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**FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS SCIENCE**

**RESEARCH TOPIC: Developing Strategies to Promote Organizational
Resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS IN
SPORT SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT.**

JUNE 2025.

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This dissertation, entitled "Developing Strategies That Promote Organizational Resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams," is hereby declared original work, which has neither been partly nor wholly presented to any institution for any degree or diploma, including this one.

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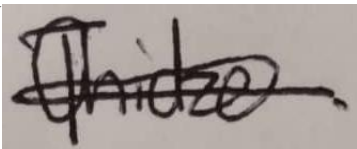
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ABSTRACT

This study examined how teams in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) develop organizational resilience amid persistent challenges such as financial instability, poor governance, and inadequate infrastructure. Using a mixed-method approach, researchers gathered quantitative data from 100 questionnaire respondents and qualitative insights from 20 in-depth interviews involving players, coaches, administrators, sponsors, media, fans, and community members.

Data were analyzed using SPSS for statistical relationships (e.g., ANOVA, correlations) and NVivo for thematic analysis. Results showed that while ZPSL teams possess some informal awareness of resilience, they lack structured, long-term strategies to manage risks. Effective practices identified included visionary leadership, diversified revenue generation, youth talent development, and stakeholder engagement. Major obstacles were political interference, inconsistent funding, and limited technology use.

Despite constraints such as scarce local literature and restricted participant access, the study ensured credibility through data triangulation and anonymity. It concludes that resilience remains mostly theoretical within ZPSL, recommending capacity building, digital transformation, and formal stakeholder strategies. The research contributes a context-specific resilience framework tailored for resource-limited sports organizations.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ ABBREVIATIONS SYMBOLS

AI – Artificial Intelligence

ANOVA - Analysis of Variance

HRO- High-Reliability Organization

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

ZPSL – Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League

GLOSSARY

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance): A statistical method used to compare means among different groups to determine if at least one group mean is significantly different from the others.

Adaptability: The ability of an organization to adjust to changes in the environment or circumstances, ensuring continued effectiveness and resilience.

Capacity Enhancement: The process of improving the skills, competencies, and resources of an organization to better handle challenges and seize opportunities.

Crisis Management: Strategies and processes that organizations implement to respond to and mitigate the impact of unexpected disruptions or emergencies.

Digital Transformation: The integration of digital technology into all aspects of an organization, fundamentally changing how it operates and delivers value.

Economic Volatility: Fluctuations in economic conditions that can impact the financial stability of organizations, particularly in sectors like sports.

Ethical Considerations: Guidelines that ensure the protection of participants' rights and well-being during research, including informed consent and confidentiality.

Financial Stability: The ability of an organization to manage its financial resources effectively to sustain operations and withstand economic challenges. It also refers to the condition of having consistent revenue streams and effective financial management.

Governance: The systems, processes, and practices that ensure an organization is effectively managed and held accountable.

Internal Development: The processes and practices within an organization aimed at enhancing employee skills, well-being, and overall organizational capacity.

Innovation Adoption: The process of incorporating new ideas, technologies, or practices into an organization to enhance its operations and resilience.

Leadership: The act of guiding and influencing individuals or teams towards achieving goals, particularly in the context of strategic planning and organizational resilience.

Organizational Resilience: The capacity of an organization to anticipate, respond to, and recover from disruptions while maintaining core functions and structures.

Policy Reform Advocacy: Efforts to influence changes in regulations or policies that support organizational goals and enhance resilience.

Resource Management: The effective and efficient deployment of an organization's resources (financial, human, and physical) to maximize performance and sustainability.

Sponsorship: Financial support provided by businesses or individuals to sports teams or organizations, often in exchange for advertising and brand visibility.

Stakeholder Engagement: The process of involving individuals or groups that have an interest in an organization, ensuring their needs and expectations are considered in decision-making.

Transformational Leadership: A leadership style that inspires and motivates followers to achieve higher levels of performance and engage in innovative practices.

Triangulation: A method used in research to combine multiple data sources or methods to enhance the validity and reliability of findings.

Underfunded Sports Environments: Contexts where sports organizations operate with insufficient financial resources, impacting their capabilities and sustainability.

Underutilization of Technology: A situation where organizations do not fully leverage available technological tools and innovations to improve operations and efficiency.

Well-being: A holistic concept encompassing the physical, mental, and emotional health of individuals within an organization, crucial for enhancing overall resilience.

Youth Development: Programs and strategies aimed at nurturing and developing young talent within organizations to ensure future sustainability and success.

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study's purpose is to develop strategies to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's premier soccer league teams. This chapter presents the study's background, problem statement, significance, research questions, objectives, delimitations, and study outline.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Organizational resilience is the ability of teams or sport organizations to adapt, respond, manage, and endure the challenges and changes in structures, technology, regulations, the economic fluctuations of the country, injuries to key players, and evolving fan preferences (Fasey et al., 2021). The significance of organizational resilience in sports ensures that the team continues to compete at the highest levels, expand its fan base, and maintain long-term financial stability. Organizational resilience enables teams to remain relevant in the sports landscape despite a rapidly changing financial environment (Kinyariro, 2018; Shabanji, 2023). For instance, in 2005, Borussia Dortmund's excessive spending and poor financial management nearly led to their collapse (Welle, 2015). Additionally, organizational resilience equips a sports team to adjust tactics and operations in response to new information or shifting conditions and technologies (Travassos et al., 2014).

Football teams that are organizationally resilient exhibit some positive characteristics. They have a healthy and stable financial foundation to support the team or organization, even though revenue from matches and subscriptions is low. (Wagstaff et al., 2020). Other football teams survive through collaborations with sporting organizations and non-sporting organizations by working together towards common goals (Misener et al. 2022). For example, some clubs have secured an opportunity through a partnership to develop grassroots-level football in the Southern Region while getting funding support and other benefits. Teams that have registered magnificent growth have managed to do so because of plans (strategies), protocols, and risk management plans that are in place; for example, some teams have shown remarkable organizational resilience. They've

routinely fared well in the competition, winning the Castle Premier competition on many occasions. Effective management, substantial financial support, and a cohesive team are credited with their accomplishment. These have made it possible for companies to minimise damage, guarantee a return to operations, and manage and communicate during emergencies.

Sports teams must be able to ensure their capability to steer through difficulties, maintain stability, and take advantage of opportunities, finally leading to enhanced performance. They should have a great fan base or engagement by relocating tangible benefits in organizational resilience (Wicker et al., 2013). Resilience often fosters a sense of community resilience, where the team develops connections with the fans and its values, which can increase loyalty and support. This can be created if the team maintains transparent communication with their fans, whether the team is in crisis or having challenges. A resilient sporting organization could create an opportunity for sponsors and increase resources for fan engagement by investing in cutting-edge technology and fan engagement experiences such as virtual reality. Teams need to be resilient enough to change their game plans and tactics on the fly depending on changing circumstances or their competitors' strategy, to enhance performance on the field. Technology allows teams to keep athletes fit, maintain training and preparation schedules even during interruptions, and gain insights about the competition. Resilient organizations must also embed talent development and succession planning within their gamified roadmaps to ensure their athletes can prepare without compromising on performance.

According to global trends, resilient organizations are better equipped to survive and thrive due to their capability to adapt, innovate, and continue to have a bigger motivation, as well as their core values and strategic goals, and quickly adopt and integrate new technologies. To improve on-field performance and attract fans who find them interesting, resilient organizations have digital media such as Somatotype software, AI, and data analytics at their disposal. This supports a more incisive response to changing market dynamics while sharpening the competitive edge sharp. These resilient teams create environments in which creativity flourishes, appealing to a considerably wider audience, absolving it of discrimination and providing equal

opportunity to all. These savior-like ambassadors may also act sustainably, synonymous with social responsibility and societal values, by reducing carbon footprints, creating brand equity with social impact, and enabling long-term sustainability. Organizational resilience in football teams positions them best to diversify income streams, manage expenditure efficiently, and make strategic investments in infrastructure and technology.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To an extent, the resilience of an organization translates into economic outlook and competitiveness of professional sports teams; however, many clubs in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) still experience poor control, varying performance, and poor financial stability. The objective of this study is to develop organizational resilience strategies that would assist teams in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League during tough times caused by hard economic conditions and ineffective administrative practices while still experiencing performance swings but ultimately maintaining long-term viability.

Organizational resilience theories centre their features on flexibility, sound resource management, and strategic decision-making. Application of these theories to teams in the Zimbabwean Premier Soccer League, however, exhibits a gap, where inadequate financial management, minimum corporate sponsorship, and the absence of player welfare regulations pose dire threats to the teams' long-term survival. Most of the studies focusing on organizational resilience within sports management mainly centre on reputable leagues in Europe and North America; there is insufficient research that is tailored to suit the African context or the Zimbabwean space.

Most resilience-building tactics, such as diversifying revenue streams and adherence to good governance practices through organized talent development programs, cumulatively lengthen the lifespan of an organization, but the majority of Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League teams were affected by an irregular source of funding and so depended on unsteady sponsorship deals, not to mention inefficiency in governance. The weaknesses of the teams are further accentuated by what the media and,

subsequently, sports organizations report on the constant failure to pay player salaries, inadequate infrastructure investment, and administrative squabbles.

The current body of knowledge does not have an organized, situational framework that holds operational agility, leadership development, and financial sustainability for Zimbabwe's PSL teams. Though international sports management models do exist, they fail to yield credible results since there are distinctive structural and economic challenges faced by Zimbabwean clubs.

This research intends to close the gap by developing a strategic resilience model for PSL teams, integrating best practices in operational efficiency, financial management, and governance. Moreover, it intends to endow the Zimbabwean football teams with relevant resources to overcome obstacles and attain long-term sustainability through careful identification of important resilience enablers and proposing solutions based on evidence.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This investigation examines the significant organizational resilience challenges encountered by teams in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL), focusing on economic volatility, poor infrastructure, and social unrest. It locates and tackles fundamental issues to enhance both the practical functioning and theoretical comprehension of team resilience in an environment with limited resources.

The study presents a comprehensive Team Resilience Building Framework designed to improve organizational sustainability. By leveraging community participation, it underscores the importance of cultivating strong financial and emotional ties among supporters, local businesses, and community organizations (Filo et. 2015). It also points out the significance of psychological and social support networks to mitigate burnout and enhance team performance (Gupta & McCarthy, 2022).

It implements the application of social-ecological theory, which is considered to be the basis of rapid recovery and sustained flexibility, within the major research activities (Foster et al., 2018, 2023). There are certain areas covered within the framework: leadership development, strategic communication, mental health resources, and feedback mechanisms (Sharma & Sharma, 2020). These are innovative ways of strengthening resilience in underfunded sports environments.

