Does board chairperson experience matter? Examining the relationship between board attributes and human rights reporting in Kenya

Daniel Kipkirong Tarus, Joel Kiplagat Tuwey and Jacob Kimutai Yego

Abstract

Purpose – *Using the resource dependence and legitimacy theories, this research aims to examine the relationship between board attributes and human rights reporting, as well as the interaction effect of board chairperson experience on the relationship among listed firms at the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE).*

Design/methodology/approach – *This study collected data from annual reports of firms listed on the NSE from 2009 to 2019 using content analysis to examine how boards influence human rights reporting. A total of 547 firm-year observations were used to test the hypotheses. This study used a hierarchical regression model to examine the relationship.*

Findings – *This study found that board attributes are important predictors of human rights reporting. This study shows that both board diversity and board independence have a positive impact on human rights reporting. Furthermore, the interaction results revealed that having a highly experienced chairperson strengthens the effect of board independence on human rights reporting; however, this study found that experienced chairperson reduces the influence of board diversity on human rights reporting.*

Research limitations/implications – *The findings suggest that board diversity and independence are essential attributes to which listed companies should pay attention when appointing board members. Moreover, the chairperson's leadership on the board is critical in ensuring that publicly trading companies adopt policies that disclose human rights information.*

Originality/value – *This paper provides insights into Kenya's human rights disclosure practices. It also analyzes how boards influence human rights disclosures, an empirical test that has received little attention in the previous literature. This study emphasizes the importance of board members and the chairperson in advocating for human rights reporting to improve corporate sustainability.*

Keywords *Chairperson experience, Board independence, Board diversity, Human rights reporting*

Paper type *Research paper*

Daniel Kipkirong Tarus, Joel Kiplagat Tuwey and Jacob Kimutai Yego are all based at the Department of Accounting and Finance, Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya.

1. Introduction

Developing countries are exposed to human rights violations because of weak enforcement of Labor laws and precarious working conditions such as health and work related injuries (Haász, 2013; Mwanza, 2020) which is compounded with a general absence of active pressure groups (Ramdhony *et al.*, 2021). Human rights are inalienable rights to which a person is entitled because of being human (Probohudono *et al.*, 2015) and these rights exist to preserve human dignity and ensure fulfillment of basic needs (van der Ploeg and Vanclay, 2017). Indeed, adverse effects on human rights occur when a corporate activity denies an individual an opportunity to enjoy hihe/sher rights (UN, 2011). In essence, a business activity may bestow, obstruct or take away a right bestowed on an individual as it

Received 1 November 2021
Revised 20 June 2022
15 July 2022
16 July 2022
Accepted 19 July 2022

pursues its objectives. Indeed, the basic understanding of human rights became established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which was adopted in 1948 after the atrocities of the Second World War. Thereafter, several conventions have been signed globally to protect human rights, for instance the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, 1976 (revised 2000); the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, 1977 (revised, 2001); the ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998; the UN Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises with regard to Human Rights, 2003; and the GRI Guidelines, among others.

Researchers have emphasized the importance of firms investing in human rights initiatives into their core strategies to meet stakeholder demands (George *et al.*, 2016; Gold *et al.*, 2018; Cormier *et al.*, 2011; Kiliç *et al.*, 2015). Specifically, firms are confronted with the need to incorporate human rights agenda into social responsibility policies and report on key aspects that influence employee rights (Čertanec, 2021; Liang *et al.*, 2022). A responsible business enterprise is expected to avoid adverse human rights impacts and in some situations leave the rights improved. Generally, employees are key stakeholders in a firm (Wolf, 2013) and their welfare is critical because firms that uphold employee rights are perceived to be socially responsible and are more likely to remain reputable and competitive (Paine, 2000). Although corporate social responsibility reporting has recently gained traction in management literature (Dawkins and Ngunjiri, 2008; Garcia-Torea *et al.*, 2020; Hossain *et al.*, 2017; Michelon *et al.*, 2015), research on human rights reporting is scarce, especially in developing countries where human rights violations are common (Searcy *et al.*, 2016). As a result, the study has potential to add to the body of knowledge the predictors of human rights reporting from the perspective of a developing country.

Globally, firms are confronted with human rights issues; however, there is higher prevalence of human rights transgression in developing countries because of weak legal environment and the inherent value system (Parsa *et al.*, 2018). Some of the human rights issues prevalent in these countries include child labor, forced labor, discrimination, workplace health and safety, collective bargaining, pollution, prohibition to right to strike, precarious wages, verbal, physical and sexual violence, among others (Aibar-Guzmán *et al.*, 2022; Hess, 2019). Previous research indicates that firms in the Middle East, Latin America, Asia and Africa contribute highest percentage of human rights violation, particularly labor related violations (Deva, 2003; Wright, 2008). In Africa, human rights violations abound, for instance, local communities in South Sudan have demanded compensation from oil companies for violations of human rights related to natural resource exploration (Ives and Buchner, 2011), there is rampant environmental destruction and human rights abuse in oil extraction industry in Nigeria, while in South African there is high incidence of child labor exploitation (Wettstein *et al.*, 2019) and child miners duped "Half Shovels" in rural villages of Sierra Leone (Maconachie and Hilson, 2016), unfortunately some of these human rights issues are not reported in the firm's financial reports (Morhardt, 2009). Given the level of human rights violations in developing countries and the absence of active pressure groups to blow the whistle (Ramdhony *et al.*, 2021), it is surprising that there are few studies focusing on human rights reporting at the corporate level (Islam *et al.*, 2017) and yet it forms part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – calling for business enterprises to incorporate frameworks and initiatives to promote decent work and safeguard human rights (Jägers, 2020). The SDGs provides a platform for firms to incorporate sustainable initiatives and practices into their reports to increase corporate disclosure and respond to stakeholder expectations (Hák *et al.*, 2016). Hence, the prominence of human rights in the SDGs reflects the recognition of the importance of human rights in corporate reporting. According to United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGPs), firms report human rights information to stakeholders to gain legitimacy, promote transparency, credibility and accountability (Gallhofer *et al.*, 2011).

Drawing from legitimacy theory, a firm's existence is legitimized if its value system is aligned with that of the larger social system of which it is a part of, but it is threatened when actual discrepancies between the two systems develop (Emeseh and Songi, 2014). And so, there is need to incorporate human rights agenda into social responsibility policies. In this sense, the board as the highest governing organ is critical in ensuring that it integrates sustainability and human rights initiatives into its programmes and policies (Khan and Sulaiman, 2021; Rupley *et al.*, 2012). Resource dependence theorists also places a responsibility on corporate boards in the sense that they provide important links with the external environment as well as expertise (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978) in corporate reporting and in particular ensuring that human rights are upheld. Whereas there is increased human rights awareness in Africa, it has not been matched with scholarly efforts (Cheruiyot and Maru, 2014). This paper proposes to fill this gap by examining the effect of board attributes on human rights reporting from the Kenyan perspective and how chairperson experience moderates this relationship.

Therefore, the paper has two main objectives. First, it specifically examines whether board attributes – diversity and independence affect human rights reporting. Previous studies have found that diverse and independent boards are equipped with essential resources such as industry expertise, experience, external linkages and varied perspectives through which the firm may leverage to embed sustainable practices into strategic decision making (Hillman *et al.*, 2002; Hillman *et al.*, 2009), including human rights reporting. Such boards are more likely to incorporate sustainable initiatives that will help identify and disclose social activities that legitimize firm's existence and respond to stakeholder needs because of their ability to obtain, analyze and assess relevant corporate information. Thus, with vast knowledge and insights, such boards may encourage executives to prioritize and report on social activities, including human rights, to sustain the firm. More importantly, by doing so, firms tend to improve the welfare of their employees and other stakeholders (Cheruiyot and Tarus, 2017; Ramasastry, 2015). Second, the paper also delves into whether chairperson experience moderates the relationship between board attributes and human rights reporting. Most experts concur that with greater need for governance and transparency, the quality and capabilities of a chairperson is critical to the general performance of the board (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2001). An experienced chairperson provides strategic guidance, which may be useful in making informed decisions about critical corporate policies and practices in the board (Banerjee *et al.*, 2020). It is worth noting that the chairperson is the 'boss of the board' whose main role is to induct and guide the board members. As a leader of the board, he/she can facilitate or hinder the use of board members' skills and competencies during board discussions. As such, the chairperson leverages and taps the broad knowledge base of the board members to ensure effective monitoring of corporate reporting processes, including human rights disclosures. Studies have indicated that when dealing with strategic issues such as corporate disclosures, an experienced chairperson may allow the diverse knowledge base inherent in the board to be translated into corporate actions and also facilitate transparency in corporate reporting (Krause and Semadeni, 2013). Furthermore, a chairperson with extensive experience derived from personal knowledge of other companies may provide a variety of perspectives that may encourage or limit the disclosure of human rights information in annual reports. Thus, we propose that board members' ability to influence human rights reporting is dependent on the chairperson's experience.

We contribute to the body of knowledge on corporate boards and human rights reporting by using resource dependency and legitimacy theories to show the crucial role board member attributes play, contingent on the chairperson's experience (Branco *et al.*, 2021; Aladwey *et al.*, 2021; Kaspereit *et al.*, 2016) in developing countries. The study also contributes to the emerging stream of research in strategic management focusing on the role of boards in corporate reporting and sustainability (Kanadli *et al.*, 2020).

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents the Kenyan context, Section 2.1 outlines development of hypotheses and theoretical framework, Section 3 describes the research methodology, Section 4 provides statistical analysis of the data and Section 5 examines the findings and conclusions and implications of the study.

