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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES  
WINCHESTER SCHOOL OF ART**

**CREATIVITY IN LEBANESE FAMILY BUSINESSES: THE ROLE OF  
CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE DESIGN SECTOR**

by

**Roula Ghazi Al Kadamani**

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## **ABSTRACT**

Diversity management plays a vital role in improving human creativity and increasing business performance within the local or global contexts. Recent studies have gathered evidence on how managers use their positional power to create “inclusive” or “assimilative” cultural norms through diversity management practices. This thesis aims to explore the relationship between diversity management, cultural diversity, and creative performance. Through a systematic review of relevant literature on diversity management, culture, and creativity, the researcher identifies some important key reasons for local and international design companies to implement diversity management in their practices.

This research study proposes a conceptual framework, which illustrates the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in the Lebanese family design businesses. The conceptual framework is evaluated within the context of four organisations operating in Lebanon. Within each organisation, semi-structured interviews and observation were conducted with employers and employees to elicit their understanding of cultural diversity, diversity management initiatives, and creative performance for this research, taking into consideration the research questions and analysing secondary documentation data related to the examined phenomenon. Empirical findings revealed that diversity management is not implemented or practised within the Lebanese family design businesses.

This thesis identified and discussed the factors affecting the role of diversity management within and across the four firms investigated. This research contributes to knowledge through presenting the conceptual framework, which uncovers the role of diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in the Lebanese family design businesses. Furthermore, this research contributes to managerial practices, especially for Human Resource, (HR) managers and employers seeking to assume more strategic roles in promoting creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, this research study develops a consistent framework for understanding the importance of diversity management, improving creativity arising from diversity, and maximising the access of talented employees to Lebanese family design businesses.

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## DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Roula Ghazi Al Kadamani, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

**Creativity in Lebanese family businesses: The role of cultural diversity in the design sector.**

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission:

Signed: Roula Ghazi Al Kadamani .....

Date:15/06/2018.....

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### Abbreviations

AA

AM3 or company 3

BR2 or company 2

CAS

CIA

CIPD

DCMS

DEIF

EC

EEO

ERGO

ETF

EOWA

EU

GDP

GTCi

GVA

HR

HRM

ICT

IDAL

IEF

IMF

IOF

IP

FFI

LEB4 or company 4

MBA

MEHE

MENA

NGOs

OECD

PhD

### Definitions

Affirmative Action

American

British

Central Administration of Statistics

Central Intelligence Agency

Chartered Institute of Personnel Development

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Directory of Exports & Industrial Firms in Lebanon

European Commission

Employment Opportunity Policy

Ethics and Research Governance Online

European Training Foundation

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act

European Union

Gross domestic product

Global Talent Competitiveness Index

Growth value added

Human Resources

Human Resource Management

Information and communications technology

Investment Development of Authority of Lebanon

Index of Economic Freedom

International Monetary Fund

International Organisation of La Francophonie

Patents or intellectual property

Family Firm Institute

Lebanese

Master of Business Administration

Ministry of Education and Higher Education

Middle East and North Africa

Non-governmental Organizations

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

Doctor of Philosophy

<b>PSD</b>	EU Private Sector Development Programme
<b>PWC</b>	PricewaterhouseCoopers
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and Development
<b>RQ</b>	Research Question
<b>SA1 or company 1</b>	Saudi Arabian
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCTD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	The United Nations International Children's Fund
<b>UNIDO</b>	The United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>WIPO</b>	World Intellectual Property Organization



## **1.0. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Lebanon is a small country with a diverse community, which has unique values, perceptions, and behaviours (CAS, 2015). Despite the fact that Lebanese people live in a diverse community, they do not practise diversity in their daily life (Barakat, 1993; Al-Ariss, 2010; Krayem, 2012). Lebanese people are religious and monotheistic as their beliefs, culture, political views, and religious practices do not support diversity (Barakat, 1993; Al-Ariss, 2010; Krayem, 2012). Historical sensitivities have also resulted in challenges and social tensions in Lebanon, including those related to political and religious power (Barakat, 1993; see section 1.6.1). Lebanon has a sectarian environment and there has been a significant decrease in gender and religious inequality within its socio-political system (see section 1.6.1). These inequalities result in discrimination, particularly in the employment fields in Lebanon (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Al-Ariss, 2010). Therefore, the existence of gender and religious inequalities does not encourage diversity in the Lebanese society. If Lebanese family design businesses fostered a diverse environment by reducing these inequalities, they could promote diversity within the creative sector.

Lebanon shares a sectarian system in the Middle East countries that is based on ethnic or cultural origins or on powerful families or clusters of families, resulting in conflict between religious and political views (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Al-Ariss, 2010). Lebanese people perceive that they share an ancestry and culture that competes for political sway and resources within the Lebanese state (e.g., Presidency.gov. 1990; Hanf 1993; Krayem 2012). The family unit is usually the only intact institution capable of sustaining innovative activities in Lebanese culture and organisations (Krayem, 2012). Most of the private sector carries out similar commercial, political, financial, and management activities in the Lebanese market (Al-Ariss, 2010; ETF, 2015). In Lebanon, family businesses play an important role in the economy because they represent 85% of the private sector, accounting for 1.05 million out of 1.24 million jobs (e.g., Fahed-Sreih and Pistrui, 2012). If the Lebanese family design businesses can enhance the Lebanese

economy, they can foster a diverse workforce and career opportunities to overcome employment challenges (Cox and Blake, 1991; Haltiwanger *et al.*, 2010; Mor-Barak, 2014). Thus, it is essential to provide evidence that diversity has a pivotal role to play in an organisation in attracting talented individuals who can most effectively contribute to the organisation and enhance its competitive advantage.

Lebanese cultural identity emphasises political sectarianism, religion, and authority, and these determine the importance of traditions and values in the community (Barakat 1993; Krayem 2012). The Lebanese constitution of 1926 stated that ‘temporarily, with the intention of assuring justice and harmony, the communities will be equitably represented in public employment and the composition of ministries’ (Presidency.gov, 1990; see Appendix C). Nevertheless, the inequality in Lebanon continues in both public and private organisations (Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010) and various forms of discrimination have fuelled insecurity for both Lebanese citizens and other nationals (e.g., Barakat 1993; Krayem 2012). Despite Lebanon’s attempts to reduce the number of discriminatory laws and regulations that exist, the country has not been actively engaged in promoting effective implementation of diversity management (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). Diversity management is becoming increasingly important in organisations (e.g., Cox and Blake, 1991; Mor-Barak, 2014). Diversity management also focuses on enhancing profitability through the fostering of social justice in the family businesses (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014). If the Lebanese family design businesses can foster an inclusive culture within their practices, they can promote a diverse workforce, which will help to create a more inclusive society.