The results are meaningful for policy, calling for government funding, sponsorship, and Compulsory Insurance schemes, because this stabilizes teams financially and prepares them for emergencies (Wicker et al., 2013). It facilitates policy making towards the development of supportive frameworks that would further secure teams within Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League from economic and operational disruption.

This research advances the theoretical understanding of sports organizational resilience by connecting individual and team-level dynamics. It investigates how leadership, shared objectives, and social design affect the team's results (Gransj  n, 2023; Hancock et al., 2020). Furthermore, it enhances the comprehension of organizational resilience as a fluid, contextually responsive process (Decroos et al., 2017; Sarkar & Page, 2020).

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1 Primary Question

What strategies can be used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams?

1.5.2 Subsidiary Questions

1. What are the current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams?
2. How effective are the current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams?
3. What are the factors that promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams?

4. What strategies can be used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams?

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.6.1 Primary Objective

To develop strategies to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

1.6.2 Objectives:

1. To identify current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.
2. To assess the effectiveness of the current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.
3. To establish factors that promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.
4. To establish specific strategies to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This research aims to develop approaches for improving organizational resilience and sustainability among teams in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). By assessing existing challenges and engaging essential stakeholders, this research seeks to provide actionable insights and frameworks that can enhance the long-term sustainability and flexibility of ZPSL teams within a constantly changing sports landscape.

1.8 STUDY OUTLINE

This research is organized into five chapters with a particular purpose.

Problem and Setting: The first chapter reviewed background, statement of research, objective, research question, and delimitation of the study, all of which are part of the study.

Literature Review: The second chapter will be entirely on literature review.

Methods and Materials: The third chapter encompasses methodology and techniques of the investigation.

Data Analysis and Discussion: In the fourth chapter, the empirical findings are thoroughly analyzed and discussed.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations: Chapter five summarizes the entire research process and makes recommendations based on the current data for each of the study objectives.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has studied the organizational resilience of the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League teams. The backdrop has revealed what should be done for the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League teams to develop organizational resilience. As a result, the primary goal of this research is to promote organizational resilience in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League teams. Stakeholders, external and internal, including players, lawmakers, and researchers, stand to gain from this study, as stated in the chapter. The chapter also includes the outline for the entire research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of existing literature pertinent to developing strategies that promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League teams. An in-depth analysis of various theoretical frameworks and their potential applicability to the current study is explored. The chapter critically examines similar research efforts, identifying gaps and areas that warrant further exploration. Additionally, relevant themes that emerge from the literature are explored, offering insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League teams.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

2.2.1 Organizational Resilience

Organizational resilience is defined as the ability of an organization to foresee, respond to, adapt to, and recover from interruptions while sustaining its core functions and structure. For instance, Duchek (2020) sees organizational resilience as a dynamic capability involving anticipation, coping, and adaptation processes, stressing both proactive and reactive features. Organizational resilience, according to Lengnick-Hall, Beck, and Lengnick-Hall (2011), is embedded into the culture and routines of the organization, which means resilient organizations have the intellectual capacity, emotional strength, and creativity. However, Boin and van Eeten (2013) highlight the crucial importance of strategic leadership and decision-making in organizational resilience within ever-changing environments characterized by governance and institutional learning. The role of technology and innovation capability is central in organizational resilience, according to Conz and Magnani (2020), who argue that digital technologies and agile management strategies allow organizations to react promptly to external shocks. Additionally, the social-ecological perspective advanced by Burnard and Bhamra (2011) draws attention to the importance of stakeholder involvement,

including those of the community and employees, in fostering organizational resilience. Collectively, these diverse viewpoints suggest that organizational resilience is a multidimensional and complex construct comprising internal capabilities, leadership, culture, technology, and external social interactions.

2.2.2 Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League.

Founded in 1992 as a replacement for the Rhodesia National Football competition, the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League is the country's Premier professional soccer competition. With a total of 18 teams and the highest level of the nation's soccer hierarchy, the ZPSL was founded by Chris Sibanda, Morrison Sifelani, and Victor Zvobgo. The league has its constitution and rules and operates autonomously while working with the Zimbabwe Football Association. Its main mandate is to organize, oversee, and advance professional football in Zimbabwe. This covers overseeing contests, making sure that teams follow rules, encouraging fair play, boosting business expansion, and nurturing the next generation of national football players. By the initiatives, the ZPSL promotes a robust football culture and aids in the growth of the game nationwide.

2.3 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.3.1 Resilience Theory (Paton and Johnson 2001)

The theory of resilience in fundamental terms helps to gain insight into human, group, and systemic survival through challenges while in action or gaining strength. It is one of the fundamentals of adaptability: choosing to act proactively at a hard time and learning from that act. Therefore, for organizations, resilience is not an emergency but a basis for growth and preparedness. (Barasa et al., 2018).

Paton and Johnson (2001) subsequently elaborated that organizational resilience embodies psychological and structural aspects that are critical in the capacity for adaptation. According to them, resilience is not just about surviving; it must include the capacity to learn, adjust, and transform in any adverse situation. This refers to

leadership, strategic thinking, and public engagement in building resilient organizations (Bicalho et al., 2020).

Indeed, among the strategies that will focus on resilience theory in relation to ZPSL would entail the management of administrative, financial, and performance challenges. So as to foster resilience, these would include strategizing about other sources of income and alliances due to financial restrictions on the majority of ZPSL teams. Strong leadership is critical for creating a culture of resilience, equally adapting on the highly dynamic economic or political conditions (Weber, 2023).

Further, some of the aspects of resilience will touch on player development. The investments in youth centres and training programs would nurture the talents and ensure future competitiveness so that thorns may sprout. Human resources and people's involvement are core for this study's conclusion towards enhancing organizational resilience (Wicker et al., 2013). Moreover, further input on crisis preparedness, for example, tailor-made risk management plans, may equally mitigate the level of response in the case of breakdowns within the league (Bicalho et al., 2022).

This entails engaging the community and contributing stakeholders in creating resilience. During tough times, a strong community linkage between the supporters, local businesses, and regulators would support the cause. Community-oriented activities have demonstrated the ability to boost morale and even facilitate continuity amidst challenges (Harrison et al., 2021). Digital means will help fan engagement efficiently and do performance analyses that will augment both financial and operational strength ("Resilience, stressors, and protective factors in sports performance," 2019).

A long-duration tactical plan incorporating resilience-building strategies can help create flexible and adaptive organizational forms in ZPSL that can withstand present challenges and prepare for future phenomena. Hence, the resilience framework by Paton and Johnson puts in place a comprehensive control model for the ZPSL management teams' sustainable success in future (Barasa et al., 2018).

2.3.2 High-Reliability Organization (HRO) Theory (Weick and Sutcliffe 2001)

High-Reliability Organization (HRO) theory, which derives from the works of Weick and Sutcliffe, provides critical features of lessons for organizations that operate within complex or highly risky environments. Indeed, this theory fits well within sport management, for instance, professional leagues such as the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL), which is characterized by continuous financial instability, operational complications, and competition pressures. By applying the principles of HRO, durability and long-term sustainability will be achieved among clubs in the ZPSL.

Preoccupation with failure is arguably the greatest law of HRO Theory concerning the prediction and prevention of potential risks, which is the primary focus of this theory. It could be what the ZPSL teams want if they enforce applicable stringent financial controls and governing structures, which would not mismanage these. But viewing the failure as rather inevitable trouble coming, not an unlikely eventuality, thus a fabulous strategy in action could win the integrity and viability of the league, forward-hunching through possible proactive responses to the unexpected (Soncrant et al., 2021; Wright, 2023).

There could never be a rapacious simplification of organizations that condemns them to throw "quick fixes" at complex issues. It can usefully be contrasted with the quick and easy answers so tempting, within that fast-paced world of the professional game, where the decisions to draw new players to the club, attract fans to it and generate revenues all have multiple variables. Hence, to develop an informed strategy that reflects across all stakeholder consultations, thorough analyses are required (León & Mu, 2021; Ford, 2018).

Attention to operations is hugely important, because it focuses on what happens on the day, from the logistics of holding a match to player welfare and stakeholder communications. Indeed, operational efficiency is part and parcel of the ZPSL environment. Keeping an eye on such tendencies can create early detection of problems,

as well as embedding continuous improvement into the fabric of the organization (Etchegaray et al., 2019).

The principle of an HRO commits itself to resilience, recovery, and adaptation. Investments in youth academies and player welfare, and mental health initiatives are likely benefits of such commitment for ZPSL teams. Structural resilience is added by the investment not only in performance enhancement but also in sturdiness for the league to face shocks (Jahn & Black, 2017).

Ultimately, deference to expertise validates the engagement of specialists in the decision-making process. In coaching, sports science, or finance, good outcomes and a culture of knowledge are fostered by allowing qualified people to lead within their areas of expertise. For ZPSL, this could mean that deference to expertise designates local experts to create development strategies and lead innovations (Nizamidou et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2022).

By adapting these five tenets of HRO, the ZPSL would have laid an indomitable foundation toward sustainable growth: a foundation that will contend with the challenges of today but also lay the basis for a stronger and progressive future for Zimbabwean football.

2.4 THEMATIC REVIEW

This thematic review aims to synthesize existing research on organizational resilience within professional sports teams, with a keen focus on Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). The review is structured around the study's research objectives and questions, exploring significant themes, identifying gaps in contemporary scholarship, and examining paradigm shifts in the discourse surrounding organizational resilience in sports.

2.4.1 Current Strategies used to promote Organizational resilience.

Organizational resilience is becoming increasingly crucial for managing professional football clubs, particularly in environments like Zimbabwe that face socio-economic volatility and infrastructural challenges. In the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League

(ZPSL), resilience goes beyond simple survival; it encompasses the clubs' ability to foresee, adapt to, and bounce back from disruptions while continuing to grow. All the resilience strategies currently reckoned among ZPSL clubs are quite complicated, such as leadership, financial management, talent development, technological improvement, and most importantly, engagement with stakeholders.

There is leadership, but transformational leadership has been key: this is characterized by vision, innovation, and empowerment worked well for clubs. On the contrary, it was the more transactional and frequently authoritarian leadership styles adopted by clubs that largely have failed and have, in turn, fettered innovation and flexibility. This is an instance where one can argue the case for the notion of inclusive leadership, but effective implementation is fettered by very firm-rooted cultures of governance and highly centralized power (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001; Moyo, 2021).

Financial management is one often ignored yet vital component. Some clubs now enjoy steady corporate sponsorship while others are stuck with issues of inconsistent funding and no formal controls. With one voice, scholars generally agree on the necessity of budget discipline with contingency plans; notwithstanding this, the financial stability remains decimated by manifest deterrents like weak enforcement, corruption, and lack of oversight (Sibanda & Dlodlo, 2020).