2. Kenyan context

Kenya is East Africa's largest economic hub, with a distinct culture, political, social and regulatory structure that generally influences corporate practices (Muthuri and Gilbert, 2011). Kenya has a population of 53.77 million people and its GDP is estimated at $106.04bn in 2021, with an annual growth rate of 5%. It has a thriving private sector and firms are listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) for purposes of regulations, mobilizing savings and attracting local and foreign capital flows. Kenya has made significant steps in incorporating environmental, social and governance framework in its long-term goals. Vision 2030 provides a roadmap for Kenya firms to realize sustainable social and environmental goals through the efforts of NSE and the Capital Markets Authority (CMA). There is plethora of legal frameworks and institutions to encourage firms to operate within a purview of positive social impact, for example, the bills of rights in Kenya's Constitution, 2010, Employment Act (2007), Labor Relations Act (2007), Occupational Safety and Health Act (2007), Work Injury Benefits Act (2007), as well as institutions established to protect human rights, for example, Employment and Labor Relations Court (2011), National and Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), among others are meant to ensure respect and protection of human rights among corporate entities.

According to the Companies Act of 2015, companies are required to disclose their social activities to communities and stakeholders and incorporate social, environmental and ethical initiatives into their processes. Furthermore, according to a report published by the center for Corporate Governance in 2005, companies may voluntarily adopt financial reporting and disclosure guidelines (Barako and Brown, 2008), but as a commitment to social fulfillment, they are expected to disclose the nature of their social activities, corporate citizenship activities, environmental, occupational health and safety and workforce management policies and practices in annual reports. Kenya, being the first African Government to engage with the UN through the National Human Rights Commission, has adopted guiding principles and action plans for enterprises to recognize and disclose human rights issues (Faracik, 2017). Although these strategic efforts have taken shape in Kenya, there are cases of human rights violations in the agribusiness, extractive and wind power sectors, including unfair dismissal, long hours of work, sexual harassment, discriminatory remuneration mechanisms and child labor (Kimotho and Ogol, 2021). A notable case of human rights violations was witnessed at Owino Uhuru, an informal settlement in Mombasa County in which dwellers and employees were affected by poisonous emissions from lead-acid smelting plant operated by the now defunct Metal Refineries (EPZ) limited from 2007 until its closure in 2014 (Mwanza, 2020). The emissions left victims with irreversible health conditions and deaths. With these human rights violations, there is a growing interest to understand the extent to which Kenyan enterprises have embraced human rights and whether corporate boards provides strategic direction for its disclosure in the annual reports.

Most publicly trading companies in Kenya have adopted corporate governance principles such as appointing board members and chairpersons with specific expertise to assist in running the company and carrying out board functions (Waweru *et al.*, 2019). Existing body of literature indicates that boards undertake several tasks, such as ensuring that stakeholder interests are taken into account, managing and evaluating financial statements (Waweru, 2019) and strategically positioning the organization to improve its reputation and image (Chintrakarn *et al.*, 2013). Boards are also responsible for embedding social agendas, providing resources and strategic guidance for sustainable business (Jizi, 2017).

In this regard, boards have a responsibility to incorporate human rights concerns into strategic decisions (Ruggie *et al.*, 2021). Hence, if the purpose of engaging in social activities is to recognize societal needs and establish constructive relationships with stakeholders (Matten, 2006), then firms with more effective board members are expected to provide human rights information in the financial statements. We believe that having an experienced board chairperson will either strengthen or limit the ability of a diverse or an independent board to engage in human rights reporting.

2.1 Theory and hypothesis development

A review of the literature suggests that most firms around the globe are working toward achievement of SDGs by integrating sustainable solutions into strategic decision-making (Halati and He, 2018; Rashed and Shah, 2020; Buhmann *et al.*, 2019). One of the key sustainable initiatives that firms have incorporated in their strategic decisions is human rights reporting, which involves reporting actions and activities that impact on the rights of employees (UN, 2011). Existing scholars argue that disclosing human rights information is considered a means of increasing transparency, meeting the needs of the stakeholders (Islam *et al.*, 2017; Park, 2014) and enhancing corporate image and reputation (Garcia-Torea *et al.*, 2016; Murray, 2017). Despite these crucial roles, developing economies continue to struggle with unstable and lack of institutional identity of corporate governance regulations (Areneke *et al.*, 2019), which raises the possibility that some key company practices, such as reporting on human rights, may not be disclosed, harming the credibility, accountability and legitimacy of the company in the eyes of various stakeholders. (Kimani *et al.*, 2021). Although the discourse on human rights has received attention in the intellectual space, the role of the board remains unexplored particularly in emerging contexts. A few studies have made an attempt to investigate human rights reporting, for example, Branco *et al.* (2021) examined the relationship between board demographic diversity and found that a diverse board enhance reporting of human rights aspects in annual reports. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to examine factors affecting human rights reporting in the Kenyan setting. As such, the aim of this line of inquiry is to examine the how board diversity and independence affect human rights reporting and how chairperson's experience moderates the relationship through the lenses of legitimacy and resource dependence theories.

Legitimacy theory proposes existence of a social contract between firms and society which provides that firm's survival largely depends on the extent to which its objectives conform to the values and expectations of the society (Baik and Park, 2019). Prior literature has documented that disclosure of responsible activities acts as a legitimization strategy (Deegan *et al.*, 2002) – implying that firms facing legitimacy questions because of social incidences tend to disclose social programnmes as a reactionary measure to modify or alter public perception and thus improve their image and reputation (Aibar-Guzmán *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, firms must be seen to act in a way that meets the expectations and norms of the society by publicly disclosing their social initiatives (Searcy and Buslovich, 2914; Jessop *et al.*, 2019). Existing literature indicate that boards are responsible for setting social agendas and providing critical resources for the implementation of social initiatives (Jizi, 2017) and, therefore, boards are more likely to undertake social activities that improve human rights (Branco and Rodrigues, 2008). Extant studies have shown that boards with diverse and independent members pursue value-creating social activities and, consequently, ensure reporting of such activities in their annual reports (Cucari *et al.*, 2018; Hoang *et al.*, 2018; Jizi, 2017). This will eventually legitimize company operations in the eyes of the many stakeholders. The resource dependence theory, on the other hand, holds the view that boards supply or secure important resources for the firm through links to the external environment (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, 2003). Extensive firm–industry expertise, diverse insights, contacts with stakeholders, unbiased judgment and networks are some of the important resources that boards contribute to the firm (Hillman, 2005; Hillman and Dalziel, 2003). It is argued that firms with a well-equipped and diverse board have a wider exposure to reporting on social initiatives in annual reports (Jizi *et al.*, 2014), however, reporting of such social actions may be enhanced or limited by an experienced chairperson who understands the dynamics of the external environment and stakeholders' needs. Thus, we contend that a board's capacity to engage in sustainable practices, such as human rights reporting, is contingent on the chairperson's experience.

2.2 Board diversity and human rights reporting

Board diversity is defined as variation among the board members that may be derived from multiple sources such as age, gender, nationality, education and ethnicity (Galia and Zenou, 2012). Prior studies have found that diverse boards improve the quality of strategic decisions and promotes corporate competitiveness (Dobbin and Jung, 2011), identify and satisfy stakeholder's demands (de Jong and van der Meer, 2017) and are more likely to stimulate debates reflective of societal needs (Hillman, 2015). Drawing from resource dependence theory, diverse boards bring variety of skills, information, resources, a broader range of strategic views and insights (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978) that are likely to aid decision-making on CSR reporting (Katmon *et al.*, 2019; Liao *et al.*, 2015). Despite prior studies pointing at a positive link between board diversity and CSR reporting (Barako and Brown, 2008; Branco *et al.*, 2021; García-Sánchez *et al.*, 2019; Khan *et al.*, 2019; Manita *et al.*, 2018), majority of these studies have focused on the impact of individual diversity characteristics rather than the overall effect of board diversity (Rao and Tilt, 2016). As such, there aren't many studies that have examined the combined impact of diversity on CSR related issues (Darmadi, 2011), more particularly in developing countries. Thus, to infer on an overall effect that might not be realized on individualized factors, we replicate this by combining diversity as one indicator because outcomes of boards are collective in nature. Moreover, empirical evidence have shown mixed results with regard to the effect of fragmented board diversity characteristics on corporate social reporting (Azam *et al.*, 2019; Tapver *et al.*, 2020). For instance, in terms of gender diversity, female directors have been linked to higher ethical standards (Kyaw *et al.*, 2017) and so they are more likely to support disclosure of human rights aspects. It is also shown that long-tenured members disclose less social corporate information including human rights reporting (Rao and Tilt, 2016). Recent study shows that diversity on boards does not contribute much to the disclosure levels of human rights information in overall, but nationality diversity was found to positively influence human rights reporting (Branco *et al.*, 2021). In essence, diverse boards are more likely to bring relevant resources such as specialized knowledge and experience, which may facilitate decisions favoring human rights reporting. Equally, diverse boards tend to legitimize external activities by engaging and voicing out stakeholders concerns in the boardroom, thus facilitating disclosure of CSR initiatives, such as human rights reporting. Hence:

H1. Diverse boards positively influence human rights reporting.

2.3 Independent boards and human rights reporting

Independent boards refers to those that are free of influence by management, businesses or other relationships which could interfere with the exercise of independent judgment or ability to act in the best interest of the stakeholders. It is a key corporate governance attribute (Effah *et al.*, 2022; Khan, 2010) that provides a mechanism that improves board effectiveness and enhances accountability to the stakeholders (Haniffa and Cooke, 2005). Owing to their unique position, independent boards are better positioned to ensure that the social concerns of the stakeholders are met. According to resource dependence theorists, independent boards offer distinctive resources (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978) that facilitate objective advice on strategic decisions such as disclosure of the firm's social programs and initiatives. According to the legitimacy theory, the presence of independent directors encourages firms to disclose human rights-related activities in their annual reports given the growing awareness of social and environmental issues (Nurhayati *et al.*, 2016). Drawing from the literature, independent boards potentially influence CSR disclosure because of greater monitoring skills (Barako and Brown, 2008), which may help facilitate reporting of social and environmental concerns of the firms they lead (Jizi *et al.*, 2014; Kaymak and Bektas, 2017) as well as motivating firms to disclose sustainability information such as human rights (Frias-Aceituno *et al.*, 2013). Studies examining the impact of board independence on CSR reporting have yielded conflicting results, notwithstanding the dearth of research examining the relationship between board independence and human rights reporting. For instance, some studies (Htay *et al.*, 2012; Post *et al.*, 2011; Al Fadli *et al.*, 2020) shows that the presence of independent boards is positively related to CSR reporting, while others suggests no relationship (Rashid, 2021). Because CSR reporting incorporates disclosure of social actions, it means that independent boards are crucial monitoring agents of corporate reporting process. Thus, owing to the key resources - objective judgment, extensive experience and knowledge, they bring to the firm, independent boards are likely to encourage firms to report information on human rights to maintain legitimacy with stakeholders. Similarly, in emerging environments where there have been more instances of human rights abuse, independent boards are more likely to scrutinize firm human rights reporting to ensure legitimacy in the face of stakeholders. Hence:

H2. Independent boards positively influence human rights reporting.