Diversity management practices emerged as a concept from the United States of America, (USA) and the United Kingdom, (UK) and drew attention to significant changes in the demographics of the workforce and its implications for business (e.g., Loden and Rosener, 1991; Liff, 1996). The interest in diversity management has spread in recent years (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Özbilgin and Syed, 2010; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012). Diversity management has become a key managerial response to changing economic and social factors perceived as affecting

organisational competitiveness (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Özbilgin and Syed, 2010; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012). As Healy *et al.* (2011) point out, diversity management, with its associated practice of business case arguments, has been construed as ‘a rational response to a competitive labour market’ (p. 10). Many practitioners that engage in diversity management approaches, have reviewed the literature on diversity discourses and have suggested that Western companies can manage employees from a diverse cultural background in their organisations (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009; Özbilgin and Syed, 2010; Healy *et al.*, 2011; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012). This diversity discourse is assumed to be more understandable and appealing to managers, as well as being a closer fit with the discussion and practices associated with human resource management, (HRM) (e.g., Özbilgin and Tatli, 2007, 2012; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2009). Diversity management practices are vital in contemporary organisations (Cox and Blake, 1991; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012; Mor-Barak, 2014) as they allow employees to bring their unique backgrounds into the workplace (visible and invisible differences). For example, race/ethnicity, or gender or different perspectives/opinions can lead to creativity that will produce benefits for the organisation (e.g., Cox, 2001; Thomas *et al.*, 2002; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2008). Gender and religion play key roles in diversity management for many organisations (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010). Some researchers focus on different diversity dimensions such as age, education, experiences, and qualifications, which are also becoming central to the achievement of a diverse organisation (e.g., Cook and Saini, 2010).

Many organisations are therefore aiming for a more diverse and inclusive culture, which is essential to develop and promote different skills and perspectives to achieve fundamental organisational change (e.g., Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012). The adoption of diversity management practices helps to develop skills and experiences and create new ideas within an organisation (Tomlinson, 2007). These skills and abilities of employees lead to increased creativity in the workplace, as new ideas are harnessed for the encouragement of diversity and the profitability of the organisation (Bilton, 2007). Bilton (2007) argues that the relationship between creativity and management in organisations plays an important role in employee performance and

creativity. Creativity is a key ingredient into managing diversity and enhancing individuals' skills and abilities to create and retain new ideas within a diverse workforce (Bilton, 2007).

Implementing diversity management practices gives companies a competitive advantage in areas such as problem-solving, intellectual property, and rewards for idea generation (see Chapter 2). However, the challenge of diversity management practices is to break the harmful cycle that equates cultural difference with social/economic disadvantages.

Therefore, the emphasis on the business advantage of diversity management 'is probably a good motivator for companies to enact diversity programs, it does not mean that moral and ethical missions should be neglected or overlooked' (Mor-Barak, 2014, p. 235).

Diversity management becomes vital in organisations, particularly in the Lebanese family design businesses (local or international firms) in order to manage diversity and enhance creativity in the workplace (e.g., Cox, 2001; Mor-Barak, 2015).

The researcher's choice of the design companies to be studied is significant as it is important to choose to follow up lines of interest and to build expertise in the field in which they work. Furthermore, the researcher selected the design sector for the study, as there is a lack of academic research on the Lebanese family design businesses. Growing up in a family business environment, the researcher worked in the field of interior and architectural design during her undergraduate studies in Lebanon. Before travelling and pursuing postgraduate studies in design management in 2013 in the UK, the researcher worked for seven years with top global and local furniture firms in Lebanon. These experiences have provided the researcher with a unique opportunity to become involved in this research study, explore the topic in a greater depth, and become engaged after leaving the field for three years to see the challenges and opportunities within local and international interior and architectural practices, which include furniture firms operating in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon. Therefore, this research study seeks to contribute to the knowledge of the Lebanese family design businesses.

Creativity is complex, and numerous studies on creativity within organisations have been conducted in Western countries (Hawkin, 2001; Bilton, 2007; Haltiwanger *et al.*, 2010; Hartley *et al.*, 2013). However, only a limited amount of research has been undertaken in Middle Eastern countries (e.g., Özbilgin and Tatli, 2008; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012), which includes Lebanon. Western and Eastern perspectives provide different views on creativity and present key directions for future research in Lebanon, the Middle East and the rest of the world. This research highlights aspects relating to the field of creativity, which requires more in-depth research in Lebanon and the Middle Eastern countries. It makes use of various studies to understand the impact of cultural diversity on creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 2). The research study, therefore, investigates the relationships between creativity, culture, and diversity practised by employers and employees.

The research study proposes creating a conceptual framework to explore the key relationship between cultural diversity influences, diversity management perspectives, and creative performance within the Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.2). Furthermore, this research study investigates the engagement of employees (family and non-family members) based on age, experience, gender, religion, and the level of qualifications of employees in order to manage diversity and foster creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. This research study, therefore, seeks to identify the critical factors influencing culture, diversity management perspectives, and creative performance in the Lebanese family design businesses. It aims to examine how a diverse workforce (family and non-family members) within the Lebanese family design businesses can have a positive impact on creativity and support a flexible and productive business environment (e.g., Jones, 2005). The research study also attempts to understand the findings regarding the impact of diversity management on creative performance, which is a knowledge gap in relation to the Lebanese family design businesses.



## 1.2. Problem Statement

Lebanon faces severe resource and structural constraints that have delayed required legal and regulatory reforms (ETF, 2015). In addition, the Lebanese government has failed to integrate diversity management approaches into most public and private sectors due to a lack of research on culture, creativity, and diversity in the country (Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). More recent information on family businesses in Lebanon, which was gathered to better understand their distribution (Fahed-Sreih, 2005; ETF, 2015) shows that Lebanon lacks diversification of the production base in terms of value added and growth. The Lebanese government has failed to provide training and skills development, attract investment, and enhance the creativity strategy in science and technology research and enterprise development (CAS, 2015; ETF, 2015; Ministry of Labour, 2015). However, there are few examples of diversity management practices in Lebanon, even though diversity, equality, and non-discrimination policies are viewed as controversial or as sensitive issues within the Middle East context (Syed and Özbilgin, 2009; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010).