This is also supported by youth academies and the way coaches have been trained. Still, the systems face serious problems due to a lack of funding and poor management, and many young players are moving to join foreign leagues. Even though focusing on psychosocial support and counselling has been recognized as crucial, the efforts to provide them are still hit-or-miss and are intended mainly by individuals (Pillay et al., 2019).

The adoption of technology, while a transformative force worldwide, remains constrained in the ZPSL. A limited number of teams utilize performance analytics or digital tools due to minimal investment, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient

expertise (Ndlovu, 2022). This technological delay not only reveals a gap in research but also represents a lost chance to improve efficiency and competitiveness.

In addition, community involvement and stakeholder management provide essential support mechanisms. Teams have demonstrated how robust community connections can foster resilience through fan-driven fundraising and volunteering. However, many clubs in the ZPSL do not have organized outreach strategies, and the commercialization of fan relationships threatens to alienate traditional supporters (Rowe, 2004).

Although academic agreement exists on these resilience strategies, the majority of research is centred on Europe and does not consider Zimbabwe's specific challenges, such as political interference and cultural dynamics. Nevertheless, changes toward systems thinking, proactive planning, and digital innovation indicate a potential for enduring resilience if backed by policies tailored to the context and sustainable investment.

2.4.2 Evaluating the effectiveness of Resilience Strategies.

Organizational resilience was gaining enough traction in the ZPSL, especially now, with regions that are politically unstable, economically volatile, and structurally weak. Though several teams have undertaken resilience strategies regarding transformational leadership, financial planning, youth development, and stakeholder engagement, the effectiveness tends to vary and is mostly too narrow. Performance indicators, recovery capabilities, stakeholder feedback, and sustainability trends have all shown strides, but deficiencies still exist.

From another substantial example of resilience, some teams' league rankings and financial well-being come into play. The two teams have consistent performances throughout the year and get substantial donations from corporations due to their successes, which speaks volumes for their good management (Sibanda & Dlodlo, 2020). Others have another last but not least serious challenge they face in terms of strategy toward getting long-term survival plans and fundraising methods through community donations. Under the youth academy establishment, many teams are yet

free to some extent to incorporate youth into their senior ranks, severely declining envisaged developmental results downstream (Moyo, 2021).

Sustainability is, besides, an important aspect of resilience achieved tangentially. Some clubs have survived for decades with poor governance, perhaps due to their strong community backing and political goodwill. While surviving these adversities has its positives, it brings the disturbing question of structural sustainability and the absence of already established resilience frameworks. Though emotional investment has guaranteed their clubs' sustainability, likely, this will not be sustained against systemic challenges in the future.

Structural vulnerability within ZPSL was glaringly exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Several clubs just shut down their activities and remained unpaid under firm contracts for services rendered (Ndlovu, 2022). According to existing literature around the world, having the right frameworks for crisis recovery is encouraged (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001), but in Zimbabwe, conditions undermined this. Sets of temporary solutions were then put forward in the ensuing times: communicating with fans through social networks and slashing costs, instead of following the well-planned resilience framework (Pillay et al., 2019), which showed that the gap between theoretical models and practicality was far apart.

Stakeholders, fans, and sponsors, the lot more, indisputably measure the resilience of this whole setup. Fanatical support notwithstanding, other administration processes are opaque and ugly enough, thus eroding the confidence of their sponsors. A 2023 survey by the Zimbabwe Football Stakeholder Trust revealed that over 60% of sponsors cited poor governance as the biggest hindrance to their continued investment. Although loyal fans may provide an informal safety net (Rowe, 2004), the lack of organized stakeholder management would continue to create obstacles toward cascading results of resilience.

Sports studies do focus on resilience, but the scope tends to be more eurocentric, mostly at the neglect of the poor African narrative. Resilience models have been built in the

West on parameters such as media revenue and developed infrastructure, and do not correlate with Zimbabwe, as teams face a very different kind of challenges (Amis & Slack, 2002). Increasingly, scholars such as Chiweshe (2014) and Moyo (2021) emphasize the need for framework building that is localized and that splices political economies, cultural considerations, and infrastructural limitations; however, these models remain more or less in their developmental infancy.

This revival in research on resilience is thus beginning to influence ZPSL teams with a transition away from classical management to systems-based and inclusive approaches. Using interviews and surveys for fan engagement and merchandising, a list of clubs is adapting their new models. Yet the general view that such initiatives are sporadic rather than holistic indicates that resilience theory is evolving, even if its practical application in Zimbabwe's football remains limited and fragmented.

2.4.3 Factors that promote Organizational Resilience

The factors that enable clubs within the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) to be resilient are linked to a web of internal and external contingencies. Internally, leadership quality, organizational culture, and available resources all impact the club's chances of survival and the ability to stand up after a fall. Adaptive capacity is fostered through competent and strategic leadership, while elsewhere, patronage systems and poor governance undermine organizations (Moyo and Banda, 2021). While governance systems that are inclusive and define engagement are of utmost importance, these are greatly lacking and hence inhibit adaptive capacities.

Cultures cultivate and nurture or inhibit an organization in the process of being innovative or resilient. Modern organizational flexibility is exemplified in clubs, where online engagement with fans takes place, albeit with scant witnesses since most clubs have remained shackled in old ways and resist any change (Chiweshe, 2014). Equally important is diversity in resources. Teams that access multiple streams of income derive great resilience against interruptions, while most of the ZPSL clubs operate on uncertain revenue streams, thereby denying them any funding stability necessary for resilience (Sibanda and Dlodlo, 2020).

However, in many ways, there are policy issues and economic dynamics at play. Inconsistent government support for the sport and poor infrastructural planning and instruction of the regulatory framework only diminish club development and instill doubt in potential investors (Ndlovu, 2022). Fluctuation of macro-economic factors creates an ecosystem wherein long-term planning is seemingly made without supportive guidelines, thus, restricting the club in devoting its contracts and dues. Social capital, in terms of support availed by communities and other stakeholder networks, remains a very vital yet vastly untapped resource. Since clubs have banked on local support to weather tumultuous times, such more or less informal methods may also quite adversely affect this from evolving into a solid source of resilience.

Much of the literature does address leadership, culture, and redundancy of resources in organizational resilience (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Burnard & Bhamra, 2011), although assumptions are made about the existence of a corresponding level of institutional viability that all too often prevails in low-income settings. For certain, almost nothing has been researched about resilience in this sector of the African sports arena, which makes glaringly obvious the disparity between theoretical constructs and practical realizations. Movement exists in the direction of resilient models that are dynamic and contemporary, accentuating adaptability and strategic renewability along with substantively encountering systemic barriers towards their realization within Zimbabwe. Proposed future models should strive for contextual-infusing levels of strategic rigor with an appreciation of the importance of informality and instability in African sports.

2.4.4 Specific strategies to strengthen Organizational Resilience

An organizational resilience strategy is necessary to address the internal structural and operational weaknesses of Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). Evidence-based and locally need-specific, the strategy targets four major pillars: strategic partnerships, capacity enhancement, policy reform advocacy, and innovation adoption. The implementation structure provides for some core resilience attributes of

adaptability, robustness, redundancy, and learning capacity and seeks to consider the socio-economic and institutional challenges facing football in Zimbabwe.

Strategic partnerships provide opportunities for knowledge sharing, financial security, and brand equity. Such relationships with international partners could lend know-how in sports science, governance, and youth development (Darby & Solberg, 2010), while commercial relationships with local firms could enhance such initiatives via co-branding or shared facilities. For such partnerships to serve the purpose of building resilience, they must be formalized with win-win objectives and transparent accountability and go beyond the presently predominant informal or politically motivated arrangements.

Capacity enhancement is indeed crucial. Most ZPSL leaders and technical staff do not possess formal qualifications in sport management nor crisis management techniques (Moyo & Banda, 2021). By prioritizing capacity-building programs focused on governance, financial management, and technology use, clubs will develop anticipatory capacities and strategic flexibility. Such programs must be linked with meritocratic recruitment to allow for the entry of competent persons for the much-needed change agenda.

From an external perspective, advocating for policy reform becomes imperative to set a new regulatory order. Whenever there are inconsistencies in government support, unclear licensing procedures, or poor enforcement of contracts, ZPSL clubs' resilience is diluted. So, proactively engaging policymakers and relevant sports governing bodies will be required to ensure better funding models, tax incentives, and infrastructure support to position football clubs as important pillars within national development strategies (Barasa et al., 2017).

Innovation, especially around digital means, is a great opportunity for impact. Globally, clubs have successfully diversified their sources of income and enhanced interaction with their fans via online merchandising, digital broadcasting, and monetizing social media (Ratten, 2020). In Zimbabwe, this digital transformation is

only just beginning, with a handful of clubs. Outstretching from there through avenues like e-commerce, mobile ticketing, and virtual experiences for the fans can usher in financial redundancy and operational flexibility, two critical aspects of resilience in an unpredictable situation (Chiweshe, 2021).

The trend for greater support for holistic and proactive approaches that synergize structural changes with cultural and behavioral modifications is gathering momentum through the existing literature (Bhamra et al., 2011; Duchek, 2020). However, scant few would put sports resilience research on the radar about grassroots or domestic African leagues relevant to the ZPSL context. Therefore, as the resurgence of Zimbabwean clubs unfolds, they shall progressively adopt adaptive systems, build strategic partnerships, and promote sustainability as an ethos. These shall advance crisis management while also preparing clubs for sustained growth and long-term attractiveness.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The research investigated major elements that shape organizational resilience patterns within Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) teams. The study revealed both current methods, such as sponsorship deals and community outreach initiatives, and confronted obstacles, including financial crisis combined with inadequate infrastructure. Organizations identified leadership as essential in building their resilience, together with financial stability and team culture. Current resilience frameworks hold practical value for specific situations, but they should be adjusted to suit ZPSL organizational requirements. The chapter shows that resilience improvement demands a complete strategy that prepares research for its subsequent analytical stage.

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter analysed the ZPSL team's organizational resilience through an exploration of existing approaches and the identification of current obstacles and crucial impact elements. Organizational resilience benefits from sponsorships combined with community engagement alongside leader support; however, economic instability, coupled with poor infrastructure, continues to pose major challenges. Presently

available frameworks provide knowledge, although they must be adjusted to fit ZPSL situations.

CHAPTER 3

MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a robust framework for identifying gaps and developing strategies to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer teams through the study's research methodology, research design, population and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection and data presentation analysis procedures, and ethical considerations.

