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Table of Content

Understanding affirmative action leadership in the South African financial context Richard A. April* and Cookie M. Govender	90
Marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behaviour in Ghana: A case of Nestle Ghana Limited Eric Gonu*, Mary Asare-Larbi and Mutari Abdul-Rahman	104
Exploring global unionism to inform South African ICT sector union strategy Hlalele Matebese* and Cookie M. Govender	117

Full Length Research Paper

Understanding affirmative action leadership in the South African financial context

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South Africa's (SA) history of apartheid produced racial inequality that was entrenched for centuries. After 1994, the goal of the new government was to transform the workplace. Numerous affirmative action (AA), legislation, policies, and procedures enforced organisational transformational obligation and compliance. Studies in SA indicate a slow pace of transformation. The financial sector may be paying lip service to affirmative action legislation; setting racially balancing targets for management structures yet not achieving them. The purpose of this paper is to explore existing literature on transformational leadership and AA progress in the SA financial sector to propose an AA Transformational Model. The research method employed was abstract qualitative content analysis method. Selected accredited journal articles were analysed as per the paper keywords for emerging trends on the topic. Findings indicate lack of leadership in transformational implementation, leadership commitment, and management motivation for accelerated transformational targets and strategies. The paper theoretically adds to the body of knowledge on workforce transformational leadership. The practical contribution of this paper is the proposed AA Transformational Model for the SA Financial sector to be proactive in their AA transformation.

Key words: Racial discrimination, racial equity, employment equity, black employees, transformation, leadership, South Africa, affirmative action.

INTRODUCTION

This paper draws upon different existent theories to discuss or to understand the lack of progress in implementing changes in the South African (SA) financial sector about transformation, especially AA transformation. From a theoretical perspective, the information extracted from theory allows the researcher to propose a model or a framework. In addition, the implementation of AA and insights into the value of the country, continent, and world economy and society are expected to make practical contributions. There is a gap in the literature in that research on AA in terms of what has historically been

done on the achievement of targeted numbers. There is also very little research being done about the opinions of employees regarding the implementation of AA in the workplace. This research, therefore, endeavoured to bridge this gap using the abstract qualitative content analysis method. The findings reveal that even with the introduction of laws such as the SA Constitution, the Employment Equity, and the Broad-Based Economic Employment, discrimination in the workplace is continuous, and the implementation of these laws has not been effective. Another significant finding is that the pace

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of transformation is slow due to the lack of commitment of top leaders and managers in the private sector and the lack of enforcement by the government. AA has nothing to do with the employment or progress of incompetent candidates or allowing organisations to accept unreasonable adversity (Roman and Mason, 2015). AA should be about taking the steps required to confirm that able, Black individuals are employed, advanced, and retained fairly (Roman and Mason, 2015). Affirmative Action is a policy approach intended at constructing a representative and multicultural country in which fairness and parity were assured to groups and citizens (Katiyatiya, 2014). Thus, AA transformation in SA is usually conceptualised as the quest of parity and henceforth its reason is both to remedy historical unfairness and expand the upcoming aptitude pool of the country (Katiyatiya, 2014).

The Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 and the implementation of AA transformation are essential steps and have their place in rectifying the historical inequities and resulting in a diverse labour force within the private and public sectors in the country (van der Bank et al., 2015). For this study, AA leadership means that decision-making and senior management commitment to AA transformation is required for the successful implementation of the policy (Booyesen, 2007). This could be done through management changes and moves towards a more representative and inclusive workplace (Booyesen, 2007). According to Booyesen (2007), organisational change must be systemic and the implementation of the AA is just the start of the transformation process. AA transformation application needs to be backed by consistent employment practice plans concentrating on employee training and development, inclusive practices, and organisational culture change (Booyesen, 2007). If the leader is stereotyped due to the old traditional norms, it may lead to prejudice, and the AA transformation will not be part of his vision.

The purpose of this paper is to theoretically explore the leadership of AA transformation in the SA financial sector and to practically propose a strategic AA Transformational Model for the sector. On a practical level, the paper promotes diversity as a diverse workforce promotes creativity, innovation, productivity, economic growth, and quality of decision making in teams (Wambui et al., 2013; Galinsky et al., 2015). The world's increasing globalism needs more teamwork among people from different cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds than ever before (Wambui et al., 2013). Adopting, expanding, and taking advantage of workplace diversity has become an essential asset for management today (Wambui et al., 2013). Multiplicity also helps underrepresented individuals to take chances (Galinsky et al., 2015). Transformation is about creating a diverse workforce. The impetus of diversity lies in valuing multiplicity which requires top leadership commitment towards a diverse workforce (Kundu et al., 2015). According to Mazibuko and

Govender (2017), a diversity management strategy should be planned and designed with clear goals that promote transformational compliance as well as organisational transformational strategy.

The exploration of understanding AA leadership in the financial context looks at how the leadership styles lend themselves to either high or positive AA leadership or low or obstructive AA leadership. The financial context is seen as consisting of banks and insurance companies; however, in this study, the financial context refers to the banking industry. The paper employs a theoretical perspective to extract relevant existing information to propose a practical implementable model or strategy. In South Africa, the banking industry contributes to 20% of the gross domestic product (GDP), and is the third-largest employer, employing over 10% of the population (Ifeacho and Ngalawa, 2014). The structure of the SA banking industry is a unique, highly sophisticated financial sector and is dominated by four major banks (Mishi et al., 2016). The Amalgamated Banks of South Africa Limited (ABSA), First National Bank (FNB), Standard Bank, and Nedbank together dominate the SA banking industry (Ifeacho and Ngalawa, 2014). Research indicates that high consolidation levels in the banking industry do not indicate a lack of but rather increase competition (Simatele, 2015).

Businesses within SA face devastating responsibilities due to past harmful bigotry and inequality (Reddy and Parumasur, 2014). Prolonged apartheid or separateness and divide-and-rule strategies relegated all segments of the country's citizens' lives. Most of the population, Black people, were denied decision-making power and economic involvement (Reddy and Parumasur, 2014). Almost two decades after democracy in South Africa, questions of tribal leadership, clan socioeconomic rights, and ownership of land are still as challenged, as they were twenty years ago (Bock and Hunt, 2015). Democracy ushered in new regulation towards radical racial transformation and inclusion for all citizens to actively participate in the leadership of the country at all levels of society and economics. These are the fundamental transformational legislation that businesses must comply with within SA: Constitution of South Africa, 1994; Labour Relations Act, 1995; Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997; Employment Equity Act, 1998; Skills Development Act, 1998; and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Booyesen and Nkomo, 2010).

The greatest strength of South Africa's Constitution is that it is one of the utmost progressive documents in the world, which has received countless admiration globally (Booyesen and Nkomo, 2010). It protects the human rights of all the people in the country and it confirms the democratic values of human dignity and freedom (Booyesen and Nkomo, 2010). The SA Constitution was designed to integrate fairness and AA transformation to redress past inequalities done to Black people yet promote opportunities for its entire people to grow

economically (Lee, 2016). The SA Bill of Rights, the Employment Equity Act of 1998 (EEA), and the Labour Relations Act of 1995 consider partial bias and prejudice, either openly or passively, as detrimental and illegal employment practices (Horwitz and Jain, 2011). Racial and ethnic inequity is a frequent unhealthy and unpleasantly characteristic of the labour force in many countries (Op't Hoog et al., 2010). South African human resource management (HRM) and employment relations management (ERM) is presently under compulsion to restore historical ethnic disparity. Due to the past of segregation, Employment Equity (EE) and the balance must be established through far-reaching EE, AA transformation, and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) strategies (Op't Hoog, Siebers and Linde, 2010). According to the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC, 2016), SA has one of the most unfair workforces in the world. The incidence of prejudice in the private sector remains significantly high. This applies to the financial services sector as well. After 26 years of democracy, it is now the right time to establish the level of transformational progress achieved in the country, especially in the financial services sector.

The research problem and motivation for this paper arose from the gap in the literature on what transformational goals were achieved towards racially equitable employment opportunities in SA workplaces. More specifically, an intensive literature review of the current situation provides a more accurate and authentic view of the socio-economic landscape, especially with regards to transformation in affirmative action measures. This paper focuses on AA transformation in the SA financial context. The research questions explored in this paper are as follows: Does South African employment legislation promote affirmative action? Do contemporary leadership styles promote affirmative action? Do South African financial services leaders and managers promote affirmative action? What model can SA financial managers utilise to enhance AA transformation?

This study contributes to theory by adding to the body of knowledge on transformation, AA, and AA leadership in SA and the financial sector. In addition, this study contributes to the literature by providing an AA Transformational Model for the SA Financial Sector, thus guiding managers and leaders on how to create a harmonious representative workforce including all the people in South Africa.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Affirmative action in South African legislation

The Employment Equity Act of 1998 requires organisations to set numerical goals, implement plans to eliminate unfair discrimination of Black people in employment and vital positions, as well as recruit, retain,

train, develop and advance previously disadvantaged individuals (Horwitz and Jain, 2011). The goal of AA in South Africa is to guarantee that Black people (Africans, Coloureds, and Indians) including women and people living with disabilities, have the same constitutional rights and the same prospects as its previously advantaged White citizens (Archibong and Adejumo, 2013). Models of redress, such as AA transformation and B-BBEE, are strategies to engage in uplifting citizens who were disadvantaged during the apartheid era, through a string of political and social compromises (Kotze, 2012; Rotich et al., 2015). The main aim of the B-BBEE regulation was to drive the economic empowerment of all Black individuals, with a specific focus upon women, workers, youth, people with incapacities, and persons living in rural and city districts, through extensive but combined socioeconomic tactics (SABPP, 2017). In its position paper on AA transformation, the SA Board for People Practices (SABPP, 2012) found that the slow rate of transformation is due to the lack of motivation of top management towards AA transformation in some companies, and especially in medium and large corporations. Affirmative action leadership in a medium and large organisation is therefore weak. According to the acting chairperson of the Commissioner of Employment Equity (CEE), the trends in 2014 and 2015 show a relatively slow pace of AA transformation (Department of Labour, 2015). Research reveals that the pace of AA transformation is seemingly blocked in the uppermost levels of leadership and management in the corporate sector of South Africa (SABPP, 2017). This slow pace of AA transformation also applies to the banking industry in South Africa.

To date, the 19th Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) annual report 2018-2019 reveals that White people remained dominant in top management positions between 2016 and 2018 (Department of Labour, 2019). The report shows that in 2016 there were 68.5% of Whites in top management positions, 67.7% in 2017, and 66.5% in 2018 (Department of Labour, 2019). There were 14.1% Africans in top management in 2016, 14.3% in 2017, and 15.1% in 2018. In 2016 there were 4.9% of Coloureds in top management positions, in 2017, 5%, and in 2018, 5.3%. There were 8.9% Indians/ Asians in top management positions 9.4% in 2017, and 9.7% in 2018 (Department of Labour, 2019). There were 3.4% Foreign Nationals in top management positions in 2016, 2017, and 2018 respectively (Department of Labour, 2019). The CEE report, therefore, shows a little transition in the African and Coloured management representation (Department of Labour, 2019).

The Employment Equity report for 2016-2017 reveals that in the South African private sector, 50.8% of senior leadership positions are occupied by White males while 10.9% are held by White women. In contrast, only 9.2% of senior leadership positions are held by African males and 2.8% by African women (Department of Labour, 2017).

This report also shows a weak AA leadership in the private sector due to the low levels of African leaders in senior leadership positions. This will also apply to the SA financial sector. The B-BBEE idea can be traced back to the Freedom Charter of 1955, which claimed that her citizens who work her land shall take part in SA's wealth (Chabane et al., 2006). In many organisations, considerable auctions of shares have been sold to Blacks who, in almost all instances, did not have the necessary money to obtain the interest being sold (Mbembe, 2006). According to Alexander (2006), B-BBEE has been used to benefit a few well-known party-political leaders who were leaders in the fight against apartheid. Coomey (2007) argues that White funds have blessed a few politically connected Blacks to front as security against the Black deprivation class, though huge amounts of White entrepreneurs continue to benefit silently. The outcomes of B-BBEE have been varied and in several ways; for the government especially, B-BBEE achievements are disappointing. Research reveals that a greater number of big and medium-size corporations continue to remain under White male leadership (Southall, 2014; SABPP, 2017). The application of the principle of 'Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value' is not only an ethical subject but a civil rights matter, which requires a will and commitment from top management in the workplace to put in place strategies and implementation plans geared towards addressing the continuing pay disparities experienced by most workers in the country (SABPP, 2017).

Explanations provided for why AA transformation has not been successful enough include stereotyping, dishonesty, favouritism, nepotism, and lack of enforcement, as well as sabotage by previous benefactors of segregation (Archibong and Adejumo, 2013). A myth about EE is that it is reverse discrimination that gives special treatment to Black people and women (Naidoo and Kongolo, 2004). Naidoo and Kongolo (2004) state that gender stereotyping has caused most Black women to be hired in areas such as education and health in which they perform only in lower levels of work, with very few in top management positions (Naidoo and Kongolo, 2004). Gender stereotyping significantly obstructs the career progressions of many women seeking management positions (Tabassum and Nayak, 2021). Stereotyping is originally shaped in infancy and education, yet workplaces influence the development of stereotypes through various practices such as recruitment, promotion, and establishing a branded culture of the organisation (Tabassum and Nayak, 2021). Stereotyping also indicates that in the SA financial sector, some White employees regard Black employees as token appointments who are incapable of doing their job (Booyesen, 2007).

At the end of apartheid, there was 30 to 40% redundancy amongst primarily Black employees, great amounts of poverty within the Black sections of the public, and 27% illiterate levels in Black communities (James, 2009).

Since the emergence of democracy in 1994 South Africa has made notable advances and progress in winning over the talent management legacy of the past (Mummenthey, 2010). Despite some achievements, insufficient levels of skills among the better part of the formerly deprived individuals have dangerously increased unemployment levels, especially amongst young people (age 15-35). The youth remains one of the country's highest and most stubborn challenges, presenting socioeconomic instability for all its citizens (Mummenthey, 2010). The Skills Development Act (1998) was introduced to offer training and development to employees that lead to recognised employment (Aigbavboa et al., 2016). This skills act highlights the necessity to change skills development through investment, spinning the place of work into a sovereign setting, refining the meaning of teaching and knowledge for the workforce. This act was motivated by an evolving need for educated, qualified, and experienced talent (Rotich et al., 2015; Aigbavboa et al., 2016). The Skills Development Act aimed to increase the abilities of the South African citizens, boost companies participating in educational initiatives and refine the employment prospects of Previous Disadvantaged Individuals (PDIs). Any workplace prejudicial racism to PDIs was outlawed and instead, as a redress, those deprived were being compensated through training and development opportunities (Aigbavboa et al., 2016).

South Africa has made noteworthy improvements and development in disabling the skills deprivation legacy of the past since the start of democracy (Lolwana et al., 2015). Regardless of this advancement, low levels of skills among most of the PDIs and persistently high joblessness rates, particularly amongst the young 15- to 35-year-olds, continue to be one of the state's most persistent worries and one of the highest obstacles to a better future for all (Lolwana et al., 2015). Youth includes approximately 70% of the jobless in the country. Furthermore, South Africa still has a very huge populace living in the countryside regions (approximately 45%). Usually, rural residents do not obtain as decent amenities as their city counterparts (Southall, 2014; Lolwana et al., 2015). Hence, the rural youth are the most deprived as they are further removed from training prospects and job opportunities (Lolwana et al., 2015).