Diversity management practices generate a massive complexity for family businesses across the world, and this is similar in Lebanon, where family firms have been predominant since the mid-1990s (after the civil war), as noted by Fahed-Sreid (2005, 2006). Although it is a multicultural country, diversity remains underrepresented, resulting in the decline of diversity initiatives in the Lebanese organisations (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). These factors have caused severe problems for the advancement of the Lebanese family design businesses. Research is required to establish the link between diversity and creativity in Lebanon. If there were a positive link, then family businesses would have the motivation to improve performance by increasing diversity.

At the group and organisational levels, diversity management is a new research topic in Lebanon. Western or Asian countries, on the other hand, have been widely recognised for their successes in establishing diversity management practices that streamline business processes, provide training and skills development, and attract employees from different

cultural backgrounds (e.g., Tatli and Özbilgin, 2009, 2012). During and after the civil war, the Lebanese government did not coordinate with small and medium enterprises, (SMEs) to establish innovative and competitive businesses (ETF, 2015). In particular, the Ministry of Economy of Trade did not facilitate the development of technical specialists, formal education levels, or managerial skills in most family and non-family firms (ETF, 2015). The next section presents the research questions.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

A research question, (RQ) provides a clear and effective analysis of the literature review, and defines the purpose of the research and the research topic. The research questions are as follows:

- RQ (1): How does the Lebanese culture affect diversity and creativity in the family design business's structures?
- RQ (2): To what extent do the Lebanese family design business's structures provide equal opportunities to diverse workers?
- RQ (3): To what extent do the Lebanese family design businesses encourage creative performance?

### **1.4. Purpose of the Study**

This research study aims to identify the importance of diversity management practices in organisations and, in particular, in the Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 2). The study examines and compares local and international furniture firms, which are part of the architectural and design sectors operating in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon. The research seeks to identify how diversity management could improve performance in the Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.2). Four organisations from the creative industries (furniture companies) have participated in this research study to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance (see Chapter 3, Table 3.1).

Choosing the design sector has helped the researcher to contribute to the knowledge about her discipline and the interest in the interior architecture and design fields, including the chosen topic and the place of research (Lebanon). The motivation of the researcher is to conduct her own research to improve her own practice and to address an issue or problem of the diversity management practices within the Lebanese family design businesses. The purpose of this research study is to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity, and to enhance the researcher's understanding in the research field (e.g., understanding of culture, diversity management, and creativity). The selection of the design sector (i.e. furniture companies) has helped the researcher to answer and develop qualitative research questions and methods, uncover the existing reality within the Lebanese context, and understand meanings of diversity management and creativity from the view of the research participants.

According to IDAL (2016), Lebanon is often considered as a European and Asia's gateway to Western countries because it has a free limited and small art market. Moreover, Lebanon consists of different ethnic and religious groups and has a diverse population. Beirut is considered to be a new destination for creativity in the Middle East (IDAL, 2016). The origins of the country have produced a high level of cultural activities, including the festivals, musical performances, and literature as well as different types of food (Najjar, 2007). The interaction between the government and creative sectors creates an environment that makes designers want to stay in Beirut. Florida (2007) argues that creative individuals will find relevant jobs associated with their educational level and values in their own city.

In addition, the consumption of creative products is likely to help cities whether small or large to perform as large communities for future success. However, there is no systematic collection of data/statistics that verifies the number of creative businesses across Beirut's districts. The furniture market is expected to grow by an average of 13% annually; it consists of 695 companies, the second largest number of companies after the food and beverage sector, and more than 10% of these are located in North Lebanon (CAS website, 2016a; see Table 1.1). The Lebanese government lacks information on the number of

creative industries in Lebanon, which would be useful for scholars, practitioners, and business owners and would assist them in making informed policy decisions concerning the creative sectors (ETF, 2015).

Table 1.1: Type and number of businesses registered in Beirut districts.

Registered enterprises	Salary of employees per month in 2016 (US dollars)	Number of enterprises per year			
		2011	2012	2013-2015	2016-onwards
<b>Printing and publishing/editing</b>	900-1100	109	69	-	-
<b>Operation/research and Development</b>	-	74	65	-	-
<b>Architectural and design (including furniture firms)</b>	1200-1300	162	66	-	695
<b>Construction design</b>	-	601	397	-	-
<b>Advertising agencies /media</b>	800-1100	226	100	-	-
<b>Textile and fashion</b>	900-1100	29	36	-	-
<b>Total number of design businesses</b>		1,201	733	-	-

Source: Adapted from Central Administration Statistics, (CAS) (2016a).

This research is significant for various reasons:

- First, the lack of academic research in this area creates a severe financial problem for supporting research projects in Lebanon because sources of funding are scarce in Lebanon. Thus, this research study offers a new research area and presents a conceptual framework to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses in order to develop better theoretical models as part of the development of the Lebanese family design businesses.
- Second, there is a lack of national strategies and an absence of accurate monitoring and implementation of intellectual property rights, which following this research, will be improved in the Lebanese family design businesses.
- Third, Lebanon's economy creates unstable investment and competition in the Middle East, which will limit the access of investors in the neighbouring economies. For example, the number of foreign investors investing in Cairo has increased because of the city's lower costs, and foreign companies have been attracted by the advanced technology in Dubai (Nasr, 2003). However, European companies have been the main investors in Lebanon, accounting for more than 43% of the total number of foreign investors; 16% of foreign investors are of Arab origin.
- Fourth, the private companies involved in politics and religions can benefit from the growth of Lebanese creative industries (ETF, 2015), which will help Lebanese family design businesses to implement diversity management, select employees from different cultural backgrounds and thereby increasing creativity. Thus, this research addresses the research aims and objectives in order to demonstrate the importance of diversity management and creativity within the Lebanese context.
- Fifth, this research adopts a qualitative method approach, using semi-structured interviews and participant observation to gather data to test and answer the research questions and objectives, and thus increasing the validity of the findings. The methodological insight used in this study contributes to the body of research knowledge explored in Lebanese family design businesses.