2.4 Moderating *role* of chairperson's experience

The chairperson is the leader of the board who assumes greater responsibilities for the firms they lead (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 2007; Krause, 2017). As a result of this increased responsibility, the role of the board chairperson is receiving increased academic attention (Kanadli *et al.*, 2020). Previous researchers, suggests that the chairperson maintains order and proper conduct of board meetings by setting key agendas, ensuring all members' participation and making technical decisions (Bezemer *et al.*, 2018). This approach may make it easier for sustainable practices to be adopted as part of the board's key agendas. Most recently, stakeholders have put pressure on board chairperson to increase corporate transparency (Amis *et al.*, 2020; Harrison *et al.*, 2020) by ensuring that the firms adopt disclosure practices geared toward sustainability. Moreover, an experienced chairman is responsible for facilitating effective board discussions on corporate practices and bringing out the best in each board member (Peterson, 2021). Resource dependence theorists postulate that a chairperson with extensive experience provides resources that are valuable in embedding the best practices in the firm (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). These resources include the provision of legitimacy, networks, outside insights, complementary talents, experience and advice. Thus, a board chairman with a broader experience is more likely to be aware of how social and environmental initiatives may damage corporate credibility and legitimacy (Al-Mamun and Seamer, 2021). This means that a chairperson who has previously been in a position as director, CEO, COO or a special expert in another organization has accumulated more experience in managing environmental uncertainty and may encourage disclosure of human rights information in the annual reports as a way of increasing its legitimacy. Moreover, based on the legitimacy perspective, an experienced chairperson has power to influence boardroom deliberations and hence corporate disclosure practices. In this regard, as an experienced chairperson, he/she may be able to exert influence over independent board members to ensure that firms report certain social actions, such as human rights – related information in the annual reports. An experienced chairperson may also use a diverse board's firm–industry-specific knowledge to encourage human rights reporting, because a diversified board has a broader view and insights that can inspire stakeholder-oriented board discussions. However, in some cases, an experienced chairman may be unable to coordinate a diverse board because of the varied personalities who may be unwilling to share information or dissent to certain board decisions (Peterson, 2021), thus limiting disclosure of human rights activities. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H3a. Chairperson's experience positively moderates the relationship between board diversity and human rights reporting.

H3b. Chairperson's experience positively moderates the relationship between board independence and human rights reporting.

3. Methods and data

We used a longitudinal approach with datasets from 53 firms listed in Kenya's Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) over 11 years (2009–2019). For inclusion in the data set, the company must have produced an annual report. However, because some firms did not produce annual reports throughout the research period, the data set was unbalanced. As a result, this yielded 547 firm-year observations which were used for hypotheses testing. We used panel data for this study because it provides more accurate inferences of model parameters, greater capacity to capture the complexity of firm behavior, more simplified statistical inference and also accounts for individual heterogeneity (Hsiao, 2007). Secondary sources, notably annual reports and company websites, were used to obtain data. Most firms published human rights disclosures on their websites, the information of which is usually reported in the annual report (Rashid, 2015). Moreover, annual reports are deemed appropriate because they are believed to be a means by which the company communicates to the public (Othman and Ameer, 2010). We used content analysis to generate the data because it is a common and exhaustive means of obtaining data from annual reports and company websites (Prado-Lorenzo *et al.*, 2012).

3.1 Measurement of variables

3.1.1 Dependent variable. We used a comprehensive Human Rights Index (HRI) based on several standards and guidelines to measure human rights reporting (Epstein and Buhovac, 2014). Following the earlier works of researchers (Aggarwal and Singh, 2018), we developed a weighted index comprising of 14 items, namely; non-discrimination, equal opportunity for employment, work conditions, sanitation, employee health and occupational safety, freedom of association and right to information, social security, fair remuneration, housing, welfare, labor grievances and unionization, child labor and forced or compulsory labor, human dignity, product quality and diversity. The index is a ratio of the number of HRI items disclosed divided by the total numbers of HRI items. To assess the total of items disclosed, we checked the presence of each item in the annual reports and company website. A score of 0 indicating (absence) or 1 indicating (presence) was assigned. The scores so obtained were then expressed in percentage, where higher scores reflected better ability of the company to disclose human rights practices.

3.1.2 Independent variables. Board diversity was constructed using four diversity indices: age, tenure, gender and nationality (Harjoto *et al.*, 2015; Rao and Tilt, 2016). Each one of the diversity indices was created based on Blau's index (Blau, 1977; Hirschman, 1964) for heterogeneity and takes on values between zero and one. The overall index of board diversity is generated by adding the four standardized Blau indices representing the four diversity dimensions mentioned above. The index is computed as follows:

$$BI = 1 - \sum_{t=1}^{n} P_i^2$$

Where:

BI = is Blau's Index, "i" is category;

"P" = is the fraction of board members in each category; and

"*n*" = is the total number of board members in each category.

Blau's index represents the degree of diversity of the board members with an index value close to one suggesting a more heterogeneous group while a value of zero would imply that there is only one category within that particular dimension (e.g. only male directors on the board), making it a perfectly homogenous group. T*enure* diversity represents the number of years each board member has served in the firm and has five categories i.e. 1–4 years, 4–8, 8–12, 12–16 and more than 16 years, *Age* diversity indicated the current age of each board member and has two categories – below and above 40 years. *Gender* diversity is measured using two categories: male and female (Abad *et al.*, 2017). Finally, *nationality* diversity is a based on whether the board member is of Kenyan nationality or of foreign nationality.

Board independence was measured using as the ratio of the total number of independent board members to the total number of board members (Ahmad *et al.*, 2017).

3.1.3 Moderating variable. We measured chairperson experience by developing a composite index of the current external directorships, previous senior-level leadership, previous directorships and special expertise in the industry. Current directorship is computed as the number of directorships in the current position. Researchers have viewed ties to other boards as a valuable quality of a director (Kor and Sundaramurthy, 2009). Special expertise in the industry or a particular strategic issue in the industry is measured by a dummy variable on whether the chairman has had previous working experience either in the firm or in a similar firm, often referred to as slightly more generic experience (Johnson *et al.*, 2013), while previous leadership either as a CEO/COO/CFO and previous directorships measured as the number of directorships previously held in other firms, including those that bear no resemblance to the firm whose board the individual chairs frequently referred to as more generic experience (Kor and Misangyi, 2008).

3.1.4 Control variables. Following previous studies, we controlled some board attributes and firm characteristics known to affect human rights reporting. These variables include firm age, size, profitability, board size and year and company dummies. Firm age is the number of years because incorporation and was computed as the natural log of the age of company *i* in year *t* (Galbreath, 2010). Firm size is calculated as a natural log of total assets of company *i* year *t* (D'Amato and Falivena, 2020); profitability was measured using (ROA), calculated as net income divided by total assets of a company *i* in year *t* (Chen *et al.*, 2018). Studies have shown that profitability does influence human rights reporting (Baker *et al.*, 1985; Hamid, 2004), specifically, profitable firms have comparatively more resources to undertake social programmes and hence more disclosures (Ramdhony *et al.*, 2021). We measured board size as the total number of directors on the board (Galbreath, 2018). It has been found that large boards have greater monitoring abilities and possibly broader stakeholder representation, which increases social responsibility disclosures (Ho and Williams, 2003). Year and company dummies were used to measure specific effects for each year and each company. Table 1 below indicates the variable definition and unit of measurement.

3.2 Model specification

We used a panel dataset to examine the effect of board characteristics on human rights reporting and the moderating role of chairperson's experience in the relationship. Panel fixed-effects and panel random-effects are the most common methods of estimating panel data. Using Hausman test, we found support for random-effects model. The panel regression model is provided in three models, with Model 1 testing for *H1* and *H2*, whereas

Table 1 Definition and measurement of variables		
Variable	*Definition*	*Measurement*
HRR	Human rights reporting	Derived from dichotomous weighted index from 14 items where the value of "1" represents disclosure and '0' otherwise
BD	Board diversity	Measured as a composite index of age, tenure, gender and nationality
BI	Board independence	Proportion of independent directors to total number of directors
CE	Chairperson experience	A composite index of the current external directorships, previous senior-level leadership, previous directorships and special expertise in the industry
FA	Firm age	Log of total number of years since inception
FP	Firm profitability	Return on assets
FS	Company size	Log of total assets
BS	Board size	Total number of members in the board

Models 2 and 3 testing for *H3a* and *H3b* interactions, respectively. As a result, the equations have the following forms:

$$HRR_{it} = \alpha_{it} + \beta_1 FA_{it} + \beta_2 FP_{it} + \beta_3 FS_{it} + \beta_4 BS_{it} + \beta_5 BD_{it} + \beta_6 BI_{it} + \beta_7 YD_{it} + \beta_8 FD_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad \text{Model 1}$$

$$HRR_{it} = \alpha_{it} + \beta_1 FA_{it} + \beta_2 FP_{it} + \beta_3 FS_{it} + \beta_4 BS_{it} + \beta_5 BD_{it} + \beta_6 BI_{it} + \beta_7 BD_{it} * BCE_{it} + \beta_8 YD_{it} + \beta_9 FD_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad \text{Model 2}$$

$$HRR_{it} = \alpha_{it} + \beta_1 FA_{it} + \beta_2 FP_{it} + \beta_3 FS_{it} + \beta_4 BS_{it} + \beta_5 BD_{it} + \beta_6 BI_{it} + \beta_7 BI_{it} * BCE_{it} + \beta_8 YD_{it} + \beta_9 FD_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad \text{Model 3}$$

Where:

HRR_{it} = represents human rights reporting of firm *i* in year *t;*

BD_{it} = is the board diversity of firm *i* in year *t;*

BI_{it} = is the board independence of firm *i* in year *t;*

BCE_{it} = is the Board Chairperson Experience of firm *i* in year *t;*

$\beta_1 \ldots\ldots\ldots \beta_9$ = are the coefficients of the model variables of firm *i* in year *t;*

FA_{it} = *is the firm age of firm i in year t;*

FP_{it} = *represents the firm profitability* of firm *i* in year *t;*

FS_{it} = *represents the firm size* of firm *i* in year *t;*

BS_{it} = *represents the board size* of firm *i* in year *t;*

α_{it} = is the constant (y-intercept) of firm *i* in year *t;*

YD_{it} = represents the year dummy of firm *i* in year *t;*

FD_{it} = represents the firm dummy of firm *i* in year *t*; and

ε_{it} = is the error term of firm *i* in year *t*.