Leadership through change

Change is an inevitable feature of life and in the 21st century. It has become vital for all organisations, societies, and individuals to withstand the ever-changing world that surrounds us (Mehta et al., 2014). Hence, effective change management is the duty of every individual, especially for leaders and managers. Gning and Yazdanifard (2015) assert that decision-making makeover refers to the transformation of a business from its existing state to its expected future state. Multiple organisational tactics are employed to assist employees

with the progress of change. Management is a key part of managing change processes and their attitude forms the key to successful organisational transformation (Gning and Yazdanifard, 2015). Businesses including banks are looking for a management team that gives the company confidence in achieving its objectives. Effective managers cleverly delegate authority to line managers and team leaders who localise AA transformation and change, thus surpassing the commotion of the change process. Effective organisational change leaders forego short-lived benefits and earnings and employ multiple strategies to improve the incomes and work conditions for all employees (Kishore and Nair, 2013). With worldwide economic competitiveness growing, visionary leaders creatively construct strategies that allow a competitive advantage using a multi-talented workforce, diverse in race, culture, age, skills, and competencies (Curtis and Cerni, 2015).

Nagendra and Farooqui (2016) argue that the main purpose of a leader is to influence, guide, and motivate others to accomplish specific duties. Managers encourage his/her juniors for proficient attainment and completion of the specified goals. Weak leadership is a subject that is central to many company disasters, governance issues, and regulatory failures; however, on the flip side, strong leadership is unavoidable for the re-establishment of good, ethical conduct in businesses (Doraiswamy, 2012). Lee (2011) states that capable management is a strength in leadership that is required to deliver equity in workforce traditions that discriminated against Black people. A Leader that delivers equality in the workplace constitutes a strong AA leadership. A capable, strong management team is required to inspire meaningful equity as well as authentic equality. This raises questions on what type of persons can possess change management skills, who will occupy transformational leadership positions, and how the job of leading a company may be performed to produce the kind of endorsed values required to allow a deep appreciation of diversity. Visagie and Linde (2010) describe effective leadership as the ability to understand and influence the activities of a person or a group by motivating employees to cope with difficulties, struggles, and challenges that arise daily in work and life. Evolving business leaders of today recognise that leadership's competencies, styles, attitudes, and values become significant for achieving business strategies and goals.

The three main leadership styles, namely, transactional leadership style, transformational leadership, and transcendental leadership are addressed as part of transformational leadership. These leadership styles either help or are not helping with the effective implementation of AA transformation based on their characteristics. According to Raghu (2018), the role of leadership is important in promoting affirmative action, and leaders must make sure that there is a strategy and execution plan in place to deliver the objective.

Transactional leadership is a type of leadership style that focuses on using executive rule and sincere power in the business. These leaders emphasise job accountability, job-related ideals, and employee obedience (Ng and Sears, 2012). Transactional leaders are more involved with operational or mechanical justice, displaying a by-the-book type of leadership. They comply with diversity laws due to usual natural forces such as AA guidelines, however, they are not prepared to do anything more than what the law prescribes (Ng and Sears, 2012). Leaders who adopt a transactional leadership style will therefore only implement AA to a certain extent but they will not exceed AA targets or expectations. They will only comply with the law and not go beyond what is expected from them. With transactional leadership, authority and accountability exist and are visible in his/her control, top-down approach (McCarthy et al., 2010). Transactional leadership can be considered as a business deal affiliation between two dealings to reach a sequence of specific assignments, complete a chain of demands, situations, and benefits or dispense punishment (de Vries and Korotov, 2010). Such dealings are common amongst managers and their subordinates, for example, company owners pay salaries for work completed by workers (Hirtz et al., 2007).

A transactional leader accompanies people where they need to go, while a transformational leader leads persons where they do not logically yearn to go, but where they must be (de Vries and Korotov, 2010). In a transactional approach, the leader emphasises principles such as honesty, reliability, and accountability to their purpose (Naji et al., 2014). Transactional management is inclined to be job-oriented rather than people-oriented. They improve work efficiency and subordinates are assisted to know their job obligations and discover their goals (Long, Young and Chuen, 2016). According to Odumeru and Ifeanyi (2013), transactional leaders provide a provisional reward (such as a compliment) when goals are reached on time, in advance, or to keep subordinates working at a decent pace at dissimilar intervals through conclusion. Transactional leaders also use conditional warnings (such as deferrals) when work excellence or competence drops lower than the established benchmarks or goals, or when job requirements are not met at all (Odumeru and Ifeanyi, 2013).

In the transactional management model, superiors assign authority to representatives who pacify others and thus occasionally gain promotion within the company (Ruggieri and Abbate, 2013). A transactional leader is inflexible in his/her anticipations about the employment association and considers that the junior's responsibility is only to follow their orders (Umme et al., 2015). Based on the characteristics of this leadership style, the leader who adopts this style will merely comply with AA legislation but will in all probability not be great at leading transformation in the banking sector or private sector. Transformational leadership is described by Kunnanatt

(2016) as an exciting, astute symbol that thrills subordinates by feeding their higher-order longings and engaging them in the managerial decision-making process. Through powerful negotiation tactics, transformational leaders encourage individuals to surpass their selfishness for the advantage of the group and the company (Kunnanatt, 2016). According to Lyndon and Rawat (2015), transformational leaders endeavour to achieve the follower's needs, who in turn will accomplish their employment requirements. Transformational leaders form a genuine trust between power and subordinates. Tangible transformation occurs only when there is visible top-down understanding and management encourages bottom-up determination. There must be a compromise towards change implementation; this is contrary to change opposition (Basu, 2015). Transformational leaders are motivated by equality, work diversity, shared justice, and they are inspired to achieve workforce diversity as it is the ethical and right thing to do (Ng and Sears, 2012). According to Ashikali and Groenewald (2015), there is a stronger correlation between transformational leadership and diversity management. Because of these characteristics, a leader who adopts a transformational leadership style will in all probability be great in implementing AA in the workplace. This will also apply to leaders in the financial services sector.

This type of leadership is considered as a multidimensional, multiplicity meta-form, which has a positive impact on employee purposefulness, eagerness, success, and natural transformation (McCarthy et al., 2010; Ashikali and Groenewald, 2015). According to Chao (2017), in terms of setting executive targets, the challenge for transactional leaders is that they set objectives for subordinates to follow; while the transformational leader and subordinates work together to plan and attain the targets. Transformational leaders endlessly reinvent themselves, they remain flexible and adaptable, and they advance those near to them (de Vries and Korotov, 2010). These leaders are convincing, they endeavour to create an appearance of hope, and they offer an incentive to followers. They encourage employees to challenge the status quo and manifest an obligation for uniqueness. They are role models to their followers and are respected, appreciated, and reliable (Rehman and Waheed, 2012). Uncertainty is a noticeable challenge in the transformational leadership process (Umme et al., 2015).

Transformational leadership is censured for lacking concerns of decency and morals (Liu, 2007). Transformational leadership is related to romanticised inspiration or charm, intelligent motivation, distinct analysis and is centered on common respect with shared dreams and exchanges of philosophies (Sudha et al., 2016; Lam and O'Higgins, 2012). This style of leadership tries to put into alignment the interest of the followers with those of the organisation (Validova and Pulaj, 2016). It

acts as a link amongst leaders and groups to cultivate a perfect appreciation of follower wellbeing, standards, and inspirational levels (Nagendra and Farooqui, 2016). Transformational leaders are visionary and they have excellent communication skills, inspiring their followers, all of which are more appropriate for leading and executing AA transformation (Raghu, 2018).

Transcendental leadership contends that for leadership to realise prominence, it must be value-centred and sanctified (Havenga et al., 2011). Transcendental leaders have an internal or intrinsic locus of power and control. Extrinsicly, essentially transcendental leaders motivate groups and stimulate employees, even in volatile arenas and economies (Liu, 2007). Transcendental leaders live and make visible the company values; thus they achieve planned innovations that stand the test of time (Kishore and Nair, 2013). They are concerned with the good of the organisation and its employees. They embrace change and encourage colleagues to buy into their vision while they nurture the needs and growth of others (Naji et al., 2014). Transcendental leadership incorporates just, ethical and spiritual philosophies to validate leadership as well as subordinate conduct (Isebor, 2018). This style of management places the running of social affairs beyond oneself in a managerial context (Nair, 2016). Transcendental leadership projects a complete, courteous, and united resolve, seeking solutions through collaborative discussions and understanding of people, profits, and the planet (Nair, 2016). Transcendent leaders exhibit multidimensional mindfulness. The more open the leader's consciousness is to perceive all employees in all work stages, the more influence he or she will have on their external setting (Stebbins, 2017).

Transcendental leadership, grounded in servant leadership, offers a pathway to increased trust that is necessary for global socioeconomic sustainability (Gardiner, 2011). Transcendental leadership offers a more holistic and collaborative executive procedure for the financial, societal, and ecological segments of businesses. They often go further than meeting the singular goal of increasing the bottom line of the business to include increasing the incomes, benefits, and rewards for people, societies, and the earth (Gardiner, 2011). Transcendental leadership emphasizes what is virtuous for civilisation, the atmosphere, investors, and financial and common contributions (Swierczek, 2014). Transcendental leaders co-create a shared dream leading to a superior creation. They also motivate and inspire their employees to strive to achieve that dream (Swierczek, 2014). Contemporary business executives must lead the organisation at these three levels if they are to practice transcendental management: lead by example (identity); lead through followers (others); and lead the business strategy towards transformation, evolution, and growth (corporate) (Crossan and Mazutis, 2008).

As a leader who can function within and between the

echelons of personality, others, the company, and civilisation, transcendental leaders will be able to successfully manoeuvre in the present unpredictable place of work (Sturm and Vera, 2011). The literature presents a gap on how transcendental leaders identify and manage obstacles and difficulties, such as transformational change, promoting AA transformation, and establishing a diverse workforce. Furthermore, limited research is available on how these transcendental leaders influence, achieve and impact workforce spirituality (Isebor, 2018). Leaders that adopt a transcendental leadership style are great at implementing AA. Raghu (2018) identified three key roles of leaders in implementing AA to inspire their followers in understanding the value of AA transformation implementation through open communication and showing genuine commitment towards the implementation of AA; to promote the application and implementation of the AA plan by eradicating obstacles to implementation and to provide funds to assist affirmative action, and to create a culture of AA transformation through incorporating AA into the business model and cascading the significance and commitment through all levels in the organisation.

Diversity Leadership values In South Africa

The word 'diversity incites strong emotive responses in some people and causes managers and administrators to immediately consider measurement concepts such as transformational targets and quotas. This in part arises from a limited understanding of how and why individuals protected under transformational legislation and strategies should be valued. Diversity management values include managing workforce variances such as tribe, sex, culture, language, and ethnicity (Herring, 2009). Diversity comprises all kinds of distinct variances, such as background, age, faith, incapacity position, geographical position, character, skills, competencies, reproductive choices, and an innumerable of other individuals, demographic and managerial characteristics (Herring, 2009; Clark, 2015). Diversity leadership is different for every business, group, learning organisation, society, and person, depending on specific attributes, such as their physical location or period (Fondon, 2017). Although the values of diversity are inclusive, numerous enterprises and individuals continue to struggle with fairness, promotion, equity, and diversity questions (Fondon, 2017). Sherbin and Rashid (2017) argue that in workplaces where variety equals likeness without incorporation of differences, such businesses will not entice global multitalented employees that inspire, contribute, innovate and evolve the business. Clark (2015) argues that diversity inclusiveness allows employees to feel engaged, involved, treated fairly and equally, and as such, they are inclined to become stronger players in business strategy achievement. Furthermore, they are less likely to leave their institutions

for jobs with competitors.

Effective diversity values improve managerial effectiveness, largely by decreasing conflict amongst the participants in the group when managers allow complementary thoughts and ideas to flourish. Poor diversity management programs and systems without inclusivity values are ineffective as workers cannot attain and reach their ideal work potential (Joubert, 2017). In any AA transformation process, top leaders must take up the role of chief architect (Kavanagh, 2006). However, poorly prepared leaders can badly affect the self-worth of employees, which can lead to a cessation amongst their groups and create a detrimental work atmosphere where workers feel misunderstood and undervalued (Jaquez, 2016). Joubert (2017) further states that incapacity to achieve labour force multiplicity and diversity may result in a reduction in production and innovation. In terms of gender parity, despite the growing diversity amongst executives, there is a sluggish movement when it comes to growing women taking up top management and leadership positions in both the private and public sectors (Eagly and Chin, 2010).

There is growing unhappiness with the slow rate of genuine transformation in South Africa, with AA, with women representation in leadership positions, and with economic power still being in the hands of White capitalists (Hills, 2014). Gender, racial, skills, educational, and other disparities are still visible in most communities, workplaces, and industrial sectors despite gender equality legislation. In corporate South Africa, the feminine value system that is creative, inclusive, and collaborative is lacking and female managers are few in the top positions in government or medium and large businesses (Cheung and Halpen, 2010; Hills, 2014). This will also apply in the financial services sector. According to Shen, Chanda, D' Netto, and Monga (2009) at a strategic level, what is essential is a leadership attitude that understands that diversity integration, multiplicity, and transcendental leadership with strong values are critical for operational achievement. Senior leaders and managers must provide a commitment to multiplicity leadership values and these should be visible in the business vision, mission, and corporate strategy. Furthermore, leaders and managers must be empowered to eradicate mental and operative obstructions to the handling of diversity integration, transformational objectives, and recruitment of global talent (Shen et al., 2009).

Transformational Leadership in South African financial services

According to the SAHRC (2018) study, the B-BBEE Act describes Black economic empowerment or BEE as the most feasible financial strategy for the enablement of all PDIs. More specifically females, Black employees, youth, people with incapacities, and rural citizens are to be

provided with empowerment opportunities through a wide range of combined social and economic initiatives. The BBEE legislation presents a strategy for transformational leadership towards the redress of past historical imbalances and injustices in employment equity. The domain of financial management and proprietorship arrangements are predominant in the SA transformational regulations such as the B-BBEE act (SAHRC, 2018). Significantly, the same study reveals that to date, B-BBEE initiatives and schemes have been ineffective in fundamentally changing leadership and proprietorship arrangements of big companies (SAHRC, 2018). The B-BBEE act has also been condemned for profiting a small segment of the Black population, nicknamed The Black Elite; while the ordinary Black citizen has thus far been overlooked from B-BBEE benefits (Archibong and Adejumo, 2013). Furthermore, B-BBEE is blamed for the alleged mass exodus of SA citizens who are skilled and qualified to economically sound countries. Individuals with high levels of skill migrate to other nations due to the challenges of gaining equitable jobs, market-related salaries, progressive career paths, and career development opportunities. B-BBEE seems to ignore citizens with high levels of ability and talent, leading to the danger of celebrating short-term transformational goals while neglecting the long-term brain drain (Oosthuizen and Naidoo, 2010).

Could the brain drain be the reason why the SA Department of Trade and Industry (2007) identified a low participation rate of black Africans in middle and top management positions in the banking industry? They raised alarms that lack of financial leadership presented severe challenges to the sector and country. The financial industry in the country is controlled by 4 major banks, named the "Big 4", who jointly hire 131 404 individuals (Mayiya et al., 2019). The Big 4 repeat their promise to support national transformational change, setting targets in the financial industry as well as establishing the Financial Sector Charter (Mayiya et al., 2019). The banks set a goal of 25% black proprietorship by 2010 and an additional 33% of the participants of a firm's board were obligated to be Black (Ward and Muller, 2010). The banking charter stipulated these six key areas of economic empowerment which were to be monitored in terms of a scorecard by the financial institutions themselves, namely: business ownership and control; recruiting and development of human resources; procurement and enterprise development; access to financial services; empowerment financing; and corporate social investment (Ward and Muller, 2010). The financial charter, which dedicated the banking industry to the government enacted strategy of B-BBEE, can be regarded as a significant landmark in redressing the past imbalances of South Africa (Moyo and Rohan, 2006).