Furthermore, this research study is important in its exploration of the diversity of employees in Lebanese family design businesses. It examines how efficiently the relevant employers select and recruit the right persons to improve skills, knowledge, and performance of their organisations (Florida, 2002a). A relationship that grows between employees can enhance the experience and practical learning that takes place in the workplace and further build the cultural economy in Lebanese family design businesses. Similarly, Blundell *et al.* (1999) suggest that creativity helps individuals to work on their knowledge, skills, and abilities and improve the core values of diversity and tolerance in organisations, because human capital is an important factor in firms, regional development, and economic growth. Creativity helps individuals to increase their skills and develop their personalities and identities within the workplace (Amabile, 1998; Florida, 2005; Bilton, 2007) and is therefore essential to enhance the employment skills within the Lebanese furniture company. In the creative economy, diversity provides many challenges and opportunities for creative workers in the workplace; it reduces inequality and minimises the effect of social class between employees and employers (UNCTD, 2005; Pratt, 2010).

For this research study, attention has been drawn to the design sectors, with an emphasis on the furniture companies located in Beirut, the capital city of Lebanon, in order to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance. Thus, this research study aims to focus on Lebanese furniture companies. The researcher identified fifteen organisations as relevant to the research; however, only four of them agreed to provide the researcher with the required primary and secondary data and facilitate conducting interviews with their employees. The opinions of different employers and employees were essential for the researcher to triangulate data and create space for debate and critical evaluation of the role of diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses. The research study seeks to contribute to the research objectives and to be in line with the adopted conceptual framework (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.2). This thesis also provides a comparison of international and local firms' practices by examining the different diversity management practices they engage in (see Chapters 5 and 6).

The creative industries play an important role in European countries, Asia, and the rest of the world (UNDP, 2010). This research study focuses on two mapping documents. The first mapping document focuses on the definition of creative industries in the UK (DCMS, 1998, 2016). The second mapping document focuses on a version of the Lebanese creative sectors and was created by the British Council and the American University of Beirut in 2007 (Najjar, 2007). The definition of UK creative industries offers a significant contribution as it has mostly been recognised at a European level from 2001 (DCMS, 1998, 2016). According to DCMS (1998), the UK creative sectors are divided into thirteen sectors:

1. Advertising and marketing.
2. Architectural design includes architecture, furniture, interior design, landscape, urban design, physical planning, engineering and model making.
3. Art and ancient art markets.
4. Crafts and antiques.
5. Design industry includes graphic, fashion, interior and product design
6. Film.
7. Video.
8. TV and radio.
9. IT, software and computing services.
10. Publishing includes printing of news, magazines, and books.
11. Museum, Galleries and Libraries.
12. Music, performing and visual arts.
13. Theatres.

However, the definition of Lebanese creative industries is based on ‘education, governance, economic empowerment, social inclusion and regeneration’ (Najjar 2007, p. 1). According to Najjar (2007), the Lebanese creative industries are divided into seven sectors as follows:

1. Theatre, film, radio, and television.
2. Music composition and production
3. Heritage, painting, photography, sculpture, fashion design, and artisanal products.
4. Advertising and graphic design.
5. Architectural and design: furniture, wood-processing.
6. Writing, publishing, and print media.
7. Video games and new technologies.

These two mapping documents contribute to the evaluation of the creative industry in Lebanon and the international debate on the definition of creative industries.

Furthermore, the main characteristics of the creative sector in Lebanon are outlined in sections 1.4 and 1.6.3. Thus, this research study focuses on architectural design sectors with an emphasis on furniture companies operating in Beirut (see Chapter 3, section 3.3). According to Hill (2008), the creative industries are located in Beirut, a hub for Middle East regions and Lebanon. Another purpose of the study is to evaluate the lack of cultural diversity and creativity in the Lebanese furniture companies, which is affected by beliefs, cultures, perceptions, and behaviours of employees and their communities (Barakat, 1993; Krayem, 2012).

The researcher believes that this academic study, which aims to examine the diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses is novel (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.2). The research aims to contribute to knowledge about culture, diversity management, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses by increasing the engagement of employees and employers and fostering talent management, (TM) practices in local and international firms. These practices could help a diverse workforce to contribute positively to Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, this research study aims to address the impact of cultural diversity on creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. The objective of the study is to discuss the influence of culture on creativity and explore the complex relationships between diversity, creativity, and cultural



expression in Lebanese family design businesses. The next section presents the research aims and objectives.

## **1.5. Research Aims and Objectives**

### **Aim**

To explore the impact of diversity of employees on creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses (e.g., local and international firms).

### **Objectives**

- To review definitions of creativity, culture, and diversity management practices in Western and Eastern countries.
- To review approaches on cultural diversity, diversity management practices, and their impact on creativity.
- To compare and analyse family and non-family design business structures in Lebanon (e.g., local and international firms).
- To evaluate diversity management practices in the Lebanese family design businesses (e.g., local and international firms).
- To investigate the diversity of employees and employers (family and non- family members) in the Lebanese family design businesses and its impact on creativity.
- To develop a conceptual understanding of the connection between creativity and performance arising from diversity in the Lebanese family design business structure (e.g., local and international firms).

## **1.6. Background and Country Context**

This section presents the background of the research context. The section is divided into three parts. Part one explores the geographical context of Lebanon. Part two considers the employment policies within the Lebanese design sector. Part three discusses the organisational context and reviews the development of the design sector in Lebanon. Finally, this section addresses the challenges of and opportunities emerging from the research study.

### **1.6.1. The geographical context**

Lebanon is a small country located in Western Asia, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Syria to the north and Israel to the south. Lebanon's capital is Beirut. The main cities in Lebanon are Tripoli in North Lebanon, Sidon and Tyr in South Lebanon, Baalbeck and Zahlé in Bekaa (see Figure 1.1). Lebanon is divided into six administrative divisions, known as governorates. These governorates are Beirut, Bekaa, North Lebanon, South Lebanon, Mount Lebanon, and Nabatiyé. Lebanon's climate is mild to cool, with wet winters and hot summers, although the Lebanon mountains experience heavy winter snows (CAS, 2015).

