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MASTER EXECUTIF EN MANAGEMENT DES ORGANISATIONS SPORTIVES *EXECUTIVE MASTERS IN SPORTS ORGANISATION MANAGEMENT*

MEMOS XXIV

2021-2022

Exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Abstract

The study's main aim was to explore Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations. This was a mixed method study which was informed by the positivism philosophical orientation hence the adoption of the explanatory research design and deductive approach. Specific objectives explored leadership, strategic planning, performance management and risk management planning maturity levels of the NF's and their role on the organizational performance of the NOC.

The study took the total population of 32, targeting sports executives (NF's Presidents) mobilised through the purposive sampling method. Out of the 32 distributed questionnaires, 94% (30) were collected and usable while 6% (2) NF's did not respond. The findings of the study indicated that there is a relationship between the strategic maturity of National Federations and the organizational performance of the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee. The exploration revealed an informal to emerging low strategic maturity level of the National Federations based on Leadership, values and culture, strategic thinking and planning, alignment, performance measurement and sustainability maturity measures. Due to this informal to emerging maturity level displayed, the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee (ZOC) has been inconsistent and under par as provided by the secondary data reviewed.

The study recommended that in order for ZOC to meet its own set strategic goals and improve the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee, there is need to form a strong support strategy to enhance and improve the strategic maturity levels of NF's in leadership, values and culture, strategic thinking and planning, performance measurement and sustainability. This can be done through deliberate actions of Government engagement and lobbying, Empowerment programmes to assist women break the glass ceiling, Embed Corporate Governance in ZOC operations and Human Resource gap strengthening through training. Based on the findings, recommendations and limitations of the study, the report presents theoretical contributions, practical contributions and areas for future possible research.

Key Words: Strategy; strategic maturity; Organisational performance, NFs and NOC(ZOC).

Résumé

L'objectif principal de l'étude était d'explorer la performance organisationnelle du CNO du Zimbabwe (ZOC) et la maturité stratégique de ses fédérations sportives. Il s'agit d'une étude à méthode mixte qui a été guidée par l'orientation philosophique du positivisme, d'où l'adoption d'un plan de recherche explicatif et d'une approche déductive. Des objectifs spécifiques ont exploré le leadership, la planification stratégique, la gestion de la performance et les niveaux de maturité de la planification de la gestion des risques des fédérations nationales (FN) et leur rôle sur la performance organisationnelle du CNO. L'étude a pris L'étude a pris l'ensemble de la population des FN, soit 32 au total, ciblant les cadres sportifs (présidents des FN) mobilisés par la méthode d'échantillonnage par choix raisonné. Sur les 32 questionnaires distribués, 94% (30) ont été collectés et utilisables tandis que 6% (2) des FN n'ont pas répondu.

Les résultats de l'étude indiquent qu'il existe une relation entre la maturité stratégique des fédérations nationales et la performance organisationnelle du CNO du Zimbabwe. L'exploration a révélé un niveau de maturité stratégique informel à faible des fédérations nationales fondé sur le leadership, les valeurs et la culture, la réflexion et la planification stratégique, l'harmonisation, la mesure du rendement et les mesures de maturité en matière de durabilité. En raison de ce niveau de maturité informel à émergent, la performance organisationnelle du Comité National Olympique (ZOC) a été incohérente et inférieure à la moyenne, comme le montrent les données secondaires examinées. L'étude a recommandé que pour que le ZOC atteigne ses propres objectifs stratégiques et améliore la performance organisationnelle du Comité National Olympique, il est nécessaire de mettre en place une stratégie de soutien solide pour renforcer et améliorer les niveaux de maturité stratégique des FN en matière de leadership, de valeurs et de culture, de réflexion et de planification stratégiques, et de mesure de la performance et de durabilité. Cela peut se faire par des actions délibérées d'engagement et de lobbying auprès du gouvernement, des programmes d'autonomisation pour aider les femmes à briser le plafond de verre ; l'intégration de la gouvernance d'entreprise "corporate" dans les opérations du ZOC et le renforcement des lacunes en matière de ressources humaines par la formation. Sur la base des résultats, des recommandations et des limites de l'étude, le rapport présente les contributions théoriques, les contributions pratiques et les domaines de recherche futurs possibles.

Mots clés : Stratégie ; maturité stratégique ; performance organisationnelle, NFs et NOC (ZOC

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Sport, as a business and field, is changing rapidly and sport in Zimbabwe is no exception. This change is typically characterized by major interrelated transitions with a significant impact on the structure, operations and strategies of National Federations (NFs). It has now become increasingly important for sports leadership to adjust to these changes. It has also become increasingly imperative to examine the strategic maturity of organizations for organizational performance in areas of Leadership, organizational culture and values, strategic thinking and planning, performance management and measurement, process improvement and (change management) sustainability of strategic management, (Software Engineering Institute/Carnegie Mellon University Humphrey 1993). Relying on outdated leadership models and old-fashioned leadership practices is no longer adequate, Llopis, (2013). Sport is a sector now involving the expertise and techniques of complex, advanced management and leadership. It all relies on the excellent performance of leaders and employees alike. Leadership in sports has lately become so important. It is no longer dependent on triumphant technical careers to qualify to lead these complex sports organizations. Appropriate sport-related administration, management leadership education, teamwork and business skills are now critical prerequisites to serve society and deliver results (Arnold et al, 2014).

The aim of this study is to bring to the fore the connection between the performance of the NOC and the strategic maturity of its feeder national federations in Zimbabwe. Contextual influences such as presence or lack thereof strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, have a direct result on strategic management on sport organization's success, (Winard et. al, 2013) It is intended that this project will guide decisions taken to address the current knowledge gaps. This project seeks to explore the relationship between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.

This chapter covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, approach, research objectives, research questions, research hypotheses, scope, significance of the study, assumptions, dissertation outline and chapter summary.

1.2 Background to the problem

Zimbabwe has sporting ability, talent and a rich sporting history, the golden girls, the black family in tennis, hosting of the 1995 All Africa Games, Bruce Grobbelaar, Peter Ndlovu, Ian

Robertson, Artwell Mandaza, George Shaya, Tracy Cox; Kirsty Coventry, Might Warriors to the Olympic Games Rio 2016, just to name but a few of great achievements and names in Zimbabwe's sporting history. It has 8 Olympic medals since 1980 from Hockey and Swimming. The country has struggled in recent times to reach past success, directly qualifying only two athletes for the **TOKYO2020 Olympic Games** largely due to the inability to consistently make it into international competitions, host big games and attract meaningful sponsorship to support preparations as demonstrated by such reports, to single out but a few reasons. Zim Sports Reporter(2021) wrote a newspaper articles "Government officials dominate Zimbabwe's Olympic Games delegation", Mhlanga (2021) , "Zimbabwe Athletes miss Olympics Qualification", Mangunda and Vickers (2019), "Zimbabwe's women boycott Olympic football qualifier against Zambia over unpaid fees". The last three Olympic games, i.e. London 2012, Rio 2016 and Tokyo2020 has seen the nation coming back home empty handed, with no show on the medal tally and unranked.

This poor performance could be attributed to a gap in performance outcomes caused by a lack of strategic maturity by local National Federations who in turn feed into the qualification and quality performance of individual and team athletes at the Olympic Games and other International Sport platforms. While strategic plans can be in place, an examination of the organizations strategic maturity in leadership traits, organizational culture and values, strategic thinking and planning, performance management and measurement, process improvement and sustainability of strategic management of the NFs and the NOC can assist to inform leaders as they face the continuing challenge of how they can meet set performance expectations of the organisation and the nation at large. While it is possible for an organisation to survive without a strategic plan in place, often businesses achieve a level of success, then stall and never thrive (Oslen 2016). Strategic planning helps organisations avoid the stalemate and get off the plateau they may find yourselves on. Accidental success is dangerous and succeeding without a plan is possible, however an organization could grow and become even more successful with a plan and benchmarking. Lack of a strategic plan and an assessment of strategic maturity negatively impacts the attitude of an organization's team (Oslen 2016).

Zimbabwe has 55 registered National Federations (**NF**'s), four not yet registered but recognized and practicing as national sport organizations, four umbrella sport organizations including the NOC - ZOC as per the Sport and Recreation Commission register of national sport associations. The sport and recreation commission itself is an umbrella sport association

constituted by an Act of Parliament reporting to the Ministry of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, which in itself reports to the Parliament. Of the 55 NF's, 32 are registered with the National Olympic Committee (ZOC), 30 being Olympic Sports and two yet to be included as Olympic sports (**Appendix B**).

The National Olympic Committee (NOC) formulated its first Strategic plan in 2002 and to date has had four reviews and four improved strategic plans in 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2021. It has however been observed that while the NOC is regarded as a model NOC in the region as alluded to in the organizations' SWOT and PESTEL Analysis (**Appendix C**), the NFs that feed into its operations are generally weak due to a lack of good governance for organizational performance hence this gap to qualify athletes for top-level competitions such as the Olympic Games. It has remained clear that there are sport performance issues in Zimbabwean sport that need addressing in order to provide possible recourse to this challenge.

This project, therefore, seeks to explore the Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sports federations. Out of the 32 NFs affiliated to ZOC, this research project explores the relationship between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sports federations and establish how the lack of National Federation strategic maturity as displayed by the lack of current and functional strategic planning, leadership, values and cultures, performance management and sustainability dimensions has impacted the performance of the NOC at international platforms.

1.3 Approach to the problem

Strategic Planning (SP): - is an organisations' theory on how to gain competitive advantage**.** It is a popular management practice in modern day business and is ranked among the top five managerial strategies worldwide (Wolf & Flody, 2017). SP provides top level direction for business/sport organizations when having to decide on purpose, best business practices that are then critical for remaining vibrant, competitive and relevant (Jaleha & Nachuki, 2018). Characteristically applied as an approach to strategic formulation, elements of SP such as strategic direction - mission, vision and values, operating environment analysis (both SWOT internal and PESTEL external), strategic goals in the form of key performance areas, tactics and objectives as well as strategic control to address the issues are attended to (Bryson, 2011). Having the ability to learn and adjust has become critical for performance sustainability. Failure to plan and foresee risk factors such as lack of a strategic plan, talent drain, political

sanctions, new training methods through sports science and new technology can lead to sport organization poor performance and eventual absolution (Perck et al., 2016).