4. Inferential analysis

4.1 Descriptive results

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics. The results indicate that sixty percent (60%) of the firms listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange disclose human rights activities and, therefore, complied with set standards and guidelines. The findings further indicate that between 2009 and 2019, the average board diversity was 20% indicating low levels of diversity in tenure, age, gender and nationality. Board independence was 0.49 indicating that on average, there are 49% independent directors on the board of listed firms in Kenya. The mean average of the chairperson's experience in Kenyan-listed firms was 27%. We find that the mean age of the firms was 29.04 indicating that the average age firms in the sample were 29 years old since and the average board size of the listed firms in Kenya was approximately nine members.

4.2 Correlation results

Correlation results are presented in Table 3. The findings indicate that both board diversity index and board independence had a significant and positive correlation with human rights reporting. Further results revealed that chairperson's experience had an insignificant correlation with human rights reporting but a significant relationship with board independence and board diversity. This indicates a possible causal effect of board diversity and board independence on human rights reporting and a possible moderating effect of chairperson experience on the relationship between board independence, board diversity and human rights reporting.

4.3 Diagnostic results

We conducted various diagnostic tests to determine the appropriateness of data for analysis. Moreover, diagnostic analyses helped in determining if the data satisfied the

Table 2 Descriptive results

Stats ($n = 547$)	*Mean*	*SD*	*Skewness*	*Kurtosis*
Human rights reporting	0.60	0.24	−0.68	2.63
Board diversity	0.20	0.18	0.85	3.82
Board independence	0.49	0.42	1.21	4.48
Board chairman experience	0.27	0.27	11.69	212.63
Firm age	29.04	17.36	0.10	1.96
Firm profitability	0.07	0.57	−15.82	316.49
Firm size	7.19	0.89	−0.21	2.73
Board size	8.81	2.55	0.26	2.67

Table 3 Correlation results

Variable	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Human rights reporting	1.000							
Board diversity	0.569**	1.000						
Board independence	0.473**	0.434**	1.000					
Chairperson experience	0.037	0.164*	0.070*	1.000				
Firm age	−0.119*	−0.086	−0.135*	−0.111*	1.000			
Firm size	0.330**	0.341**	0.153*	0.047	−0.200**	1.000		
Firm profitability	0.003	−0.019	0.014	−0.039	−0.031	0.048	1.000	
Board size	0.307**	0.463**	0.196*	0.033	−0.053	0.297**	0.035	1.000

Notes: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed), *r (0.05) level (two-tailed). $n = 547$

cardinal conditions for panel analysis using fixed or random models. Table 4 presents a summary of all diagnostic tests performed during the analysis. For example, data normality was tested using the Jarque-Bera test, which yielded a chi value of 3.327 and a *p*-value of 0.1895, indicating that the null hypothesis was supported. This implied that the data had a normal distribution, which is suitable for further data analysis. Heteroscedasticity was assessed using the Breusch and Pagan Lagrangian Multiplier test, which yielded a chi value of 2.00 and a *p*-value of 0.1578, suggesting that the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that there was no violation of homoscedasticity. Autocorrelation was tested using the Wooldridge test which from Table 3 had a chi value of 7.536 with a *p*-value of 0.0952 hence failing to reject the null hypothesis an indication that there was no first-order autocorrelation. Equally, variance inflation factors (VIF) was used to test the presence of multicollinearity. The VIF was less than 10 hence no problems of multicollinearity. In this study, the unit root was tested using Fisher-type unit-root test Based on augmented Dickey–Fuller tests. As shown in Table 4, the significance level is less than 5% for stationary testing of all variables; therefore, the variables are stationary at a confidence level of 95%. Finally, we used Durbin-Wu-Hausman to detect for endogeneity of individual regressors. As shown in Table 4, the significance level is more than 5% for endogeneity testing of residuals, therefore, it is concluded that the explanatory variables are uncorrelated with the error term.

4.4 Regression results

We analyzed our data analyzed using the random-effects model. The Hausman test yielded a chi-square of 10.18 and a *p*-value of 0.1174. Because the *p*-value was greater than the 0.05 threshold, the random-effects model is appropriate for estimation. Table 5 presents results from our hypotheses tests. Model 1 analyzes *H1* and *H2*. To test *H3a* and *H3b*, we include the moderating influence of chairperson experience in Models 2 and 3. *H1* proposed that board diversity impacts human rights reporting positively. As demonstrated in Table 5, the results are significant and support *H1* that board diversity improves human rights reporting (β = 0.42, $p <$ 0.01). In terms of economic relevance, having a diverse board membership is related with a 0.42% increase in human rights reporting. As a result, the findings support our argument that diverse boards are more likely to improve human rights reporting by using their diverse skills and insights to legitimize corporate activities. This finding is in line with earlier claims that the more diverse the board is, the more effective their decisions on corporate disclosure practices and, thus enhancing human rights reporting (Rao and Tilt, 2016). In *H2*, we proposed that an independent board has a positive impact on human rights reporting (β = 0.14, $p <$ 0.01). The results from Table 5 support this assumption that independent directors have strict monitoring abilities that allow them to scrutinize disclosure practices meant to improve human rights reporting. In economic terms, the appointment of independent board members improves human rights

Table 4 Diagnostic results

Test	*Null hypothesis*	*Test statistic*	*Prob.*	*Remark*
Jarque-Bera normality test	*H0*: normality	3.327	0.1895	Fail to reject *H0*
Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg test	*H0*: Constant variance Variables	2.00	0.1578	Fail to reject *H0*
Wooldridge test for autocorrelation	*H0*: no first-order autocorrelation	7.536	0.952	Fail to reject *H0*
Ramsey's RESET	*H0*: The model is correctly specified	0.420	0.657	Fail to reject *H0*
Durbin-Wu-Hausman	*H0*: no endogeneity	0.02	0.8924	Fail to reject *H0*
VIF for multicollinearity		1.22	VIF were < 10, hence no multicollinearity	
Fisher-type unit-root test Based on augmented Dickey-Fuller tests	*H0* = panels contain a unit root	All *p*-values less than 0.00		Reject *H0*

Table 5 Regression results

	Model 1	*Model 2*	*Model 3*
Firm age	0.14* (0.05)	0.15** (0.05)	0.16** (0.05)
Firm size	0.15** (0.03)	0.14** (0.03)	0.14** (0.03)
Firm profitability	– 0.01 (0.02)	−0.01 (0.02)	−0.00 (0.02)
Board size	0.03 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)
Board diversity	0.42** (0.03)	0.39** (0.03)	0.41** (0.03)
Board independence	0.14** (0.03)	0.13** (0.03)	0.12** (0.03)
Chairperson experience		– 0.02 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Chairperson experience*board diversity		−0.14** (0.04)	
Chairperson experience*board independence			0.14** (0.04)
_cons	0.04 (0.09)	0.04 (0.09)	0.04 (0.09)
Year dummy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Firm dummy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	547	547	547
R-sq:			
within	0.398	0.419	0.414
between	0.358	0.368	0.370
overall	0.363	0.376	0.375
R-sq:Δ	*0.240*	*0.021*	*0.016*
Waldchi2(6)	351.32	379.88	373.42
Prob > chi2	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hausman			
chi2(4)	10.180	11.010	14.620
Prob > chi2	0.117	0.088	0.102

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; ** and * Significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 levels, respectively

reporting of Kenya's listed firms by approximately 0.14%. This finding is supported by Waweru (2020), who argued that owing to their industry knowledge, independent boards are more likely to require firms to disclose human rights information in their reports to gain legitimacy.

The hierarchical regression model was used to test the moderating role of chairperson's experience on the relationship between board attributes and human rights reporting. All variables were standardized before performing interactions to avoid problems of multicollinearity (Jose, 2008). The variables were entered stepwise into the regression model to form hierarchical regression in Table 5. To test the interaction effects, we added chairperson's experience in Models 3 and 4 respectively. As indicated in Table 5, we hypothesized (*H3a*) that chairperson experience positively moderates the relationship between board diversity and human rights reporting. The results presented in Model 3 show a negative moderation effect ($\beta = -0.14$, $p < 0.01$), hence does not support the assertion that an experienced chairperson enhances the impact of board diversity on human rights reporting. It economically means that in the presence of chairperson's experience, the impact of board diversity on human rights reporting reduces by 0.14%. This outcome supports the claim made by Forbes and Milliken (1999) that when boards are diverse, there is a high possibility of problems arising from conflicting views, which may divert the attention of an experienced chairperson from enhancing diverse boards decisions to ensure firms report human rights information. Furthermore, in the third hypothesis (*H3b*), we suggest that chairperson experience positively moderate the impact of board independence on human rights reporting. Consistent with our prediction of *H3b*, the coefficient of the interaction between chairperson experience and board independence is significant and positive ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.01$). In terms of economic significance, the presence of an experienced chairperson in a highly independent boardroom enhances the impact of board independence on human rights reporting by an approximate 0.14%. This result is consistent with research on the chairperson's role (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2006; Van den Berghe and Baelden, 2005), which suggests that having an experienced chairperson on the board fosters a culture where board members can exercise their independence and draw on their expertise to support corporate policies like disclosing information about human rights.