3.2 METHODOLOGY APPROACH

In investigating the resilience of organizations within the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) clubs, the study adopted a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This approach is favored as it allows for the assessment of objective results while also considering various stakeholder viewpoints on how to tackle the intricate research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). According to Megheirkouni (2018), mixed methods enhance research through triangulation, which combines the statistical reliability of quantitative data, such as secondary performance records and structured surveys, with the contextual richness offered by qualitative techniques like key informant interviews. In this investigation, the mixed-methods design facilitated the development of customized, evidence-based strategies aimed at enhancing operational effectiveness and resilience within ZPSL teams.

3.3 TIME HORIZON

Due to resources and time constraints, a cross-sectional design was adopted. The selected cross-sectional study aims to reveal the current strategies used to enhance organizational resilience among the teams in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). As discussed by Melby et al. (2023) and Westby et al. (2023), this is the one that minimizes the time taken, making it easier and cheaper for researchers to collect data and draw conclusions. This also applies to the relationship relevant to ZPSL operations using this method with flexibility; thus, they can avoid time and resources that are always associated with longitudinal studies.

The research focuses on the cross-section. Considering the constraints of time and resources, data collection is planned for a defined period. The chosen cross-section intends to illustrate the ongoing strategies for promoting organizational resilience within the teams of the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). This approach allows the researcher to gather data on essential characteristics of resilience, growth, and performance simultaneously. Thus, it offers various practical benefits, including lower costs, ease of data collection, and quick conclusion formulation, as noted by Melby et al. (2023) and Westby et al. (2023). It is versatile and suitable for capturing

relationships within ZPSL operations without the time delays and resource requirements typical of longitudinal studies.

3.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY

This study adopted a concurrent mixed-methods research strategy, which enabled the simultaneous collection of qualitative and quantitative data to examine organisational resilience in Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) teams. Guided by Saunders et al. (2023) and Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), this design was preferred over single-strategy approaches such as surveys or phenomenology, as it allowed for triangulation and a more comprehensive understanding of complex resilience factors. These qualitative insights were obtained through discussions with players, coaches, and managers, while the quantitative data were collected using structured surveys. These multiple sources of data, therefore, added to the validity, reliability, and depth of the findings through targeting contextual strategies for strengthening organizational resilience in Zimbabwean football.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.5.1 Population

The population was comprised of key groups that are involved in the daily operations and performance of teams in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League. This group has a total estimate of 500 participants that has sport administration, sponsors, media outlets, fans, community members, coaches and players.

3.5.2 Sample Procedures

In order to get an in-depth understanding and recommendations regarding building resilience in Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) teams, a mixed-method approach comprising both qualitative and quantitative methods was used.

Qualitative: Purposive sampling

It was a qualitative purposive sampling method. It means that purposive sampling does not give probability flow of assignation; thus, the purposive way gives applicators the

facility to deliberately select those people who are particularly knowledgeable, experienced, or have insight into the subject of inquiry- in this case, organizational resilience in professional football teams.

Participants include;

- Players
- Coaches
- Managers of Teams

and were hunted with respect to first-hand experience and perspectives concerning internal operations, challenges, and strategies concerning performance and resilience of teams.

Procedure:

The subjects were identified according to the function and standing in ZPSL. The first contact was via club official communication. Informed consent was attained and appointments made for the interviews at the participants' convenience. With the semi-structured interview guide, discussions concerning resilience leadership and organizational strategy themes were piloted.

Quantitative: Systematic Sampling

The systematic sampling technique employed in this study was to provide a more representative, broad-spectrum view from among the larger pool of stakeholders associated with the ZPSL. This gave the researcher an avenue for views from a more diverse and sufficiently large population to support the generalizability of findings.

Participants included:

- Players
- Coaches
- Administrators
- Sponsorship Agencies
- Fans
- Media Personnel
- Community Members

Procedure:

A master list of potential participants was developed from databases provided by clubs, media houses, and fan associations. From this list, a random starting point was selected using a random number generator. From that point, every *n*th individual was chosen for inclusion in the survey (e.g., every 5th person). The value of "*n*" was determined based on the total population size and desired sample size to ensure representativeness across different stakeholder categories. Surveys were administered electronically and, where possible, in person at matches and training facilities.

3.5.3 Sample Size Determination

Participants were identified across the different clusters, followed by the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. The recognized stratum included players, coaches, team management, sport administrators, sponsors, media personnel, and fans of the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL).

Participants for the quantitative strand were selected using systematic random sampling from a pool of approximately 500 ZPSL stakeholders. Cochran's formula, set in a sample size calculator, was used to obtain a sample size yielding a 95% confidence level ($Z = 1.96$) and a 5% margin of error ($e = 0.05$). For balanced representation, we intended to draw 20% of the samples from each stratum.

Table 3.1

Quantitative Sample (20% Sample Size)

Stratum	Population (N)	Sample Size (n)	Sampling Method
Players	150	30	$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$
Coaches & Managers	80	16	$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$
Administrators	90	18	$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$
Sponsors	40	8	$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$
Media Personnel	70	14	$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$
Fans & Community	70	14	$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$
Total	500	100	$e = 0.05, Z = 1.96$

As a qualitative measure, purposive sampling, based on the theory, was utilized to locate key informants possessing the depth of knowledge about organisational

resilience in ZPSL. The main selection criteria were seniority, experience, and decision-making role. Sampling proceeded until no new information could be generated from interviews and discussions, that is, until theoretical saturation was achieved.

Table 3.2

Qualitative Sample

Stratum	Population (N)	Sample Size (n)	Selection Criteria
Players	150	3	Senior players with team leadership roles
Coaches & Managers	80	5	Head or assistant coaches
Administrators	90	4	Operational or technical directors
Sponsors	40	2	Key representatives from major sponsors
Media Personnel	70	3	Senior sports journalists or editors
Fans & Community	70	3	Long-time fan representatives
Total	500	20	Data saturation guided sample

The integrated approach ensured that both the breadth and depth of data collection were maintained. The quantitative sample provides ZPSL in general, whereas the qualitative sample, mainly involving experienced people directly engaged in resilience-building projects, takes care of the in-depth input.

3. 6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

3.6.1 The pilot study

During a pilot study conducted in Harare from February 28 to March 31, 2025, the researcher tested the efficacy and clarity of questionnaires and interview guides. The pilot involved officials from the Ministry of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture. Feedback from these participants ensured that the research instruments were clear, relevant, and appropriate for use in the main study.

3.6.2 Main study

Thus, this critical major study high season runs from January to April in the year 2025 with a mixed-research design from which the research analyzes the performance of the teams in considering the various organizational aspects of resilience. Accordingly, semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires have been included as qualitative and quantitative approaches in terms of how teams adapt, cope, and recover from operational and strategic challenges in the research design. The variety includes club officials, coaches, players, sponsors, media representatives, supporters, and other community members in the country. The research mainly focused on some clubs as case studies for better insights into their resilience strategies.

Data collection commenced by structuring a questionnaire sent out through Google Forms, linked to circulate via WhatsApp. These questionnaires focused on resilience's key pillars such as resource mobilization, governance, and stakeholder participation. While Google Forms made it possible for data collection to be conducted more efficiently and in a better-organized manner, WhatsApp provided accessibility to a broader audience, despite slow internet connection.

Data was collected from the study participants using semi-structured interviews conducted by sending audio messages through WhatsApp, the major means of data collection in qualitative studies. This method is quite flexible and cost-effective in engaging the participants in quite long discussions, especially in cases where personal meetings are not considered viable. Interview responses were saved, transcribed, and secured for analysis.

Both qualitative and quantitative were stored in encrypted digital folders, accessed only by the core research team to ensure privacy and data security. Challenges faced during the research included busy schedules when interviewing stakeholders, limited access to private organizational information, and possible response bias. However, this study, being one of the most encompassing documents reviewing resilience practices among ZPSL teams, adds to the pool of knowledge on organizational sustainability and sports management.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Practical data analysis took the form of quantitative analysis using SPSS data and qualitative analysis using NVivo. The surveys that respondents filled out online through Google Forms were imported into SPSS and had several cleaning, coding, and analysis steps, some of which were descriptive and others were inferential statistical methods. Descriptive analysis, ANOVA, and correlation analyses were used to study relationships and differences between some main variables related to organizational resilience. Visual representation in the form of histograms, bar charts, and scatter plots helped to make the trends as well as relationships very comprehensible within the data set.

Correspondingly, for the qualitative aspect, audio-witness interviews recorded using WhatsApp were transcribed into NVivo. The transcripts were organized and coded with headings narrating concern, recurring themes, patterns, and keywords of importance associated with strategic and operational resilience. The features of NVivo were used to develop thematic categories, node structures, and also word clouds, tree maps, and matrix coding for a better visual representation of stakeholder perceptions on the key challenges associated with it. These visual and thematic insights bolstered the quantitative results to improve the interpretation and analysis of the study's results.

3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY AND (QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH)/ TRUSTWORTHINESS (QUALITATIVE RESEARCH)

Ethical standards, including informed consent and confidentiality, will be followed; a comprehensive literature review will ensure the study's credibility and academic foundation; a pilot study will be carried out to test the research instruments; internal reliability will be ensured using Cronbach's alpha; validity will be improved by aligning questions with the study's themes and using triangulation through interviews and questionnaires from various stakeholders; confidentiality will be maintained through coded questionnaires; and reliability will be improved through standardised procedures.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher will obtain ethical clearance and approval in line with Bindura University's Research Policy. The right to withdraw at any moment, voluntary consent, and full disclosure will all be provided to participants. Confidentiality and anonymity will be ensured, with data securely stored and used only for research purposes. The study will preserve participants' privacy, dignity and adhere to professional ethical standards throughout.

3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter has discussed the research methodology appropriate for this study. Concurrent mixed research design and cross sectional time horizon was employed with qualitative and quantitative methods (mixed method). The next chapter deals with the data analysis and presentation of the research.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the methods used to analyze and present data gathered for enhancing organizational resilience among teams in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). It details the approaches employed, such as surveys and interviews, to assess the existing state of resilience. The chapter discusses both quantitative and qualitative evaluations, highlighting significant patterns and relationships found in the data. Visual representations, including charts and tables, improve understanding and accessibility for stakeholders. By consolidating the findings, it pinpoints essential elements that influence organizational resilience.

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

This section shows the response rate of the study participants in both the qualitative and quantitative strands.