The banking sector transformed itself into a leading lending giant for PDIs post-1994; as before democracy proper monetary facilities were unavailable to millions of Blacks in South Africa (Moyo and Rohan, 2006). Yet

banks have been criticised for granting Black empowerment banking loans for only a few. This was announced in July 2004 by a leading bank and its insurance subsidiary, in which both would sell 10% of their companies for a joint total of R5.6 billion (Moyo and Rohan, 2006). The deal reserved 40% of shares for Black management and staff, 20% for community groups, and two politically connected individuals received the remaining 40% without collateral. Each of these individual shareholders netted around R200 million (Moyo and Rohan, 2006).

Change in the South African labour market, private sector, and especially in the financial industry has been a relevant subject for several years; and notwithstanding the best exertions by lawmakers and business relations, the pace of change has stayed agonisingly slow (SAHRC, 2018). Furthermore, the fact that White males still control the most profitable businesses in the economy further proves the failure of B-BBEE as singular mechanisms designed to transform the economic sector of the country (SAHRC, 2018). Moreover, the country's Department of Labour initiatives, opportunities, and prospects for advancements are often given to applicants other than black Africans. According to the Department of Labour (2017) report, the financial services industry has seen a rise in Africans, Indian/ Asian, and Coloured persons at entry and middle managerial positions; however, as per the transformation legislation, few Blacks are appointed at senior and executive positions in the financial sector of SA.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method employed was qualitative content analysis (Fanelli et al., 2020; Pratici and Singer, 2021). Qualitative content analysis is defined as a research technique that allows for the subjective interpretation of the content of data through the logical categorisation procedure of coding and classifying themes or patterns (Shava et al., 2021). Qualitative content analysis allows scientists to comprehend social reality in a personal but systematic way (Shava et al., 2021). Superior research studies usually integrate both qualitative and quantitative analysis of texts and blending of approaches, usually recognised as an efficient method to ensure the dependability of the research in terms of soundness and trustworthiness (Sándorová, 2014). The aim of using content analysis as a research technique is to deliver new awareness and more understanding of a particular occurrence, to acquire a better and more concise explanation of the phenomenon, as well as to define and measure a phenomenon (Moldavska and Welo, 2017). The method for extracting relevant data for analysis as findings consist of these 5 steps: Identification of research questions plus keywords; Inclusion and exclusion criteria; Selection of final content; content analysis; selection of transformational trends for the proposed AA transformational model for the SA financial sector. Table 1 presents the research method for the literature review.

RESULTS

Literature evidence reveals that in response to research question 1 of this paper, although the SA government

Table 1. Research method for the literature review.

Step	Process	Procedure
1.	Identification of research questions plus keywords	Identified all relevant AA and transformation research papers available in SA as per these identified keywords: transformational leadership; affirmative action; equity; financial sector and South Africa. This search yielded 470 publications and legislation.
2.	Inclusion and exclusion criteria	Included all publications and legislation that were relevant to the financial sector and AA leadership. Excluded all publications before the year 2000 and theoretical studies. This search yielded 282 publications and legislation for analysis.
3.	Selection and final content	Analysed publications and legislation that were relevant to transformational leadership in the global and SA arena. This analysis resulted in a final selection of 94 publications and legislation for content analysis of current trends.
4.	Content analysis	A total of 94 publications and legislation were analysed to answer the research questions and determine the transformational trends.
5.	Select transformational trends for the AA Transformational Model	Used content analysis trends to design AA Transformational Model.

introduced numerous laws to address transformation in the country, the slow pace of AA transformation points to the government's inability to enforce the EE legislation. Furthermore, most of the senior management in the private sector consists of White males; the assumption is that there is a reluctance to replace themselves with equally competent and qualified Black colleagues. In response to research question 2 of this paper, while though numerous research papers report on the panaches of leadership, characters, and executive leadership influences on business results; there is limited research on how leadership influences transformation and affirmative action (Raghu, 2018). Ng and Sears (2012) found that while transactional leaders achieve operative or mechanical justice and comply with AA laws to avoid penalties; they are reluctant to initiate and sustain AA strategies that effectively promote transformation. Transformational leaders employ multiplicity management strategies, hence they are more inclined to meet AA targets and goals (Ashikali and Groenewald, 2015; Kunnanatt, 2016). Raghu (2018) found that although transformational leaders may be more armed at inspiring and stimulating their supporters to use their ethical duty when it comes to applying obedience to laws such as affirmative action, transcendental leadership styles may work better if legislation is implemented and monitored effectively. In contrast, Ashikali and Groenewald (2015) argue that businesses could benefit from managing diversity policies by adopting a transformational management style. Transformational and transcendental leaders are inclined to be more involved with collective fairness and they feel encouraged to achieve diversity since it is ethically the

correct thing to do (Ng and Sears, 2012; Basu, 2015). These findings are highly significant and indicate that multiplicity leadership styles do indeed promote affirmative action if the intention and motivation exist.

In response to research question 3 of this paper, SA financial services leaders and managers do, yet neglect to promote affirmative action. While in 2004, the Big 4 banks in SA voluntarily established the Financial Sector Charter to transform the banking industry, they achieved very little with regards to effective AA transformation (Mayiya et al., 2019). The financial industry of SA has the best strategies for AA target achievement theoretically; yet practically, they fail to execute transformation in most banks. The pace of change has remained agonisingly slow with little representation of the majority racial group in top management, especially in the financial organisations (SAHRC, 2018; SABPP, 2012; Kunnanatt, 2016). Furthermore, there is a very low commitment by leaders and managers to implement transformative and empowering affirmative action (Basu, 2015; Kunnanatt, 2016). Moreover, the private sector in SA pays lip service to transformational legislation and targets (Kunnanatt, 2016; SABPP, 2017). The SA government needs to work collaboratively yet firmly with the financial sector organisations if they are to strategically implement existing AA and transformational legislation in all industrial sectors of the country.

The intensive literature analysis resulted in these six conclusions:

1. Despite legislation such as the Constitution, the Employment Equity Act, and the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, discrimination in the

workplace continues and the implementation of these laws has not been effective.

2. The pace of change is slow due to the lack of commitment of top leaders and managers in the private sector and the lack of enforcement by the government.

3. Transactional leaders follow AA compliance as per the legislation; however, once they have met their targets, they are not prepared to do anything more than what the law prescribes.

4. Transformational leaders motivate and encourage their supporters and use their virtuous obligation to achieve transformation with laws such as affirmative action.

5. Transcendental leaders may be more effective in promoting and implementing AA legislation as they employ spiritual multiplicity in their strategies.

6. Although the Big 4 banks in SA set up the financial charter in 2004 to transform the banking sector, its implementation has not proved to be successful.

DISCUSSION

Literature suggests that effective transformation, change, and diversity in the South African marketplace, specifically in the corporate world, and particularly in the financial industry is a contentious subject. This is since, despite AA transformational efforts by government and policy makers, the rate of change has stayed agonisingly sluggish in all industry sectors. As mandated or recommended by SA legislation on AA and transformation, most industrial sectors initiated radical shifts and changes. The country's financial industry initiated a charter that stipulated targeted efforts towards meeting AA transformation and EE transformation goals. It is significant to note that some financial organisations surpassed employment equity goals, promoting Blacks into junior and middle managerial ranks. More significantly, it is noted that while an improvement in AA occurs at the middle managerial level, the same cannot be stated for senior and executive managerial positions (Mayiya et al., 2019).

The citizens of democratic South Africa imagined a fresh start that was demonstrated by a governmental instituted transformative plan, with AA, EE, and BBBEEE as the integrated strategy (Rotich et al., 2015). After more than 20 years since the implementation of AA laws, progress has been very slow. Some experts have projected that it will take until 2060 to achieve equitable population representation in top and executive management positions in SA (SABPP, 2012). Low dedication to AA from senior leadership, as supported by leadership who pay lip service to the need for transformation in the country's workforce presents high transformational risks (SABPP, 2017). The 2016/2017 Employment Equity report statement reveals the following significant statistics worth noting:

1. SA Blacks comprise approximately 78% of the

economically active population, yet they occupy only 14.4% of the top and executive positions in the workforce.

2. SA Whites comprise approximately 12% of the population, yet they hold 68.5% of the highest leadership occupations (October, 2017).

Grant (2007) argues that in South Africa a tiny but influential White minority has dominated all financial and workforce action including labour intensive work. SA workforce leaders are tasked to transform the country's workplace and workforce to be more illustrative of all population groups in all occupational categories. While legislation has transformative goals, to the detriment of inclusive transformation and socioeconomic justice, White leaders and managers continue to act as caretakers for most of the Black population. Black people may be in control constitutionally but they are not in power economically (Rotich et al., 2015; SABPP, 2017).

Different existent theories reveal a lack of progress in implementing changes in the SA financial sector about transformation especially AA transformation. This paper adds to the body of knowledge on affirmative action, transformation, employment equity, management, and leadership within the South African context. The paper highlighted how the SA legislation, leadership styles, and financial organisations promoted AA and transformation for the country. Imbalances in workforce planning and misrepresentation of the population groups within organisations hinder the growth of the South African economy. The theoretical knowledge on the strategic implementation of affirmative action and transformation in the South African banking sector will contribute to more equitable workplace opportunities, an authentically representative economy, and create socially just organisational strategies, policies and practices.

The insights gained into the implementation and value of affirmative action for the country, continent, and world economies and societies are expected to contribute practically. Leaders, managers, and the South African financial services can benefit from implementing AA and transformational legislation as follows:

1. Diversity integration of the workplace can remove past biases and stereotypes.

2. Effective and efficient implementation of employment equity strategies and AA legislation in organisations will result in a productively diverse labour force.

3. A productively diverse workforce will reinforce social upliftment and promote innovation in businesses.

4. Management that represents the population authentically tends to influence work performance, attendance, retention, improved customer service, and client gratification (SABPP, 2017).

5. Diverse and inclusive management structures reveal improved innovation, creativeness, engagement, productivity, proficiency, and the company image is heightened (SABPP, 2017).

Table 2. Proposed AA transformational model for the SA financial sector.

Step	Action	Implication	Stakeholder
1.	Comply with AA legislation	Organisations benefit by transforming the workforce as per the country's transformation strategy	Human resources and Line managers
2.	Management to promote AA transformation	Productivity improves with happier staff and more collaborative teams	Top, middle, and line managers
3.	Increase AA targets	Staff are satisfied with working conditions and thus innovatively perform to grow the organisations products and services	Human resources and Line managers and top managers
4.	Training and development for AA Candidates	Previously Disadvantaged Individuals (PDIs) can develop skills to take up senior positions within the organisations	Human resources and Line managers
5.	Diversify and transform the entire workforce	Creativity and innovation are enhanced in organisations, the economy, the country, and the African continent	Human resources, Lime managers, and top management

The practical contribution of this paper is the proposed AA Transformational Model for the SA Financial Sector, as presented in Table 2. The model consists of five action steps that the key stakeholders in the organisations must take to ensure the successful implementation of AA. These five actions should be implemented as follows: Comply with AA legislation; Management to promote AA transformation; Increase AA targets; Training and development for AA candidates; Diversify and transform the entire workforce.

The proposed model is designed to assist organisations in both the private sector and public sector with strategies to effectively transform their organisations. Each step in the transformational process model is discussed further.

Step 1: Comply with AA legislation

The purpose of the EEA is to promote fair labour practices and social justice in the SA workplace (Department of Labour, 2014). Organisations that implement AA legislation will be able to achieve their Employment Equity targets and help transform the workplace in South Africa. Organisations should develop AA strategies which must be submitted annually to the Department of Labour. There should be consultation with the unions and employees to obtain agreement regarding the plan, examine their employment procedures, practices and strategies to ensure that they have the support of employees (Department of Labour, 2014). The consultation process is vital to make sure that the aim of AA is realised in the organisation.

Step 2: Management to promote AA transformation

There should be a commitment to the implementation of

AA from all levels of management within the organisation, commencing at the top in the decision-making levels to ensure senior management agreement to the AA process (Booyesen, 2007). The EEA requires employers to implement AA measures to accelerate transformation for Previously Disadvantaged Individuals (PDIs).

Step 3: Increase AA targets

The aim of the EEA is not just to meet targets but to ensure that past practices of discrimination in the workplace are eliminated and to ensure that all racial groups are fairly presented at all occupational levels within organisations. The organisation should provide the necessary training and development to employees that will enable them to take up better positions in the organisation when they occur. This will result in a more satisfied and happier workforce.

Step 4: Training and development for AA candidates

Without adequate skills development in the workplace AA will fail, and this will result in dissatisfaction and lowering of standards (Martha, 2010). It is specified in the EEA that suitably qualified individuals should be identified for training and development (Martha, 2010). The organisation should link its training and development initiatives to succession planning to ensure that employees receive enough training and mentoring to prepare them for future promotion (Van Der Heyden, 2013).

Step 5: Diversify and transform the entire workforce

One of the main objectives of the EEA is to achieve a

diverse workforce that is broadly representative of the SA population. The CEO should provide robust guidance and champion the advantages of diversity and should take a strong position on supporting the need for and the benefits of a diverse workforce (Wambui et al., 2013). The organisation should generate and uphold a constructive work environment where the similarities and differences of employees are valued, so all can attain their full potential and exploit their strengths to the company's intended aims and purposes (Wambui et al., 2013).

Conclusion

After 26 years of democracy, and the commemoration of 24 years of the South African Constitution, it is the ideal time to establish the level of transformational progress in the country, especially in the financial sector. Theoretical research was conducted to determine whether AA transformation is legislatively complied with, what leadership styles promote AA transformation, and how South African financial services managers can promote AA transformation strategically. Theoretically, this paper added to the body of knowledge on workforce transformation. Practically, this paper presents the AA Transformational Model for SA Financial Sector managers to implement AA transformation positively. Further qualitative and quantitative research is recommended to explore and examine whether SA managers can accelerate AA transformation, especially in the financial sector, and especially through training and development.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

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Full Length Research Paper

Marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behaviour in Ghana: A case of Nestle Ghana Limited

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The role marketing strategies plays in influencing purchasing behaviors of consumers in various economies can never be overemphasized. However, this assertion requires further investigation with respect to consumers of Maggi seasoning products in Ghana especially those in Tamale metropolis. The study analyzed the effect of marketing strategies specifically sales promotion and perceived product quality on consumers' purchasing behavior toward Maggi products in the Tamale metropolis of Ghana. To achieve this goal, the study adopted the quantitative approach, descriptive design and structured questionnaire. Valid data sets were retrieved from 162 food vendors in Tamale Metropolis. The IBM SPSS Statistics software version 26 was employed to process the data and subsequently analyzed with both descriptive and inferential tools. The study found all the marketing strategies to significantly influence the purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products focusing on food vendors within the Tamale metropolis, Ghana. As a result, the research found that marketing strategies, particularly sales promotion and perceived product quality, have a major role in encouraging consumers to make better purchasing preferences. According to the research, Nestle Ghana could use more comprehensive methods, such as unique sales promotion packages, better pricing, and better product concepts in order to guarantee high purchasing behavior among its clientele.

Key words: Marketing strategies, consumers' purchasing behavior, sales promotion, perceived product quality.

INTRODUCTION

The competitive and unpredictable nature of business environments has induced businesses to explore various avenues and strategies in order to survive, enjoy high profit-levels while enhancing overall corporate performance (Romdonny and Rosmadi, 2019). Arguably, businesses can never achieve set targets in the absence of customers. Customers have become the key assets to any business establishment and as such, their tastes and preferences are key to promoting business performance

(Alzoubi et al., 2020). According to Orji et al. (2020), failure to provide relevant strategies to meet customers' demands could have severe negative repercussions on overall performance levels. As such, firms need to adopt relevant marketing strategies in a bid to promote customers' purchases, loyalty and invariably meet set performance targets. Donny et al. (2018) similarly opined that, business can only attract and maintain customers by adopting various marketing strategies which include

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processes, systems and techniques for providing value to customers. These strategies are also associated with establishing relevant measures to predict customers' demands and culture, determine their tastes and preferences while ensuring that the firms' products and/or services conform to their requirements. A recent study by Bestari and Butarbutar (2021) similarly revealed that marketing strategies induce businesses strategically to configure various resources to make relevant marketing decisions in areas of product quality, pricing, distribution and after-sales services delivery.