The population of Lebanon is approximately 4.6 million, including 449,957 Palestinian refugees, 5,986 Iraqi nationals, and 1,172,753 Syrians and their descendants (CAS, 2015; CIA, 2015). Although Arabic is the official language, French and English are widely used in schools, universities, and businesses (CIA, 2015). Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, was thought to be the home of the Phoenicians, a culture of Semitic traders. Beirut plays an important role in Lebanon's economy; its ports have promoted economic integration across Europe, North Africa and the Middle East (IEF, 2015).



Figure 1.1: Map of Lebanon (adapted from IDAL, 2017b, p. 8).

Following World War I, Lebanon was occupied by French troops in 1920 and subsequently gained independence in 1943. Since 1975, Lebanon's economy has experienced significant challenges due to civil war, Syrian occupation, political instability, and social and religious tensions (IEF, 2015). The country also has experienced a civil war between 1975 and 1990 and was occupied by the Syrian military from 1976 until 2005. In spite of these events, Lebanon has maintained its position as a regional centre for finance and trade (IDAL, 2015; IEF, 2015). After 2005, and the assassination of the Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri, the Syrian military was forced to leave the country (IEF, 2015). In 2006, fighting continued between Israel and Hezbollah, a Lebanese based militia, a conflict which continues to impede economic growth and job creation in Lebanon (IEF, 2015).

Lebanon's encounters with European colonisation and Ottoman modernisation have led to an emphasis on sectarianism, religious identities, political and social tensions. This research study focuses on Lebanon because it is a strategic point of intersections between West and East and a melting pot of different cultures. Furthermore, Lebanon provides an interesting site for this research study because it is considered as an emerging market economy for international investors (EC, 2015). The European Union, (EU) maintains close investment relations with Lebanon (Ministry of Economy and Trade, 2016). For instance, foreign direct investment plays a considerable role in enhancing Lebanon's economy (EC, 2015, 2017). In 2016, foreign direct investments inflow accounted \$US 2.56 billion representing 4.94% of the gross domestic product, (GDP) in Lebanon (IDAL, 2017b). Lebanon's investment legislation seeks to facilitate the establishment of new businesses in Lebanon and to ensure their viable growth and expansion (IDAL, 2016). The franchise owners represent 9% of the total workers in Lebanon (IDAL, 2016). The Lebanese government does not provide a definition of franchising or franchise agreements (IDAL, 2017b). However, the Lebanese law defines the franchise companies as commercial agencies (IDAL, 2017b):

The merchant who, on his own account, sells what he purchases according to a contract, which gives him the quality of sole and exclusive representative or distributor, shall be considered as a commercial agent.

According to Investment Development of Authority of Lebanon, (IDAL) (2016), the Lebanese government has enacted a law with Decree-law No. 34/67 in 1997 and amended the law in 2010:

the mandatory who undertakes, within the framework of his usual and independent profession and without being bound by an employment contract, any necessary negotiations of sale and purchase, hire or provision of services, and if need be, carries on such activity in the name of producers or merchants and for their account.

This statement explains that the ownership of a franchise company can have an independent employment contract in Lebanon. Most of the franchise companies are owned and operated by Lebanese employers (ETF, 2015; IDAL, 2016). Furthermore, the owner of the franchise companies often enters into local (Lebanese) agreement with foreign franchisors (IDAL, 2016). The franchise industry is estimated to have 1,000 local and international franchise (mainly European companies) brands and employs nearly 100,000 workers within the Lebanese community (IDAL, 2016). The EU is considered one of the first trading partners in Lebanon (see Chapter 1, pp. 19-20). Since 2007, European private franchisors remain resilient to a regional political crisis (Israel and Hezbollah and Syrian conflicts) and foreign trade is undergoing growth in Lebanon (IDAL, 2016).

### **Political status**

Lebanon was established by the enactment of the 1926 constitution (see Appendix C), but its borders with Syria and Israel are still disputed. Lebanon is a semi-presidential parliamentary democratic republic in which the Prime Minister leads the executive branch of government (Krayem, 2012). The country has a sectarian system and is ruled by families and politicians belonging to the wealthy elite families. Since 1992, the parliament has 128 cabinet seats (CAS, 2015). These cabinet seats in the parliament are distributed equally (on a sectarian basis) between Muslims and Christians (CIA, 2015). According to Article 95 of the 1926 constitution, the sectarian groups share seats ‘in a just and equitable manner in the formation of the cabinet’ (see Appendix C). The parliament elections must be held every six years. The last election was due to be held in 2009, but it was postponed until May 2018. The speaker of the parliament (a Shia

Muslim) usually elects the president (a Maronite Christian), and the president chooses the Prime Minister (a Sunni Muslim). The political system in Lebanon reflects a sectarian balance between Muslims and Christians. Lebanon has numerous political parties, usually formed of one leader each (Muslim or Christian). The political parties also share seats in the parliament. These political parties include March 8 Alliance under the control of Hezbollah (Shia Muslim), Amal (Shia Muslim) and the president (Maronite Christian); and March 14 Alliance under the control of the Prime Minister (Sunni Muslim), the Lebanese forces (Christian), and the progressive socialist party (Druze). The structures of alliances and divisions between political parties play a critical role in determining a consistent sectarian nature of the political system in Lebanon.

Lebanon has maintained good foreign relations with other countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United States of America. However, despite these good diplomatic relations, powerful families still play an essential role in local and parliamentary elections in Lebanon (Krayem, 2012). The country is also a member state of the International Organisation of la Francophonie, (IOF) (2002) and was the first Francophone country in the Middle East to hold a summit in October 2002. This summit was held in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon and discussed issues related to the Middle Eastern countries and their governance systems, in addition to developing policies and investing more in cultural diversity (IOF, 2002). Political tensions and violence continue to obstruct trade union activities in Lebanon, particularly in private sectors (Annual survey of violation of trade union rights, 2010).