We also presented our results using mod graphs as shown in Figures 1 and 2 to further probe the interactions (Aiken *et al.*, 1991; Jose, 2018). The interaction presented in the Figure 1 indicates that when the chairperson is highly experienced, diverse board does report less of human rights information. In other words, when a chairman is highly experienced, low diversity improves human rights reporting. The results in Figure 2 indicate that when a chairman is experienced, independent boards tend to report on human rights information in the annual reports.

4.5 Robustness test

To provide evidence of robustness of our findings to endogeneity from unobserved individual effects and simultaneity (Areneke and Tunyi, 2020), we used a dynamic estimating technique, the first-difference GMM proposed by Arellano and Bond (1991) which takes the first differences to remove unobserved individual effects and also test for auto-correlation of the first and second order. The technique identifies reliable instruments

Figure 1 Interactions of chairman experience and board diversity to human right reporting

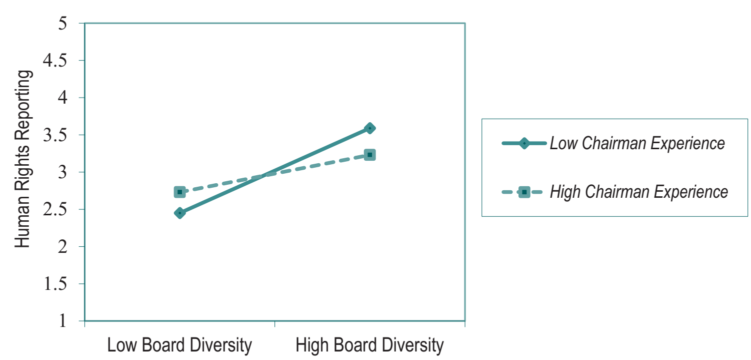
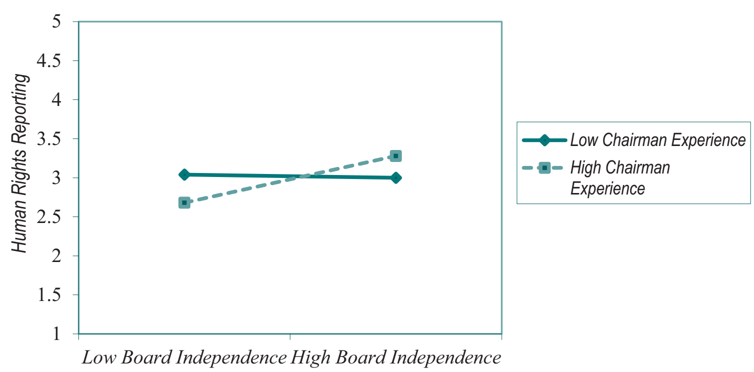


Figure 2 Interactions of the chairman experience and board independence to human rights reporting



to use in the estimation equations (Wintoki *et al.*, 2012; Flannery and Hankins, 2013). We restricted the number of instruments as suggested by Roodman (2009b) by collapsing the instrument sets to improve efficiency of the model. We also tested for over-restriction using the Sargan–Hansen method (Windmeijer, 2018). The results on Table 6 shows that all the coefficients of the difference GMM estimates lies within the bounds of those given in the random effects regression models, the sign of the coefficient for lagged ROA however becomes positive and mildly significant. The results for the Hansen J test which reports the *p*-values for the *H0* of the validity of the over-identifying restrictions shows that we do not reject the *H0* ($p > 0.05$). Thus, the model is properly identified. In addition, the *p*-values for the first and second order auto correlated disturbances in the first-differenced equation shown in the Table 6 as AR(1) and AR(2) values are significant for first order auto-correlation as expected, but shows no evidence for significant second order auto-correlation. This suggests that our test statistics are properly specified. Overally, the robustness test results are comparable to the baseline results, demonstrating the consistency and robustness of the main findings across alternative measurements.

5. Discussion and conclusion

We examined the moderating role of the chairperson's experience on the relationship between board attributes and human rights reporting in Kenya. Our study provides insight into a developing country characterized by weak institutional and legal environment (Waweru *et al.*, 2019). Using a dataset of 53 firms from 2009 to 2019, the findings suggest that firms report human rights disclosures to legitimize their firms' position in society. Furthermore, in order for firms to implement this in their annual reports, corporate boards are at the forefront of disclosing human rights-related information. The findings support our proposition indicating that board diversity and independence improve human rights reporting in listed firms in Kenya. Furthermore, the empirical results sheds light on the role of the chairperson in mobilizing board competencies and ensuring human rights reporting form an integral part of corporate reporting in Kenya. This underscores the importance of the chairperson and board members in human rights reporting from a developing country perspective.

We find that board diversity is positively and significantly related to human rights reporting in Kenyan firms. These findings are consistent with the results of other researchers (Barako and Brown, 2008; Branco *et al.*, 2021; García-Sánchez *et al.*, 2019; Khan *et al.*, 2019)

Table 6 First- difference GMM results

Variables	*GMM*
Lagged. Human rights reporting	0.333**(2.05)
Board diversity	0.305***(3.07)
Board independence	0.05 (0.91)
Firm age	0.183 (0.82)
Firm profitability	0.01* (1.80)
Firm size	0.009* (1.81)
Board size	0.004 (0.07)
Year dummies	Yes
No. of observations	547
F-Statistic	9.03***
Groups/Instruments	53/24
AR(1)	0.012
AR(2)	0.549
Hansen statistic	0.384

Notes: ***, **, * are statistical significance at the 1, 5 and 10% levels, respectively; *t*-statistics (in parentheses) are based on White Heteroscedasticity-consistent std. errors; *p*-values reported for AR (1), AR(2) and Hansen Statistic. Dependent variable: human rights reporting indicating that diverse boards are more likely to improve human rights reporting because their diversities endows them with skills and experiences that facilitate the disclosure of human rights-related information. Khan and Sulaiman (2021) indicated that firms may communicate a picture, say of equal opportunity and gender diversity in their reports, but lacking the details and accuracy of how it has been achieved. Indeed, human rights reporting is based on high quality decisions of the board that are realized when they are diverse. Such diverse boards promote better quality discussions and increase the ability of the board to undertake socially responsible activities and make the requisite disclosures (Ramdhony *et al.*, 2021). In tandem with resource dependence viewpoints, diversity bring a variety of information, resources, a broader range of strategic views and insights that are likely to aid in reporting human rights related information. Besides, a diverse board may commit to ensuring that stakeholder needs are considered in strategic decisions, ensuring that firms gain legitimacy. As a result, these findings support the legitimacy theory's proposition that firms disclose information in response to various social and environmental concerns, and that these disclosures help to legitimize the company's action (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; Kotonen, 2009). The study also revealed the importance of independent boards in human rights reporting. Although a few studies have examined human rights reporting, to the best of our knowledge, the role of board independence on human rights reporting has not been given attention. However, it has been linked to CSR reporting (Al Fadli *et al.*, 2020; Fahad and Rahman, 2020; Fernández-Gago *et al.*, 2018). Hence, independent board members tend to use their industry experience and knowledge to pressurize firms to disclose human rights issues in their reports to earn legitimacy (Waweru, 2020) by meeting the social needs of stakeholders. From a theoretical stand point, our findings are consistent with legitimacy propositions which indicate that independent boards use their expertise and compel executives to make human rights disclosures in the annual reports to preserve reputation and image.

The interactions revealed that the ability of board members to influence human rights disclosure in listed firms in Kenya is largely dependent on the chairperson's experience. For instance, an experience chairperson may set agendas on corporate disclosures and initiate board discussions on human rights reporting. The findings support the hypothesis that when a board chairperson is experienced and skilled, board members are more likely to report human rights information. We found that when the chairperson is highly experienced, a diverse board in terms of age, gender, nationality and tenure is more likely to engage in less human rights disclosure in their annual reports. This is rather surprising because one would expect an experienced chairperson to use the key resources brought into the firm by a diverse board to influence human rights reporting. However, research suggests that diversity in the boardroom can lead to communication and coordination difficulties, which can impair board functions (Forbes and Milliken, 1999). Thus, an experienced chairman may prioritize mitigating the challenges of diversity over corporate disclosures such as human rights reporting. We also observed that independent boards perform better in human rights disclosures when the chairperson is experienced. According to resource dependence theory, the chairperson's experience complements the skills and objectivity of the independent board members, resulting in improved human rights disclosure.

Therefore, the findings of this study contribute to the existing literature in two ways: First, our research adds knowledge to the ongoing debate on the determinants of human rights reporting (Branco *et al.*, 2021; Kaspereit *et al.*, 2016), by examining how board diversity and board independence influenced human rights reporting. Second, the paper also contributes to the literature by examining the role of the chairperson experience as an interaction term in the relationship. We conclude that a chairperson endowed with relevant resources such as extensive knowledge and experience in managing boardroom activities and industry dynamics has a voice in providing strategic directions to the board members and executives on corporate practices such as human rights reporting. This has positive implications on legitimacy of the company operations because by supporting disclosure of human rights information in the annual reports, stakeholder concerns are more likely to be recognized and fulfilled in the long-run.