Moreover, previous studies have linked marketing strategies with consumers' purchasing behaviour (Bestari and Butarbutar, 2021; Orji et al., 2020). These arguments have been reinforced by the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2011) and theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1979). The theory of planned behavior, for instance, suggests that consumers exhibit certain purchasing behaviors based on exposure to various methods, processes or strategies (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011). As such, customers are highly likely to repeat purchases once they have strong intentions of exhibiting such behaviors and vice versa. This clearly indicates that the adoption of relevant marketing strategies influence consumers intentions of consistently purchasing from a firm (Guerin, 2017; Homburg, Jozić and Kuehnl 2017). Consumer purchasing behavior is related with the behaviors or attitudes of consumers toward purchasing a product or service (Inonii, 2017). Similarly, Orji et al. (2017) asserted that consumers' purchasing behaviour focuses on studying customers' behavioral, mental and emotional responses and other related purchasing activities. Prior to making purchases, consumers are mostly influenced by their perceptions and socio-cultural characteristics and they are likely to make purchases repeatedly if they hold positive perceptions or attitudes toward a firm's product. According to Orgi et al. (2020), businesses that emphasize on consumers' behavior enjoy competitive advantage and achieve performance standard. To influence purchasing behaviors of customers, Le-Anh and Nguyen-To (2020) revealed that 75% of organizations in most developed economies including USA adopt different marketing strategies such as quality products delivery, pricing, quality packaging and effective promotion techniques.

Equally, other authors posit that the linkage between marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behaviour within developing economies is growing in importance (Hasan and Ali, 2015; Juwaheer et al., 2012). Marketing strategy is a set of integrated decisions and actions by which a business expects to achieve its marketing objectives and meet the value requirements of its customers through the marketing mix (product, place, price and promotion) (Chikweche, Lappeman and Egan, 2021)). In these economies notably Ghana, for instance, large businesses are continuously realizing the contributions of customers to achieving set performance

levels. This has prompted them to adopt varying marketing strategies to convince existing, new and prospective customers to exhibit positive purchasing behaviors towards their products and/or services. This has been evidenced in the business activities of Nestle Ghana Limited leading to their success stories since its incorporation in Ghana in 1957. Nestle Ghana Limited is known for producing and exporting diaries, beverages, confectionary and culinary products. Within the sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, Nestle Limited operates in several countries but is yet to meet its performance targets. This is evidenced in Ghana where its actual performance remains inconsistent. Despite Nestle Ghana Limited's ranking among the best food consumer processors in Ghana, it still struggles to critically determine consumers' purchasing decisions regarding their products especially the Maggi seasoning brand. This product is undoubtedly a household name within the Tamale Metropolitan of Ghana but the factors that influence the customers' purchase decisions remain unclear. This situation could exhale and have rippling effects on their marketing strategies.

Several studies have revealed that consumers' purchasing behavior is influenced by many factors such as situation, psychological, environmental and marketing factors, personal factors, family, and culture (Mashao and Sukdeo., 2018). However, the focus of such research studies has not been on how marketing strategies especially sales promotion and perceived product quality have influenced consumers' purchasing behavior of Maggi seasoning products. Even though extant literature exists on factors influencing consumers' behavior, most of those studies were found in banking, automobile and hospitality sectors (Ahmad and Ahmad, 2014; Wang, 2017; Dholakia et al., 2010) and in developed countries. Only a few like Ofosu-Boateng (2019) studied on how only sales promotion influenced consumers' behavior in a retailing of consumers' goods in Ghana.

Furthermore, previous studies have largely focused on food processors in various countries other than Nestle Ghana Limited. Thus, research is yet to be conducted on marketing strategies and purchasing behaviors using consumers of Nestle Ghana Limited's Maggi product as a case study in the Ghanaian context. It is against this background that the study investigated the influence of marketing strategies (such as sales promotion and perceived product quality) on consumers' purchasing behavior of Maggi seasoning product in the Tamale Metropolis of Ghana. Moreso. Many of these studies conducted were in the Western world whose cultural differences significantly differ from those in third world countries such as Ghana. This study therefore aims at closing the gap and also contributing to existing literature on marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behavior. The question therefore is what are the marketing strategies that have influenced the purchasing behavior of consumers of Nestle Maggi seasoning

products in Ghana? Specifically, the study sought to investigate the following research objectives: evaluate the effect of sales promotion on consumers' purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana and examine the effect of perceived product quality on consumers' purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana;

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted which examined the various marketing strategies that influenced consumers' purchasing behavior, sales promotion and perceived product quality. A marketing strategy contains the overall plan of a business for reaching its prospective customers and eventually turning them into actual consumers of its products or services (Saura et al., 2019). Also, a marketing strategy comprises the value propositions, data on customers' demographic features and brand messages of a business. According to Hollensen (2019), this strategy captures all the four basic marketing Ps in areas of pricing, promotion, place and product. It revolves around the techniques, methods and practices that are used to communicate relevant information to customers in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage over competitors. Aghazadeh (2015) added that marketing strategies should be clear and in line with the value propositions of a company in order to communicate the company's key information to consumers in terms of how it operates, what it stands for and why consumers should transact business with it. According to Shashishekar and Anand (2019), a marketing strategy informs the company's marketing plan by documenting the specific marketing activities that need to be carried out in order to provide maximum satisfaction to consumers. Marketing strategies generally have longer lifespans and contain vital elements that help understand consumers well. Previous studies have revealed marketing strategies to include sales promotion, product packaging, perceived product quality, pricing and product branding (Alao et al., 2020; Thakur et al., 2017; Raheem et al., 2014).

Sales promotion

Sales promotion is among the commonly used marketing strategies for stimulating demand among customers (Kaveh et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2019). Sales promotion refers to the marketing strategy where a company promotes its products or services using attractive short-term initiatives (Fam et al., 2019). It aims at stimulating demand among consumers in order to exceed sales targets. This strategy has been grouped under three elements: pull, push and hybrid dimensions respectively (Gikonyo, 2020; Nangoy and Tumbuan, 2018). The pull strategy, for instance, is aimed at inducing customers to 'pull' a company's products. The push strategy, on the

other hand, is used to push a company's product to the customers through intermediaries (such as; wholesalers, retailers, agents) and finally, the hybrid strategy focuses on attracting customers by providing incentives to distributors and adopting special coupons to promote a given product. According to Shamsi and Khan (2018), sales promotion is generally used to introduce new products, clear existing inventories, induce potential customers while inspiring purchases among existing customers. Furthermore, Yang and Mattila (2020) added that, sales promotion is primarily short-term oriented strategy and is used to persuade customers to purchase a given product. It is relevant for spreading information about a product to customers, stabilizing sales and arousing customers' demand. Firms have also been found to use sales promotion to remain competitive, gain consumers' trust, introduce new products, and promote brand awareness while wooing existing customers. Examples of sales promotion include; free gifts, samples, exchange schemes, discount coupons, discount prices and bulk purchase deals (Ofosu-Boateng, 2020). Other examples include point of purchase displays, trade shows, premiums (Gorji and Siami, 2020).

Perceived product quality

Perceived product quality is also a key marketing strategy that identifies a customer's views about a product's brand equity and total superiority in comparison with competitors' products (Golder et al., 2012). Styliadis et al. (2015) viewed perceived quality as a 'customer's perception' as against 'objective' quality; thus, primarily focused on the subjectiveness of a customer's judgement. This strategy focuses on providing quality products to satisfy consumers' needs by including several relevant and unique features. Okolo (2017) also suggested that perceived quality of a product focuses on the overall product assessment and serves as a source of satisfaction to consumers. Again, it also refers to consumers' estimations by relying on several elements to measure the performance of a particular product (Rosillo-Díaz et al., 2019). According to Styliadis et al. (2020), marketing strategy creates better understanding of consumers' requirements in order to provide valuable products to them. Saleem et al. (2015) were of the view that perceived product quality is the summation of product perception and product expectations. This strategy has been found to directly influence the purchase intentions of consumers. As such, if the quality of a given product is high then the purchasing intention of the consumer is perceived to be high and vice versa.

Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Consumer Purchasing Behavior (CPB) has become a very significant concept in today's business environments

especially in the area of marketing (Romdonny and Rosmadi, 2019). As such, for businesses to achieve competitiveness, they need to provide value to their customers; however, this goal can never be achieved in isolation if firms ignore the concept of CPB. Consumer purchasing behavior focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, efforts) on consumer-related items that include what they buy, why they buy, when they buy, where they buy, how often they buy, how they evaluate it after the purchase (Olbrich and Holsing, 2011). According to Inoni (2017), consumer purchasing behavior is the summation of attitudes, behaviors and action that are carried out by a consumer prior to purchasing a product or service, during the actual purchase consumption and post purchase evaluations. Similarly, it also refers to the various behaviors an individual exhibits before deciding to buy a product (Falebita et al., 2020). Prior to making purchases, consumers are faced with several stimuli including the marketing mix that they need to respond to and these influence their purchasing behaviors. Thus, purchasing behavior is also defined as the acts and decision processes of ultimate consumers who are involved in purchasing and using products (Orji et al., 2020). Researchers such as Orji et al. (2017) opined that CPB focuses on studying of individual, organizations and groups and all relevant actions related with the purchase, utilization and disposal of products coupled with the behavioral, mental and emotional responses of the consumers. This concept is therefore associated with all the various elements of purchasing behavior from pre-purchase actions through to post-purchase consumption, evaluating and disposal events. As such, having adequate knowledge about consumers' behavior renders immense assistance during planning, controlling and implementations of relevant marketing strategies in competitive business environments to influence the purchasing behavior of the consumers of a firm's products. Several studies have revealed that companies which rely on consumer behavior during production and delivery of products and services create unique competitive advantages over their rivals (Ramafamba, and Mears, 2012; Orji et al., 2020; Nasse et al., 2019; Nasse, 2021). Romdonny and Rosmadi (2019) added that CPB sums up the preferences, attitudes and decisions associated with the buying of any product or service. These are clear indications that consumer purchasing behavior predicts actual purchases and as such requires the needed attention.

Sales promotion and consumer purchasing behavior

Sales promotion has empirically been found to affect the purchasing behavior of consumers within several study areas. For instance, Ahmed and Javed (2015) investigated how sales promotion influenced consumer buying behavior

in Pakistan focusing on those within the Punjab metropolis. Using self-administered questionnaires, the data gathered were analyzed through hierarchical multiple regression after processing using the IBM SPSS version 20. It was found that sales promotion strategies such as free samples, price discounts, coupons and buy-one-get-one-free significantly and positively influence the respondents' buying behavior. Also, a similar study was conducted by Shamout (2016) and found sales promotion to significantly promote consumers' behavior. Imaningsih (2018) added that sales promotion plays a crucial role in ensuring positive consumers' behavior. This finding was generated from the use of multiple linear regression. Similarly, Nakarmi (2018) did a quantitative study to examine the contributions of sales promotion in improving consumers' behavior. The author opined that sales promotion serves as a marketing strategy for meeting and persuading targeted consumers to purchase a product. The study found sales promotion as a useful tool for understanding consumers' features and their differing behaviors. In a similar vein, Khan et al. (2019) studied 297 randomly sampled walk-in customers of 25 supermarkets in Lahore. Using a quantitative research technique, data were analyzed using both correlation and regression analytical tools. The study outcome revealed sales promotion tools such as bonus packs and free samples have no significant effect on consumers' behavior; whereas, other promotion tools including coupons, price discounts and buy one get one free offer rather significantly affected consumers' purchases. According to Shamout (2016), sales promotion is an important marketing strategy adopted by marketers to induce consumers to exhibit positive purchasing behaviors. Ofosu-Boateng (2020) also conducted a recent study on this subject matter focusing on retailing consumer goods within the Tema Metropolis of Ghana. The study was quantitative in nature but wrongly adopted the structured interview and convenience sampling technique. The choice of these methods affected the quality of the study and made it to have some research gaps. Regardless, the study data gathered from 220 respondents and were analyzed using Pearson correlation instead of linear regression. However, the study found sales promotion to be significantly correlated with consumers' purchasing behavior. Thus, a unit increase in sales promotion would lead to a significant unit increase in purchasing behavior of consumers. It could be deduced from the various reviews that sales promotion plays a significant positive role in promoting consumers' purchasing behavior.

Perceived product quality and consumers' purchasing behavior

The role perceived product quality plays in consumers' purchasing behavior has been investigated by previous

researchers producing inconsistent findings. Previous studies have also been conducted in different study areas with minimal focus on consumers of Maggi seasoning products within the Tamale municipality. Saleem et al. (2015) measured how a product's perceived quality affects the purchasing intention of 122 randomly sampled consumers. Data were appropriately gathered through questionnaires but the sampled respondents were inappropriately done using convenient sampling. Also, the researchers wrongly used statistical software to analyze data and found perceived product quality to significantly improve the consumers' purchasing decisions at D.G. Khan District. Brata et al. (2017) conducted a study and as part of their objectives investigated the role of perceived product quality in the purchasing decisions of consumers of Nitchi at PT. Jaya Swarasa Agung, Central Jakarta. The study relied on the quantitative approach and used a sample size of 115 buyers of Nitchi products in Supermarket Rezeki. Primary data were collected from structured questionnaires and analyzed using multiple regression. The study shows that product quality plays a significant role in promoting the purchasing decisions of consumers of this product. It was, therefore, concluded that the production of quality products is key to ensuring high and quality purchasing behaviors of consumers of the Nitchi product. Imaningsih (2018), for instance, investigated product quality and purchasing decisions among its specific objectives. Data obtained through structured questionnaires were processed using SPSS version 23.0 and further analyzed using T-test and linear regression. The study found that perceived product quality positively influenced the purchasing behavior of consumers of HONDA H-RV. The study concluded that product quality, promotion and pricing lead to better purchasing behaviors among consumers. Furthermore, Konuk (2018) also investigated the role of perceived product quality and other elements in predicting the purchasing intention of consumers of organic privatelabel food. The researcher gathered empirical data through self-administered questionnaires from consumers in Istanbul, Turkey. The hypotheses were tested using the structural equation modelling technique and it was found that product quality contributes significantly to influencing consumers' purchase intentions toward the product. It was, therefore, concluded that consumers' perception about product quality plays an important role in predicting their purchasing behaviors.

In summary, it is evidenced from the literature review that marketing strategies influencing consumers' purchasing behavior is an important area that researchers and practitioners are still giving attention to in these competitive business environments. There are extensive researches on consumers' purchasing behaviors in the online shopping, financial services, Cellular service sector, food and restaurants service industries (Ahmad and Ahmad, 2014; Dholakia et al., 2010; Wang, 2017) in developed countries; there are few of such studies

revealing the marketing strategies that influence the buying behaviors of consumers in developing countries especially Ghana in relation to food seasoning products. This gap is what the current research seeks to fill. This section presented the conceptual framework to further explain and link the study's relevant concepts. The framework specifically provided a graphical presentation of the study's objectives which are valuable in organizing empirical research. This graphical demonstration was drawn based on two basic variables: independent (that is, marketing strategies) and dependent (that is, consumer purchasing behavior). The conceptual presentation is shown in Figure 1. From Figure 1, the independent variable (that is, marketing strategies) is represented by sales promotion, and perceived product quality; whereas, consumer purchasing behavior represented the dependent variable. The framework emphasizes the relationship that exists between these strategies and purchasing behavior of consumers. Simply put, a unit change in any of the marketing strategies could also lead to a unit change in consumers' purchasing behavior. However, the framework does not provide the actual strength and magnitude of the relationship between these variables under study.