### **Economic development**

Lebanon has a service-oriented free-market economy. The main dominant sectors include banking and tourism, representing 73.3 % of the country's GDP (CIA, 2015). Lebanon's economy is also dominated by the manufacturing of agricultural products, furniture, wine, jewellery, cement, mineral and chemical products, oil refining, and metal production, accounting for 21% of GDP and employing over 20 % of the workforce. (CIA, 2015). The civil war between 1975 and 1990 severely damaged Lebanon's economic infrastructure and, following the civil war, the government was left with huge

debts because it borrowed funds from domestic banks. As a result of the Syrian conflict, economic growth in Lebanon slowed down to a rate of between 1% and 2% from 2011 to 2013, compared to an average rate of 8% during the previous four years (CIA, 2015). Although Syrian refugees have increased the labour supply, Lebanese citizens are experiencing a crisis of poverty and unemployment (ETF, 2015). In 2014, the unemployment rate was 6.6%, with a youth (aged 14-28) unemployment rate of 25% (IMF, 2014). The unemployment in Lebanon has led to high levels of emigration of skills mostly to Gulf countries (ETF, 2015).

### **Foreign trade and investment**

Foreign trade has become an important factor in Lebanon's economy as a source of both financial and employment developments. In 2014, Lebanon's major exporting partners were Syria, the UAE, Turkey, Switzerland, and Saudi Arabia (CIA, 2015). Lebanon's primary suppliers were Italy, France, Syria, Germany, China, the USA, and the UK (CIA, 2015). In 2014, EU imports from Lebanon consisted mainly of metals (27.7%), food, beverages, and tobacco (18.6%), and chemicals (15.7%) (EC, 2015). EU exports to Lebanon consist mainly of fuel and mining products (36.8%), machinery and transport equipment (21.5%), and chemicals (13.4%) (EC, 2015).

In 2016, the European companies were the main investors in Lebanon accounting for more than 43% of the total number of the foreign companies. The main European countries were the UK with the largest share of 27%, followed by France, with 5%, then Switzerland, Italy, Bulgaria, and the Netherlands with 3% each of the total number of foreign companies (IDAL, 2016). North American countries (USA and Canada) with eight American projects and two Canadian ones had the second largest share of investors (IDAL, 2016). In 2016, Arab investors' percentage of foreign companies in Lebanon decreased to 16% of the total investor base: Iraq with 5%, and Kuwait, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, (UAE) and Algeria with 3% each of total foreign investments in Lebanon. Asian investors were from Singapore, Hong Kong, and Turkey with 11% and one African country (Nigeria) comprising 3% of total number of foreign companies (IDAL, 2016).

## Religious identities

Under French rule, the majority of the population were Christians; 51% of the population in 1932 were Christians, compared with 47% who were Muslims (Maktabi, 1999).

Lebanon has a diverse community, which consists of many religious groups. Currently, 54% of the population are Muslims (27% Sunni, 27% Shia), 40.5 % are Christians (21% Maronite Catholic, 8% Greek Orthodox, 5% Greek Catholic, 6.5% other Christian), and 5.6 % are Druze. There are also small numbers practising Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, or Baha'ism (CIA, 2015). Muslims have become the largest population in Lebanon, due to long-term demographic trends and population displacements during and after the civil war (CIA, 2015).

Islam is the dominant religion in Lebanon and affects day-to-day life (CIA, 2015; IDAL, 2015; ETF, 2015). According to the Quran, Islam confers equal rights to both males and females and recognises that the position of women is the same as that of men (see Verse 4:1). However, women still face discrimination related to personal status and Islamic jurisdiction since Lebanon follows a sectarian system that affects power positions among the religious and political minorities (Barakat, 1993; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, women face challenges in adhering to Islamic norms and laws because Islam sees women as the weak and inferior sex in their families within the Lebanese community (Barakat, 1993). The existing inequality between men and women means that women in Muslim societies are kept under men's control, power, and authority.

Moreover, Article 9 of the Lebanese constitution of 1962 stated that religious communities have the right to apply their law particularly in matters related to women or men and their social status (see Appendix C). However, the Lebanese government does not help women in improving their positions in the family or the workplace (Barakat, 1993; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). Al-Ariss (2010) argues that discriminatory and religious factors are part of the gender issues in Lebanon and goes on to say that Lebanese people do not practise Islam as required by the Quran. The Prophet Muhammad supports human motivation and values, including equality for both males and females. The Quran comments on gender discrimination as follows:



O mankind! Reverence your Guardian Lord, Who created you from a single soul, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them two scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; God through Whom you demand your mutual (rights) and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you) (Verse 4:1).

This statement from the Quran explains that both men and women have an equal social, legal, and ethical status in accordance with their human rights. However, the Lebanese government does not support women's careers, and their contributions are considered secondary to society and family structures. A role for women in society is mostly absent within the Lebanese community (Jamali *et al.*, 2010). Women still face issues related to gender inequality and discrimination in the workplace as confirmed by Jamali *et al.*, (2010). The current patriarchal system affects the role of women when it comes to starting businesses and participating in decision-making at work, and therefore their choices of professional careers remain limited (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). Women continue to be evaluated in the societal context based on their roles as mothers, sisters, and daughters in Lebanon (e.g., Barakat, 1993). These characteristics of tradition have favoured men because of the omnipresence of patriarchal religions in masculine societies like Lebanon (Hofstede, 1991; Barakat 1993). The cultural values vary in different countries. Hofstede (1991) found that the Arab countries are moderately masculine. Kabasakal and Bodur (2002) also found that Arab countries rank low for gender egalitarianism since men believe that women should stay at home. Although Islam is the dominant religion in Lebanon, the Lebanese population includes a large number of different Muslim sects. In the Muslim world, leaders do not always practise what the prophet and the Quran demand (Hanf, 1993; Inati 1999; Mandaville, 2007).

The Lebanese government offers a system styled on religion (see Appendix C; Al-Arris, 2010). Al-Ariss (2010) confirms that the Lebanese government does not work to prevent interactions between religion and politics to reduce the social and cultural tensions associated with Muslim values and traditions. Furthermore, Barakat (1993) argues that it is culture and history that often influence the behaviour and values that humans' exhibit in daily life. Culture and religious background affect people's habits, perceptions, and behaviours. Quddus *et al.* (2009) observe that religious background and beliefs influence the behaviour and attitudes of people. Jalil *et al.* (2010, p.147) note that 'ethics can be

understood in Islamic terms as *haya*, the state of respect and the practice of good deeds. Muslims should reflect the Islamic ethics in all parts of his or her life including business life.' Moreover, Jalil *et al.* (2010) affirm that Arabic managers must adopt appropriate practices and ethical considerations in their organisations in order to increase interaction, trust, and solidarity among employees to improve performance in the workplace. The impact of religion (particularly Islam) reflects the identity of the Lebanese people, community, and organisations (Barakat, 1993).