1.4 Research Aim and Objectives

1.4.1 Aim

To explore the relationship between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.

1.4.2 Objectives

The research objectives are as follows: -

1.4.2.1 To explore the leadership maturity of NF's and its effect on the organizational performance of the NOC.

1.4.2.2 To explore NF's strategic planning maturity its effect on the organizational performance of the NOC.

1.4.2.3 To explore NF's performance management maturity its effect on the organizational performance of the NOC.

1.4.2.4 To explore NF's risk management planning maturity for process improvement and sustainability of strategic management maturity its effect on the organizational performance of the NOC.

1.5 Scope

As noted above, the research covers all National Federations in Zimbabwe affiliated to the National Olympic Committee ZOC (32). The research was limited to the leadership and members of these sport organizations as they are the key players responsible for defining the strategic maturity of their National Federation which may be having a bearing on the performance of their organization and subsequently of the National Olympic Committee. These organizations form the research population and the lists of names of NFs members and leadership from these organizations form the sampling frame for this study. The geographical spread for this study is confined to Harare.

1.6 Assumptions

The research assumed the NFs affiliated to the NOC experience unique strategic management maturity challenges. Secondly, the study assumed that the respondents chosen provide adequate information to answer the set research questions.

1.7 Chapter Summary.

Chapter 1 covered an introduction to the research exploring the relationship between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of feeder sport federations. It explored the background to the introduced problem that this author in her role is an interested part in the well-being and organisational performance of National Federations and the NOC is heavily invested as it impacts directed on set performance targets. The research aims and objectives were outlined. The research scope and assumptions were also outlined.

<div align="center">**CHAPTER 2:**</div>

<div align="center">**LITERATURE REVIEW**</div>

2.1 Introduction

The study examines the dimensions of strategic maturity as originally put across through the works of Nolan (1973) and Crosby (1979). Arguments drawn from these theories suggest that strategic planning and subsequently strategic maturity can positively contribute to the operational efficiency of both process and organization. While planning is important, there is value in the pursuit of perfection and development towards "strategic maturity". "Maturity", refers to the state of being "fully-developed", "complete" or "advanced". While strategic maturity accordingly Bourne (2014) involves the identify aspects of existing culture and parts of management systems that offer the best opportunities for improvement, defining options that may work (there are no guarantees), and decide on the steps needed to deliver the desired improvements to become better. Hence, a quest for organizational excellence can take a form of a search for organizational performance

2.2 Theories

Exploration of strategic maturity can be conducted using a number of different theories. These include the synoptic planning theory, the Harvard policy model, the goal setting theory and the strategic leadership theory among many others. The synoptic theory approach is a conscious, comprehensive, rational planning effort where executives formulate the organization's goals, oversee their implementation and measure their progress while at the same time making adjustments to the goals as changes in environment and organizational conditions change Roberts (2000). The Harvard model is used to assist firms with developing the best fit between their stakeholders and the environment. There is need to pay attention to the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the values of senior management, the external threats and opportunities and social obligations of the firm.

The goal-setting theory is based on the idea that setting specific and measurable goals is more effective than setting unclear goals, this addresses employee motivation as being challenged to work hard and develop their skills when working with specific and measurable goals, (Locke, 1968). This in turn may result in improved employee engagement, productivity and satisfaction in the workplace. According to Locke's goal-setting theory, there are five principles to setting effective goals namely, clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback and task complexity.

Strategic leadership theory suggests that top leadership determine and influence strategic decisions that have major bearing on effective strategic implementation and eventually determining organizational performance. Leaders at strategic leadership level have to develop knowledge and awareness, connect and create ideas, be creative and innovative (Bayle et al., 2007). Given the importance of planning based on the explored theories as well as the link between the theories and organizational performance in relation to the professionalization of sport, this study seeks to explore the relationship between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.

These theories establish some basic relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance. It is through planning that performance can be enhanced. The ZOC organizational performance is hinged on the national federations as they are the one's directly responsible for preparing and qualifying athletes for international and world games such as the Olympic Games. It therefore becomes imperative to explore the relationship between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.

2.3 Strategic maturity

According to Witek-Crabb (2017) strategic maturity can be defined as, becoming more perfect, fully-developed and advanced in strategic management but not necessarily translate to organizational growth but rather improved performance. In his seminal work Argyris (1957) assumes that maturity of strategic management could be considered through the maturity of strategic management process and strategic management leaders. Becker et al. (2009), point out that strategic management maturity examines a number of management dimensions by an organisation in an effort to examine and measure where they stand compared to other high performing organizations.

For purposes of this study, NF's strategic maturity is being explored in relation to the organizational performance of the NOC as feeder entities. This literature review will address strategic maturity dimensions of leadership, culture and values, strategic thinking and planning, performance management and measurement, process improvement and the sustainability of strategic management. The following discussions are based on Humphrey (1993) see Appendix D, in an applied strategic maturity model and leadership submission. While strategic maturity measurement levels which can be used to measure the above dimensions are given by Smith (2021) as follows: -

- **Informal**. At this stage of a maturity model, the organization has little to no capabilities. When new projects or processes are implemented in the discipline in question, teams typically "play it by ear." Results, therefore, are usually inconsistent and under par.

- **Emerging.** This level refers to the lowest level of competency. Typically, at this stage, competencies and consistent practices are beginning to emerge, though they are not usually implemented or standardized across the organization.

- **Integrated.** The third level in many models integrates capabilities, standardized processes, defined best practices, and so forth. Organizations at this level have begun to codify and ensure that best practices are implemented throughout the organization.

- **Strategic.** At this point, the fourth level of an organizational maturity model, businesses have aligned processes with organizational strategy. These practices are implemented consistently across the organization and managed quantitatively.

- **Fully optimized**. Business functions that reach the highest and final maturity level have achieved full competency, standardized best practices across the organization, integrated the business function into the organization's overall strategy, and are undergoing continuous improvement. Fully optimized processes are much more profitable and deliver tangible impacts to the bottom line.

The strategic dimensions under exploration are also generally the same management areas addressed by the Managing Olympic Sports Organisation module's six chapters namely Organizing an Olympic Sport Organisation, Managing Strategically, Human Resources, Finances, Marketing as well as Organising a major sport event, International Olympic Committee (Camy & Robinson, 2020).

2.3.1 Leadership

Effective strategic management starts with leadership as put across by Nolan (1973). He expands to say that good leaders look at problems in a critical way, question assumptions, create and articulate a vision for the future. A leader has to set a clear and consistent vision of the organisation, prepare for the future; be visible and engaged to ensure staff understand the vision and translate it into terms relevant to their roles and not micromanage, but trust and

encourage employees to contribute their ideas and grow in their careers; walk around and work alongside staff to encourage teamwork according to Crosby (1979).

2.3.2 Culture and values

'A leader leads by example, whether he intends to or not.' (Author unknown). According to Mintsberg (1984), the culture and values dimension addresses the culture and values inside the organisation while speaking to leaders and employees shared understanding and agreement with the stated values. Lester et al., (2003) pointed out that, organisations habitually post a list of virtuous words, however what distinguishes maturity is the degree to which those values are communicated, understood and practiced by the leader as well as by all employees. Evidence of mature workforce culture and values include: - thoughtful applications of change management principles and practices by the leadership; the degree of ownership that employees feel for vision and values of the organisation, their degree of participation in shaping the organisation's culture and ways of working, the level of trust, transparency and freedom to communicate with candor, as opposed to a culture of fear and denial, the degree of flexibility and willingness to change to align to new strategic priorities.

2.3.3 Strategic thinking and planning

Strategic development is a process that is challenging requiring strategic thinking (Persse, 2001). The submission by this author being that this requires several traits such as using consistent definition of planning terms understanding their distinctions, a conscious awareness of the distinctions between project planning and strategic planning, ability to discuss and describe items in plans at the appropriate 'strategic altitude', awareness of the dynamic system effects in organizations, such as delays and feedback and an openness to new ideas and encouragement of creativity and innovation, there has to be openness of the planning process to a team of employees of various ranks and functions, degree to which alternative strategies and scenarios are.

2.3.4 Alignment

Strategic alignment is the degree to which the organization's people and resources are focused on the strategy to which the opposite of alignment is 'chaos' (Humphrey, 1990). In a chaotic situation, managers, programs and projects are aiming at different goals and their lack of a

common vision, leading to wasted energy, delays, conflict and confusion. Features of the organisation that can be aligned include, values, vision, mission, strategic plans, budgets, policies, procedures, functions, themes, objectives, information standards and organisation structure. This alignment will measure the degree to which people at all levels are motivated by a common vision and strategy, people understand and support the strategy in their job and people are self-motivated.

2.3.5   Performance measurement and management

Without a performance measure, managers are 'flying blind'. The strategic measure should be aligned to the strategic plan tying the vision of the organisation. Strategic performance measure includes measures derived from and aligned to the strategy, not just key performance indicators for day to day operations; a focus on outcomes and results, not just money spend, tasks accomplished, or outputs delivered De Bruin (2005). Hammer (2007) supports that the use of appropriate ratios, sample size and frequent reporting on the measurement in order for the measurement to be more meaningful is important for decision making. According to Ittner (2008), when the measurement has been done, then comes the non-financial performance management. The submission by this author is that decisions are made based on the measurement outcomes. These include; the use of feedback loops to allow managers to see results of their decisions, the recognition of the organisation as a dynamic system where leaders have placed the entire organisation into a learning loop to allow for the validation of the vision.

2.3.6   Process improvement

The role of strategic management is to identify which processes out of our entire portfolio are most in need of improvement in line with doing the right things according to Witek-Crabb (2016). This is guided by the set strategy, which informs the allocation of resources for planning improvements of the most strategically important processes in the short to long term. The use of industry benchmarks for efficiency comparison, skills, practices and technology used to improve process quality and efficiency. A knowledge of core competencies and capacities of the organisation and how well to apply them in running the process is a core principle. It is equally important that employees have an understanding of stakeholders and their expectations coupled by an appreciation of the existence of contingency plans for future.

2.3.7   Sustainability of strategic management

An organisation should be able to define its strategic management sustainability by how well it maintains it focus on the strategic vision, plans and initiatives Kaleta (2014) The existence and functionality of its systems, people and communication activities to maintain the momentum of desired change. There is need to designate an 'Office of Strategic management' to deploy the strategy and track performance thus, institutionalizing strategic management and make strategy everyone's business according to Humphrey (1987). Having achieved a high level of maturity, the organisation is on a journey of continuous learning and improvement which can be tracked through positive organizational performance and risk management planning.