Mathematically, this conceptual framework can be illustrated as an estimable regression function and this is given as follows:

$$CPB = \beta_0 + \beta(SP) + \beta(PPQ) + \epsilon$$

Where: CPB = Consumer purchasing behavior; SM = Sales promotion; PPQ = Perceived product quality; β_0 = Intercept/ constant; ϵ = Error term; β = Contribution

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data were collected from consumers located in the Tamale Metropolis of Ghana, the regional capital of the Northern Region. Tamale has a land size of 646.9 sq. Km, a population of 642,000 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). With the view providing explanatory and predictive logic regarding the nature of empirical relationship between marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behaviour, the study adopted the explanatory research design backed by the quantitative orientation of the measurement of the variables and analytical stance of the statistical techniques employed for the test of the formulated research objectives pursued. This design was adopted for this study because, it allows for description of characteristics of relevant groups, such as consumers in a study, help determine the perception of consumers about product and service characteristics and help to make prediction about a phenomenon (Malhotra, Nunan and Birks, 2017; Segbenya and Ansah, 2020). The design affords the researchers to collect a large pool of data from large respondents at a time through cross-sectional design. The target population of the study consisted of 420 registered food vendors within Tamale metropolis (GTA, 2020). A sample size of 201 was determined through the population- sample matrix developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Due to the regression technique employed for the data analysis, a probability sampling technique was used for the selection of the participants of the study. However, data point for the analysis was based on 162 food vendors; hence response rate

Table 1. Measurement of Variables.

Variable	Measurement indicators	Source
Consumer purchasing behaviour	Frequency of purchase, consumer attitude, willingness to repeat purchases, brand choice, purchase time	Peattie and Peattie (2009); Dagher and Itani (2014)
Sales promotion	Product availability, past experience, discount sales, gift offer, stimulating offer	Sinha and Verma(2020), Daramola et al. (2014)
Perceived product quality	Reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, expectation	Liao and Tseng (2009); Zeithaml et al. (1990)

Source: Author's Own Construct (2020).

of 81% was obtained. This number of cases is deemed representative because above 70% of the minimum sample size is considered in the study (Malhotra, 2018; Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Serial numbers were assigned to the registered food vendors in the sampling frame. Through a computer application, random numbers were generated based on the total number of elements in the sampling frame. Elements whose serial numbers appeared as part of the random numbers were selected and contacted for the primary data collection. This sampling technique gave all elements in the sampling frame equal chance of selection and helped to avoid sampling bias (Meng, 2013).

The study used structured questionnaire to collect the primary data from the participants. Food vendors served as proxies for the businesses that were targeted. With a structured questionnaire, every respondent answered the same set of questions in a pre-arranged directive (Creswell et al., 2011; Saunder et al., 2012). On a Likert-like scale (using interval data), the questionnaire was organized with 1 representing the least agreement, while 5 represented the highest agreement. This scale is effective when the researcher intends to use analytical tools to generate factual conclusions. The scales, after careful scrutiny, proved to fit the context of the study, thereby cementing its validity already attested to by its tests in previous empirical studies. The structured questionnaire was divided into 3 segments (that is, Parts A to C). Part A, for instance, collected the respondents' demographic characteristics; Part B also contained items on the marketing strategies whereas the final part contained items on the measurement of consumers' purchasing behavior. The study relied on pre-validated scales for the measurement of the constructs/variables under investigation. Summary of source of the scales is presented in Table 1.

A pre-test was performed at the Cape Coast metropolitan assembly by using 30 registered food vendors who use the Maggi seasoning product for preparing food. The pre-testing was actually carried out to test how reliable the instrument was. The 30 data set was then analyzed with the use of reliability analysis. The study reported α of the various constructs as suggested by Best and Kahn (2016). An overall α of 0.912 was achieved when all the items were combined. In terms of determinants of consumers' purchasing behavior, the study achieved α of 0.831, the marketing strategies had α of 0.865 and finally, measurement of consumers' purchasing behavior had α of 0.816, respectively. It could, therefore, be deduced that all α values were > 0.7 ; thus, indicating reliability of the questionnaire. Self-administration of questionnaires through the drop-and-pick method was used for the collection of the primary data. The data collection started from 21st January, 2021 and ended 16th February, 2021. Certain ethical practices were employed so as to avoid the violation of the rights and privacy of the participants. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that the privacy, integrity and identity of the participants were greatly

respected. Informed consent of the participating businesses was sought through an official introductory letter. Once permission was granted by the participants, they were then asked if they were willing to participate in the study or otherwise. Fortunately, in all instances, they agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, no participant was forced to participate in the data collection exercise phase of this empirical study. The purpose and benefits of the study were fully explained to all the participants who genuinely influenced their decision to participate in the study. The primary data collected were treated as confidential because the data file was not made available to any third parties. No manipulative behavior was put up in respect of the analysis of the primary data as determined by the nature of the formulated research objectives. The results were presented as found.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of the study were presented based on each research objectives using linear and multiple regression techniques with the support from SPSS software version 26. The study met the following assumptions underpinning the use of linear regression: uniformity of variation, data linearity and independence, sample adequacy (≥ 30) and the data should have a normal distribution (Casson and Farmer, 2014; Ruginski, 2016). The regression analysis determines the degree to which the independent variables are associated with any change to consumer purchasing behaviour which is the dependent variable. The coefficient informs us about these changes and the p-value let us know if these coefficients are significantly different from zero. R-Squared informs us of the proportion of variation in the dependent (response) variable, consumer purchasing behaviour.

Demographic features of respondents

This section presented a description of the respondents' demographics with respect to sex, age, level of education and years of patronizing the Maggi products. The results presented in Table 2 revealed that 119(73.5%) of the consumers (that is, food vendors) are females whereas 43(26.5%) of them are males. This result means that majority of the food vendors in the Tamale metropolis are

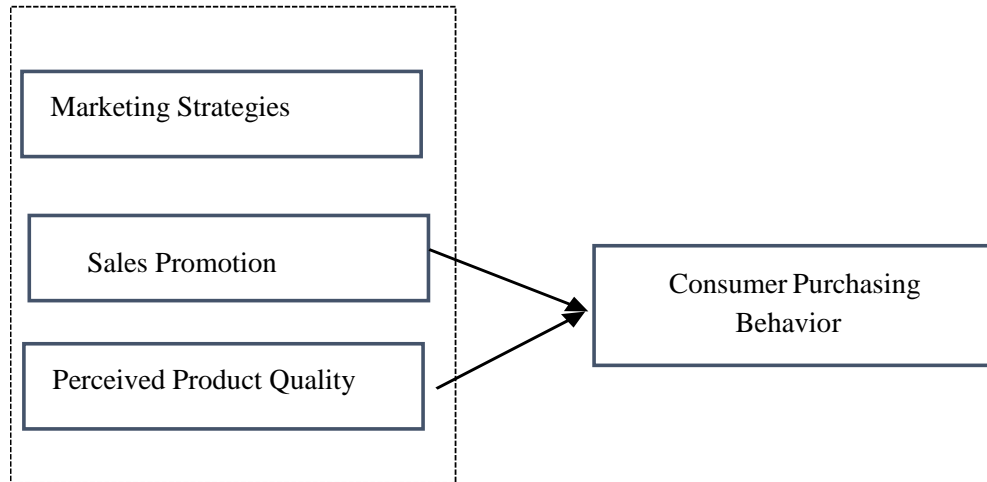


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework on Marketing strategies, and Consumer Purchasing Behavior
Source: Author’s own construct (2020).

Table 2. Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	43	26.5
Female	119	73.5
Age (years)		
18-30	44	27.2
31-40	55	34.0
41-50	34	21.0
51-60	29	17.9
Level of education		
No Formal Education	138	85.2
Basic Education	24	14.8
Years patronizing the product		
<10	30	18.5
10-20	68	42.0
21-30	43	26.5
31-40	21	13.0
Total	162	100.0

Source: Field data (2021).

females. This result is not surprising as report from the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) has proven that majority of food vendors in the country and especially those within the remote areas like Tamale metropolis are dominated by women. This could also be because the Ghanaian cultural setting has forced females to be involved in food-related activities unlike the male group. In terms of age, Table 2 revealed that 44(27.2%) of the food vendors were between 18 and 30 years of age; 55(34.0%) were between the ages of 31 and 40

years; 34(21.0%) of them were between the ages of 41 and 50 years; whereas 29(17.9%) of the food vendors were between the ages of 51 and 60 years. This means that all the respondents were within the legal age (that is, >18) with majority of them within the active working age bracket. This means that all the food vendors are within the legal age to respond to issues in the study devoid of ethical or legal breaches in terms of age. Also, the table revealed that majority of the respondents (138, 85.2%) had no formal education with the remaining 24(14.8%)

Table 3. Model Summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.600 ^a	0.360	0.356	2.54278

^aPredictors: (Constant), PPQ
Source: Author's computation

Table 4. ANOVA.

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	582.252	1	582.252	90.052	0.000 ^b
	Residual	1034.519	160	6.466		
	Total	1616.772	161			

a. Dependent Variable: CPB; b. Predictors: (Constant), SP
Source: Author's computation

Table 5. Coefficients^a.

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
		B	Std. error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	7.236	1.036		6.984	0.000
	SP	0.580	0.061	0.600	9.490	0.000

^aDependent Variable: CPB
Source: Author's computation

had basic (that is, high school) certificates. This means that most of the respondents were given the needed assistance during the data collection exercise to minimize the difficulties they face in responding to the question items. Finally, the number of years the respondents have been patronizing the Maggi product was presented. Table 2 reveal that majority (68, 42.0%) of the food vendors has purchased the Maggi product for about 10 to 20 years. Also 43(26.5%) of the food vendors have purchased the product for between 21 and 30 years; 30(18.5%) of them have patronized the product for less than 10 years and finally, 21(13.0%) of them have patronized the product for between 31 and 40 years respectively. These are clear indications that majority of the respondents have patronized the Maggi product for a considerable number of years and as such have the needed experience to respond to issues associated with their purchasing behaviors.

Sales promotion and consumer purchasing behaviour

The first study's objective focused on how sales promotion (SP) affects consumer purchasing behavior (CPB) of consumers of Maggi seasoning product within the Tamale metropolis of Ghana. To achieve this research, the linear regression was adopted and discussed in Tables 3 to 5 respectively. More precisely, Table 3

presents the regression result; Table 4 discusses the regression's ANOVA outcome while Table 5 presents the coefficients of the analysis. The result presented in Table 3 was the Model summary of the regression analysis and it captured the R, R squared, adjusted R² and the analysis' standard error. This study reported the R² value instead of R and this is because it provides more valid, reliable and accurate results. The R² specifically accounts for the degree of variation in the objective's dependent variable that is linearly contributed by the predictor variable (Creswell, 2014). In line with this, the study's R² value of 0.360 meant that the predictor variable (that is, SP) linearly contributes about 36% to any change in the dependent variable (that is, CPB). The implication is that about 36% of variation in purchasing behavior of consumers of the Maggi seasoning product within the Tamale metropolis was linearly accounted for by sales promotion. Also, the adjusted R² of 0.356 indicates that any variation in consumer purchasing behavior is explained by adjustments made in the company's sales promotion strategies. Therefore, for any adjustments made in the sales promotion it will contribute about 35.6% of change in consumer purchasing behavior of the Maggi seasoning product. It could be seen that the R² and adjusted R² values were similar and thus reporting the R² value was justifiable. Table 4 presents the ANOVA result of the linear regression analysis for research objective two.

Table 6. Model summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.398 ^a	0.159	0.153	2.91572

^aPredictors: (Constant), PPQ
Source: Author's computation

Table 7. ANOVA^a.

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	256.541	1	256.541	30.176	0.000 ^b
	Residual	1360.230	160	8.501		
	Total	1616.772	161			

^aDependent Variable: CPB; ^bPredictors: (Constant), SP
Source: Author's computation

Also, the results in Table 4 presented the ANOVA result of the linear regression analysis. The table specifically presented the sum of squares, df, mean square, F and sig. values in relation to the objective. The F-stat's sig. value should be < 0.05 to indicate that the predictor variable plays a better role in describing any change in the study's dependent variable. This means that, whether a significant association exists between the variables or not is statistically determined by the F-stat's sig. value. It could be deduced from the table that, the F-stat of 90.052 with mean square of 582.252 had a sig. value of 0.00. This result implies that there is a significant linear relationship between sales promotion (SP) and consumer purchasing behaviour (CPB). Finally, Table 5 indicates the regression's coefficient and shows the standardized and unstandardized coefficients to actually explain the cause-and-effect relationship between the variables under study. Table 5 shows how the independent variable (sales promotion) contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable (Consumer purchasing behaviour). The beta value under Standardized Coefficient was used which indicated a figure of $\beta=0.600$, and Sig.=0.000. This means that sale promotion makes a strong unique contribution to explaining consumer purchasing behaviour and is significant. The estimated regression function is:

$$CPB = 7.236 + (0.580 * SP).$$

Perceived product quality and consumer purchasing behaviour

The second objective of the study focused on analyzing the effect of perceived product quality (independent variable) on consumer purchasing behavior (dependent variable) towards Maggi seasoning products of Nestle Ghana Limited. To attain this objective, the study adopted the linear regression analytical tool and as such presented

three tables comprising Model Summary, ANOVA and Coefficient score respectively. Table 6 presents the model summary of the regression analysis by specifically reporting the R square (R^2) result. The R^2 provides the regression's coefficient of determination to show the extent to which any change in a dependent variable is statistically accounted for by a predictor variable.

Results from Table 6, showed an R^2 of 0.159 indicating that for any change in consumer purchasing behavior (CPB), perceived product quality (PPQ) linearly accounts for about 15.9% of it. Simply put, PPQ statistically accounts for about 16% of any variation in CPB; implying that other variables account for the remaining 84.1% of the overall change. Therefore, for any change in the purchasing behaviors of the consumers of Maggi products, about 15.6% of it is linearly accounted for by perceived product quality. The model summary report was further explained using the ANOVA output. The ANOVA output presents the sig. value of the F-stat to show whether statistically significant relationship exists between PPQ and CPB. The output is presented in Table 7.

From Table 7, an F-stat of 30.176 reported a sig. value of 0.000 to indicate that there is a statistically significant correlation between PPQ and CPB of the Maggi product. This means that perceived product quality could play a crucial role in explaining any change in consumer purchasing behavior. This is simply because a significant association exists between the two variables under study. This result provided grounds for the analysis of the coefficient output. Note that, the coefficient output reports the extent to which one variable statistically influences the other and this can only be achieved if a correlation exists between those variables. Table 8, therefore, presents the coefficient score in two basic themes unstandardized and standardized coefficients.

Table 8 shows how the independent variable (perceived product quality) contributed to the prediction of

Table 8. Coefficients^a.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	8.930	1.466		6.093	0.000
	PPQ	0.460	0.084	0.398	5.493	0.000

^aDependent Variable: CPB;
Source: Author's computation

Table 9. Model summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.621 ^a	0.386	0.379	2.49819

^aPredictors: (Constant), PPQ, SP.
Source: Author's computation

Table 10. Coefficients^a.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.882	1.362		3.585	0.000		
	SP	0.508	0.066	0.525	7.678	0.000	0.824	1.213
	PPQ	0.206	0.079	0.178	2.600	0.010	0.824	1.213

^aDependent Variable: CPB.
Source: Author's computation

the dependent variable (Consumer purchasing behaviour). The beta value under Standardized Coefficient was used which indicated a figure of $\beta=0.398$, and $\text{Sig.}=0.000$. The regression analysis produced a standardised coefficient of 0.398 and this indicates that perceived product quality statistically predicts about 39.8% of change in consumer purchasing behaviour. This means that perceived product quality makes a weak unique contribution to explaining consumer purchasing behaviour of consumers of Maggi products within the Tamale metropolis of Ghana. The estimated regression function is:

$$\text{CPB} = 8.930 + (0.460 \cdot \text{PPQ}).$$

In order for the study to provide further explanation to the results, multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the combined effect of sales promotion and perceived product quality on consumer purchasing behaviour. The result is in Tables 9 and 10. Multiple regression is one of the fussier of the statistical techniques. This approach would tell us how much unique variance in the dependent variable each of the independent variable explained. An assumption of multicollinearity was tested. Multicollinearity exists when the independent variables are highly correlated ($r=0.9$

and above) (Pallant, 2020). In checking for multicollinearity, the result presented in Table 10 under collinearity statistics was performed labelled Coefficient. Two values were given: Tolerance and VIF. Tolerance is an indicator of how much of the variability of the specified independent variable is not explained by the other independent variables in the model. Since the tolerance figures were above 0.10 and VIF. less than 10, as indicated in Table 8, it shows that there was no problem with multicollinearity.