4.2.1 Questionnaire Response Rate.

Table 4.1

Questionnaire Response Rate

Stakeholder	Number of Questionnaires distributed	Number of Questionnaires returned	Percentage Returned
Players	22	17	56.7
Coaches	16	5	31.2
Administrators	18	10	55.6
Sponsors	8	3	37.5
Media Personnel	4	4	100
Fans	14	12	83.3
Community Member	10	6	60
Club Owner	8	5	62.5
Total	100	62	62

The analysis of stakeholder engagement regarding the development of strategies to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League teams revealed varying levels of participation in the questionnaire survey. A total of 217 questionnaires were distributed, with a 55.3% response rate, translating to 120 completed surveys. Players exhibited the highest response rate at 74.5%, reflecting their strong interest in the topic, while sport administrators and media outlets showed lower engagement, with response rates of 26.7% and 20%, respectively. Owners and sponsors also returned a limited number of questionnaires, at 41.7% and 40%, respectively. Community members and fans contributed moderately, with return rates of 33.3% and 45%. These findings indicate a critical need to enhance engagement strategies, particularly targeting underrepresented stakeholders, to ensure comprehensive input in developing effective resilience strategies for the league.

4.2.2 Interview Response Rate

Table 4.2

Interview Response Rate

Stakeholder	Number of Interviews Distributed	Number of interviews responded	Percentage Responded
Players	5	3	60
Coaches	7	3	43
Team Managers	8	4	50
Total	20	10	50

The table illustrates the response rates from key stakeholder groups engaged in the research. A total of 20 interview requests were distributed among Players, Coaches, and Team Managers, with only 10 responses received, resulting in an overall response rate of 50%. Players had the highest response rate at 60% (3 out of 5), suggesting a relatively strong willingness to participate and share insights. Team Managers followed with a 50% response rate (4 out of 8), while Coaches recorded the lowest participation at 43% (3 out of 7). This variation in engagement levels may impact the diversity and balance of perspectives captured in the study, potentially limiting the depth of analysis across different organizational roles. Nonetheless, the responses provide a valuable foundation for understanding stakeholder views and developing tailored strategies aimed at enhancing resilience within Premier Soccer League teams in Zimbabwe. Improving future stakeholder engagement will be essential to ensure more comprehensive and representative data.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

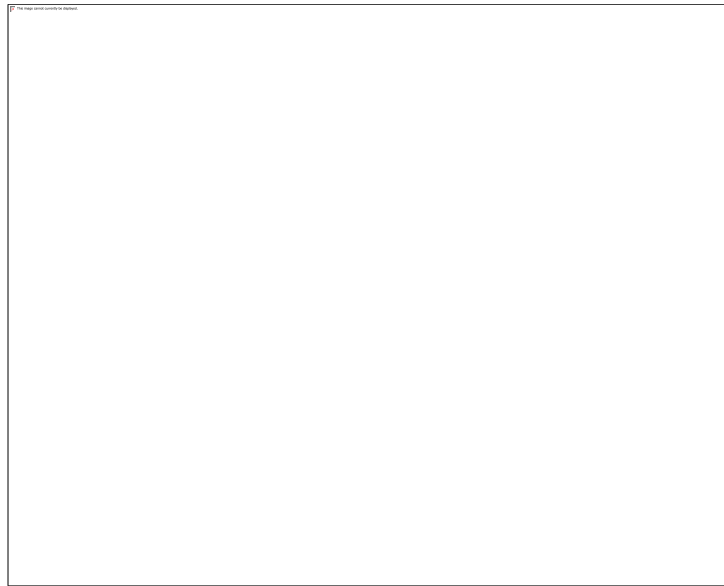
This section provides demographic data of the participants on study variables of age, gender, role, and experience of key stakeholders and perspectives.

4.3.1 Age of participants

The respondents' age distribution is shown as a percentage in the bar chart below. The data offers insights into the age distribution of the studied population by classifying people into several age categories, spanning from 16 to over 60.

Figure 4.1

Age of participants



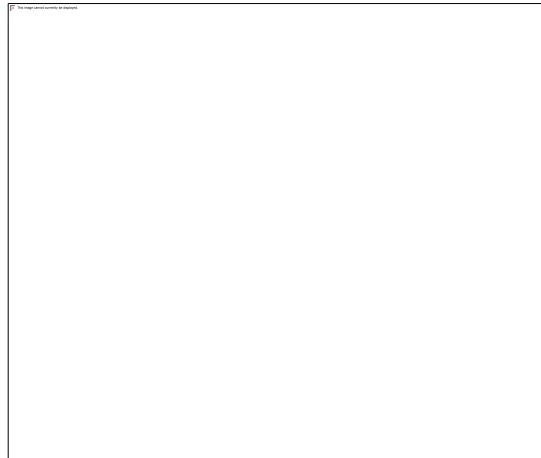
With 21.9% of the responses, the age group with the largest representation is 46–50 years old. Next in line are those aged 26 to 30 (16.7%) and those aged 51 to 55 (14.7%). At 10.9% each, the 16–20 and 21–25 age groups are similarly represented. 10% of the population is between the ages of 36 and 40, while the least represented age groups are those between the ages of 31 and 35 (5.6%) and 41 and 45 (5%). 7.8% are in the oldest age category, which is 56–60+ years old. All things considered, the distribution shows a wide range of ages, with a concentration in the middle-aged groups.

4.3.2 Roles of Participants

The bar chart below presents the distribution of various stakeholders involved in the study, expressed as percentages. It categorizes respondents based on their stakeholder roles within the organization or industry under review.

Figure 4.2

Roles of Participants



As of now, players are the largest stakeholder group at 27% in the stakeholder distribution chart. Second place goes to sport administrators at 16% and fans at 19%. Club owners account for 8%, while community members and coaches account for 10%. Lower interests are attached to the media and sponsors, with 6% and 5%, respectively.

The majority of respondents are those who are either directly involved in athletic activities or very closely attached to those who are involved in supporting roles: administrators and supporters. The interests of big players and fans are reflected by this very large majority. A comparatively lower representation of sponsors and media, which indicates lower attention given to financial and promotional stakeholders, combined with great participation for all those who are affected by the decisions made on and off the pitch, seems to indicate the areas that require an enhanced focus in subsequent stakeholder meetings.

4.3.3 Gender of participants

The bar chart below represents the gender distribution of participants in a given study or dataset. It displays the percentage of male and female respondents, allowing for a visual comparison of gender representation.

Figure 4.3
Gender of participants



The bar graph gives a pictorial representation of research subjects in terms of gender, with both male and female populations subjected to almost equal representation, each constituting an almost equal part of the total population, thus almost 50 percent. This nearly equal comparison enables gender-based comparison or analysis without the anxiety of a majority or minority group biasing results or over-representing either group. This states that the findings are inclusive of both masculine and feminine viewpoints, thus highlighting the generalizability and reliability of results in terms of gender dynamics. Such equal participation tends to promote inclusiveness and is an added strength to the reliability concerning study conclusions.

4.3.4 Level of education

The table below outlines the educational qualifications of the respondents, including both frequency and percentage distributions. It provides a clear view of the academic background of the participants, which is important for understanding the knowledge base and potential professional capacities within the group.

Table 4.3
Level of education

Level of Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Certificate	19	30.6	30.6	30.6
	National Diploma	5	8.1	8.1	38.7
	Degree	17	27.4	27.4	66.1
	Master's Degree	9	14.5	14.5	80.6
	Phd	1	1.6	1.6	82.3
	None	11	17.7	17.7	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

The data shows that most respondents have post-secondary education, with certificates (30.6%) and degrees (27.4%) being the most common. However, 17.7% have no formal qualifications, and only a small number hold advanced degrees (16.1% for Master's and PhD combined). This suggests a moderate level of education overall, but highlights a need for further training and educational support, especially for those without qualifications or limited access to higher education.

Table 4.4

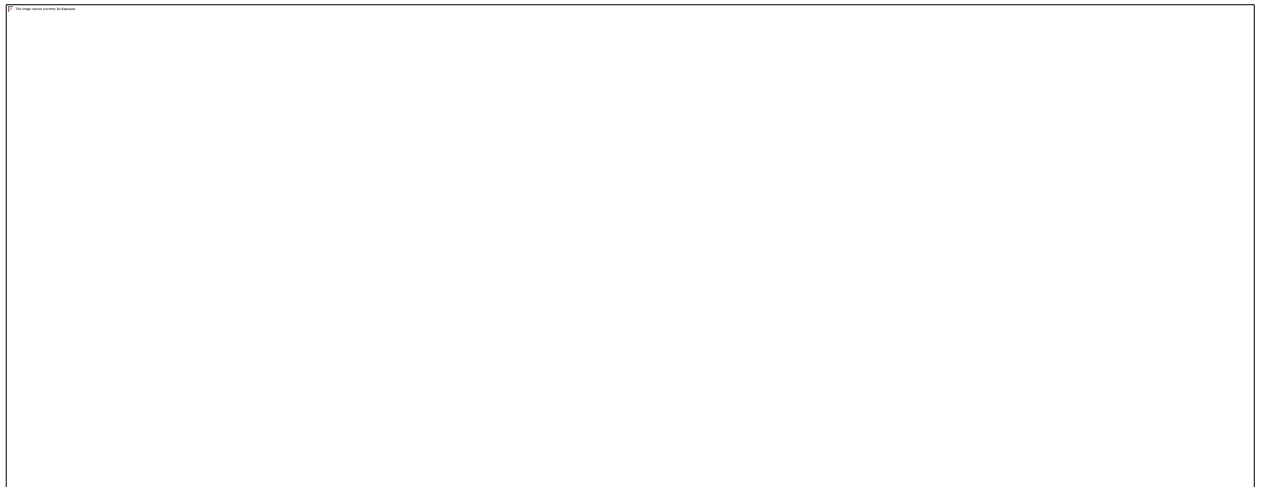
Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
	c			c		
Age	.169	132	.690	.924	132	.600
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

The normality tests conducted on the age data related to developing strategies for promoting organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League teams indicate that the data is normally distributed. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic is 0.169 with a p-value of 0.690, and the Shapiro-Wilk statistic is 0.924 with a p-value of 0.600. Both tests suggest no significant deviation from normality, as the p-values exceed the conventional threshold of 0.05. This finding is crucial for the research, as it supports the use of parametric statistical methods in further analysis. A normally distributed age variable can facilitate more robust conclusions regarding the relationships among stakeholders' perceptions and strategies for enhancing organizational resilience within the league.

Figure 4.4

Q-Q Plot



The Q-Q plot for age data demonstrates that the data has a normal distribution, supporting the findings of normality tests. This backs up the analysis of resilience tactics and stakeholder perceptions in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League using parametric statistical approaches. The trustworthiness of the study's findings and conclusions on organisational resilience is strengthened by the consistency between the statistical and visual data.

4.4 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA LINKED TO THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.

This section analyses the data collected from the questionnaire and interview linked to the research question. The qualitative and quantitative data were analysed separately.