5.1 Theoretical and managerial implications

This study has several implications. First, on theoretical front, this study paper lends support to resource dependence theory by demonstrating that chairperson and board members supply important resources such as links, knowledge, diverse insights and objectivity that may facilitate human rights reporting. Our results confirm the proposition that boards are critical in human rights reporting because listed firms are public in nature it tends to attract a pool of board members who are diverse, experienced and independent thus able to provide advisory services on corporate disclosure policies to the companies they lead. So, this research shows that board members and chairpersons are endowed with unique attributes that may be helpful in formulating policies regarding human rights disclosures. Importantly, we found that chairperson's experience is relevant in ensuring that board attributes are coordinated and used to enhance human rights reporting. Moreover, we found that chairperson's experience moderates the relationship between board attributes and human rights reporting. This finding provides an understanding of how chairperson influences board functions of listed firms in Kenya. In particular, the board chairperson is expected to coordinate and integrate board members' diversity, objectivity and experience in the decision-making process by creating an enabling environment where they feel valued enough to contribute to human rights disclosures. Second, with regard to managerial practice, listed firms in Kenya should place more attention on a board chairperson who is experienced and skilled and can motivate and inspire board members to capitalize on their diversity and independence to be involved in human rights reporting. Equally, it is important to consider diversity and independence during the selections of boards to ensure firms achieve SDGs and promote sustainability for listed firms.

5.2 Limitations and suggestions for further studies

Like all other studies, this research suffers from a number of drawbacks. First and foremost, this is a quantitative study. Future scholars should investigate qualitative analysis to gain a deeper understanding of human rights concerns because matters touching on human rights are better when expressed by the respondents. This research examined two board attributes – board diversity and independence, while controlling other board characteristics. Whereas the results of this study have expanded our understanding on how boards influence human rights reporting, future researchers could nest all board attributes in a single model and test their potential influence on sustainability reporting. There is also opportunity for future researchers to examine other potential interactions such as CEO narcissism, humility and other CEO personal values.

References

Abad, D., Lucas-Pérez, M.E., Minguez-Vera, A. and Yagüe, J. (2017), "Does gender diversity on corporate boards reduce information asymmetry in equity markets?", *BRQ Business Research Quarterly*, Vol. 20 No. 3, pp. 192-205.

Aggarwal, P. and Singh, A.K. (2018), "CSR and sustainability reporting practices in India: an in-depth content analysis of top-listed companies", *Social Responsibility Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 8, pp. 1033-1053.

Ahmad, N.B.J., Rashid, A. and Gow, J. (2017), "Board independence and corporate social responsibility (CSR) reporting in Malaysia", *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 61-85.

Aibar-Guzmán, C., García-Sánchez, I.M. and Salvador-González, C. (2022), "Do codes of conduct really mean a change in corporate practices with regard to human rights? Evidence from the largest garment companies worldwide", *The International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 1-25.

Aiken, L.S., West, S.G. and Reno, R.R. (1991), *Multiple Regression: Testing and Interpreting Interactions: Sage*, 3rd ed., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers, Mahwah, NJ.

Al Fadli, A., Sands, J., Jones, G., Beattie, C. and Pensiero, D. (2020), “Board independence and CSR reporting: pre and post analysis of JCGC 2009”, *International Journal of Law and Management*, Vol. 62 No. 2, pp. 117-138.

Aladwey, L., Elgharbawy, A. and Ganna, M.A. (2021), “Attributes of corporate boards and assurance of corporate social responsibility reporting: evidence from the UK”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 22 No. 4, pp. 748-780.

Al-Mamun, A. and Seamer, M. (2021), “Board of director attributes and CSR engagement in emerging economy firms: evidence from across asia”, *Emerging Markets Review*, Vol. 46, p. 100749.

Amis, J., Barney, J., Mahoney, J.T. and Wang, H. (2020), “From the editors – why we need a theory of stakeholder governance – and why this is a hard problem”, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 45 No. 3, pp. 499-503.

Arellano, M. and Bond, S. (1991), “Some tests of specification for panel data: Monte Carlo evidence and an application to employment equations”, *The Review of Economic Studies*, Vol. 58 No. 2, pp. 277-297.

Areneke, G. and Tunyi, A.A. (2020), “Chairperson and CEO foreignness and CG quality of emerging markets MNCs: moderating role of international board interlocks”, *International Journal of Finance & Economics*, pp. 1-22.

Areneke, G., Yusuf, F. and Kimani, D. (2019), “Anglo-American governance adoption in non-Anglo-American settings”, *Managerial Auditing Journal*, Vol. 34 No. 4, pp. 486-514.

Azam, M., Khalid, M.U. and Zia, S.Z. (2019), “Board diversity and corporate social responsibility: the moderating role of shariah compliance”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 19 No. 6, pp. 1274-1288.

Baik, Y. and Park, Y.-R. (2019), “Managing legitimacy through corporate community involvement: the effects of subsidiary ownership and host country experience in China”, *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, Vol. 36 No. 4, pp. 971-993.

Baker, H.K., Farrelly, G.E. and Edelman, R.B. (1985), “A survey of management views on dividend policy”, *Financial Management*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 78-84.

Banerjee, A., Nordqvist, M. and Hellerstedt, K. (2020), “The role of the board chair – a literature review and suggestions for future research”, *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, Vol. 28 No. 6, pp. 372-405.

Barako, D.G. and Brown, A.M. (2008), “Corporate social reporting and board representation: evidence from the Kenyan banking sector”, *Journal of Management & Governance*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 309-324.

Bezemer, P.J., Nicholson, G. and Pugliese, A. (2018), “The influence of board chairs on director engagement: a case-based exploration of boardroom decision-making”, *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, Vol. 26 No. 3, pp. 219-234.

Blau, P.M. (1977), *Inequality and Heterogeneity: A Primitive Theory of Social Structure*, (Vol7): Free Press New York, NY.

Branco, M.C. and Rodrigues, L.L. (2008), “Social responsibility disclosure: a study of proxies for the public visibility of Portuguese banks”, *The British Accounting Review*, Vol. 40 No. 2, pp. 161-181.

Branco, A.P.C., Bianchi, M.T. and Branco, M.C. (2021), “Board demographic diversity and human rights reporting in Western Europe”, *PSU Research Review*, Vol. ahead-of-print no. ahead-of-print). ISSN: 2399-1747.

Buhmann, K., Jonsson, J. and Fisker, M. (2019), “Do no harm and do more good too: connecting the SDGs with business and human rights and political CSR theory”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 19 No. 3, pp. 389-403.

Čertanec, A. (2021), “Determining the content of corporate reporting on human rights”, *Anali Pravnog Fakulteta u Beogradu*, Vol. 69 No. 4, pp. 813-842.

Chen, Y.C., Hung, M. and Wang, Y. (2018), “The effect of mandatory CSR disclosure on firm profitability and social externalities: evidence from China”, *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, Vol. 65 No. 1, pp. 169-190.

Cheruiyot, T.K. and Maru, L.C. (2014), “Corporate human rights social responsibility and employee job outcomes in Kenya”, *International Journal of Law and Management*, Vol. 56 No. 2, pp. 152-168.

Cheruiyot, T.K. and Tarus, D.K. (2017), “Corporate social responsibility in Kenya: Blessing, curse or necessary evil?”, in Idowu, S., Vertigans, S. and Schiopoiu Burlea, A. (Eds), *Corporate Social Responsibility in Times of Crisis. CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance*, Springer, Cham.

Chintrakarn, P., Chatjuthamard, P. and Jiraporn, P. (2013), “How do entrenched boards reduce human rights violations? An empirical analysis”, *Applied Economics Letters*, Vol. 20 No. 12, pp. 1178-1182.

Cormier, D., Ledoux, M.J. and Magnan, M. (2011), “The informational contribution of social and environmental disclosures for investors”, *Management Decision*, Vol. 49 No. 8, pp. 1276-1304.

Cucari, N., Esposito de Falco, S. and Orlando, B. (2018), “Diversity of board of directors and environmental social governance: evidence from Italian listed companies”, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 250-266.

D’Amato, A. and Falivena, C. (2020), “Corporate social responsibility and firm value: do firm size and age matter? Empirical evidence from European listed companies”, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 909-924.

Darmadi, S. (2011), “Board diversity and firm performance: the Indonesian evidence”, *Corporate Ownership and Control*, Vol. 8, available at: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1727195

Dawkins, C. and Ngunjiri, F.W. (2008), “Corporate social responsibility reporting in South Africa: a descriptive and comparative analysis”, *Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 45 No. 3, pp. 286-307.

de Jong, M.D. and van der Meer, M. (2017), “How does it fit? Exploring the congruence between organizations and their corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 143 No. 1, pp. 71-83.

Deegan, C.M., Rankin, M. and Tobin, J. (2002), “An examination of the corporate social and environmental disclosures of BHP from 1983–1997 – a test of legitimacy theory”, *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 3, pp. 312-43.

Deva, S. (2003), “Human rights violations by multinational corporations and international law: where from here”, *Conn. J. Int’l L*, Vol. 19, pp. 1-57.

Dobbin, F. and Jung, J. (2011), “Board diversity and corporate performance: filling in the gaps: corporate board gender diversity and stock performance: the competence gap or institutional investor bias”, *North Carolina Law Review*, Vol. 89 No. 3, pp. 809-839.

Dowling, J. and Pfeffer, J. (1975), “Organizational legitimacy: social values and organizational behavior”, *The Pacific Sociological Review*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 122-136.

Effah, N.A.A., Kyei, B.T., Kyeremeh, G. and Ekor, N.W.K. (2022), “Boardroom characteristics and forward-looking information disclosure: evidence from Ghana”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, (ahead-of-print). ISSN: 1472-0701.

Emeseh, E. and Songi, O. (2014), “CSR, human rights abuse and sustainability report accountability”, *International Journal of Law and Management*, Vol. 56 No. 2, pp. 136-151.

Epstein, M.J. and Buhovac, A. (2014), *Making Sustainability Work 2nd Edition: Best Practices in Managing and Measuring Corporate Social, Environmental, and Economic Impacts*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco (CA, US).