The results from Table 9 indicate R Square of 0.386 or 39% implying those other variables account for the remaining 61% of the overall change. Therefore, for any change in the purchasing behaviors of the consumers of Maggi products, about 39% of it is accounted by sales promotion and perceived product quality. Furthermore, the results from Table 10 under Standardized Coefficient showed $\beta=0.525$, $\text{Sig.}=0.000$ for sales promotion and $\beta=0.178$, $\text{Sig.}=0.000$ for perceived product quality. The results implied that sales promotion contributes about 52% in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products in Tamale, which is significant; while perceived product quality contributes 18% of consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products in Tamale. The estimated regression function is:

$$CPB = 4.882 + (0.508*SP) + (0.206*PPQ).$$

DISCUSSION

The first objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of sales promotion on consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana. The study reported the beta value of the standardized coefficient in order to reveal the extent to which sales promotion significantly predicts consumer purchasing behavior. More precisely the beta coefficient of 0.60 under the column marked standardized coefficient explains that SP significantly predicts CPB. This means that, for any change in consumer purchasing behavior, sales promotion statistically predicts about 60% of such change. The result implies that a unit increase in sales promotion practices, strategies or techniques would lead to a significant positive and moderate unit increase in consumer purchasing behavior toward Maggi seasoning products. Simply put, SP contributes about 60% of change in CPB; thus, the more relevant sales promotion measures are adopted by Nestle Ghana Limited, the better the consumers' purchasing behavior towards the product. Findings from the study have largely been corroborated by previous related literature. For instance, a study by Ahmed and Javed (2015) found sales promotion to significantly and positively influence consumers' purchasing behavior in Pakistan. Also, Adela (2017) found consumer purchasing behavior to be significantly predicted by sales promotion and thus concluded that sales promotion plays a vital role in improving the purchasing behavior of consumers. Similarly, Imaningsih (2018) and Nakarmi (2018) all concluded that sales promotion is a significant predictor of purchasing behavior. Thus, consumers are highly likely to exhibit better purchasing behavior in the presence of effective sales promotion strategies such as; discounts/discount coupons, free samples, free gifts, bulk purchase deals.

The second research objective was to examine the effect of perceived product quality on consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana. The regression analysis produced a standardized coefficient of 0.398 as indicated in Table 8, and this suggests that perceived product quality statistically predicts about 39.8% of change in consumer purchasing behavior. This result implies that perceived product quality plays a weak role in contributing to improving the purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products within the Northern region, especially Tamale metropolis of Ghana. This finding is empirically supported by Imaningsih (2018), Konuk (2018), Brata et al. (2017) and Saleem et al. (2015). Imaningsih (2018), for instance, found perceived product quality to be significantly correlated with consumers' intention to purchase Honda H-RV. The researcher, therefore, concluded that consumer-purchasing intention is primarily and strongly

influenced by consumers' perception about product quality. In addition, Konuk (2018) found that a unit increase in perceived product quality is associated with a unit increase in consumer purchasing behavior toward organic private label food. Brata et al. (2017) also agreed that the perceived quality of a product plays a vital role in promoting the purchasing behavior of consumers of Nitchi products within Central Jakarta. Thus, these studies statistically concluded that perceived product quality is crucial to ensuring better purchasing behaviors of consumers toward a given product or service.

Conclusion

This particular research employed a theoretical framework derived from an academic and practical consumer behavior discourse on consumer purchasing behavior of Maggi seasoning product. Against the backdrop of the findings of the study, sales promotion as a marketing strategy has a strong effect on consumer purchasing behavior in Ghana. The study's result revealed that sales promotion had a significant positive and moderate influence on purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products within the Northern region of Ghana, especially Tamale metropolis. This outcome suggests that continuous increase in sales promotion strategies would consequently lead to improved consumer purchasing behaviors. Thus, consumers are likely to purchase more of the Maggi products when the company continues to adopt sales promotion techniques. This implies that any unit increase in sales promotion is statistically linked with better consumer purchasing behavior within the study area. Finally, perceived product quality was also found to significantly influence consumer-purchasing behavior towards Maggi products within the Tamale metropolis. This result implies that perception about product quality plays an important role in inducing the purchasing behaviors of consumers. Perceived product quality is associated with consumer's perception about a product in terms of its brand equity, effectiveness and general superiority. The quality of a product is perceived as a critical dimension of product development and it guides the purchasing behaviors of consumers. In view of this, the study found that any unit increase in perceived product quality would lead to a unit increase in consumer purchasing behavior toward Maggi products. Overall, it can be confirmed that consumer purchasing behavior of Maggi products is influenced strongly by sales promotion and perceived product quality within the Northern region of Ghana.

Recommendations

Based on the study objectives, recommendations are provided. With reference to the first research objective, the study concluded that sales promotion plays a

significant role in promoting purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products. The study recommended that more engaging and innovative sales promotion techniques should be adopted by Management of Nestle Ghana Limited to stimulate positive purchasing behaviors among consumers. Sales promotion techniques notably the use of coupons, bonus sales, premium offers, affordable prices and lucrative discount sales should be implemented and intensified as a marketing strategy to continuously promote positive purchasing behavior. Adopting varying sales promotion technique would not only promote better purchasing decisions but help the company to introduce new products, reduce inventory wastages while attracting more consumers. Furthermore, in the light of Perceived Product Quality (PPQ), the study concluded that, perceived product quality plays a vital role in affecting the purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products. Based on this conclusion, the study recommended that management of Nestle Ghana should pay the needed attention to continuously promote the quality of the Maggi products. This can be achieved by developing innovative ways to identify and address possible factors such as branding, promotion packages, pricing policies that could impede production of quality Maggi seasoning products. For example, proper usage of advertisements, warranty, low-cost pricing and creation of positive brand image can help improve perceived product quality and in turn promote better purchasing behaviors among the consumers.

Limitations

This study presented valuable insights into marketing strategies and consumer purchasing behavior; however, the area is still biased, thus, affecting the generalization of findings across the entire population (that is, consumers of the Maggi products in Ghana). This is because, the study focused on registered food vendors in the Northern region of Ghana; specifically, the Tamale metropolis. As such, further researchers could improve generalization of findings by including other food vendors in other metropolises of the country. Additionally, potential researchers should examine how other variables of marketing strategies such as distribution strategies, pricing etc. influence consumer purchasing behavior in order to improve or enhance the current research findings.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

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Full Length Research Paper

Exploring global unionism to inform South African ICT sector union strategy

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Unions are prominent stakeholders in employment relations (ER), representing and protecting the rights of their members and other employees on labour-related issues that the workforce is overwhelmed with within the workplace. The purpose of this article was to examine global unionism to advise South African (SA) Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector labour unionism. It focuses on the recent trends of global literature review to answer five research questions. The rationale is to gain a more theoretical understanding of union roles, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions, global unionism, SA unionism, SA ICT unionism, union challenges and strategies. Globally, unionism drives advancements in socio-economic policies, calling for social dialogue between the tripartite alliances partners in ER: Unions, employers, and the government. However, SA ICT union leaders are weak when negotiating for equity, socio-economic justice, and the advancement of employees in their careers. This research study revealed that union challenges include poor social dialogue, ineffective strategies to sustain membership, inefficient partnerships, and non-collaboration between management and unions. By the results of this study, a strategic framework was proposed for union effectiveness to provide Human Resources (HR), ER and union leaders with a practical management tool. Thus, this study contributes by expanding the body of knowledge on global and SA ICT unionism.

Key words: Employees; employers; human resources; employment relations; information and communications technology; socio-economic advancement; social dialogue; South African; unionism.

INTRODUCTION

Global unionism is a phenomenon through which interrelations among unions occur; it impacts and influences the socio-economic status of the workforce through social dialogue with relevant stakeholders in the ER sphere worldwide (Debono, 2017). It encompasses global, national, regional, and local labour movements. It is worth noting that some unions, and not all of them, are affiliated with international federations and confederations.

Northrub (2018) defined industrial or employment relations (IR/ER) as an industrial tool that engages management with recognised unions on collective bargaining agreement implementation issues. ER involves the tripartite relationship between employees represented by unions, employers, and government in conjunction with institutions and associations through the process of mediation (Brown et al., 2018). The purpose of ER is to

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minimise, curb and avert labour disputes that arise between unions and management through the government (Njoku, 2017). Nonetheless, the customary frameworks of ER have been crumbling in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom due to unsound and unsupportive legal systems. The pluralist approach to ER suggests that interests and rights that include the regulation and quality of work, fairness, and collective voice by government and unions must be studied (Budd and Bhawe, 2019).

In the current ER landscape, employees are on a quest for mutual respect with employers. Equity, job satisfaction and security, fair salary, and socio-economic benefits dominate ER and unionism agendas (Goslinga, 2017). Although this is the case, SA unionism and SA ICT sector unionism are both confronted with challenges in the ER arena. For example, union membership has decreased drastically in SA and appears poorly amongst the SA youth (Visser, 2019a). SA unionism is attributable to lower productivity and non-flexible employment contracts that hinder the economic growth that could create jobs (Bisseker, 2017). Comparably, SA ICT sector unionism is also overwhelmed with declining union membership (Visser, 2019a), the effects of globalisation (Chun and Shin, 2018), selfish union leadership (Zlolniski, 2019), and lack of strategy to overcome the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) challenges (Schwab, 2017). These unions fail to resolve socio-economic advancement by collaborating with employers within this sector in a harmonious and peaceful approach (Visser, 2019a). In this regard, this study identified gaps concerning its problem statement that states as follows: SA ICT union leaders are poor when negotiating for equity, socio-economic justice, and advancement of employees in their careers. Therefore, a theoretical exploration of global unionism was necessary to recommend strategic union drivers for the SA ICT sector.

Moreover, labour issues can be managed and achieved in the ER domain, with effective and efficient HR interventions geared to maintain a good working relationship between employers and unions. Wilkinson et al. (2019) stated that HR needs to incorporate policies that ensure employees are treated with respect and dignity, not just as productive tools, to alleviate industrial hostility. Employees are human assets but cannot be susceptible to abuse as just production instruments by management. Globally, employees, employers and governments engage in social dialogue to resolve ER issues that form the basis of IR or ER tasks. Social dialogue includes extensive negotiations and engagements between management and unions on behalf of employees. Government must dialogue about matters of common interests to all the parties involved in economic and social regulations (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2018). Social dialogue refers to a negotiating forum whereby the stakeholders agree to terms and conditions of their engagements on social

policies (The European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC], 2018). Parties involved in ER engagements have different motives and goals that they need to attain.

The motivation for this article is that global unionism is largely unexplored concerning its function in advancing employee rights and growing economies (Wilkinson et al., 2019). In Africa, especially in South Africa (SA), union effectiveness appears to be a contentious issue. This article aims to explore global, African and SA unionism in light of proposing a strategic framework for effective unionism in the SA ICT sector. There are five research questions in this article as follows:

What are union functions or roles?

Are unions effective or ineffective globally?

Are unions effective in the SA ICT sector?

What challenges plague SA unionism and the SA ICT unions?

What strategic framework is available for effective unionism in the SA ICT sector?

This article theoretically contributes to the body of knowledge on union and ER effectiveness, strategy, and practices in the SA ICT sector. Practically, this article provides HR, ER, union and government leaders and managers a proposed Strategic Framework for Union Effectiveness as a tool for efficient and successful unionism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following section aims to answer research question 1: What are union functions or roles?

Union roles in the economy

Union roles include protection and advancement of the economic, social, and political interests for the benefit of their members (Okechukwu, 2016). They play a significant role in the economy by convincing employers to surrender to their demands that boost worker remuneration. Furthermore, unions drive economic policies that advance their member welfare and the community (Okechukwu, 2016). Labour Unions in Nigeria act as agents of socio-economic change to economically develop their members, other workers, and ordinary citizens (Orji and Kabiru, 2017).

As such, unions act as social and economic architects in African countries, as they did and continue to do in other countries and continents. As socio-economic architects, unions need social partners to improve the social conditions and economic performance relative to their countries. Although unions may have lost the power to represent their workforce (Visser, 2019b), they are important actors in crafting local, national, and global economies via their influence and support from numerous international institutions.

Union dysfunctional roles in union membership

The strength and ranking of unions are dependent on their union density in the sectors to which they serve their members (Currie et al., 2017). Employees align themselves to labour movements to protect themselves against victimisation by exploitative employers (Caraway and Ford, 2020). In addition, Currie et al. (2017) argued that member allegiance to unions is contingent on the union power to solve problems to their workplace issues. There is, however, deterioration of union membership in the world, consequential due to the loss of union leadership in their power to bargain with employers, resulting in low salary increases, fewer jobs and fewer benefits (Isaac, 2018). In most parts of the world, the ailing union membership is evident due to the erosion of union bargaining power over decades (Ellem et al., 2020). A decline in union membership is associated with various factors such as the following: unsupportive and uncooperative HR policies, procedures, and practices; management contravention of union rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining; and no clear strategic drive for the recruitment of new union members (Uys and Holtzhausen, 2016).

In Europe, union membership has immensely declined by 79% between 1992 and 2000. It further declined between 2000 and 2017 by 11%, which is the lowest rate this continent has ever experienced (Visser, 2019b). The declining global union membership is also attributable to the massive economic inequality that creates lessened income distributions to the detriment of the growing workforce (Uys and Holtzhausen, 2016). On these grounds, the Power Resources Approach (PRA) questions research studies that accentuate the declining union power and influences that emerged worldwide since the 1980s. The PRA recommends that union members focus on making strategic decisions on who holds the fiscal power; cooperative and harmonious ER; and neoliberal economic policies worldwide (Schmalz et al., 2018).

Union leadership roles in collective bargaining

Collective bargaining has been a crucial tool for unions in industrial economies for longer than a century. It governs how labour markets operate, in addition to protecting and securing employee pay equity. Nyanga and Tapfumanei (2019) assert that collective bargaining through constructive negotiations results in employee engagements to enhance worker performance. The customary framework of collective bargaining is predominantly centralised in most countries. This practice establishes standardised working conditions relative to salaries, working hours, and other remuneration that employees qualify for in different organisations (Bach and Bordogna, 2016). Decentralised collective bargaining

involves the negotiations relative to working conditions at the organisational level (Visser, 2016), while centralised collective bargaining takes place at the sectoral or national level.

The attrition of union leadership on collective bargaining power results in a power disparity between the workforce and management (Dromey, 2018; Ryall and Blumenfeld, 2016). Organised labour gains strength through the collectivism of employees against their individualism in the workplace, and effective union leadership uses this power to the advantage of the working class when bargaining with employers (Currie et al., 2017). Despite this, challenges exist in union leadership tasks that include collective bargaining with employers and their roles as unionists, mediation of social relations, involvement in internal union affairs, and the out-turns of globalisation (Chun and Shin, 2018).