4.4.1 To identify current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams

Table 4.5

Current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation

Our team has implemented clear strategies to manage crises.	62	1	5	2.37	1.163
Regular training is provided to enhance resilience.	62	1	4	2.13	1.208
There are contingency plans in place for unexpected challenges.	62	1	5	2.24	1.155
The team conducts regular risk assessments.	62	1	5	2.13	1.408
Valid N (listwise)	62				

A questionnaire conducted with 62 members from Zimbabwean top-flight clubs found that most clubs across the sample had low levels of preparedness that neither revealed nor substantiated the construction of resilience. They scored in the range of 2.13 and 2.37. While some clubs claim that they have some kind of crisis management strategies, there is a lack of contingency planning, risk assessment, and resilience training. Huge variation in responses among the Dirham clutches clearly shows disunity across the clubs, as a result of leadership and resource disparities. It can thus be inferred that serious resilience-building led by educated rationale is called for. The clubs become too prone to frantic moments without any strategies. The league needs its efforts to be channelled towards standardized planning, routine training, official risk assessment, and contingency arrangements to go some way in satisfying the need for the promotion of organizational resilience. Good training on the capacities will underwrite the quest for long-term development and fight for their supremacy across all the clubs.

Table 4.6

Thematic analysis for current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams

Theme	Description	Sample Mentions	Mentions
Youth Development	Clubs invest in youth academies to ensure continuity and long-term competitiveness. Sub-themes include	"We focus on youth development to maintain the club culture." "We scout at schools to build from the base." "Youths	11

	grassroots scouting, mentorship by senior players, and structured progression pathways.	are mentored by seniors to instill discipline.” “Junior teams are trained using the same philosophy to replace aging players.”	
Player Welfare	Focuses on holistic support — including health, mental well-being, and post-career development. Welfare programs reduce burnout and strengthen psychological resilience.	“Players get wellness checks monthly.” “Counselling helps us cope with losses.” “Former players help current ones plan life after football.” “We have started mental health workshops.”	9
Financial Discipline	Encompasses strict budgeting, diversified income streams, and transparent reporting to ensure survival during low-revenue periods.	“We stick to realistic budgets.” “We sell merchandise to cover travel costs.” “Quarterly audits keep us accountable.” “Community fundraising helps when sponsors delay funds.”	7
Communication	Open and structured internal communication improves teamwork and reduces conflict. Leadership encourages participatory decision-making.	“Management now shares plans openly.” “Players are consulted before major changes.” “Regular meetings help prevent misunderstandings.”	5

Leadership Commitment	Strong and transformational leadership drives discipline and innovation across clubs, influencing culture and morale.	“Our chairperson motivates us through challenges.” “Leaders are now more hands-on and transparent.”	6
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Any analysis of the functions of clubs that is done fairly sort of indicates a preference for Youth Development activities, meaning that clubs are investing in building up some internal talent, necessarily. They want to break away from the over-dependence on hiring external talent. On the same note, Player Welfare was another item given priority, suggesting an upsurge in welfare beyond coming to things like mental welfare and investment plans. Communication stood as a third pillar to lay the foundation for happiness via information flow, transparency, and inclusion of critical decision-making. Financial Discipline ranks further below as a way of ensuring sustainability, with clubs running budgets carefully to withstand financial pressures. Besides, this shows a balanced approach that tends to favor the development of persons and the stability of the institutions. So the data hints that the lifeline towards the resilience of football organizations supports the long-term trend of on-and-off-the-field human employment. Youth development and welfare show a turnaround from ad hoc recruitment for short-term victories to internal growth. Methodology and financial sagacity are the underpinning framework that allows these people-focused strategies to functionally hold sway. These findings portray the construction of institutions as key to building a resilient culture, efficiency in the use of resources, and human development opportunities as the dynamical trajectory across choppy sports terrains.

Globally speaking, quantitative and qualitative findings reflect some degree of mutual collaboration. While the quantitative aspect shows that the participating clubs are ill-equipped and operationalizing the ideas, the qualitative nuances suggest a liking for equal emphasis on youth development, player welfare, communication, and finance.

Hence, the grounding in resilience is not hybrid; journeys were posited with them, except that undergraduates were still treated as such. And that is to say that the alignment between intended strategy (qualitative) and the weak performance of such intentions (quantitative) alludes to the perception of a significant divergence among the strategic aims and method of furtherance to these aims, thereby emphasizing unchanging best practices for league-building, solid and generic, hence uniform-enough training, and conserved frames for risk evaluation to throw the same notion of promoting resilience in concrete terms across the board.

4.4.2 To assess the effectiveness of the current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League Teams.

Table 4.7

ANOVA analysis for the effectiveness of current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League teams.

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Current strategies effectively mitigate disruptions.	Between Groups	13.438	7	1.920	1.295	.271
	Within Groups	80.046	54	1.482		
	Total	93.484	61			
Leadership is proactive in addressing potential threats.	Between Groups	17.354	7	2.479	1.238	.299
	Within Groups	108.129	54	2.002		
	Total	125.484	61			
Resource management supports organizational resilience.	Between Groups	7.177	7	1.025	.730	.647
	Within Groups	75.791	54	1.404		
	Total	82.968	61			
The team adapts quickly to changing circumstances.	Between Groups	3.894	7	.556	.600	.753
	Within Groups	50.041	54	.927		
	Total	53.935	61			

The ANOVA analysis shows no significant differences in how various teams or groups within Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League perceive key aspects of organizational resilience as crisis strategies, leadership responsiveness, as well as resource management and adaptability. Non-significant results were obtained from testing all variables ($p > 0.05$), meaning these challenges are not specific to particular clubs, which

rather indicates that they are afflicting the entire league. Such consistency could be illustrated as systemic resilience gaps across the league. The interventions that should follow should therefore be across the league, such as standardization of the resilience framework, shared centralized training, and indeed common platforms for knowledge sharing. With these strategies in place, it will be possible for the teams to be better placed to handle disruptions while keeping an active reputation during changing and uncertain attributes of sports.

Table 4.8

Thematic analysis of the effectiveness of the current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams

Theme	Description	Sample Mentions	Mentions
Youth Development Effectiveness	Structured youth systems enhance continuity but face financial limitations. Clubs using academies report smoother transitions and consistent performance.	“Our under-20s fit easily into the senior team.” “Lack of resources delays progress of promising youth.” “It’s effective where management supports it fully.”	8
Player Welfare Impact	Wellness programs have improved morale and player longevity, but consistency is lacking across clubs.	“Mental health support helps us recover after poor games.” “Only big teams can afford full-time welfare officers.” “We need standard welfare policies.”	7
Financial Stability Measures	Effective budgeting and diversified income streams reduce reliance on unstable sponsorships. However, clubs	“Merchandise sales cushion us when sponsors pull out.” “We introduced membership fees for fans.” “Delayed payments weaken our planning.”	6

	still face limited corporate partnerships.		
Leadership and Governance	Transparent and visionary leadership enhances trust and decision-making, leading to collective resilience.	“When leadership communicates openly, it unites the team.” “Frequent board changes disrupt strategic goals.” “Effective leaders drive discipline and accountability.”	7
Stakeholder Engagement	Collaboration with fans, communities, and sponsors sustains clubs during crises.	“Fans mobilized donations when we had no kit.” “Local businesses support us with logistics.”	6

Analysis indicates an inclination toward Youth Development regarding clubs perceiving it as the most effective resilience strategy, long-term planning and seamless player transition. Player Welfare, emotional and career support for an increase in morale and stability, is also very pertinent. Communication is most important for dependence and unity because of the trust built through its openness and early resolution of emerging problems. Financial Discipline is less mentioned but underpins all strategies as the basis for stability against financial challenges. Therefore, a holistic approach in aspects of talent development, overall support, communication, and sound financial management is necessary for organizational resilience. Better done using all four is adaptation and survival against prevailing pressure.

In total, qualitative and quantitative results strongly corroborate each other in offering an integrated picture of challenges to organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League. Quantitatively, the ANOVA results show that there is no significant difference across teams regarding perceptions of resilience aspects; this, therefore, indicates that these resilience weaknesses are systemic, not isolated. This conformed to qualitative findings that shared a common emphasis on long-term strategies such as youth development, player welfare, communication, and financial discipline as

conceptualization of resilience. However, both data indicate that while agreed strategies have been identified, implementation remains patchy or informal. Across clubs and then stratified by quantitative (perception) and qualitative (strategic focus), such consensus calls for league-wide, standardized interventions to strengthen resilience uniformly across all teams.

4.4.3 To establish factors that promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

Table 4.9

Correlation Analysis for the Factors that promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams

Correlations					
		Team culture promotes collaboration and trust.	Strong relationships with stakeholders enhance resilience.	Continuous learning is encouraged within the organization.	Financial stability contributes to our resilience.
Team culture promotes collaboration and trust.	Pearson Correlation	1	.272*	.017	.084
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.033	.895	.514
	N	62	62	62	62
Strong relationships with stakeholders enhance resilience.	Pearson Correlation	.272*	1	.336**	.498**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.033		.008	.000
	N	62	62	62	62
Continuous learning is encouraged within the organization.	Pearson Correlation	.017	.336**	1	.407**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.895	.008		.001
	N	62	62	62	62
Financial stability contributes to our resilience.	Pearson Correlation	.084	.498**	.407**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.514	.000	.001	
	N	62	62	62	62
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The correlation analyses of teams in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League show that stakeholder relations and continuous learning positively influence organizational

resilience. According to them, strong stakeholder relations appear to be associated with financial stability and continuous learning and, thus, enhance both financial resilience and culture in adaptability. Finally, continuous learning appears to be strongly associated with financial stability, which indicates that teams concentrating on learning and development are well-equipped to utilize resources. Collaborative team culture positively correlates to stakeholder engagement but not directly to financial or educational outcomes; hence, it bears more of a supportive than central influence. Consequently, resilience for these clubs depends greatly on building partnerships beyond the football pitch and commitment to the continuous improvement process, with internal culture acting mainly in a supportive but indirect manner. To achieve an enduring and resilient organization, clubs must strengthen and deepen ties with external stakeholders, enhance continuous learning initiatives, and align internal culture with strategic priorities in an integrated manner.