Fahad, P. and Rahman, P.M. (2020), “Impact of corporate governance on CSR disclosure”, *International Journal of Disclosure and Governance*, Vol. 17 Nos 2/3, pp. 155-167.

Faracik, B. (2017), *Implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights*, European Parliament, PE, 578.

Fernández-Gago, R., Cabeza-García, L. and Nieto, M. (2018), “Independent directors’ background and CSR disclosure”, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 25 No. 5, pp. 991-1001.

Flannery, M.J. and Hankins, K.W. (2013), “Estimating dynamic panel models in corporate finance”, *Journal of Corporate Finance*, Vol. 19, pp. 1-19.

Forbes, D.P. and Milliken, F.J. (1999), “Cognition and corporate governance: understanding boards of directors as strategic decision-making groups”, *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 24 No. 3, pp. 489-505.

Frias-Aceituno, J.V., Rodriguez-Ariza, L. and Garcia-Sanchez, I.M. (2013), "The role of the board in the dissemination of integrated corporate social reporting", *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 219-233.

Galbreath, J. (2010), "Drivers of corporate social responsibility: the role of formal strategic planning and firm culture", *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 511-525.

Galbreath, J. (2018), "Is board gender diversity linked to financial performance? The mediating mechanism of CSR", *Business & Society*, Vol. 57 No. 5, pp. 863-889.

Galia, F. and Zenou, E. (2012), "Board composition and forms of innovation: does diversity make a difference?", *European J. of International Management*, Vol. 6 No. 6, pp. 630-650.

Gallhofer, S., Haslam, J. and Van Der Walt, S. (2011), "Accountability and transparency in relation to human rights: a critical perspective reflecting upon accounting, corporate responsibility and ways forward in the context of globalisation", *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, Vol. 22 No. 8, pp. 765-780.

García-Sánchez, I.-M., Suárez-Fernández, O. and Martínez-Ferrero, J. (2019), "Female directors and impression management in sustainability reporting", *International Business Review*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 359-374.

Garcia-Torea, N., Fernandez-Feijoo, B. and de la Cuesta, M. (2016), "Board of director's effectiveness and the stakeholder perspective of corporate governance: do effective boards promote the interests of shareholders and stakeholders?", *BRQ Business Research Quarterly*, Vol. 19 No. 4, pp. 246-260.

Garcia-Torea, N., Fernandez-Feijoo, B. and De La Cuesta, M. (2020), "CSR reporting communication: defective reporting models or misapplication?", *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 952-968.

George, G., Howard-Grenville, J., Joshi, A. and Tihanyi, L. (2016), "Understanding and tackling societal grand challenges through management research", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 59 No. 6, pp. 1880-1895.

Gold, S., Muthuri, J.N. and Reiner, G. (2018), "Collective action for tackling "wicked" social problems: a system dynamics model for corporate community involvement", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 179, pp. 662-673.

Haász, V. (2013), "The role of national human rights institutions in the implementation of the UN guiding principles", *Human Rights Review*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 165-187.

Hák, T., Janoušková, S. and Moldan, B. (2016), "Sustainable development goals: a need for relevant indicators", *Ecological Indicators*, Vol. 60, pp. 565-573.

Halati, A. and He, Y. (2018), "Intersection of economic and environmental goals of sustainable development initiatives", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 189, pp. 813-829.

Hamid, F.Z.A. (2004), "Corporate social disclosure by banks and finance companies: Malaysian evidence", *Corporate Ownership and Control*, Vol. 1 No. 4, pp. 118-130.

Haniffa, R.M. and Cooke, T.E. (2005), "The impact of culture and governance on corporate social reporting", *Journal of Accounting and Public Policy*, Vol. 24 No. 5, pp. 391-430.

Harjoto, M., Laksmana, I. and Lee, R. (2015), "Board diversity and corporate social responsibility", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 132 No. 4, pp. 641-660.

Harrison, J.S., Phillips, R.A. and Freeman, R.E. (2020), "On the 2019 business roundtable statement on the purpose of a corporation", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 46 No. 7, pp. 1223-1237.

Hess, D. (2019), "The transparency trap: non-financial disclosure and the responsibility of business to respect human rights", *American Business Law Journal*, Vol. 56 No. 1, pp. 5-53.

Hillman, A.J. (2005), "Politicians on the board of directors: do connections affect the bottom line?", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 464-481.

Hillman, A.J. (2015), "Board diversity: beginning to unpeel the onion", *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, Vol. 23 No. 2, pp. 104-107.

Hillman, A.J. and Dalziel, T. (2003), "Boards of directors and firm performance: integrating agency and resource dependence perspectives", *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 383-396.

Hillman, A.J., Cannella, Jr,A.A., and Harris, I.C. (2002), "Women and racial minorities in the boardroom: how do directors differ?", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 28 No. 6, pp. 747-763.

Hillman, A.J., Withers, M.C. and Collins, B.J. (2009), “Resource dependence theory: a review”, *Journal of Management*, Vol. 35 No. 6, pp. 1404-1427.

Hirschman, A.O. (1964), “The stability of neutralism: a geometrical note”, *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 54 No. 2, pp. 94-100.

Ho, C.A. and Williams, S.M. (2003), “International comparative analysis of the association between board structure and the efficiency of value added by a firm from its physical capital and intellectual capital resources”, *The International Journal of Accounting*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 465-491.

Hoang, T.C., Abeysekera, I. and Ma, S. (2018), “Board diversity and corporate social disclosure: evidence from Vietnam”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 151 No. 3, pp. 833-852.

Hossain, M.M., Momin, M.A., Rowe, A.L. and Quaddus, M. (2017), “Corporate social and environmental reporting practices: a case of listed companies in Bangladesh”, *Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 138-165.

Hsiao, C. (2007), “Panel data analysis – advantages and challenges”, *TEST*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 1-22.

Htay, S.N.N., Rashid, H.M.A., Adnan, M.A. and Meera, A.K.M. (2012), “Impact of corporate governance on social and environmental information disclosure of Malaysian listed banks: panel data analysis”, *Asian Journal of Finance & Accounting*, Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 1-24.

Islam, M.A., Haque, S. and Roberts, R. (2017), “Human rights performance disclosure by companies with operations in high risk countries: evidence from the Australian minerals sector”, *Australian Accounting Review*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 34-51.

Ives, K. and Buchner, M. (2011), “Implementing CSR in South Sudan: challenges faced by the oil sector in implementing international human rights: integrity/Norwegian”, People’s Aid.

Jägers, N. (2020), “Sustainable development goals and the business and human rights discourse: ships passing in the night?”, *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 42 No. 1, pp. 145-173.

Jessop, A., Wilson, N., Bardecki, M. and Searcy, C. (2019), “Corporate environmental disclosure in India: an analysis of multinational and domestic agrochemical corporations”, *Sustainability*, Vol. 11 No. 18.

Jizi, M. (2017), “The influence of board composition on sustainable development disclosure”, *Business Strategy and the Environment*, Vol. 26 No. 5, pp. 640-655.

Jizi, M.I., Salama, A., Dixon, R. and Stratling, R. (2014), “Corporate governance and corporate social responsibility disclosure: evidence from the US banking sector”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 125 No. 4, pp. 601-615.

Johnson, S.G., Schnatterly, K. and Hill, A.D. (2013), “Board composition beyond independence: social capital, human capital, and demographics”, *Journal of Management*, Vol. 39 No. 1, pp. 232-262.

Jose, P.E. (2008), ModGraph-I: a programme to compute cell means for the graphical display of moderational analyses: the internet version, Version 2.0, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand, Retrieved June, 4, 2009.

Jose, P.E. (2018), *Mediation and Moderation. The Reviewer’s Guide to Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences*, 2nd ed., Routledge, pp. 248-259.

Kakabadse, A. and Kakabadse, N. (2007), “The return of the chairman”, *Business Strategy Review*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 62-65.

Kakabadse, A., Kakabadse, N.K. and Barratt, R. (2006), “Chairman and chief executive officer (CEO): that sacred and secret relationship”, *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 134-150.

Kakabadse, A., Ward, K., Korac-Kakabadse, N. and Bowman, C. (2001), “Role and contribution of non-executive directors”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 4-8.

Kanadli, S.B., Zhang, P. and Kakabadse, N.K. (2020), “How job-related diversity affects boards’ strategic tasks performance: the role of chairperson”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 583-599.

Kaspereit, T., Lopatta, K. and Matolcsy, Z. (2016), “Board gender diversity and dimensions of corporate social responsibility”, *Journal of Management and Sustainability*, Vol. 6 No. 2, pp. 50-66.

Katmon, N., Mohamad, Z.Z., Norwani, N.M. and Al Farooque, O. (2019), “Comprehensive board diversity and quality of corporate social responsibility disclosure: evidence from an emerging market”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 157 No. 2, pp. 447-481.

Kaymak, T. and Bektas, E. (2017), “Corporate social responsibility and governance: information disclosure in multinational corporations”, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 24 No. 6, pp. 555-569.

Khan, H.U.Z. (2010), “The effect of corporate governance elements on corporate social responsibility (CSR) reporting: empirical evidence from private commercial banks of Bangladesh”, *International Journal of Law and Management*, Vol. 52 No. 2, pp. 82-109.

Khan, M. and Sulaiman, R.B. (2021), “On the linkage between CEOs’ statements and CSR reporting: an analysis of visuals and verbal texts”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 21 No. 3, pp. 515-535.

Khan, I., Khan, I. and Senturk, I. (2019), “Board diversity and quality of CSR disclosure: evidence from Pakistan”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 19 No. 6, pp. 1187-1203.

Kiliç, M., Kuzey, C. and Uyar, A. (2015), “The impact of ownership and board structure on corporate social responsibility (CSR) reporting in the Turkish banking industry”, *Corporate Governance*, Vol. 15 No. 3, pp. 357-374.