Additionally, union leaders have lost their collective bargaining power due to the outsourcing of jobs in most countries resulting from unfavourable effects of globalisation that impacted sectors of employment negatively (Klindt, 2017). It appears that African countries may be lagging regarding the out-turns of globalisation compared to developed continents that continue to dominate and enjoy the products of globalisation (Asongu and Nwachukwu, 2016). For this reason, strategic labour policies are advocated for African nations to participate and benefit from globalisation, advancing technology and innovation (Asongu and Nwachukwu, 2018). For unions to gain bargaining power in worker participation, contributions and rewards from globalisation, technology and future union trends, union leaders and members must engage in tripartite collaborative collective bargaining. Figure 1 depicts the revolving tripartite relationship between unions, collective bargaining, and globalisation in the technological era.

Unions represent employees in collective bargaining at a local level on sectoral, national, and global matters. In this process, the revolving tripartite relationship involves an effective strategic union leadership that bargains with employers on the positive and negative effects of globalisation and technology. The ongoing responsibility of effective unionism in any country lies in union leadership power to utilise globalisation and technology to advance employee socio-economic development.

Union roles in collaboration for harmonious ER

Collaboration is an approach to industrial peace and productive engagements among employees represented by unions and employers represented by employer organisations to attain their conflicting mandates (Bray et al., 2020). In a productive ER arena, organised labour and management collaborate objectively and harmoniously to achieve their different goals. However, Visser (2019a) demonstrated that poor collaboration



Figure 1. Tripartite relationship of unions, collective bargaining, and globalisation.

between unions and management emerges because both parties disengage when negotiating during labour issues discussions. In addition, the labour-management relationship is hostile irrespective of numerous attempts to advance collaboration through government policies and labour legislation in Europe (Bray et al., 2017). Consequently, the assumption is that unions and employers are counter-interactive because they have different goals and priorities (Martin et al., 2016). Yet, there is room for improvement on the condition that they trust each other and possess the necessary skills and knowledge to engage in effective and cooperative social dialogues (Obiekwe et al., 2018).

HR plays a pivotal role in the ER space between unions and employers. Colombo and Regalia (2016) noted that effective HR practices promoted a healthy and sound relationship between organised labour and management. There is a transparent, better, and harmonious collaboration between employers and union leaders in ER when all negotiating parties completely trust each other (Smith, 2016). Harmonious ER induces a sense of belonging in the organisational workforce, and employees fully take accountability and responsibility for their actions. This practice produces harmonious and peaceful working relationships between management and employees, especially union leaders and officials. In some cases, the establishment of unions has not been

desirable in the ER domain. This scenario results in disharmonious working relationships between unions, employers, employees, and managers (Arslanov and Safin, 2016).

In summary, unions play a fundamental role in the ER. Effective participation of labour unions in the economy is indisputable, and effective union leadership engage employers in collective bargaining in favour of their members and other employees. However, some factors hamper union effectiveness, for instance: a shrinking union membership that disempowers labour unions, technology, and globalisation. Finally, this section indicated that for an efficient harmonious working relationship to prevail between management and organised labour, both parties need to accommodate each other and put their differences aside with HR intervention through their practices and policies. Therefore, this section has provided answers to research question 1. The following part of this study aims to answer research question 2. Are unions effective or ineffective globally?

Effectiveness of international unionism

International unionism is composed of global unions across many countries. The International Trade Union

Congress (ITUC) claims a membership of 202 million across 163 countries and regions (ITUC, 2018). Notably, Croatia had 630 registered labour unions in 2016 (Bagić, 2019) and four union labour federations. In a similar vein, Latvia boasted 197 recognised labour institutions in 2014 that protected employee rights (Lulle and Ungure, 2019). In addition, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) covered its affiliated labour organisations from various countries in 2019 that encompassed five from Hungary, four from Romania, three from Poland, and one from Latvia, Czechia, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

Unions are perceived by some researchers as inefficient, while others evidence their effectiveness to effect global change socially and economically. For example, in the United States, 62% and 39% of employees acknowledge and strengthen the influence of unions, irrespective of the view that the rate of union density in this country is moderately low compared to other developed nations in the world (Saad, 2018). Globally, the call is for union effectiveness about collaborative and cooperative social dialogue in the ER space, between employers, unions, and government. Nevertheless, this tripartite application is not spontaneously harmonious caused by different reasons per country. In Portugal, the trust between unions, employers, and the government seems to have broken down. Therefore, no collaboration exists between these ER stakeholders (Addison, 2016).

Ineffectiveness of African unionism

The African continent comprises of the global rapid ballooning workforce that carries an enormous number of an unemployed younger generation. In the Northern parts of this continent, this practice is evident as 30% of the younger generation were unemployed in 2015 (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2016). It seems a violation of employee rights is rife in some African states in union presence. For instance, in the Central African Republic, Eritrea, Somalia, Burundi, South Sudan, and Sudan: in these nations, labour anarchy prevails because worker rights seem violated (ITUC, 2017).

In most African countries, the institutional power of organised labour is weak because unions have a deficiency in applying the labour legislation efficiently. Tapia et al. (2017) are sceptical concerning union effectiveness in implementing the ILO conventions, citing that unions appear to be aloof in this regard and consequently fail to address this challenge. To aggravate the African situation, Chinese and other foreign companies recruit foreign employees from their employment agencies to work in African multinational organisations. Most Chinese natives prefer to recruit Chinese employees for their skills, language, cultural similarity, and convenience. Furthermore, this practice diverts the labour legislation applicable to a specific

African country in which they operate (Cooke et al., 2018). Moreover, African countries trading with China have purportedly adopted the Chinese labour legislation that tends to disregard the protection of workers (Adolph et al., 2017).

In SA, 13.7% of total employment growth between 1995 and 2016 has been created through outsourcing and subcontracting of jobs (Bhorat et al., 2016). Low-skilled workers in SA are prone to insecure jobs that pay unjustifiable salaries and further restricted career advancement (Mncwango, 2016). SA lacks a strategy that creates jobs and neglects the challenge of skills shortages and other labour issues within the current competitive labour market (Bisseker, 2017).

In summary, some global union federations claim capacities in terms of union membership. Yet, studies show that unions are fragile concerning membership across the globe. Also, international unionism advances unity when engaging in social dialogue platforms amongst ER stakeholders (unions, employers, and government). African unionism is deficient owing to its failure to partner with governments to reduce the alarming rate of youth unemployment. It further fails to apply the ILO conventions beneficial to the working class. Moreover, SA has a shortcoming in producing jobs for its unemployed population. The following section aims to answer research question 3: Are unions effective in the SA ICT sector?

SA ER and unionism legislation

The two major industrial laws that regulate ER in SA are the Labour Relations Act (LRA) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA). In addition to the LRA and BCEA, other regulations that seem to support ER in SA, employee rights, unionism, and harmonious collective bargaining are the following SA legislation: Employment Equity Act (EEA); Skills Development Act (SDA); Unemployment Insurance Act (UIA); Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA); and Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA). Table 1 presents the various legislation and purposes that govern ER, unionism, freedom of association and collective bargaining in SA.

SA ICT ER

The SA ICT sector comprises employers that render services in broadcasting, information technology (IT), postal services, and telecommunications. Table 2 presents the SA ICT employers. The field of ER in the SA ICT sector has been re-designed to accommodate the changing nature of work, workplaces, and workers. New HR policies, procedures, practices, strategies, and trends are all enacted to advance employee rights (Cook et al., 2020). The operational conditions of both unions and

Table 1. SA employee relations legislation.

Legislation	Purpose
Labour Relations Act (LRA)	To stimulate economic development, social justice, labour peace and democracy in the workplace
Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA)	To regulate the basic conditions of employment and to ensure fair labour practices in the workplace
Employment Equity Act (EEA)	To ensure that all employees receive equal opportunities and treated fairly by their employers in the workplace
Skills Development Act (SDA)	To develop the quality of life of the workers, their prospects of work and labour mobility
Unemployment Insurance Act (UIA)	To ensure that employees who become unemployed and their beneficiaries are entitled to benefits and to alleviate the harmful economic and social effects of unemployment
Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)	To promote and regulate health and safety in all organisations in SA, including foreign companies operating in SA
Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA)	To provide for compensation for disablement caused by occupational injuries or diseases sustained or contracted by employees in the course of their employment, or for death resulting from such injuries or diseases

Table 2. SA ICT employers.

Industry: Broadcasting		
CII Broadcasting	MNet	Red Pepper Pictures (PTY) Ltd
South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)	Zimele Broadcasting Services	
Industry: Information Technology (IT)		
Business Connexion (BCX)	Bytes Technologies	Dimension Data
International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) SA	Musato Technologies	
Industry: Postal Services		
Post Net	South African Postal Services (SAPO)	
Industry: Telecommunications		
Cell C	Mobile Telephone Network (MTN)	Telkom
Vodacom	Vox Telecom	

shop-stewards in the SA ICT sector have also changed as technology emerges as the latest threat to labour-intensive jobs (Chun and Shin, 2018). Studies reveal that ICT unions may not be ready to adapt to the rapidly advancing workplace in this technological era. Moreover, it is imperative to note that the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) falls outside the normal scope of union tasks when representing employees in the workplace because members require unions to protect their labour rights against exploitative employers (Prassl, 2018). It seems that 4IR has adverse effects on both unions and employees, as the latter are negatively affected by technological advancement resulting in the former losing union members (Schwab, 2017). Therefore, the future of SA ICT unions in the 4IR era seems to be a challenge (Chun and Shin, 2018).

SA ICT employees may be members of these national unions as follows:

- 1) Broadcasting, Electronic, Media and Allied Workers (BEMAWU).
- 2) Communication Workers Union (CWU).
- 3) Democratic Postal and Communication Workers Union (DEPACU).
- 4) Information Communication and Technology Union (ICTU).
- 5) Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA).
- 6) National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA).

In summary, SA ICT sector unions face massive challenges concerning 4IR. This dilemma is disadvantageous to the workforce because it seeks to

secure the jobs under threat. Regrettably, labour movements in this sector are deficient in a strategy that reduces and prevents the loss of jobs at issue. Therefore, SA ICT sector unions appear to be ineffective in this regard.

METHODOLOGY

The research method employed in this study was qualitative, involving literature review and document content analysis. An in-depth review of recent relevant literature was collected and used as secondary data. This data assisted in providing answers to the study primary research question. A five-step approach was applied to gather, analyse, and report on the qualitative documents of this study (Fanelli et al., 2020). Step 1 determined the purpose of the literature review and content analysis. The rationale was to understand unionism roles, effectiveness, ineffectiveness, and challenges across a spectrum. Exploring and analysing existing literature before conducting empirical studies allows for a research topic to be explored more holistically, providing a global, continental, national and local view of the context (Gough et al., 2017). Step 2 was an online search and exploration of the following online databases: Google Scholar, Research Gate, SAGE, Emerald Insight, Springer, Wiley Library, EBSCO, JSTOR, Web of Science, and Taylor and Francis. The search covered articles relevant to this study across ER/IR, HR, ICT, Economics, and Business Management. Step 3 determined the criteria for purposively selecting and gathering the secondary data required for this study. The keywords included in the study search criteria were union effectiveness, union members; union leaders; union strategy and challenges; ICT; and South Africa.

Step 4 determined the inclusion and exclusion of articles and legislation. The initial search yielded over 30 000 studies. The search was narrowed down to 8700 articles using the study keywords. Finally, only 180 studies that contained some of the study keywords were relevant. Articles that excluded three or more keywords were not utilised from the final analysis. Step 5 involved a combined document synthesis and content analysis technique to arrive at the last set of articles in this study. These articles were analysed and synthesised systematically to answer the research questions of this study (Snyder, 2019). The references between the years (2016-2021) were employed as cited in this article, and articles that are relevant to this study but older than five years were not utilised. In the final analysis of this study, only 60-70 articles were analysed purposively, from which relevant findings were drawn out. The intensive, systematic literature review, document analysis and synthesis were the most appropriate method for this study because they explored the unionism strategy effectiveness using existing accredited, documented, and published evidence (Pratici and Singer, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Effectiveness of SA ICT unions

This section presents the exploration into answering research questions 1, 2 and 3. Research question 1 is as follows: What are union functions or roles. The results revealed that labour unions are economically active (Okechukwu, 2016) but failed to sustain union membership (Isaac, 2018). In support of this finding, Ellem et al. (2020) found that dwindling union

membership is irrefutable because most unions across the globe are experiencing it; thus, unions and the workers endure drawbacks while management is benefitting concerning the challenge under discussion. Although organised labour participates in collective bargaining, the results further indicate that union leadership experiences difficulties engaging employers in this process (Chun and Shin, 2018). Similarly, unionists have been losing their power over the years to effectively bargain for their members and the working class in general; it appears this situation is perpetual because unions lack tactics to reduce it to maintain their significance (Ellem et al., 2020). Furthermore, the results revealed that unions failed to collaborate with employers for harmonious ER (Addison, 2016; Arslanov and Safin, 2016).

A recent empirical study supports this finding. Wood (2020) asserts that there is no collaboration between employees represented by unions and employers; this is an undesirable custom because these parties frequently interact together to attain their different goals. In contrast, a study found that unions collaborate with management via HR intervention to maintain peace and harmony in the workplace while protecting the interests of their members and other beneficiaries (Cook et al., 2020).

Research question 2 is as follows: Are unions effective or ineffective globally? The answers to research question 2 are two-fold. On the one hand, international unionism is inefficient concerning union membership (Isaac, 2018), a phenomenon that reduces union power to bargain with employers on behalf of their members. A recent study has also highlighted that unions worldwide are experiencing a decline in union membership (Ellem et al., 2020). On the other hand, international unionism is efficient because it calls for HR and ER to promote collaborative and cooperative social dialogue in the tripartite relationship between employers, unions, and government. African unionism is also ineffective about youth unemployment (ILO, 2016) and executing the ILO conventions (Tapia et al., 2017). Consequently, the rate of youth unemployment tends to increase in Africa, as it is highly likely this is one of the reasons the youth are not interested in joining labour unions. Various African countries ratified the ILO conventions. In this regard, African unionism dysfunctionality appears unfair to workers to forfeit their benefits concerning the conventions under discussion.

Research question 3 is as follows: Are unions effective in the SA ICT sector? The answers to this research question are significant: Union membership is vastly diminishing (Schwab, 2017), a factor that weakens unions as they are susceptible to being de-recognised by employers. Also, it appears that organised labour in this sector lacks strategies to resolve this challenge. In a similar vein, Isaac (2018) found that union membership is diminishing in various parts of the globe. SA ICT unions are also ineffective because they failed to regulate the

4IR workplace to protect employees' right, jobs and advance their skills (Schwab, 2017; Chun and Shin, 2018).

SA unionism challenges

This part of the study aims to answer research questions 4 and 5. Research question 4 is as follows: What challenges plague SA unionism and SA ICT sector unions? Research question 5 is as follows: What strategic framework is available for effective unionism in the SA ICT sector?

In SA, several union leaders practice egocentric leadership because they solicit bribes from employers and accept promotions in exchange for neglecting employees interests; this action is detrimental and amounts to a misrepresentation of the working class (Zloliniski, 2019). In this country, it appears that union membership is very poor, especially amongst the youth. According to Visser (2019a), only 15% of youth are union affiliates compared to a third of the younger generation not associated with unions for all the labour federations in SA. This argument is supported by empirical evidence. Høgedahl and Kongshøj (2017); and Kjellberg (2020) found that unions are poor and failed to recruit young workers, a tradition that also contributes to their inefficiencies as they gain strength through massive membership. Moreover, the youth could bring bright and fresh ideas to take unionism to greater heights. Therefore, it is evident that SA unions are failing dismally to recruit the younger workforce into their labour movements which constitutes a threat for the future of unions in this country (Visser, 2019a). Workers likely partner with unionism on the condition that they value and acknowledge the benefits provided to them by organised labour that needs to maintain its relevance. For instance, Caraway and Ford (2020) opined that labour unions thrive regarding their members challenges in the workplace against toxic management because they have the power to achieve their mandate in the ER space. Opposingly, Klindt (2017) found that unions are powerless and susceptible to failure in serving their members and other workers.