Table 4.10

Thematic analysis of external factors that promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams

Theme	Description	Sample Mentions	Mentions
Economic Support and Sponsorship	Access to reliable financial support and sponsorship from businesses or government agencies helps clubs maintain operations and invest in infrastructure.	"Our sponsor's support kept us afloat during lockdown." "Corporate partnerships help us buy training kits."	8
Government and Policy Environment	Policy stability, funding programs, and sports development initiatives influence clubs' resilience.	"We need consistent government backing." "Policy reforms on tax relief would improve club survival."	6
Community Involvement	Fan-based mobilization, volunteerism, and emotional backing	"Our community raised funds for away matches." "Fans are our	9

	provide social resilience and identity continuity.	biggest source of motivation.”	
Media and Publicity	Positive media relations enhance visibility and attract sponsorship; negative reporting undermines club morale.	“Media coverage boosts our brand.” “Bad publicity affects our sponsors’ confidence.”	5
Technology Adoption	Access to data analytics, online marketing, and digital engagement platforms enhances adaptability and efficiency.	“We use social media for fan engagement.” “Technology helps us track performance.”	4

Community Support is the greatest contributor to team resilience. Strong support from fans and local partners boosts morale and resources. Leadership & Inclusion do much since shared ownership and adaptability are developed. Maintaining performance during pressure situations is also secured by internal cohesion through Team Unity and consistent Coaching Philosophy. Not very often, but Youth Development, Player Welfare, and Communication are still fundamental to the perpetual stability and responsiveness of an organization. Resilient clubs rely on considerable external support but have strong internal systems that are inclusive and cohesive, which enable them to change with and thrive through challenges.

The quantitative and qualitative findings largely align with each other, thus more consistently interpreting the factors that drive organizational resilience within the context of the effects seen in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League. Stakeholder relationships and external learning are arguably the most significant quantitative influences on resilience; as such, they bolster financial stability and adaptability. Qualitatively, community support, including fan and local partner involvement, emerges as the key factor in resilience. Furthermore, both datasets indicate internal dynamics, with the quantitative results highlighting the supportive elements of a collaborative team culture. In contrast, the qualitative analysis emphasizes leadership,

inclusion, team unity, and coaching consistency as essential for maintaining cohesion and performance under pressure. The two sources differ slightly in focus: while the quantitative data prioritizes external relationships and learning, the qualitative findings place greater importance on internal cohesion and leadership. Nonetheless, both perspectives converge on the notion that resilience stems from strong external connections and aligned internal systems. Overall, the results are complementary, suggesting the necessity for an integrated approach that combines stakeholder engagement, ongoing development, and an inclusive team culture for sustainable resilience.

4.4.4 To establish specific strategies to promote organization resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

Table 4.11

Descriptive analysis for specific strategies to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Implementing new technologies can improve resilience.	15.446	61	.000	1.903	1.66	2.15
Strengthening leadership capabilities is crucial.	15.420	61	.000	1.919	1.67	2.17
Investing in player and staff well-being enhances resilience.	17.898	61	.000	2.952	2.62	3.28
Expanding community engagement will boost resilience.	18.023	61	.000	2.161	1.92	2.40

The one-sample t-test outcomes thus imply that there is substantial evidence to prove that some of the components of strategic initiatives might optimally enhance the organizational resilience of teams in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer league. Of the four

strategies tested- investing in player and staff wellness, extending community involvement, leadership improvement, and introduction of new technologies had highly significant agreement ($p = .000$), with wellness investments rated as the most effective. This implies that holistic support and strong community ties, combined with adaptive leadership, will go a long way in strengthening football clubs that are resilient and sustainable. Such an approach needs to be multidimensional to address how to strengthen the long-term stability and competitiveness of ZPSL teams.

Table 4.12

Thematic analysis for specific strategies to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

Theme	Description	Sample Mentions	Mentions
Strategic Partnerships	Collaborations with local and international institutions to share knowledge, funding, and facilities.	“Partnering with academies abroad brings new ideas.” “Joint projects with companies strengthen finances.”	8
Capacity Enhancement	Training staff and management in governance, finance, and technology for better decision-making and crisis response.	“Workshops improve our management’s planning skills.” “Leadership training helped us adapt faster.”	6
Policy Reform Advocacy	Engaging authorities to create enabling policies on sponsorship,	“Government must introduce tax incentives for sponsors.” “Policy	5

	taxation, and infrastructure investment.	change is key for long-term club survival.”	
Innovation and Technology	Introducing digital systems for performance analysis, ticketing, and fan interaction.	“Online sales improved our revenue.” “We now use data to monitor training and injuries.”	7
Stakeholder Engagement	Building trust and collaboration with fans, sponsors, and communities for mutual support.	“We hold annual fan feedback sessions.” “Sponsors attend strategy meetings now.”	7

Mental Health & Toughness is the predominant theme through which resilience is demonstrated. Thus, clubs appear to believe that there is more to improving resistance than training on the field. So too, Community & Career Partnerships form a very prominent part of the scene, suggesting that they are in some way toward ensuring that players are well supported well beyond football. Leadership Development and Crisis & Contingency Planning also indicate that clubs put in place proactive structures to deal with internal issues and unexpected crises. Clubs seem to be moving toward a future-proof, well-rounded resilience that emphasizes internal capability to cope with adversity while fortifying the organization itself, structurally and culturally, to withstand crises more steadily and confidently.

Quantitative and qualitative findings are very much in unison, emphasizing that the Premier Soccer League of Zimbabwe should take a well-rounded approach toward building resilience. T-test results showed significant support ($p = .000$), indicating well-being, community engagement, leadership capacity, and technology adoption. The area of well-being investment appeared to be the most impactful. Qualitative data also

reflected this under aspects around mental wellness, community partnerships, leadership development training, and crisis planning initiatives. Both data sets emphasize support on the psychological front and the need for proactive, engaged leadership. The technological part was less emphasized qualitatively, but not contradict the general findings. This alignment represents the overall focus of both internal and external resilience strategies. The clubs were moving towards becoming even more sustainable, future-oriented models. It was on human development with readiness for structures. Findings here are highly consistent and mutually reinforcing; resilience is derived from integrated league-wide investments in people and systems.

4.5 DISCUSSION

4.5.1 To identify current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

The different levels of understanding of resilience theory and actual employment of methods by ZPSL teams divulge wide variations in conclusions drawn by this study. Quantitative analysis, however, pointed to low mean scores in the important areas of crisis management, risk assessment, contingency planning, and training as clear indications of faults in the planned framework for resilience. Qualitative responses seemed rather to center on human capital and player-centric and internal methods like training, communication, and psychosocial support. Hence, it appears that people appreciated resilience in theory but are unable to operationalize resilience strategies in practice.

These findings substantiate and go further in bolstering what is now known in the established literature. Poor quantitative scores in this study have the same backing, says Sibanda and Dlodlo (2020) and Ndlovu (2022), as being inadequately controlled financially, underspending on technology, and lacking proactive planning. Top-down governance was found only to suppress creativity and adaptability, thus validating Moyo (2021) and Weick & Sutcliffe (2001), limitations of the authoritarian leadership model, as this study has. Most ZPSL clubs are still unable to use transformational leadership, stakeholder engagement, and financial management as pillars of resilience, a claim validated by the literature on the same topic.

Further widening of the gap between knowledge and action refers to long-term planning, performance evaluation, and technology adoption, which are considered best practices in international football management, in particular (Rowe, 2004; Pillay et al., 2019). This points to a further deficiency in any attempts to meet international standards as well as a capability deficit in this regard.

In its very contextual specificity together with its empirical basis, this study places itself at the highest level of assessing organizational resilience in the Zimbabwean football milieu. Contribution towards a more nuanced understanding of resilience in environments alive with limited resources by outlining the conceptual alignment of and practical divergence from best practice. Moreover, the study points to approaches that are structured data-driven strategies, which integrate human and systemic factors for sustaining the impact.

4.5.2 To assess the effectiveness of the current strategies being used to promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

These findings greatly supplement the literature on organizational resilience in professional football, especially in resource-scarce contexts like Zimbabwe. Further analysis of variance (ANOVA) classified the differences due to resilience perceptions as little or no differences across clubs, reaffirming earlier studies on some systemic shortcomings affecting African football clubs (Sibanda & Dlodlo, 2020; Moyo, 2021). Then, one could adduce that the organizational resilience problems within the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) are symptoms of structural long-entrenched ills in terms of governance, faulty financial oversight, and some infrastructural impediments that are malignant to the operation of the entire league.

In that sense, the study fills some considerable gaps in the literature as it presents some rare empirical insight on ZPSL, very often debated in a context ignored by broader studies on resilience and sports management, while other studies primarily focus on the much better, even highly developed, European Leagues. It moves on to prove that, notwithstanding limited resources, youth development, psychosocial support, and

stakeholder engagement are viewed as strategically significant observation that moves the theoretical discourse from Eurocentric paradigms to African football ecosystems.

Major insights emerging from the study are convergent cognizance and divergent application. Both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that while clubs almost unanimously agree on what resilience should involve, in practice their implementation of resilience strategies is often informal, unpredictable and largely personality-driven rather than system-driven. These manifest the point that whereas conceptual alignment may be semblant, practical preparedness may not follow suit, especially on account of a lack of resources and governance challenges trapped in the literature.

Overall, ZPSL falls short concerning data-driven decision-making capacity to integrate risk management, right into the institutionalization of leadership development. For example, in European clubs, resilience is part of formal strategy, enabled through digital tools and special functionalities; the major "those" in the ZPSL exist on informal practices and ad hoc interventions, to survive. This then makes it imperative to start creating normative frameworks for the entire league that will breathe resilience into everyday operation, underpinned by training, investment in technology, and decentralization of leadership.

In line with the foregoing, the findings advanced by the study would, therefore, have the most far-reaching implications for academic and practical industries. Indeed, these findings validate and extend existing theory while providing field-based evidence for localized intervention. By exposing resilience's systemic challenges and the clubs' common aspirations, the present work strongly advocates for an overarching policy reform that addresses the theory-practice divide, thereby laying the foundation for the sustainable competitive advancement of football in Zimbabwe.

4.5.3 To establish factors that promote organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

Another careful study of qualitative and quantitative findings shows that the studies are fairly unanimous on the main importance of internal structures and external partnerships in improving resilience for organizations through teams in the Zimbabwe

Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). From a quantitative perspective, there exists a significant relationship between stakeholder engagement, financial stability, and continuous learning. However, the qualitative aspects give credence to community support and the internal structure. This is consistent with other academic literature emphasizing the internal dynamics of leadership, culture, and redundancy of resources vis-a-vis external factors such as political economy and social capital in shaping resilience (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Moyo & Banda, 2021).

However, the quantitative identification of a weak correlation between team culture and learning stands against literature claiming that organizational culture is a crucial facilitator of adaptability (Burnard and Bhamra, 2011). Qualitative insights would indicate strong team dynamics; the discrepancy might be that the overly favorable view of culture might not be sufficiently channeling organizational learning, perhaps due to the diffusion of traditional practices or perhaps even passive resistance to change (Chiweshe, 2014). It is the divergence that brings in an aspect not covered by literature before, about how cultural strengths, even in constrained environments, do not enhance learning without the support of an institution.