2.4 NF's and NOC (Zimbabwe Olympic Committee)

NF's are classified as non-profit making organizations that administer their sport code and provide sport services to communities in their country. This makes them custodians of their sport policies, rules and regulations. In recent years, sport has turned increasingly professional (Arnold, Fletcher & Molyneux, 2012) as evidenced in the adoption of corporate management practices such as strategic planning and revenue generation to enhance performance (Akinyele & Fasogbon, 2010). People need a reason to come to work every day (besides the paycheck). Lack of direction results in morale problems because, as far as your employees are concerned, the future is uncertain, unpredictable, and out of control. These depressing conclusions can only be seen as a threat to employment, which negatively impacts productivity (Locke & Latham, 2002).

NFs as an integral part of sport and the sport industry have been the focus of much attention. Researchers have participated in an emerging critical debate about sport and its place and impact in society (O'Boyle & Bradbury, 2017) with a relevantly new agenda to articulate the need for organizational performance and good governance of sport associations. Scholars have studied the changing nature of sport and its response to environmental influences presenting a critical foundation for understanding sports organizational performance (Shilbury & Ferkins, 2014). They also argue that the tensions experienced as a result of sports' transition from amateur to professional entities contributed to the need to have a deeper appreciation of the importance of strategic planning in organizations, sport being no exception.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Four variables from the seven outlined above will be explored, namely HR issues, Governance issues, Financial issues and Change Management issues. This is because they are highlighted

in the MOSO and are of great concern to the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee as guided by the IOC in the management of an Olympic sport organisation. The conceptual framework of this research shows the presumed connection between the variables as shown in Figure 2.1.

Independent variable	Dependent variable

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┌──────────────────────────────┐
│ Strategic maturity of NFs    │
│    • Leadership              │
└──────────────────────────────┘


   ┌──────────────────────────────┐
   │   • Strategic thinking       │
   │     and planning             │
   └──────────────────────────────┘                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                                        │ Organizational               │
                                                        │ Performance                  │
   ┌──────────────────────────────┐                     │    • Performance             │
   │   • Performance              │                     │      efficiency              │
   │     management and           │                     │    • Qualification and       │
   │     measurement              │                     │      quality results         │
   └──────────────────────────────┘                     │      efficiency              │
                                                        └──────────────────────────────┘

   ┌──────────────────────────────┐
   │   • Risk management          │
   │     for process              │
   │     improvement and          │
   │     sustainability           │
   └──────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework

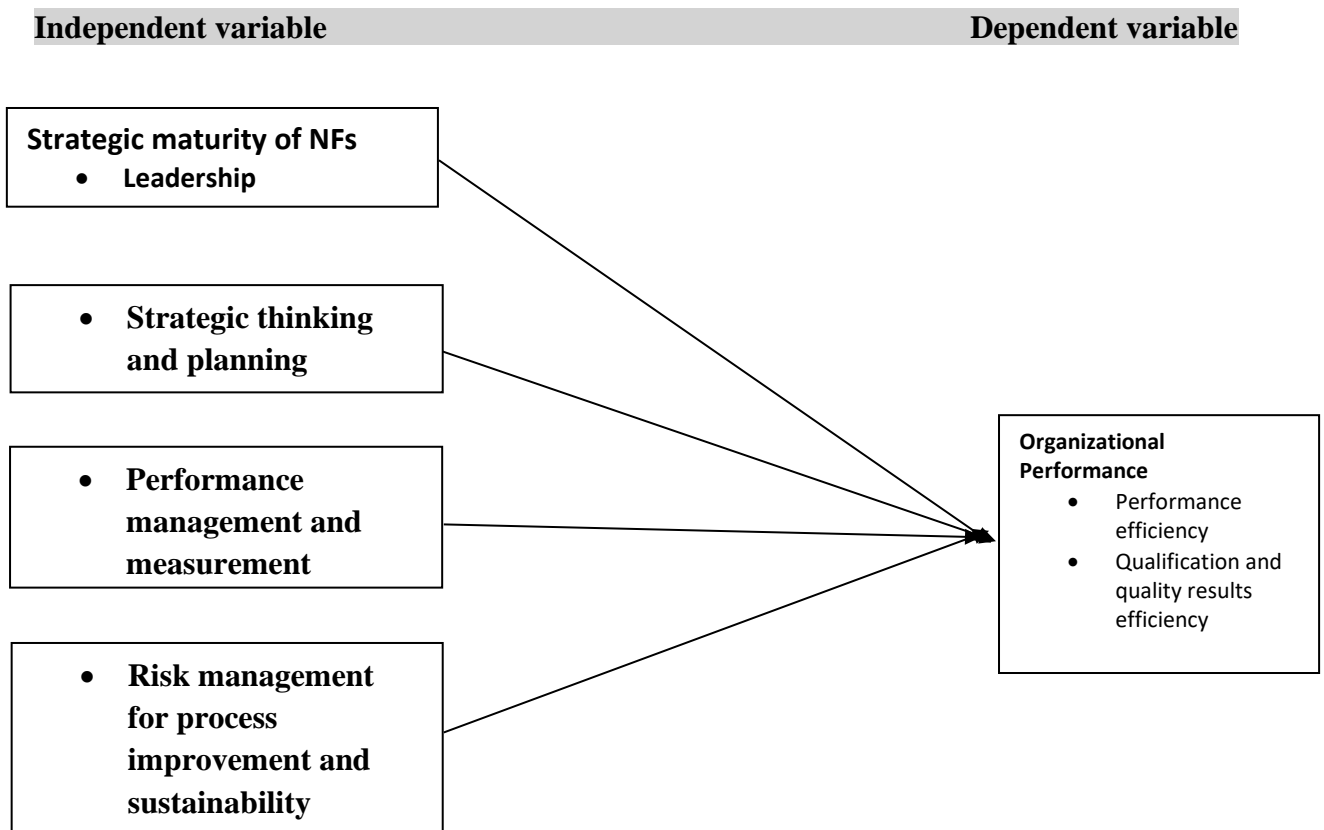### 2.6 Literature review Summary

This literature covered theories justifying and providing the basis for this study. It presented both theoretical and empirical literature reviews. Previous research linked to this project research as well as critiquing of current literature were looked into. The literature review presented a conceptual framework and finally, this literature review summary.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research philosophy

This chapter provides the research methodology which was used to collect data, analyze it and present the results. Specific focus was on research design, research subjects, sampling and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures and data presentation and analysis.

3.2 Research philosophy

A research philosophy is well-defined as a building up of research background, knowledge and its occurrence (Saunders et al., 2013). The research philosophy has all the necessary assumptions according to the researcher's point of view. These assumptions uphold the research approach and the procedure adopted as a part of the approach. In addition, Toor and Ofori (2009) denote that a research philosophy is used by the researcher to direct them in coming up with the procedure of research design, research strategy, research instruments design and sampling methods. The philosophy which a researcher can adopt is dependent on the characteristics of data to be collected in the research process. There are three research philosophies namely: interpretivism, pragmatism or realism and the positivism (Saunders *et al.*, 2013).

The project approach was underpinned by a positivism philosophy to explore the relationship between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.

3.3 Research approaches

The choice of a research approach is underpinned by the researcher's own philosophy, research questions, correct knowledge, objectives other resources available to be research and amount of time (Kirk & Miller, 2016) There are basically three research approaches namely qualitative (inductive), quantitative (deductive) and the mixed method which is a combination of both.

3.3.1   Mixed approach

The research adopted the mixed method and, in this approach, data is collected and analyzed using both the quantitative and qualitative methods. The use of both approaches allows the

researcher to looks for causes and answer the what, when and where questions. Emphasis is on the prediction and explanation designs thereby exploring the relationship that exists between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations. The research adopts the mixed approach because of its versatility nature. Statistical data is analyzed and expressed in numbers and explanations.

3.4 Research strategy

Given the explanatory research approach adopted, the survey strategy was used in this study seeking to explore the strategic maturity of NF's. A standardized tool in the form of questionnaire was developed and then employed for data collection from sports association leadership to explore the Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations. Structured questions both open and close ended were used in the data collection tool/questionnaire. The questionnaire survey gave a lot of advantages, as data was collected remotely from the population, respondents were able to respond at their convenience in the comfort of their homes or offices online and return the completed form instantly online. The process was economical in terms of effort, time and cost as the questionnaire was sent out on the google forms platform with telephone follow ups. The method was appropriate as the results were versatile and reliable.

3.5 Data collection instruments

For this project, a questionnaire survey (See Appendix A) was used as the data collection instrument. This questionnaire was developed with seven sections, Section A-G. Section A collected demographic based on one's social standing such as time of service in the organization, level of training, age, and gender. Sections B to G assessed respondent's views on the strategic maturity of their organization examining the following maturity dimensions as given by Software Engineering Institute/Carnegie Mellon University Humphrey (1987) and supported by the International Olympic Committee (2020) in the Managing Olympic Sports Organisation module through the six chapters addressed namely Organizing an Olympic Sport Organisation, Managing Strategically, Human Resources, Finances, Marketing as well as organizing a major sport event as follows: -

- Leadership
- Strategic thinking and planning

- Performance management and measurement

- Risk management for process improvement and sustainability of strategic management.

3.6 Population and sampling

There is consensus among many scholars (Saunders *et al*., 2013) that a study population is a set of all memberships or elements about which a research intends to make inferences, that is every probable observations of the random variable under research. In this study, the total population was drawn from 32 affiliated (See Appendix B) and recognized sport organizations in Zimbabwe. The focus was top leadership comprising of the board and management (President) and secretariat head (Secretary General/CEO). The research was limited to the top leadership of these sports organizations as they are the key players responsible for making strategic leadership decisions which affect organizational performance. The geographical scope for this study was confined to Harare, Zimbabwe.

3.7 Sampling procedure

Sampling was used to determine the respondents for this research. As provided, Cooper and Schindler (2016), a sample becomes, a smaller collection of units from study population (representative), used in determining the truths about the study population."