Other factors that negatively affect union density in SA include the changing nature and erosion of permanent employment contracts into temporary employment and labour brokers and slower economic growth that impedes job creation (Bisseker, 2017). As a result, SA experienced an estimated increase of approximately 5% concerning temporary employment contracts between the periods 2011 to 2015 (Cassim and Casale, 2018). Additionally, the SA youth endure an extreme unemployment rate. This undesirable situation is associated with the government and unions as they are fuelling the challenges about the current situation concerning the youth job crisis in SA. Statistics South

Africa (StatsSA) (2019) reported that the SA youth unemployment rate is alarming because 68% of black males and 79% of black females were not participating in the labour market.

Union higher wages demands are attributable to the failure to attract foreign direct investment integrated with the government failure to amend its labour legislation that attracts businesses and entrepreneurs to invest in SA (Balsmeier, 2017). However, the SA government attempted to address this challenge by attracting investors by implementing incentive-based strategies. Nel et al. (2016) stated that the current high rate of labour disruptions due to strikes organised by labour unions is counter-effective to the government plan and thus needs to modify its inflexible labour legislation. These strikes are counter-productive to the economic development of SA and have adverse effects on employers operating their businesses in this country (Nel et al., 2016). Additionally, Balsmeier (2017) found that investors are reluctant to risk their capital in highly unionised industries because of increased labour protests and employee higher wages of which both are attributable to lower productivity. Subsequently, Bernards (2017) proposed that unions need to be realistic when negotiating wage increases for their members and other employees to sustain businesses and ensure that the salary adjustments are affordable and not financially draining for SA employers.

Objectively, management is opposed to union members who have the right to strike under the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (LRA) and thus prefer temporary and independent contractors instead of permanent employees who are potential union affiliates (Coetzee and Screuder, 2016). SA faces socio-economic challenges that include but are not limited to high unemployment, poverty, and inequality due to union ineffectiveness and the government failure in improving labour policies (Madonsela, 2018). Despite all these challenges, SA ratified the ILO conventions. Figure 2 displays eight fundamental conventions ratified by SA.

SA ICT sector union challenges

Recent literature trends reveal that similar to global trends: the SA ICT ER landscape is volatile, erratic, and transformative considering advancing globalisation and technology. The threats of SA ICT unions are declining membership (Visser, 2019a), globalisation (Asongu and Nwachukwu, 2016; Chun and Shin, 2018), self-centred leaders (Zloliniski, 2019), and 4IR (Schwab, 2017). The inability of these unions to engage, dialogue and successfully become economic architects and resolve employee socio-economic demands through collaborative dialogue presents a further challenge (Visser, 2019b). Conversely, another study found that unions play an integral part in their country economies in which they operate (Okechukwu, 2016). Nevertheless, the unionism



Figure 2. Eight fundamental ILO conventions ratified by SA.

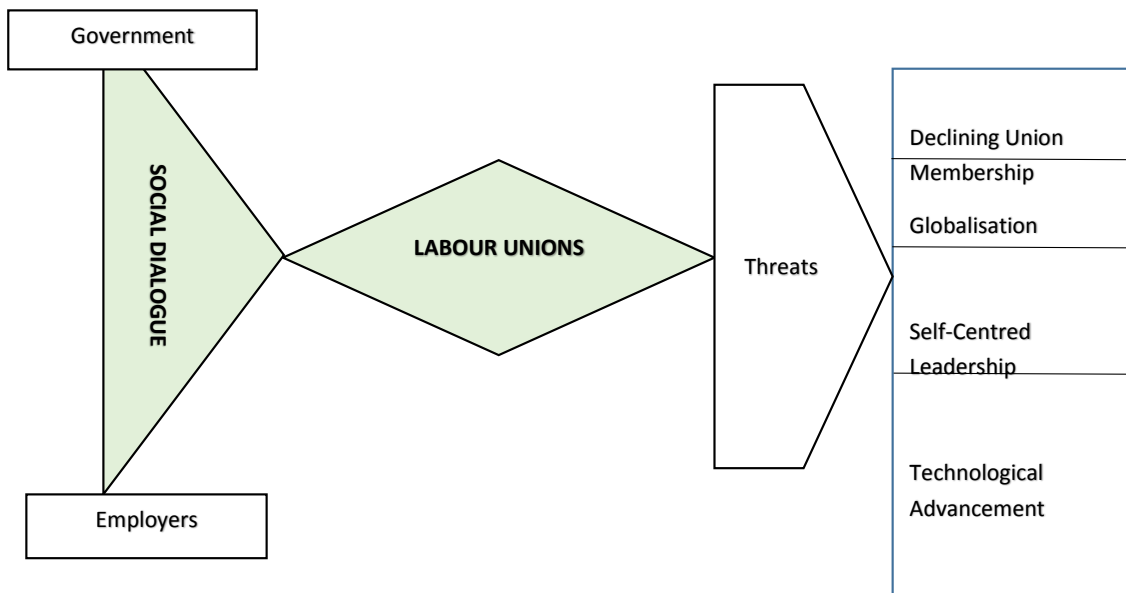


Figure 3. Social dialogue and threats to SA ICT unions.

gap of non-cooperativeness needs to be closed in the future to promote industrial peace and harmony in the SA ICT ER realm (Tapia et al., 2017). Figure 3 depicts the process of social dialogue and other factors that are threats to SA ICT unions.

Figure 3 illustrates that threats to unions include: a

decline in union membership, globalisation, self-centred leadership, and technological advancement as indicated by the connection between partners. It further displays that the significant role players in social dialogue are unions, employers, and government. In this process, unions are workers' representatives, government

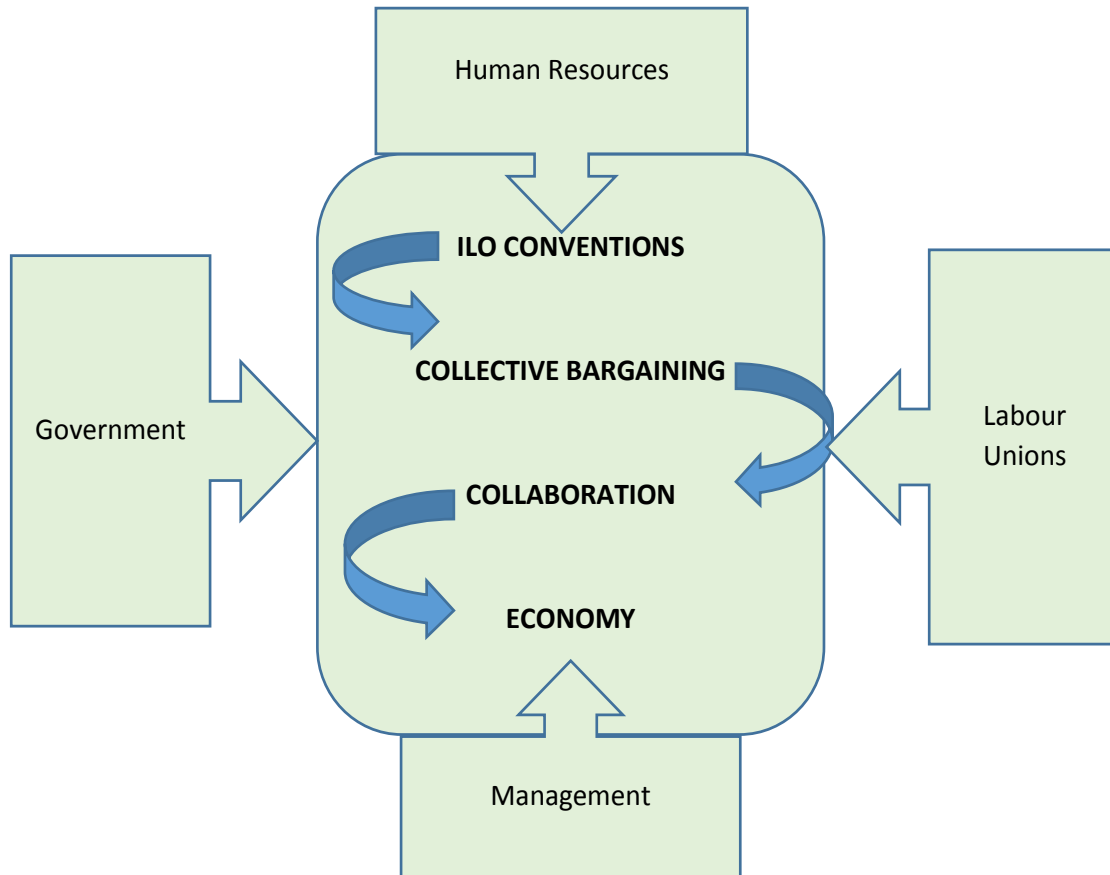


Figure 4. A proposed strategic framework for SA ICT union effectiveness.

promulgates labour legislation, and it also mediates, conciliates, and arbitrates between unions and employers where applicable (ILO, 2018; Schmalz et al., 2018). Other employers choose to be affiliated to and thus are represented by employers' associations, while others prefer to represent their own interests in the ER space as individual businesses.

Unions need to address the factors that threaten their effectiveness to remain relevant in the ER domain. Firstly, they need to resolve the declining union membership that weakens them. Secondly, these organisations need to utilise globalisation to their advantage rather than perpetuate to view global connectivity as a threat. Thirdly, union leaders should design and drive effective and efficient strategies to manage technological advancements. Finally, unions need to address the issue of their self-centred leadership. Figure 4 presents the proposed strategic framework for union effectiveness in the SA ICT sector.

Figure 4 presents that the ILO conventions as per ratification by the government are the foundation for collective bargaining whereby recognised unions negotiate for their members and other employees with employers. In turn, stakeholders in this process are

unions, management, and government (through enforcement of labour legislation) by conjunction with HR (through the implementation of sound labour policies) must lead to collaboration between employers and unions. Finally, this interaction between ER stakeholders can improve the SA ICT sector and the ailing economy of SA to benefit the employees of the ICT sector and the country (Huws et al., 2017). In this regard, an efficient and harmonious social dialogue, collaboration, and sound union tripartite partnerships (with the union, management, government) should be monitored and evaluated by HR and ER managers and professionals.

Union collaboration and cooperativeness must aim to advance their membership, socio-economic benefits, create career paths, transform jobs, and grow the economy in rural, suburban, and urban areas (Currie et al., 2017; Saad, 2018).

In summary, answers to research question 4 are as follows: What challenges plague SA unionism and SA ICT sector unions? SA unions are troubled with decreasing union membership, particularly the youth (Visser, 2019). In this country, unemployment is a genuine challenge for unions and the government. This problem is a challenge on labour movements because it

harms union membership. The failure by the SA government to create employment opportunities is another factor that impedes an improvement in union membership as some of the new entrants in the labour market could be potential union members.

Also, SA unions have massive challenges because they contribute to prolonged strikes that hinder production integrated with their demands for higher wages that are a barrier to foreign direct investment (Nel et al., 2016; Balsmeier, 2017).

The challenges experienced by SA ICT sector unions include: a shrinking union membership (Shwab, 2017; Visser, 2019a), this is the trend also experienced by unions around the globe, union leaders in this sector lack social dialogue skills and fail to form progressive tripartite relationships (Visser, 2019b), and lack strategies for effective management of globalisation, 4IR in the changing world of work (Schwab, 2017).

In summary, the answer to research question 5 is as follows: What strategic framework is available for effective unionism in the SA ICT sector? A call is made for union leaders to use the proposed strategic framework as a tool for effective collective bargaining with partners via strategic dialogue, discussions, and agreements. Therefore, answers have been provided for research questions 4 and 5 of this manuscript. From now onwards, this study proposes the following practical recommendations for the effectiveness and social partnership of SA ICT unions to consider:

- 1) Smaller unions within this sector should consider amalgamating with larger unions to form better and stronger unionism.
- 2) Unions need to maintain their relevance by addressing the reduction of union membership by applying the attract and defend strategy. In other words, they need to preserve their current membership and attract new members by displaying tangible evidence of their worth.
- 3) Unions further need to appoint the youth in their ranks to improve the status quo of the latter being disinterested in joining the labour movement.
- 4) Recognised unions could further enforce an agency shop agreement according to section 25 of the LRA through a collective agreement with employers. This measure might indirectly force some non-union members to join the labour movements because they would be paying an agency fee in any case.
- 5) Harmonious collective bargaining by unions must advance both employees and employers for the economy to grow, transform and evolve via globalisation and 4IR.
- 6) HR and ER managers must facilitate harmonious employer and union collaboration, cooperation, and agreement for the socio-economic development of all employees across all occupational categories.
- 7) Union leaders, managers, officials, and members must aim for successful partnerships, negotiations, and agreements by identifying and managing union

challenges, threats, and gaps, and

8) Union leaders and managers should implement effective strategies to achieve targeted goals and annually advance employee socio-economic statuses in the SA workplace.

Practical implications of effective union strategy

Strategic and effective unionism can benefit employees and employers in various ways. The following are a few practical implementation strategies recommended for union leaders and officials:

- 1) By negotiating salary increases for their members and other employees, they expand the buying power of the workforce as consumers of goods and services. Resultantly, businesses benefit and in turn contribute to the economy.
- 2) Unions secure training and development of the working class, a practice that also advantages businesses because skilful and competent employees contribute to the bottom line of their employers.
- 3) Unions also ensure that employees are not prone to unfair dismissals by manipulative employers. This action is also advantageous to businesses because they avoid unnecessary labour disputes against them by victimised employees.
- 4) Unions represent employees in ER hearings to protect their jobs, an undertaking that is also favourable to businesses because they save money on recruitment costs to replace dismissed employees.
- 5) Unions safeguard the compliance of employers on labour legislation promulgated by the state. Therefore, businesses avoid possible penalties that would have been imposed on them by the state for non-compliance with labour regulations.
- 6) Unions further secure the health and safety of employees, a measure that also advantages businesses because the rate of absenteeism becomes minimal, and employers are likely to attract their ideal workforce as employees prefer a safe working environment and
- 7) Union followers are susceptible to being easily persuaded by union leaders because they trust them. Therefore, businesses can benefit by allowing unions to act as change agents in conjunction with HR.

Conclusion

The first significant finding of this study is that diminishing union membership is evident across the globe (Isaac, 2018; Schwab, 2017; Ellem et al., 2020). The second significant finding of this study is that poor union membership amongst the youth in SA is experienced (Høgedahl and Kongshøj, 2017; Kjellberg, 2020; Visser, 2019a). The third significant finding is that union leaders

have lost the power to bargain with employers (Chun and Shin, 2018; Ellem et al., 2020).

However, the analysis of Caraway and Ford (2020) contrasts with this finding. These scholars found that unions possess the power to represent and protect their member interests in the workplace. Lastly, poor collaboration between employers and employees exists (Arslanov and Safin, 2016; Wood, 2020). Contrarily, Cook et al. (2020) found that cooperation and collaboration between management and employees prevail.

In conclusion, this study reiterates the call for ER stakeholders to collaborate when engaging on labour issues. The contributions of this study are a unionism strategy to theory and practice. Theoretically, this article expands further the body of knowledge on an effective union strategy. Practically, the contribution is a proposed strategic framework whereby union leaders collaborate with HR and ER managers to effectively negotiate agreements with management using government strategies and the ILO conventions. The study limitations are that generalisability is limited as it applies specifically to the SA ICT sector. In addition, the literature review as the data source abstract of this manuscript was limited to secondary data. Theoretical and empirical research is recommended for further research to explore the effectiveness of labour unionism in the ICT sectors of other African countries and globally.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interests.

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