Kimani, D., Ullah, S., Kodwani, D. and Akhtar, P. (2021), “Analysing corporate governance and accountability practices from an African neo-patrimonialism perspective: insights from Kenya”, *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, Vol. 78, p. 102260.

Kimotho, W. and Ogol, D. (2021), “Exploring the drivers of gendered grievance mechanisms: examples from the agribusiness, extractive and wind power sectors in Kenya”, *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, Vol. 39 No. 3, pp. 240-250.

Kor, Y.Y. and Misangyi, V.F. (2008), “Outside directors’ industry-specific experience and firms’ liability of newness”, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 29 No. 12, pp. 1345-1355.

Kor, Y.Y. and Sundaramurthy, C. (2009), “Experience-based human capital and social capital of outside directors”, *Journal of Management*, Vol. 35 No. 4, pp. 981-1006.

Kotonen, U. (2009), “Formal corporate social responsibility reporting in finnish listed companies”, *Journal of Applied Accounting Research*, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 176-207.

Krause, R. (2017), “Being the CEO’s boss: an examination of board chair orientations”, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 38 No. 3, pp. 697-713.

Krause, R., Semadeni, M. and Cannella Jr, A.A. (2013), “External COO/presidents as expert directors: a new look at the service role of boards”, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 34 No. 13, pp. 1628-1641.

Kyaw, K., Olugbode, M. and Petracci, B. (2017), “Can board gender diversity promote corporate social performance?”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 17 No. 5, pp. 789-802.

Liang, X., Dai, L. and Xie, S. (2022), “Examining the social pressures on voluntary CSR reporting: the roles of interlocking directors”, *Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 3, pp. 653-679.

Liao, L., Luo, L. and Tang, Q. (2015), “Gender diversity, board independence, environmental committee and greenhouse gas disclosure”, *The British Accounting Review*, Vol. 47 No. 4, pp. 409-424.

Maconachie, R. and Hilson, G. (2016), “Re-thinking the child labor “problem” in rural Sub-Saharan africa: the case of Sierra Leone’s half shovels”, *World Development*, Vol. 78, pp. 136-147.

Manita, R., Bruna, M.G., Dang, R. and Houanti, L.H. (2018), “Board gender diversity and ESG disclosure: evidence from the USA”, *Journal of Applied Accounting Research*, Vol. 19 No. 2, pp. 206-224.

Matten, D. (2006), “Why do companies engage in corporate social responsibility? Background, reasons and basic concepts”, *The ICCA Handbook on Corporate Social Responsibility*, 3, 28. John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, England.

Michelon, G., Pilonato, S. and Ricceri, F. (2015), “CSR reporting practices and the quality of disclosure: an empirical analysis”, *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, Vol. 33, pp. 59-78.

Morhardt, J.E. (2009), “General disregard for details of GRI human rights reporting by large corporations”, *Global Business Review*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 141-158.

Murray, J. (2017), “Adopting stakeholder advisory boards”, *American Business Law Journal*, Vol. 54 No. 1, pp. 61-106.

Muthuri, J.N. and Gilbert, V. (2011), “An institutional analysis of corporate social responsibility in Kenya”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 98 No. 3, pp. 467-483.

Mwanza, R. (2020), “Toxic spaces, community voices, and the promise of environmental human rights: lessons on the Owino Uhuru pollution incident in Kenya”, *Nordic Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 279-304.

Nurhayati, R., Taylor, G., Rusmin, R., Tower, G. and Chatterjee, B. (2016), “Factors determining social and environmental reporting by Indian textile and apparel firms: a test of legitimacy theory”, *Social Responsibility Journal*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 167-189.

Othman, R. and Ameer, R. (2010), “Environmental disclosures of palm oil plantation companies in Malaysia: a tool for stakeholder engagement”, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 52-62.

Paine, L.S. (2000), “Does ethics pay?”, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 319-330.

Park, S.K. (2014), “*Human Rights Reporting as Self-Interest: The Integrative and Expressive Dimensions of Corporate Disclosure Law, Business and Human Rights*, Edward Elgar Publishing.

Parsa, S., Roper, I., Muller-Camen, M. and Szigetvari, E. (2018), “Have labour practices and human rights disclosures enhanced corporate accountability? The case of the GRI framework”, *In Accounting Forum*, Vol. 42 No. 1, pp. 47-64.

Peterson, R.S. (2021), *Leadership in the Boardroom: Effective Directors*, (pp. 87-91): Routledge.

Pfeffer, J. and Salancik, G.R. (1978), “Social control of organizations”, *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*, New York, NY, Harper and Row, pp. 39-22.

Pfeffer, J. and Salancik, G.R. (2003), *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*, Stanford University Press.

Post, C., Rahman, N. and Rubow, E. (2011), “Green governance: boards of directors’ composition and environmental corporate social responsibility”, *Business & Society*, Vol. 50 No. 1, pp. 189-223.

Prado-Lorenzo, J.M., García-Sánchez, I.M. and Gallego-Álvarez, I. (2012), “Effects of activist shareholding on corporate social responsibility reporting practices: an empirical study in Spain”, *The bi-Annual Academic Publication of Universidad ESAN*, Vol. 17 No. 32.

Probohudono, A.N., Sudibyo, Y.A., Atmaji, A. and Noor, M. (2015), “Human rights disclosure practices. Does ownership matter? Evidence from Indonesia”, *Corporate Board Role Duties and Composition*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 149-158.

Ramasastry, A. (2015), “Corporate social responsibility versus business and human rights: bridging the gap between responsibility and accountability”, *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 14 No. 2, pp. 237-259.

Ramdhony, D., Rashid, A. and Gow, J. (2021), “Do gender-diverse boards over-invest in corporate social responsibility (CSR)?”, *Gender, Technology and Development*, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp. 43-67.

Rao, K. and Tilt, C. (2016), “Board diversity and CSR reporting: an Australian study”, *Meditari Accountancy Research*, Vol. 24 No. 2, pp. 182-210.

Rashed, A.H. and Shah, A. (2020), “The role of private sector in the implementation of sustainable development goals”, *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, pp. 1-18.

Rashid, A. (2015), “Revisiting agency theory: evidence of board independence and agency cost from Bangladesh”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 130 No. 1, pp. 181-198.

Rashid, A. (2021), “Board independence and corporate social responsibility reporting: mediating role of stakeholder power”, *Management Research Review*, Vol. 44 No. 8, pp. 1217-1240.

Roodman, D. (2009b), “A note on the theme of too many instruments”, *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, Vol. 71 No. 1, pp. 135-158.

Ruggie, J.G., Caroline, R. and Davis, R. (2021), “Ten years after: from UN guiding principles to multi-fiduciary obligations”, *Business and Human Rights Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 2, pp. 179-197.

Rupley, K.H., Brown, D. and Marshall, R.S. (2012), “Governance, media and the quality of environmental disclosure”, *Journal of Accounting and Public Policy*, Vol. 31 No. 6, pp. 610-640.

Searcy, C., Dixon, S.M. and Neumann, W.P. (2016), “The use of work environment performance indicators in corporate social responsibility reporting”, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 112, pp. 2907-2921.

Tapver, T., Laidroo, L. and Gurvitš-Suits, N.A. (2020), “Banks’ CSR reporting–do women have a say?”, *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 639-651.

UN (2011), *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' Framework*, United Nations Human Rights Council. UN Doc. HR/PUB/11/04.

Van den Berghe, L.A.A. and Baelden, T. (2005), "The complex relation between director independence and board effectiveness", *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 5 No. 5, pp. 58-83.

Van der Ploeg, L. and Vanclay, F. (2017), "A tool for improving the management of social and human rights risks at project sites: the human rights sphere", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 142, pp. 4072-4084.

Waweru, N. (2020), "Business ethics disclosure and corporate governance in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)", *International Journal of Accounting & Information Management*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 363-387.

Waweru, N., Mangena, M. and Riro, G. (2019), "Corporate governance and corporate internet reporting in Sub-Saharan Africa: the case of Kenya and Tanzania", *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, Vol. 19 No. 4, pp. 751-773.

Wettstein, F., Giuliani, E., Santangelo, G.D. and Stahl, G.K. (2019), "International business and human rights: a research agenda", *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 54 No. 1, pp. 54-65.

Windmeijer, F. (2018), "Testing over-and under identification in linear models, with applications to dynamic panel data and asset-pricing models", University of Bristol Department of Economics Working Paper.

Wintoki, M.B., Linck, J.S. and Netter, J.M. (2012), "Endogeneity and the dynamics of internal corporate governance", *Journal of Financial Economics*, Vol. 105 No. 3, pp. 581-606.

Wolf, J. (2013), "Improving the sustainable development of firms: the role of employees", *Business Strategy and the Environment*, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 92-108.

Wright, M. (2008), "Corporations and human rights", *A Survey on the Scope and Patterns of Alleged Corporate-Related Human Rights Abuses. Working Paper for the Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative, N. 44. Cambridge MA*, JF Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Further reading

Boubaker, S., Cellier, A., Manita, R. and Saeed, A. (2020), "Does corporate social responsibility reduce financial distress risk?", *Economic Modelling*, Vol. 91, pp. 835-851.

Certo, S.T. (2003), "Influencing initial public offering investors with prestige: signaling with board structures", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 432-446.

Deegan, C. (2002), "Introduction: the legitimising effect of social and environmental disclosures–a theoretical foundation", *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 3, pp. 282-311.

Hamrouni, A., Boussaada, R. and Toumi, N.B.F. (2019), "Corporate social responsibility disclosure and debt financing", *Journal of Applied Accounting Research*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 394-415.

Hillman, A.J., Cannella, A.A. and Paetzold, R.L. (2000), "The resource dependence role of corporate directors: strategic adaptation of board composition in response to environmental change", *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 235-256.

Searcy, C. and Buslovich, R. (2014), "Corporate perspectives on the development and use of sustainability reports", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 121 No. 2, pp. 149-169.

Corresponding author

Daniel Kipkirong Tarus can be contacted at: kdtarus@gmail.com