentralisation of the office space. Centrally, technology enabled employees in various departments of the organisation to easily access the corporate interfaces from any location ensuring process consistency. In decentral, technology empowered employees to be able to reschedule their tasks in cases of network downtime or electricity blackouts while at the same time maintaining the same service quality.
- While the issue of rewards was appreciated in view of employee performance, it was observed that it still remained a grey area in organisational support. The findings exposed that, though there were some interventions being rolled out by organisations, but employee expectations were partly being fulfilled. This resulted in responses in relation to rewards being interchangeably varied from below to above the minimum threshold compared to management support and technological support both which comfortably settled above the minimum thresholds in support.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In light of the above conclusions, it was recommended that organisations should regularly review the support they provide to staff. This ensures employee job security which translate to seamless employee performance towards guaranteed client satisfaction leading to repeat and new business interactions and profitability.

While workers had genuine concerns in view of organisational support, it was recommended that companies should evaluate the significance and relevance of their support management systems. With the workspaces rapidly evolving, management support, technological support and reward management systems which dominated between the year 2020 and 2021 may no longer be relevant and feasible going into the year 2023 and beyond the same as they were not relevant in the year 2019 going backwards. The process of evaluating organisational support systems should not be left to the managers or shareholders or consultant firms alone, the employees should also collaborate in the process to ensure a shared vision by all the critical elements of the organisational value chain.

Furthermore, it was recommended that further research be undertaken in order to establish how best the organisations should support their employees in terms of rewards. The focus towards rewards was informed by the findings which reveal mixed sentiments compared to management support and technological support with significant positive feedback backed by sound statistical reports. Rewards should not always be financial but also in non-monetary forms, for example in other companies and countries they introduced paternity leave, menstrual leave, four day working week among other unique rewards. These interventions would motivate employees and retain their loyalty towards the success of the organisation.

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**BINDURA UNIVERSITY  
OF  
SCIENCE EDUCATION**

### **Organizational Support Questionnaire**

Dear Colleague

I am Tatenda Mugabe a Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) student for the Master of Science in Digital Marketing conducting a research study on the topic: **The impact of organizational support on employee performance in the telecommunications industry of Zimbabwe from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021.** Do not write your name on questionnaire. The findings from this study are for academic purposes. For any enquiries contact me on [tmug80@gmail.com](mailto:tmug80@gmail.com). Thank you, for your co-operation.

#### **SECTION A: Demographics of Respondents**

Answer all questions. Rate by placing a **Tick or X** in the desired answer.

1. Please indicate your Gender.

1 = Female

2 = Male

2. Please indicate your Residential status.

1 = Ownership

2 = Offspring

3 = Tenant

4 = Other

3. How many people do you share your residence with?

1 = 0 /zero

2 = 1 / one

3 = 2 / two

4 = 3 / three

5 = 4 / four

6 = 5+ / five or more

#### **SECTION B: Management Support**

Below are statements of possible opinions about organizational support given to you during the COVID19 pandemic period when you were working from home (virtual / telecommuting / remote working). Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by putting a **Tick or X**. Where 1=Strongly Disagree

2=Moderately Disagree

3=Slightly Disagree

4=Neither Agree/ Disagree

5=Slightly Agree

6=Moderately Agree

7=Strongly Agree

**Management Support (MS)**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MS1	Safety and health in home-based office was monitored by managers.							
MS2	Finances were provided to setup the home-based office.							
MS3	Employees were inducted / trained to fit in home-based office.							
MS4	Mental health support was provided during the period of working from home.							
MS5	Ergonomic chairs were provided to reduce back issues.							

**Rewards (RW)**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RW1	Salary / incentives were reviewed upwards.							
RW2	Salary / incentives were reduced.							
RW3	Home based work option is more rewarding than a pay rise.							
RW4	Working from home provided time to do personal business.							
RW5	Employees had the freedom to decide their work schedules.							

**Technological Support (TS)**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TS1	Laptops and modems used for remote working were loans.							
TS2	Electricity and network backup was provided by the employer.							
TS3	Virtual Private Network (VPN) made it possible to access systems from home-based office.							
TS4	VPN reduced customer enquiry handling time.							
TS5	Electricity/network challenges resulted in schedule adjustments.							

**SECTION C. Employee Performance****Employee performance (EP)**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EP1	I invest in my technical knowledge to do my job.							
EP2	I execute my tasks aiming for positive results.							
EP3	I plan my tasks in relation to organizational targets.							
EP4	I take initiatives to improve my results at work.							
EP5	I seize opportunities that improves my work results.							

END