This study used purposive sampling technique that involved examining the total population under study. The method was used in the study exploring the relationship that exists between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations. This method was used because the total target population was well known and all have a particular set of characteristics under study, that is, there are all National Sport Federations affiliated to the ZOC. Purposive sampling has the potential to allow a researcher to paint a much more complete picture, and greatly reduces guesswork. It also eliminates the risk of biased sample selection that can be encountered with random study samples Boddie, (2013). This study focused on top executives mostly Presidents of National Federations in sport organizations in Zimbabwe. The sampling method used produces study data that will allow the author to draw conclusions about the group while permitting the application of inferential statistics as indicated by Saunders, (2016) Purposive sampling permits researcher to reduce biases while enabling all possible respondents an equivalent chance to be part of the study.

Reliability and validity

Reliability, validity, and objectivity were considered in the questionnaire design.

3.8 Reliability,

Reliability is the degree to which data collection methods as well as data analysis techniques produce dependable conclusions (Donald & Schindler 2011). A lot of effort was put into collecting data from informed sources with a degree of exploring the relationship that exists between Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations. It was highly necessary to carry out a pilot study to test the data collection instruments for internal consistency, and ability to elicit the required information.

3.8.1   Validity

Donald and Schindler (2011) describe validity as the instrument's ability to measure what it is supposed to measure. The questionnaire instrument was short and simple and care was taken to remove ambiguities ensuring both face and content validity. This was tested through the supervisor to ensure the validity and reliability of the study.

3.14. Chapter summary

This chapter explored the philosophy and research design adopted by this research. It also covered on the research approach, study population, sampling procedure, data collection procedure, research instruments and data sources. Chapter three provided for the way the data was to be analyzed, reported as well as how the research instruments and data were to be validated in order to ensure reliability. Lastly, the chapter covered the ethical consideration with which the research and the data were controlled. Chapter four will present the findings of the study which are the answers to the questions raised in Chapter one specifying them in connection to the literature that was reviewed previously in chapter two.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three discussed the research methodology used by the researcher exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations. This current Chapter Four presented the study findings from primary data in form of tables, charts and figures. Data was collected and processed manually in line with set organizational strategic maturity levels. Discussion of the study results was carried out in order to Explore Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations in light of the research objectives.

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

The research questionnaire was distributed to all 32 national federations currently affiliated to the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee. A total of 30 National federations responded to the questionnaire representing 94% of the target population. Two National Federations constituting 6% of the target population did not respond. The overwhelming rate of response was a result of self-distribution of the questionnaire by the researcher coupled with the use of Google survey and direct emailing and follow up calls on the respondents. The below Figure 4.1 indicates percentage rate of response from the sample.
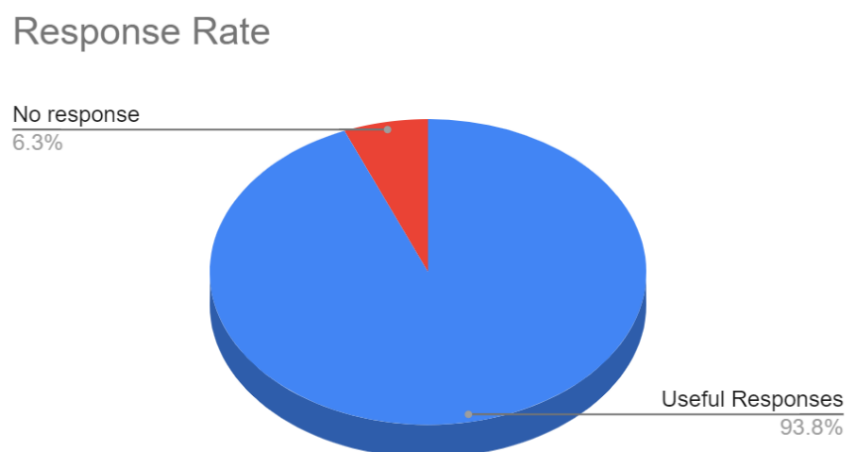
Figure 4.1 Response rate

4.3 Descriptive statistics - Values and culture

This section covered the respondents background information which are gender, highest level of education attained in sport, experience in sport sector and status of position in the sport organization.

The analysis of each descriptive demographic issue is as presented below:

4.3.1 Gender of respondents

A research by Sotiriadou and Haan (2019) indicated that the sporting organizations executive positions are dominated by males than females. The sample consists of 26 (87 %) male respondents, 4(13%) female respondents.

These days the sporting activities are no longer gender biased as noticed by the presence of women in all sport codes at all levels. However, these results of the gender are useful to the current study as they provide an insight into the existence of gender equality, diversity and inclusion. Gender equity displays a level of maturity of an organization in terms of its values. Our current context displays a patriarchal society that believes in male leadership and fails to implement and apply policies, plans, approaches or strategies promoting gender equity that may be in place for the organization when it comes to exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.

4.3.2 Highest grade of education attained in sport

The results indicate that most of the respondents are educated with a post grad in a field relevant to their current sport (n=11; 36.6%) equally tied with a diploma (n=11; 36.6%) and then undergraduate degree (n=5; 16.6%) and lastly a few with certificate and below in sport (n=3; 10%). The distribution of the level of education of respondents is presented in the below table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Highest level of education attained in sport

Highest level of education attained in sport	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate and below	3	10%
Diploma	11	36.6%
Undergraduate degree	5	16.6%
Post graduate and above	11	36.6%
Total	**30**	**100**

Highest level of education attained in sport indicates that most of the participants from the sporting associations are educated with a diploma of higher. In sport the executives are continuously educating themselves in order to meet the international standards and regional qualifications. In the advanced world countries, they are now taking sport and supporting roles such as legal, finance and marketing as professional as possible, hence the need for executives and those in positions of power to meet world best practices. The question remains if this high level of education displayed shows strategic maturity of the organisations led.

4.3.3 Experience in sport sector

The respondents were further asked on the level of experience they have accumulated in the sporting sector. The results presented in figure 4.2 below indicates that majority of the respondents have been in the sports industry between 16 to 25 years (n= ; 37%) followed by those who have 11-15 years in the sector (n=;30%), then those with above 25 years (n= ;20%) and lastly those with 10 and below years (13%). The executives and senior management in the sporting organization have been in the sector for more than 10 years as evidenced by a cumulative figure of 87% for those with experience of 10 years and above in the sport sector.
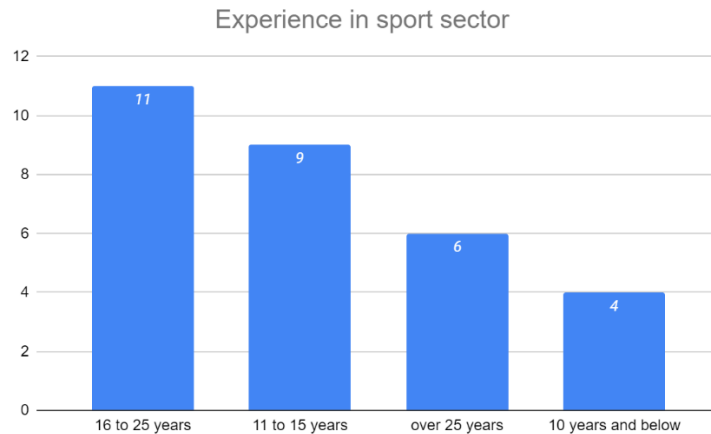
Figure 4.2 Experience in sport sector

The levels of experience in the sporting sector are critical to this current study in **Exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations**. The higher the level of experience the more the executives will be expected to lead strategically mature sport federations who should contribute positively to the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee.

4.3.4 Status of position in the sport organization

Volunteers are relevant to the functioning of non-profit sport organizations and events, as reflected in large sport volunteer numbers across countries and events. Wicker (2017). The respondents in the current study indicated that most of them are volunteering (n=26; 86.7%) and those in the full-time positions (n=4; 13.3%) as presented in figure 4.3 below. The results of the status of position of the respondents are useful to explore Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations Figure 4.3 below presents the distribution of the status of position in the sport organization.
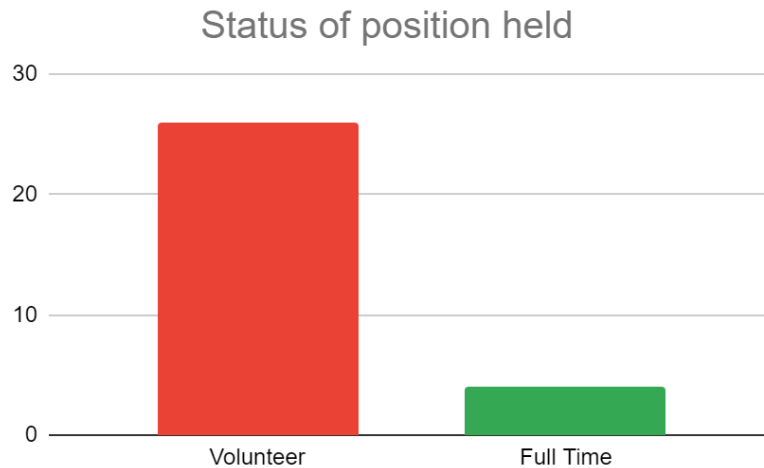
Figure 4.3 Status of position in the sport organization

The distribution of the status of positions held by the respondents in the sporting sector indicates that the majority of the executives 84.6% are in voluntary positions whilst the few are full time executives with 15.4%. The executives in the voluntary positions cannot influence the strategic direction or developing human capital in the sporting organizations as they will leave the organization any time and they affect the decision-making process. However, some of the executives are focused and they can shape the strategic leadership in the sport organizations even if they are from the voluntary or part time position status. With the aid of those who are in full time positions, some of the volunteering and part time executives do appreciate the effort and benefits they will receive, hence they make decisions that are to the best interest of the sporting organizations so that they will not have difficulties in controlling the operations.