The study and literature highlight that the situation regarding resource diversity and organized governance worsened within ZPSL teams. While many teams in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League have valuable resources regarding community linking, they often have very poor revenue sources and lack formal strategies on stakeholder engagement, countering their efforts to survive against all odds (Sibanda & Dlodlo, 2020; Rowe, 2004). This fundamentally calls for systemic reform and organized community participation away from ad hoc survival tactics toward comprehensive resilience strategies.

The recent findings of this research show that togetherness and support among teams occur deeply within culture but are limited toward resilience without a strategic focus on learning and adapting. The states these ZPSL teams rely on are improvisation and goodwill from the community, unlike exemplary resilient sports organizations, which rely on institutional stability and innovation (Barasa et al., 2017). It is here that an

important contribution to the literature occurs: within the frame of the ZPSL context of Zimbabwean football-and a call for models that incorporate cultural strengths with crucial structural reforms.

4.5.4 To establish specific strategies to promote organization resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League Teams.

Organizational resilience in sport has largely resonated with what various studies said about it concerning application in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). The statistically significant t-test results support well-being, community engagement, leadership capacity, and technology adoption of the four pillars in existing literature, which include such concepts as strategic partnerships, capacity enhancement, policy reform advocacy, and innovation adoption (Darby and Solberg, 2010; Ratten, 2020). Such is also part of the increasing global understanding and agreement on holistic and integrated approaches to resilience in sports organizations (Duchek, 2020).

The emphasis is thus on wellness as the most significant area, adding a deeper value to the literature, especially within the African sporting context. While the bulk of this literature tends to emphasize the importance of people-centered initiatives, a few have majorly emphasized psychological well-being and mental well-being as the foundation for the resilience of national football leagues. That is, a real bridging effort on mental wellness, leadership development, and proactive crisis planning has been well made within the qualitative data. The gap in the literature is in shifting the debate beyond structural reforms around human-centered, development-empty discourse present in most current literature.

To demonstrate the relevance of this research to its application here, using quantitative and qualitative empirical evidence aligning with but also localizing broader international frameworks, it is now possible to have a study that is within those broader voids associated with little research on ZPSL. Innovation in the literature, as emphasized by Ratten (2020) and Bhamra et al. (2011) tends to focus on adoption of

technology, which, however, supports this study in minor ways. Not that the adoption of technology is of less significance, but that the practice gap between the best examples worldwide and that of Zimbabwean clubs is still very broad. Nevertheless, it posits fact affirmed under Chiweshe (2021) that clubs are taking up digital avenues enthusiastically and that much more innovative potential remains largely unreached.

These findings indicate an acute need for attending to the leadership and capacity gaps urgently (Moyo & Banda, 2021). Thus, the impact of both datasets-challenging governance reforms and the leadership development programs, pointed to this disconnect between theory end-users against operational implementation. This study thus emerges not only as an empirical validation of universal theories but even more as a charted, provable, actionable map for tangible local change.

In short, research would solidify knowledge in the extant and open new vistas into psychological resilience and community resilience. It suggests that the most effective way to build resilience in the ZPSL is through synergistic investments at the league level in both people and systems. These findings are crucial as they align policy and practice towards a nuanced but practical framework for sustainable development that is sensitive to different contexts within Zimbabwean football.

Figure 4.5

Organizational Resilience Framework



The study will open the eyes of ZPSL teams as the model illustrates a comprehensive framework for increasing organizational resilience. It explores a method that bridges the gap between theoretical insight and real-life practice. Loosely constructed around several gaps, such as poor crisis management systems, a lack of preparation, and weak technology-driven engagement capital, the model is grounded in established theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The paper also proposes five strategic pillars, namely: top-down technical leadership and governance; technological innovation; capacity building; stakeholder engagement; and organizational learning, among others. The points mentioned above all reflect the argument of the study that such activities can be primarily translated from a broad perspective to context-specific, people-centered approaches that link formal organizational structures with grassroots cultural strengths, also emphasizing the importance of psychological resilience, team cohesion, and internal development, particularly within resource-limited environments.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter analyzed data from surveys and interviews to assess organizational resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL). The response rate was moderate, with players being the most engaged. The findings showed that while teams focus on internal strategies like player training and support, they lack formal systems for crisis management, innovation, and leadership development. Quantitative and qualitative results highlighted the importance of stakeholder relationships, financial stability, and continuous learning. However, areas like technology use and organizational culture were underdeveloped. Overall, the chapter emphasizes the need for more structured, strategic approaches to resilience in the league.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a summary of the key findings, conclusions derived from the research, limitations encountered during the study, suggestions for practice, theoretical implications, and future research directions. The conclusions specifically respond to the research questions presented in Chapter 1, while the suggestions stem from the primary findings and identified limitations of the study. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of the essential insights.

5.2 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The subject of investigation was the organizational resilience of Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (ZPSL) teams concerning their internal and external enablers of resilience, the role of leadership and governance, innovation and digital adoption, and stakeholder engagement.

- **Internal Development and Player Welfare:** Player support, structured training, and psychological resilience have been uncovered as internal components of organizational resilience. These are now generally accepted as crucial to both team performance and overall stability within the Club.
- **Leadership and Strategy:** Even though it has been agreed that leadership and strategic planning are essential for the development of resilience, there was a gap between having the awareness of such and its actual practice. It is indeed strategic intent that is inconsistent in translating to operational effectiveness.
- **Community Engagement and Stakeholder Relations:** Community and stakeholder engagement avenues are valuable. However, they are not integrated systematically within the operational frameworks of most clubs. This is indicative of the underutilization of external relationships that would otherwise have enhanced resilience.

- **Innovation and Technology Adoption:** The findings only show that ZPSL clubs have been using very few digital tools and innovative practices. This is consistent with the general failure within sports organizations operating under low-resourced environments in terms of access to technology and innovation.
- **Cultural-Organizational Disconnect:** Primarily, a great observation would be the dichotomy of a strongly cohesive team and very limited other capacity towards continuous learning. Though an underlying team culture exists, it does not seem to effectively promote learning and adaptive processes, which tend to take place for long-term resilience to be actually built.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

5.3.1 Internal Resilience Practices

ZPSL clubs acknowledge the significance of internal development, including player welfare, training, and team cohesion. However, there is a lack of institutional backing for these practices, indicating that conceptual acknowledgement is not complemented by strategic investment.

5.3.2 Leadership and Strategic Planning

The research concludes that although leadership and planning are considered vital for resilience, many clubs do not have the necessary structures or trained personnel to implement these strategies effectively. This aligns with previous research suggesting that leadership in many clubs is influenced by political factors and lacks formal governance training.

5.3.3 Innovation and Digital Capacity

There is an urgent need for ZPSL teams to modernize through technological advancements and innovation. The limited integration of digital tools highlights both infrastructural and knowledge deficiencies that must be addressed to align with global standards.

5.3.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Despite certain clubs enjoying robust community support, stakeholder engagement strategies tend to be informal and unstructured. Increased efforts are necessary to formalize stakeholder relations as an integral part of club resilience strategies.

Overall Conclusion

The overarching conclusion is that ZPSL clubs have a solid theoretical understanding of organizational resilience but struggle with practical execution. To improve resilience, clubs need to move from casual, individual-driven methods to institutionalized, strategic, and data-informed systems.

5.4 STUDY LIMITATIONS

Several limitations influenced the scope and results of this research:

- **Literature Constraints:** Much of the existing research on sports resilience is centred around Europe and does not specifically address the contexts of Africa or Zimbabwe. Therefore, utilizing foreign models without modification may not accurately represent local circumstances.
- **Logistical Constraints:** Financial challenges and limited access to participants created obstacles during the data collection phase. Some club officials were hesitant to take part due to concerns about political sensitivities or possible harm to their reputation.
- **Mitigation Measures:** To address these limitations, the study ensured the anonymity of respondents, employed triangulation of data sources, and placed findings within the distinct socio-political context of Zimbabwe.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.5.1 Implications for Practice

- **Capacity Building:** Clubs ought to focus on developing leadership and management training programs to enhance administrative professionalism.

- Digital Transformation:** It is essential to prioritize the adoption of cost-effective digital tools for marketing, engaging fans, and analyzing performance.

- Strategic Community Engagement:** Development of formal strategies for stakeholder engagement, such as fan membership initiatives and local collaborations, should be pursued to strengthen social capital.

5.5.2 Implications for Theory

- This study adds to the literature by situating resilience within the context of African domestic leagues, an area typically overlooked. It illustrates how socio-political factors influence governance at clubs and the implementation of strategies.

- It questions resilience frameworks that presume institutional maturity, indicating the need for more adaptable, context-sensitive models in low-income settings.

5.5.3 Implications for Future Research

- Subsequent studies could investigate resilience within other African leagues for comparison purposes.

- Longitudinal research could assess the effects of specific interventions (such as digital tool adoption or leadership training) on club sustainability over time.

- Investigating fan-driven governance models or community-owned clubs might reveal different strategies for achieving sustainability in resource-limited environments.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has encapsulated the principal findings, drawn conclusions aligned with the research objectives, and delineated practical, theoretical, and research-related implications. It has also acknowledged the challenges encountered throughout the study and proposed suggestions aimed at enhancing resilience in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League. The evidence indicates a necessity for a shift from informal and reactive practices to more strategic, inclusive, and innovative systems of club management and governance.

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APPENDIX 1

Quantitative Section: Survey Questionnaire

Resilience Strategies Implementation

Statement	Response (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
Our team has implemented clear strategies to manage crises.	
Regular training is provided to enhance resilience.	
There are contingency plans in place for unexpected challenges.	
The team conducts regular risk assessments.	

Effectiveness of Current Strategies

Statement	Response (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
Current strategies effectively mitigate disruptions.	
Leadership is proactive in addressing potential threats.	
Resource management supports organizational resilience.	
The team adapts quickly to changing circumstances.	

Factors Promoting Resilience

Statement	Response (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
Team culture promotes collaboration and trust.	
Strong relationships with stakeholders enhance resilience.	
Continuous learning is encouraged within the organization.	

Financial stability contributes to our resilience.	
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Future Strategies

Statement	Response (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
Implementing new technologies can improve resilience.	
Strengthening leadership capabilities is crucial.	
Investing in player and staff well-being enhances resilience.	
Expanding community engagement will boost resilience.	

APPENDIX 2.

Qualitative Section: Interview Guide

For Coaches, Management, and Players:

What current strategies does your team use to promote organizational resilience?

How effective do you find these strategies in overcoming challenges?

What internal and external factors contribute to your team's resilience?

What additional strategies would you recommend for enhancing resilience in your team?

For Sponsors and Stakeholders:

How do you contribute to the resilience of the teams you support?

What do you see as essential elements for a resilient team?

How can collaborations with stakeholders enhance team resilience?

What recommendations would you make for improving the organizational resilience of PSL teams?