Lebanon is a parliamentary democratic and independent country (see Appendix C). The government currently includes a Maronite Christian president, a Sunni Muslim Prime Minister and a Shia Muslim speaker of parliament (Hanf, 1993). With this religious diversification, the Lebanese government was originally based on the population's sectarian affiliations, or confessions (Hanf, 1993). Since 1932, no further national census has been conducted (Maktabi, 1999). Krayem (2012) argues that conducting a national census in Lebanon would cause tensions and conflicts between Christians and Muslims, and that this would affect the power of leaders in politics. After the civil war, a document called the "Taif agreement" was drawn up which dealt with three types of predicaments: political, social and regional, and international powers, namely between Riyadh (the capital of Saudi Arabia) and Tehran (the capital of Iran).

The Lebanese parliament approved this document (Taif agreement) in 1990. The "Taif agreement" consists of transferring some of the power away from the Maronite Christian communities, which had been given a privileged status in Lebanon during the periods of French rule (Krayem, 2012). As a result, the Sunni prime minister was given power over the Christian communities. The agreement also defined the socioeconomic system as a free economy, protected private institutions, and encouraged the development of public schools (Makdissi, 1996). Through the "Taif agreement", curricular reforms were charged with promoting "national belonging", "integration", and "spiritual and cultural openness" (Inati, 1999, p. 60). Thus, the agreement was able to strengthen Lebanese national identities (Inati, 1999). However, the agreement reproduced the Lebanese confessional state under a new formula of sectarian balance and did not address the structural limitations of such a system (Krayem, 2012).

Furthermore, many researchers note that Lebanon's democracy remains stagnant; democracy has reinforced a culture of sectarianism that encompasses public life and supports family power and kinship in all sectors (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Inati, 1999; Ali and Al-Owaidan, 2008; Krayem, 2012). These factors determine the succession of power, which, in Lebanese society, is handed to family members in organisations. Despite enjoying liberal economic growth, the country has failed to create a balance of power or to achieve peace for both Lebanese citizens and foreign nationals (Krayem, 2012). To this day, political power in the Lebanese government is divided along religious lines. The Lebanese government offers a system styled on religion (Barakat, 1993; Inati, 1999; Krayem, 2012). However, the government does not work to avoid sectarian conflicts between religion and politics in Lebanon (Inati, 1999; Krayem, 2012). It also does not address social, political, and economic problems, which are associated with individual identity, vision, and values within the Lebanese culture and whole communities (Barakat, 1993; Inati, 1999; Krayem, 2012). The culture of Lebanon is conservative and emphasises the family unit by controlling and constraining the opinion of individuals in the society, the community, and in organisations as a whole (Barakat, 1993; Al-Ariss, 2010).

### **Technological features**

Lebanon's private research and development, (R&D) sector is still limited (OECD, 2002). The estimation of R&D personnel data in Lebanon is problematic, particularly regarding personnel working within the main higher education institutions and public research institutions (OECD, 2002). A recent study indicates that Lebanon is engaged in scientific research at a high level, including at seven colleges and universities in Beirut, which offer degrees in basic and applied sciences (MEHE, 2015). According to Schwab *et al.* (2014), Lebanon ranked fourth worldwide in 2014 for science and maths, and around 3,000 engineers graduate each year.

In 2014, Lebanon had a high level of technology exports totalling 2% of all manufactured exports. For example, information and communications technology (ICT) is now achieving remarkable successes in high technology companies in Lebanon (IDAL,

2017a). Lebanon's ICT industry is moving up the value chain as opportunities are now emerging in the manufacturing and design of hardware components (IDAL, 2017a). The country's advanced technology is currently limited to oil refining, the facilities for which were installed by international oil companies. The National Council for Scientific Research, established in Beirut in 1962, draws up national science policies and fosters research in fundamental and applied research. The council operates a marine research centre at Al-Batroun in North Lebanon (MEHE, 2015).

### **Education Sector**

The development of Christian and Islamic schools in Lebanon took place under the period of Ottoman rule and the French mandate (1920-1943). The French communities established "Lebanese institutions" and opened schools in Lebanon (UNICEF, 2011). Lebanon's education system uses the French language, which is prominent in private institutions and public life (UNICEF, 2011). The education sector is one of the main contributors to Lebanon's GDP (UNICEF, 2011). The United Nations Children's Fund, (UNICEF) (2011, pp. 31-32) and Article 10 of the Lebanese Constitution assert that education is free in Lebanon,

education is free and gives the freedom for confessional groups to run their own schools, given they follow the National curriculum and respect the principles of dignity and order.

According to Schwab *et al.* (2014), Lebanon was ranked tenth in the world in 2014 for the overall quality of its education. In 2014, the country ranked second in the Middle East (behind Qatar) regarding the quality of primary education and the net enrolment rate (Schwab *et al.*, 2014). Lebanon's adult and youth literacy rates rank among the highest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions, particularly the percentage of female literacy, which is about 91.8 % (Schwab, 2015). The Lebanese government does not support private schools. Despite the bilingual nature of the national curriculum, private and public schools are divided into two categories, i.e. French or Anglo-American, according to the language used for instruction. This has given Lebanese schools and universities a high status in the Middle East and the Arab regions. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), (2015) runs all public schools and educational

institutions in Lebanon. United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees, (UNRWA) runs seventy-five schools for 33,000 students (MEHE, 2015). The private sector has increased significantly in Lebanon, and the enrolment of students in private schools is high in comparison with that of public schools. According to the centre for Educational Research and Development, (CRDP) (2015), 67% of students in Lebanon were enrolled in private education in 2014. During the 2014-2015 academic year, 70% of elementary students were enrolled in private schools, compared with 60% of intermediate-level students and 50% of secondary-level students (CRDP, 2015).

The Minister of Labour submitted a new draft of employment law to the Lebanese parliament in 2012; however, the draft was not implemented due to remarks and objections concerning specific points and issues (ETF, 2015). Employers still maintain that labour regulations represent a barrier to hiring new workers (ETF, 2015). As a result, the lack of labour regulations negatively affects recruitment and employment in Lebanon. The European Training Foundation, (ETF) (2015) has confirmed that public and private organisations do not play a significant role in facilitating information exchange between employers and job seekers, as Lebanese jobseekers rely more on their personal contacts or relations to find a job (ETF, 2015). However, some non-governmental organizations, (NGOs) provide informal employment services by tapping into their networks of contacts to help their beneficiaries find jobs (ETF, 2015). Youth employment is the most challenging issue for the Lebanese government. Young people (aged between 15 and 29) often face an extended period of unemployment in Lebanon (Lebanese parliament, 2013; Ministry of Labour, 2015).