4.4 Strategic thinking and planning
Corporate Governance analysis

While 24 NF's indicated having a current and functional strategic plan in place, 6 National Federations do not have a strategic plan in place. 21 of the National Federations believe their vision, mission and value statements are clear while 9 National Federations are of the opinion that the vision, mission and values in their Strategic Plans are not so clear. 18 National Federations submitted that their members were aware of the implementation of the Strategic Plan while 12 NF executives are certain not all members of their National Federation are aware of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. This is shown in Figure 4.5 below.
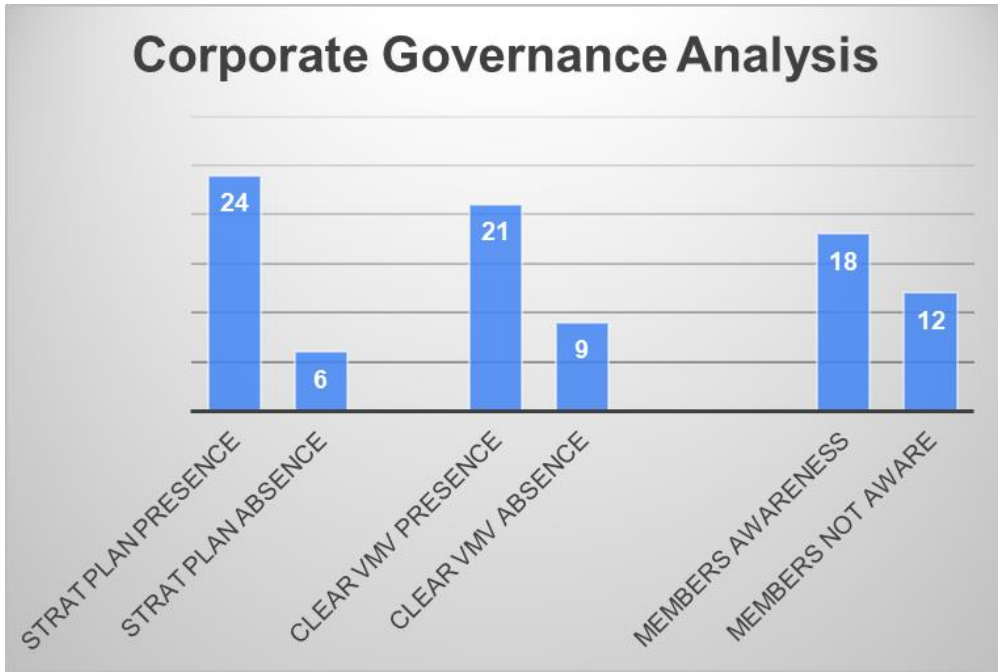
Figure 4.4 Corporate governance analysis

The monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan is done mostly by 14% of the National Federations Executive Boards, followed by 8% Secretary Generals, while 3% indicated there is no monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan or any other form of plan as the NF has no written plan in place. 2% have their President as an individual conducting the monitoring and evaluation of the Strategic Plan.
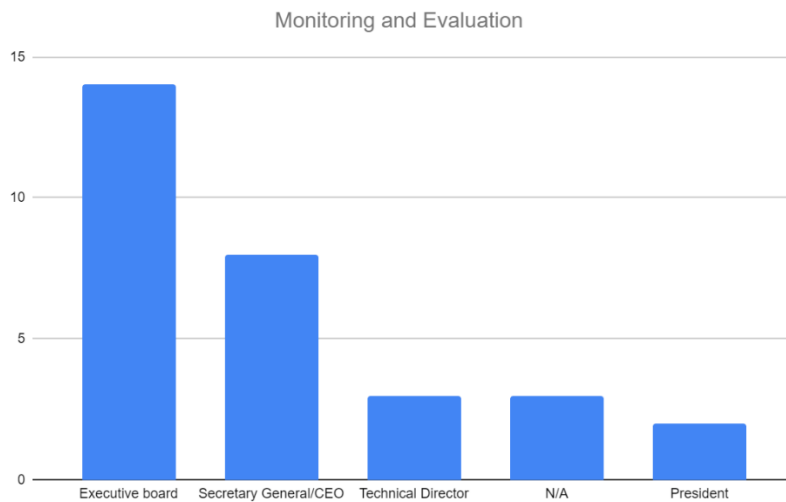
Figure 4.5 Monitoring and Evaluation of Strategic Plan

Corporate governance demonstrated by strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is a key indicator of the strategic maturity of an organization hence important for **Exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations**. Strategy drives critical organizational decisions and helps maintain a continuous improvement planning process in an organization.

4.5 Internal structure and size of the National Federation

Size has long been linked with performance and can be interpreted as the number of customers or staff in any set up Winard et al (2013). Respondents of this study gave information showing that (n=21) 70% of NF's do not have full time staff, hence no offices. Operations of the NF's are fully run by volunteers from the executive to the athletes. (n=9) 30% of NF's have full time paid staff with the majority (5 out of the 9) having 1 administrator in place. Of the full-time positions, 5 are administrators, 3 are secretaries, 3 are CEO's, 3 are ground staff and 1 is a development officer as shown by Fig 4.6 below.
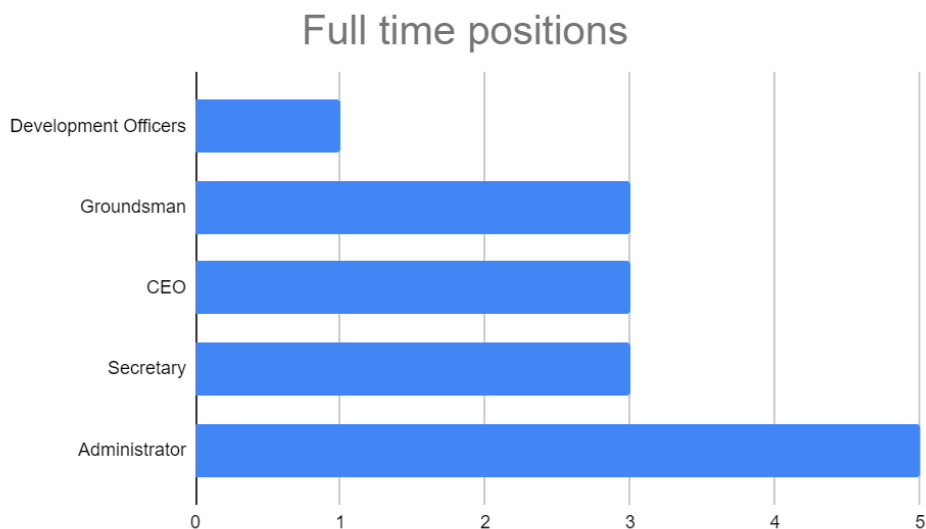
Figure 4.6 Full-time positions in the organization

In the absence of full-time staff, the day to day operations of 63.3% of the NF's are run by the Secretary General, 33.3 % by the Board and 3.3% by the NF's President. Fig 4.7 gives a visual view of staff in-charge of the day to day running of NF's.
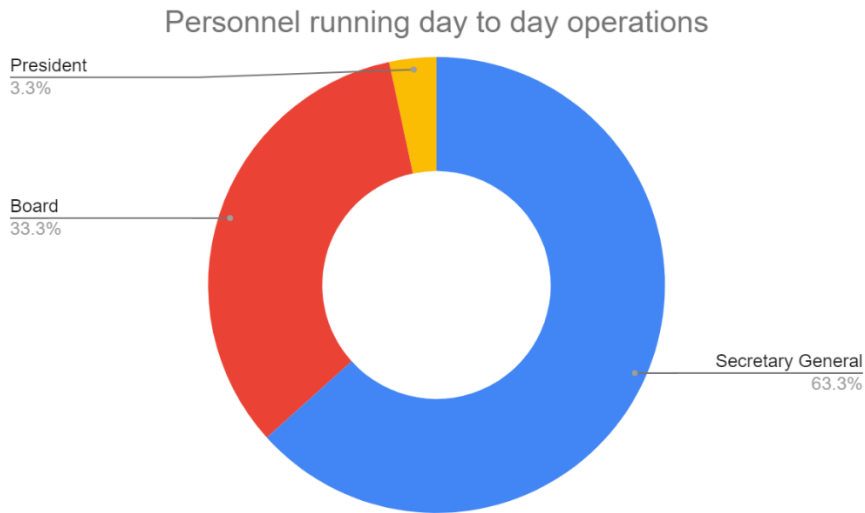
Figure 4.7 Personnel running day-to-day activities

Internal structure and size of the NF's is important for exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations as it gives an indication of how the organizations are aligning to their strategy and their reach of the intended target population.

4.6 National Federation Financial Resources

NF's executives responded that the majority of Zimbabwean sport organizations affiliated to the ZOC, (n=21) 70% do not have or own property (ies), while (n=7) 23.3% own movable property (ies) and (n=2) 6.7% have immovable property (ies). Fig 4.8 demonstrates this position.
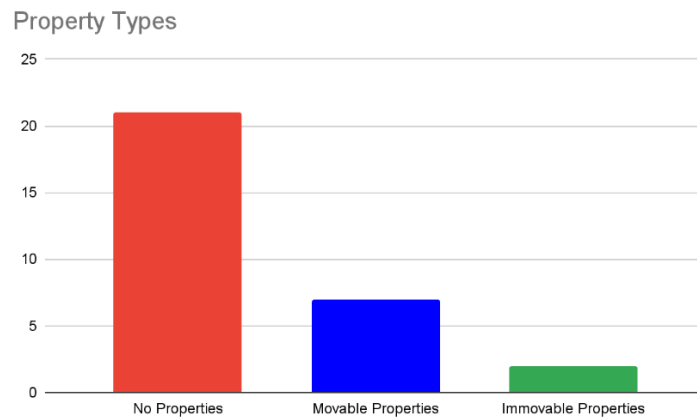
Figure 4.8 Property types

This result further gave 76.7% of those owning property as not generating any income while 16.7% are generating income from their properties. 50% (n=15) of the total respondents indicated that they do not generate income, 23.3% get income from donations, 16.7% rent out their properties to members, 6.7% get income from membership fees and only 3.3% are getting income from gate takings as shown in 4.9 below.

Income Methods

Donations
23.3%

Gate Takings
3.3%

Memberships
6.7%

Renting Out
16.7%

No Income Generated
50.0%
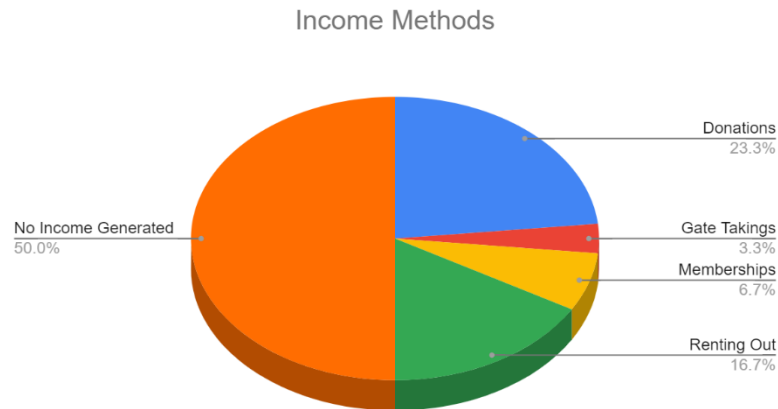
Figure 4.9 Methods used to generate income

The NF's financial resources status is significant in exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations as it gives an indication of the professionalization of the sport organization in line with current global trends of such organizations.

4.7 Risk assessment and change management

93.3% of the respondents indicated that risk assessment and management was important to their organization with 43.3% having a written or known internal and external risk assessment and management plan in place. 6.7% did not consider risk assessment and management as being critically important to their organization. 56.7% do not have a known or written risk assessment and management plan in place.

COSO *(the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations)* (2004), considers the identification of risks as important for the achievement of the organization objectives because an effective internal control system, no matter how well conceived, and operated, can provide only reasonable- not absolute-assurance to management about the achievement of an entity's objectives. He says that managers should determine what can go wrong, what areas have the most risk, what assets

are at risk, and who is in a position of risk. The risks may include; public scandal, misuse of revenues, assets and personnel, and also the use of unreliable information for decision making.

Explanations given to these two points indicated a haphazard approach to risk assessment and management of the Zimbabwean National Federations with issues ranging from making use of other instruments to assessing risk, engaging critical consultants as well as dealing with issues as they arise. It was noted that athletes' health and welfare was critical for those who had some form of plan in place. Risk assessment and management is vital to exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.

4.8 Challenges

Challenges faced by NF's were given as below given in Table 4.2. They were grouped and presented in four categories namely: - Resources challenges – Financial and otherwise, Manpower HR related, Governance and external and Other challenges.

4.9 Enablers

National Federations gave input on what they perceive as enablers and if put in place would assist them achieve their strategic goals. These were categorised into four sections namely: - financial and otherwise resources, Governance, Human Resources and Marketing enablers and presented in Table 4.3 below.

4.10 Other Comments

Additional comments received from respondents were categorised into three groups and tabled in Table 4.4 below. The groups are: - Financial, Governance and Patriarchal comments.

Table 4.2 Challenges faced by federations

Resources challenges – Financial and otherwise	Manpower HR related challenges	Governance and external challenges	Other challenges
• Lack of funding x 7 • Lack of facilities x 4 • Lack of sponsorship x 3 • Lack of equipment x3 • Lack of venue x2 • International exposure being limited due to costs of travel or hosting • The major challenge will be to raise resources to finance some of our programmes but we are trying our level best to mitigate the situation by biting what we can chew • Financial backing • Lack of member appreciation • Unavailability of horses • Inability to attend external competition, • No direct funding from government • Failure to have tangible revenue generating programs e.g. ZTTU sports shop, National league • Lack of Brand visibility and strategic partners for ZTTU	• Membership is very small x 3 • Full-time staff for the NF • Most of us are volunteers • Failure to have permanent staff that are focused in achieving set goals. • Constricted human resource base, • A shortage of competent administrators who work on a voluntary basis • Commitment - Judges, Coaches, Athletes x2 • Full time employment x4 • lack of skilled manpower or personnel	• The Strategic Plan is still in process of being formulated • Review of the strategic plan Lack of a strategic plan • Transparency issues • Economic environment • Economic challenges • Awareness of long-term goals and focus on International Championship arenas • Understanding the importance of a plan • Lack of regulations governing the sport of shooting Conflict issues in the country • Technical - oversite in spread as most development is done at school level run by another Ministry. • Grassroot sport development programmes at school level • Lack of full government support in providing sport facilities	• Athletes school commitments, • Tertiary education out of Zimbabwe • "Talent retention • information retention • Capacity • Competition • Reach of the NF • Public perception of the Sport, • National disasters • COVID

Table 4.3 Enablers of federations

Financial Resources and otherwise	Governance Enablers	Human Resources	Marketing enablers
- Sponsorships x5 - Base for the sports - Facilities x2 - Provision of financial resources - Financial support x2 - Funding x4 - Equipment access x3 - Financing backing" - Adequate financial resources - Group IX support, ACES support, ZOC, SRC - Stable financial backing " "Administrative grant - - Resources - Regulatory bodies assisting	- Risk management plan in place x2 - management issues - relations with corporates - Theory of change understanding management - ZTTU should have a mixed approach on recruitment and do away with voting for Executive. - ZTTU Executive should be entrepreneur minded that are able to come up with activities that generate revenue and create a recognized brand - Strategic Plan in place - Running of competitive leagues locally and taking part in international tours - Participation of schools could help - Tap into the local talent - Triathlon being a part of the school curriculum - Growth of coaching bases through program - National Sports Hubs in Harare and Bulawayo (Callies Veladrome) to facilitate Cycling - Spreading of our grass roots program - Human resources to implement the strategic goals,	- Full time staff - technical persons x4 - At most 3 permanent members should be employed to run the association - Rewarding volunteers - Government funding - Member Affiliates - Strengthening our existing man-power through resources - Induction of new board members - Women empowerment - Tap into low hanging fruits in growing our membership - Staff training - Hold staff accountable	- Framework that is conducive for combat sport - Policy that enable the NF to have a say in school sport. " - Connection to the school, colleges, - General education awareness of the importance of having a plan in place - Junior sport development policy "Support from the right authorities - Growing our membership " - Improved marketing of our product via social media "More volunteers in the sport - Advertising. " "More outreach to the whole nation - More partners - Partners, Corporate, Government, Sports and recreation commission and Zimbabwe Olympic committee

Table 4.4 Other comments

Financial	Governance	Patriarchal comments
• I wish that if at all the National Federation at large can all be sponsored and the National Sports and Recreation Commission then audit us, because if so, the sports will improve countrywide. • The federation has limited support from government in form of grants to enhance its service delivery • National Sports Associations have talented Executives which are lacking resources to physically run their organizations. • Athletes and members have since stopped paying affiliation fees because there is no reward in doing so. • There is need for commercializing Sports so that we do not lose long invested funds and efforts in nurturing talent. • Aquatics sport is general expensive to run hence in our current financial state, it does exclude the majority population • As we are volunteering organisation finance support is much more needed in order for us to run our strategic plans well for development, as we don't have permanent staff which will make it a little difficult to those who are on voluntary based to for full or for the Association to meet its plans . • If we had our own facilities like a stadium it would help us achieve numerous strategic goals • Healthy issues are critical for Karate and we therefore need specific medical aid plan for all our athletes to safe guard and protect them. • We require cooperate and government assistance to aggressively undertake development projects • As compared to say soccer. This also extends to sponsorship from corporates.	• Have an adaptive system • Need a revised constitution, a committed team in committee. • Introduce triathlon at grassroot level • Strategic plan in place • Strategic plans for sports associations are difficult to implement without government support and funding. It is necessary that government support NF so as to see growth in sports. • Critical debate for higher platforms • Guiding policy for all associations on strategic maturity requirements. • Grassroot sport development is key • I think the current relationship with our NOC is fine but we need to engage more and benefit from the programmes that they offer technical support in all areas so we develop to maturity. • Support from ZOC through grassroot sport development • "the NF is in its infancy maturity level is low. • Encourage combat sports • The implementation of WADA facilities for anti-doping	• Women are no longer coming to the sport. • "Netball is a women sport in a Patriarchal society we have to work thrice as hard as our male counterparts. • Male domination even in a women sport. we embrace them because we want results. • As a woman president with male subordinates I also have to work hard • As women we are viewed as cry-babies. It is a very hostile environment. You have to deliver notable results. • Attitudes towards the female gender because Patriarchy"

4.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored both the qualitative and quantitative statistics within Zimbabwe's sporting committees in relation to the strategic maturity of NF's and the results led to the conclusion that there is a relationship between the NOC organization's performance and the strategic maturity of sport organizations in the country. It is the duty of the NOC to support and enhance the strategic maturity of its members as they feed directly into its organizational performance. The successful implementation of a strategic plan appears to be dependent on the presence of an employed administrator who works for the federation full time. This would allow the federation to receive full attention and aid the development of their respective sporting.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aimed at **Exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.** This was done with reference to the Research questions and objectives. The chapter dealt with the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

5.2 Discussion

This study was **Exploring Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations,** different demographic statistics that explored strategic maturity dimensions of, Leadership, values and culture, strategic thinking and planning, alignment, performance measurement and sustainability to determine the strategic maturity of sport organizations and the organizational performance of ZOC were explored. This was done with reference to research questions and objectives as outlined: The study applied a positivism research philosophy. This paradigm was applied since it is directly associated with the idea of objectivism that is organizational performance of the NOC (ZOC). In this type of philosophical approach, researchers give their viewpoint to evaluate the social world with the help of objectivity in place of subjectivity. The following quantitative and qualitative instruments were used to generate data; secondary data review on the organizational performance of ZOC and a questionnaire with both closed and open-ended interview guides.

In relation to values and culture as a strategic maturity measure dimension, NF's affiliated to the ZOC showed an emerging low level 2 maturity where Vision, Mission and values may be published but are not fully lived. This comes to the fore by the obvious absence of gender equity in top executive positions, highly educated and experienced top executives ironically running federations as voluntary entities. Because of the voluntary nature of executive positions which seems to apply across NF's structures, Leaders dictate but gather feedback sporadically. Those with skeletal staff, 'Leaders engage with direct reports only but do model desired behaviours and values. There is no evidence of empowerment of many employees through continuous engagement.

Sound corporate governance starts with a solid strategic plan. Strategic thinking and planning demonstrated by NF's fall on level of, 'no strategic planning occurring within the organization

and therefore no goals are defined' and 'Strategic planning being the responsibility of a small team and dictated to the rest of the organization with those with a handful of staff, having the capacity to have a structured and open planning process involving people through-out the organization every couple of years. Resources and risk assessment and management are sporadic, demonstrating lack of strategic continuous improvement within the National Federations. Monitoring of the implementation of the strategic plan is usually assigned to the executive board and not to individuals or a handful of individuals as demonstrated by the respondent NF's. Roles and responsibilities within a National Federation should be well defined and outlined in constitution and other operating documents.

In the case of alignment and performance measure as dimensions of strategic maturity measurement, it is seen in the composition of staff which is mainly volunteers as opposed to full-time staff. For those with full-time staff in the office, it is mainly an administrator with no decision-making powers to serve for those few NF's with a full-time Secretary General in place. The other observation is on the personnel in charge of the day to day running of the NF being placed squarely on the shoulders of the Secretary general, the board(with no definition of an individual) and in some instances the President being in charge of the day to day monitoring and evaluation of the NF. Generally, the maturity level is very low, informal level 1, as work is narrowly focused based on organization structure with little customer input. The financial resources of all the NF's are not solid as demonstrated by their lack of property(ies) from which they could generate income. Sources of funds indicate an ailing economy as not of the NF's is receiving sponsorship from local companies rather, Incomes comes from donations, renting and hiring out immovable and movable properties for NF's like Football and Basketball to members. Football is fortunate enough to make some money from ticket sales. All other sport codes can not sell their sport offering as properties to fans, tv and advertisers. Performance reviews required but not taken seriously no accountability for performance exists. Measures are assigned owners and performance is managed at the organizational and employee level.

Lastly when it comes to sustainability, as can be measured from the NF's views and actions on the risk assessment and management, while almost all the NF's 93.7% are in agreement that risk assessment and management is important to them as organizations. However more than 50% do not have a known or written risk assessment and management plan in place. Risky areas such as athletes' health and welfare are known and identified as well as possible experts to assist NF's to have plans in place such as auditors and medical consultants, however no plan

in place, they 'play it by the ear." Others are aware of the importance of theory of change but have no capacity to activate it within their NF. Instead, there's a haphazard approach to risk assessment and management with inconstant and under par results/outcomes. Risk assessment and management are not embedded in the culture of the organization hence eventual lack of follow up plans like change management and sustainability. There in turn affecting the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee (ZOC).

5.3 Conclusions

The study **explored Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.** Based on the study findings, the study concluded that there is a relationship between the strategic maturity of National Federations and the organizational performance of the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee. The exploration revealed that NF's have informal to emerging low strategic maturity levels based on Leadership, values and culture, strategic thinking and planning, alignment, performance measurement and sustainability maturity measures. Due to the informal to emerging maturity level measure displayed, what happens within the National Federations has a bearing on the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee (ZOC) as demonstrated by poor performance of athletes at international and world platforms as provided by the secondary data reviewed.

It was concluded that there was great need to further enhance and strengthen support of NF in areas of Leadership, values and culture, strategic thinking and planning, performance measurement and sustainability. The greatest notable enabler being the human resource training, provision/availability of full-time staff in all National Federation's offices to see to the day to day running of operations. This needs to be backed up by financial support in the form of a sustainable grant administered by the Government through the Sport and Recreation Commission. Corporate governance through strategic planning and thinking aligned to and supported by structure and budgetary needs.

The study explored Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations. Based on the study findings, the study concluded that there is a relationship between the strategic maturity of National Federations and the organizational performance of the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee. On the national federations, the majority of the NF's are at the emerging level, showing the lowest level of competency, mostly displayed by the presence of a strategic plan. Competencies and consistent practices are beginning to emerge, but are not usually implemented or standardized across the

organization. The remaining have remained at the informal level, displaying little to no capabilities. When new projects or processes are implemented, they typically "play it by ear" usually producing inconsistent and under par results, what happens within the National Federations have a bearing on the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee (ZOC) as demonstrated by poor performance of athletes at international and world platforms as provided by the secondary data reviewed.

It was concluded that there was great need to further enhance and strengthen support of NF in areas of Leadership, values and culture, strategic thinking and planning, performance measurement and sustainability. The greatest notable enabler being the human resource training, provision/availability of full-time staff in all National Federation's offices to see to the day to day running of operations. This needs to be backed up by financial support in the form of a sustainable grant administered by the Government through the Sport and Recreation Commission. Corporate governance through strategic planning and thinking aligned to and supported by structure and budgetary needs.

Further the study concluded that, leadership needs to be strengthened and taught to brave and break societal norms that silently discriminate against women and girls because of the patriarchal society. Women and girls need to be taught to normalise breaking the glass ceiling through deliberate empowerment programmes that will see them naturally penetrate executive positions within NF's. Equally important is the teaching of theory of change to assist NF's with their strategy monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability for better organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee.

5.3 Limitations of the study

The researcher encountered various limitations that were likely to hinder access to information that the study was looking for. The main limitation of study was its inability to include external stakeholders. This was a study focusing on the 32 National Federations affiliated to the ZOC. The respondents were reluctant in giving information fearing that the information sought would be used to find fault with their existence and operations as a NF. The researcher handled the problem by carrying an introduction letter from the University and assured them that the information they gave would be treated confidentially and it would be used purely for academic purposes. Sending out questionnaires resulted in low return rate and had to be followed up by phone calls and periodic reminders to respond to the data collection instrument.

The small size of the sample could have limited confidence in the results and this might limit generalizations to other situations. Reluctance to respond to interview questions was another limitation in collecting the required data for the study. This was due to some reservations held by the target population. This hence would have led to generalization during the analysis and presentation of the data made from those who responded to represent the views of the rest of the respondents.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommended that in order for ZOC to meet its own set strategic goals and improve the organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee, there is need to form a strong support strategy to enhance and improve the strategic maturity levels of NF's in leadership, values and culture, strategic thinking and planning, performance measurement and sustainability. This can be done through deliberate actions Government engagement and lobbying, Empowerment programmes to assist women break the glass ceiling, Embed Corporate Governance in ZOC and Human Resource gap strengthening through training as further discussed below: -

5.4.1 Government engagement and lobbying

There is need for ZOC to keep engaging and lobbying government for financial support to go towards the establishment of minimum office operating requirement specially to cover full-time staff and an operational grant of member federations. Advocacy with policy makers to support full-time office staff for NF's through continuous and engagement and support. This can be pursued with some measure of success given an enabling policy position that already exists in Zimbabwe. Article 7.3 of the Zimbabwe National Sports and Recreation Policy (2007:20) focuses on financing of sports and recreation programmes and has the following provisions: among others:

- Government through the Ministry of Sport, Recreation and Culture shall endeavour to provide funds for sports development.
- Such funds shall be augmented by those raised by the Sports and Recreation Commission and other statutory bodies and sponsors.
- Government will also offer incentives to the business/private sector involved in the funding or sponsorship of sport and recreation programmes.

5.4.2 Empowerment programmes to assist women break the glass ceiling.

Deliberate and continuous programmes of a differing nature and varied target groups should be put in place. In 1996, having acknowledged that women were underrepresented in sport governance, the IOC established the target of women holding at least 20% of decision-making positions in Olympic sport by 2005. This target was not achieved. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Olympic Charter speaks against discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status (IOC 2015, p. 14). The IOC Executive Board adopted the Olympic Agenda 2020 that included not only a goal of female athletes comprising 50% of athletes competing in the Olympic Games but also of supporting the leadership of governance structures that enable this (IOC 2016). In March 2018, the IOC's Gender Equality Project Working Group declared eight gender equality recommendations that related to governance and organisational culture/communication, including gender equality and diversity in leadership (IOC 2018). However, despite several political initiatives designed to establish more gender-balanced leadership structures in sport, women remain underrepresented in all facets of leadership in sport governance (Acosta & Carpenter 2012, Smith & Wrynn 2013).

5.4.3 Embed Corporate Governance in ZOC

Furthermore, there is need for theory of change training for NF's, education awareness of practical corporate governance embedded and lived in the ZOC organizational structure for sustainability including risk assessment and management planning coupled by an awareness on the importance of individual NF's strategic maturity assessment.

5.4.4 Human Resource gap strengthening through training.

Educate affiliate NF's that people management should be consistent with the overall strategy of the organisation (Fombrun et al, 1984) and secondly, that all resources, but in particular human resources, contribute to the unique character of organisations and can therefore support competitive advantage. This led to a recognition of people and investment in them as a source of 'human capital advantage' (Boxall and Purcell, 2016) rather than a cost to be minimised as much as possible. This education should push NF's to invest more in the people who serve them including the well-being of staff and a serious consideration of full-time engagements with whatever financial resources mobilised by the NF.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

The study suggests further research be carried out in corporate governance of NF's and organizational performance of the National Olympic Committee in light of the current corrupt and volatile operating environment sport associations are operating in. A number of NF's also sited corporate governance as a challenge to achieving their set strategic objectives.

5.6 ACTION PLAN **for enhancing Zimbabwe's NOC (ZOC) organizational performance and the strategic maturity of its sport federations.**

Table 4.2 ACTION PLAN

ACTION	WHEN	WHO	RESOURCES	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Government engagement and lobbying	Dec 2022	ZOC President and Board	**$1000** for meetings and engagements	Government policy in place for supporting funded National Federations and sport in the country. Full time staff supported sport offices for National Federations.
Empowerment programmes to assist women break the glass ceiling.	2021-2024 Quadrennial	ZOC CEO and Secretariat	**$80 000** IOC, Partner sourced funds towards programmes	Women empowerment Safeguarding and inclusivity for marginalized groups in sport. Breaking new grounds for women into otherwise male preserve sport leadership positions.
Embed Corporate Governance in ZOC	August 2022 and ongoing	ZOC `Board and Secretariat	**$4 000** for benchmarking	Lead by example for the good example of National Federations. Improved organisational performance benchmarked on best practices.
Human Resource gap strengthening through training.	2021-2024 Quadrennial	ZOC CEO, Secretariat and	**$200 000** IOC, Partner sourced funds towards HR training.	Appropriately educated sport office personnel including support and specialist roles e.g. Legal, marketing and finance. Full-time support staff for all ZOC affiliated NF.

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MEMOS RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE:

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ZIMBABWE'S NOC (ZOC) ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND THE STRATEGIC MATURITY OF ITS SPORT FEDERATIONS.

RETURN TO:	**CHIEDZA MAFUNGA** **Zimbabwe Olympic Committee** **MEMOS STUDENT** **E-mail: cmchiedzam@gmail.com; marketing@zoc.co.zw**

Dear NOC friend,
Many thanks for taking your time to answer this questionnaire which will help in providing baseline data/ information in informing the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee the strategic maturity of national sport federations for the enhancement of strategic management systems within the member federations.
This is a digital Word document, so please write your answers directly under the corresponding question.
The information you provide is strictly for the purpose of research and will be dealt with confidentially.
Many thanks for your kind assistance.
Chiedza Mafunga
MEMOS student

Name of the National Federation:

Your function in the Sport Federation:

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC/demographic DATA

A1. Gender:

□ Male   □ Female

□ Prefer not to say

A3. Highest Level of Education Attained **as related to your current position in sport:**

□ Certificate and below
□ Diploma
□ Undergraduate degree
□ Postgraduate degree and above
□ Other (Please specify) …………………………………………...

A4. Number of years in the sport sector:

……………………………………………………………

A5. Status of your position in the sport organization

□ Volunteer position

□ Part-time

□ Full-time

Other (please specify) ....

B. Corporate governance

B1. Does your National Federation have a current and functional strategic plan?

□YES   □NO

B2. Is everyone in the organisation aware of and implementing the strategic plan?

□YES   □NO

B3. Does your strategic plan have clear mission statement and vision?

□YES   □NO

B4. Who is in charge of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategic plan?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

C. Internal structure and size

C1 Does your organisation employ full-time paid staff

□YES   □NO

How many …………………………………………………........

C2 Specify the full-time position(s) at your National Federation

………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………..

If NO, who is in charge of the governance and day to day operations of the organisation?

………………………………………………………………….

D. National Federation resources

D1 Does your National Federation own property (ies)?

□YES   □NO

Specify the properties

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

D2. Does your National Federation generate income from its property(ies)

□YES   □NO

Explain

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

E. Risk assessment
E2. Is risk assessment and management important to your National Federation?

□YES   □NO

Explain

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

E1. Does your National Federation have internal and external risk management plan in place?

□YES   □NO

F. Challenges and enablers

E1. What challenges are there for your NF in meeting its strategic goals? (Give 3-5)

……………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………..

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E2. What facilitors/enablers could help your NF in meeting its strategic goals? (Give 3-5)

……………………………………………………………………………

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…………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………..

Please insert any comments that you feel are relevant to the topic

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THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

ZIMBABWE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

2021 NF'S AFFILIATED – STRATEGIC PLAN STATUS

NO.	DISCIPLINE	REG NUMBER	STATEGIC PLAN STATUS
1.	Aquatics	3966	✓
2.	Archery	3982	X
3.	Athletics	3985	X
4.	Badminton	3998	X
5.	Baseball	4013(late registration)	x
6.	Basketball	4000	X
7.	Bowls	4002	X
8.	Boxing	3995	✓
9.	Cycling	4005	X
10.	Equestrian	3973	X
11.	Football	3993	X
12.	Golf	3994	X
13.	Gymnastics	4010	X
14.	Handball	4004	✓
15.	Hockey	3979	X
16.	Judo	3986	X
17.	Karate	4003	X
18.	Netball	3974	X
19.	Rowing	3975	X
20.	Rugby	3983	✓
21.	Sailing	De- registered	X
22.	Shooting	3967	X
23.	Snow Sport	3999	X
24.	Softball	4009	X
25.	Table Tennis	4001	X
26.	Taekwondo	3980	X
27.	Tennis	4006	X
28.	Teqball	3987	X
29.	Triathlon	3978	✓
30.	Volleyball	3948	✓
31.	Weightlifting	De-registered	X
32.	Wrestling	4015 (outstanding issues)	X

✓   Got current and functional Strategic Plan

X Do not have a current and functional Strategic Plan

ZOC SWOT AND PESTEL SUMMARY DOCUMENT

SWOT REPORT

Reviewed **Strengths**: ZOC's Internal Advantages

1. Model NOC in Africa – High

2. Good governance – High

3. Own Headquarters and other assets – High

4. Functional Commissions – Medium

5. Relevant programmes – Medium

6. Support for High Performance – High

7. High Standards – High

8. Clear separation of roles between Board and Secretariat – High

9. Strong and diverse membership base Medium

10. Appropriate policies, processes and systems - High

Reviewed **Weaknesses:** Internal factors likely to hamper ZOC

1. Inadequate preparation of Team Zimbabwe High

2. Limited resources High

3. Lean structure High

4. Failure to optimally leverage the ZOC brand High

5. Limited representation Low

6. Low investment on athletes Med

7. Low return on investment Med

7. Lack of sport science, technology and research in TID High

8. Lack of proper athlete development pathway High

9. Weak Policies, No documented business continuity plan (sustainability) , Inadequate policies , Inadequate standard operating procedures High

Reviewed **- Opportunities:** External Factors for ZOC to Leverage on

1. IOC/O S funding, Corporate support High

2. New technologies High

3. Abundant sport talent Med

4. Exploit Government policies and strategy, Lobbying for enabling instruments High

5. Zimbabwe's Representation in IOC and other International Organisations, Sport tourism High

6. Collaboration with ZNPC High-Med

7. Applying sport science in sport High

8. Covid-19 Vaccine and implementing the new normal High

9. Re-admission of Zimbabwe into the Commonwealth Med

10. Good working relationship with the media High

Reviewed **Threats:** External Factors ZOC has to Eliminate

1. <mark>Poor governance and management in affiliates, leading to Abuse of athletes and officials High</mark>

2. Covid 19 pandemic and associated restrictions and Cancellation or Postponement of Olympic Games High

3. Drug abuse and Doping High

4. Low representation, poor performance at the Olympic Games and Over-expectations from stakeholders High

5. Talent drain, skill drain, change of nationality High

5. Economic and political instability High

6. Change in IOC support policy High - Med

7. Over-expectations from stakeholders and Wrong perceptions by some stakeholders High

8. Limited exposure to international sport competition High

9. Manipulation of competitions and results, age cheating Med

PESTEL ANALYSIS

Reviewed **Political** Factors/ Trends/Changes

1. Bilateral and multilateral relations and Sanctions High

2. International sports diplomacy High

3. Government priorities (agenda) High

4. Re-engagement initiative by the Government of Zimbabwe High

5. Political and Electoral environment, Political will Med

6. Bureaucracy Med

7. ZOC's relations with government entities High

8. ZOC's relations with IOC and other sport governing bodies High

9. Non participation in the Commonwealth Games Med

10. Political unrest or instability Low

Review **Economic** Factors/ Trends/Changes
1. Performance of Business Sector, Corporate policies and strategies High

2. Global economic challenges High

3. Government budgetary constraints, Fiscal and monetary policies High

4. Sport business and Sport tourism opportunities and benefits Med

5. Increased charges for amenities, factors impacting on ZOC's operating costs Med

6. Increase in corruption, Sports betting High

7. Entrepreneurship Med

8. Diminishing disposable incomes High

9. Talent drain Med

10. Shortages, availability of foreign currency in Zimbabwe Med

Review **Social** Factors/ Trends / Changes
1. Abuse and harassment High

2. Drug abuse High

3. Corruption High

4. Culture and religion, Society structures, Racial intolerance, Social disparities High

5. Gender participation High

6. Value of sport, Sport as a social intervention, Lifestyle High

7. Support by parents or guardians, Conducive social environment High

8. Peer influence, Competition of sport with other interests among the youths Med

9. Use of sport facilities for non-sport activities, Lack of recreational facilities High

10. Education vs sport Med

Review **Technological** Factors/ Trends/Changes
1. Availability of reliable internet connectivity, Benefits of technology usage High

2. Technological skills High

3. Availability of technology enabling infrastructure High

4. E-commerce Med

5. New or appropriate technologies, E-Sports, Online Gaming High

6. Global technological developments and innovations High

7. High cost of technology and its upgrades Med

8. Cyber bullying High

9. Technology security Med

10. Research and Development High

Review **Environmental** Factors / Trends/Changes
1. Infrastructure development High

2. Air and water pollution High

3. Recycling and waste management High

4. Natural disasters Med

5. Environmental policies High

6. Climate and climate change, Climatic conditions in Zimbabwe Med

7. Environmental impact assessment Med

8. Availability of all weather and indoor facilities Med

9. Developing and managing sports facilities & surroundings High

Review **Legal** Factors/Trends/Changes
1. Sports law and regulations, Labour laws and sport High

2. ZOC policies and legal processes High

3. Sport integrity laws or policies High

4. Contracts and Agreements Med

5. Conventions and Constitutions High

6. Dispute resolution and Arbitration High

7. Government policies and regulations Med

8. Rights and obligations of sports organisations, athletes and officials High

9. Intellectual property Med

10. Data protection policies Med

APPENDIX D – Strategic maturity measurement table - Mellon University Humphrey (1993). Introduction to Software Process Improvement

Dimension Level	Leadership	Value and culture	Strategic thinking and planning	Alignment	Performance measurement	Sustainability
1 Informal	Leaders dictate in the command and control fashion otherwise disengaged	Vision and values undefined or not shared	No strategic planning occurs within the organisation, no goals defined	Work is narrowly focused based on organisation structure with little customer input	No emphasis on using performance as a criterion to manage the organisation	Lack of structure and champions lead to short-term focus on tasks
2 Emerging	Leaders dictate but gather feedback sporadically	Vision and values published but not lived	Strategic planning is the responsibility of a small team and dictated to the organisation	Customer needs and feedback start to influence more aligned decision making	Performance reviews required but not taken seriously no accountability for performance exists	Strategy 'champions' identified
3 Integrated	Leaders engage with direct reports only but do model desired behaviours and values	Vision and values communicated and understood	A structured and open planning process involves people through-out the organisation every couple of years	Employees know their customers and align strategy to those needs	Measures are assigned owners and performance is managed at the organisational and employee level	Formal organisation structure in place to maintain focus on strategy
4 Strategic	Leaders empower many employees through ongoing engagement	Vision and values collaboratively developed	Plans are developed and revised regularly by cross-functional planning teams	Vision, customer needs, strategy and employee reward and recognition systems are cascaded and aligned	Measurement owners are held accountable and performance is managed at all levels.	Organisation has an 'Office of Strategy Management' or equivalent
5 Fully optimized	Leaders and employees fully engage in a continuous dialog based on a team-based culture	Vision and values fully integrated into the organisation's culture	Strategy drives critical organisational decisions and a continuous improvement planning process is maintained.	All structures and systems and systems are aligned with strategy and organisational alignment is continuously improved	Organisation culture is measurement and accountability focused decisions are evidence based.	Strategic thinking and management are embedded in the culture of the organisation