The Lebanese National Youth Policy Document provides the government's policy for national youth development. This document includes a vision of all the actions that the state intends to take to improve the living conditions of young people, provide them with access to welfare and other services, and create an enabling environment so they can access decision-making positions in the public sector (Ministry of Labour, 2015). In Lebanon, employees (particularly young employees) contend with various obstacles when looking for a job, notably low skills and a lack of the necessary expertise. The

Lebanese government cannot stimulate the recruitment and selection of employees and employers in the private sectors. For example, in several private sectors, the employer must be a Lebanese national. These private sectors include banking, architecture, engineering, shoemaking, furniture-manufacturing, printing, and accounting sectors (Ministry of Labour, 2015). The Ministry of Labour provides incentives for employers who recruit first-time jobseekers, covering their social security contributions and allowing some tax reductions (Ministry of Labour, 2015).

According to the ETF (2015), private sectors (including family businesses) will differ concerning their motivation for participating in programmes that involve young people and assist them in Lebanon. The Ministry of Labour launched a New Programme in 2012 under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and with financial assistance from the World Bank. The New Programme aims to improve the employment prospects of first-time jobseekers, and to offer training and coaching techniques (skills). However, this project has not yet been implemented and faces delays (World Bank, 2010; Ministry of Labour, 2015). One of the significant challenges facing the Lebanese economy is the creation of jobs for young people (Lebanese Parliament, 2013; UNDP, 2013). In 2013, an estimated 5,000 industrial companies employed around 90, 000 workers in Lebanon (UNDP, 2013). Since March 2011, however, Lebanon has faced political and economic challenges due to the conflict in Syria. The Syrian crisis has created unprecedented inflows of refugees, now exceeding one million or about one-quarter of Lebanon's population (IMF, 2014). This unprecedented number of refugees has contributed to increased instability throughout Lebanon, where refugees are competing with Lebanese citizens for jobs (World Bank, 2013a, 2013b). The situation threatens the country's delicate sectarian balance, institutional and political stability, as well as regional peace and security (World Bank, 2013a, 2013b).

The value of architecture and design in Lebanon has a critical role in significant businesses (Nahass, 2009). Nahass (2009) confirms that the disadvantage that arises from diversity is linked to inequality in gender, in Lebanon; the difference between the opportunities for male and female students is still prominent. The Lebanese government

has not introduced programmes that address gender issues, update the labour law, or control the quality of the courses offered at the private and public universities (Nahass, 2009). Many studies reveal that education and training open up avenues to develop job opportunities that can benefit individuals, develop an organisation's leadership, and result in economic growth (e.g., Pratt 2006; Lowden *et al.*, 2011). When a wealthy government encourages learning, education or training, then innovation or creativity can help individuals to improve their skills and assist organisations to achieve their goals (Amin and Roberts, 2008). It is essential for universities and organisations to introduce some creative programmes to prepare students and graduates for a career in the creative industries in Lebanon (Carey and Naudin, 2006). Furthermore, recent studies confirm that academic institutions and creative industries should provide training platforms for new graduate designers. For example, Lowden *et al.* (2011) found that employees should attend courses in design areas to facilitate approaches to the design process. Lowden *et al.* (2011, p. vii) argue as follows:

Developing graduate employability skills and attributes should be included in HEIs' strategic and faculty/departmental level planning. Universities need to reflect the promotion of employability skills and attributes in their mission statements, learning and teaching strategies, course frameworks, strategic documents and practical guidance.

This statement by Lowden *et al.* (2011) captures many of the challenges and barriers that creative graduates face within the employability discourse and the ability to manage personal and career commitment within organisations and, in particular, in Lebanese family design businesses. The next section presents the employment policies in the design sectors in Lebanon.

### **1.6.2. Overview of employment policies in the design sectors**

The unemployment in the fields of architecture, design, and construction is rising in Lebanon. According to the World Bank (2014, 2013b), the total unemployment rate reached 25% in Lebanon in 2014. Nahass (2009) confirms that the average age of females and males graduating from higher education is 22 to 29 years. Each year, there are around 200 graduates with a design degree in Lebanon. The Lebanese government lacks the commitment and resources to help individuals to develop their skills and to provide a range of creative and technical courses in schools and organisations (Nahass, 2009).

In 2011, 47% of males and 53% of females aged between 20 and 24 were enrolled in higher education institutions (World Bank, 2012). Table 1.2 highlights the top leading universities in Lebanon and their design programme degrees. There are thirty-one full universities, including the public university (LU), six university institutes or colleges, and four university institutes for religious studies (MEHE, 2014, 2015; see Table 1.2). The Lebanese labour law is not enforced in private organisations (ETF, 2015; Ministry of Labour, 2015). The Lebanese government does not control or restrict legal rights and security measures in Lebanese private sectors (Ministry of Labour, 2015). However, the Lebanese government inspects companies occasionally to ensure that security measures in the workplace are respected. Most of the employers do not always recognise these security measures (Annual survey of violations of trade unions rights, 2010). The Lebanese law is not always respected by the private sector, and employees often do not sue their companies for the non-application of this law (Annual survey of violations of trade unions rights, 2010):

A draft amendment to the labour code reduces the threshold to 51% and gives government employees the right to bargain collectively. However, the Lebanese government had not implemented this law.

This statement reveals that the labour code has not been implemented in Lebanon. The law in Lebanon does not provide adequate protection against discrimination in private and public sectors. Some factors hinder efforts to develop evidence-based policy on the labour market and skills development, including a lack of updated data, a dearth of labour



market analyses and an absence of updated and operational labour market information systems (ETF, 2015). If Lebanese family design businesses promoted diversity management, they would have an opportunity to attract local and international investments by fostering creativity and recognising diversity management policy-making in organisations, particularly the design sectors. Therefore, it is important to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance within the Lebanese family design businesses. Diversity management is becoming critical in global and local economies for attracting and retaining new or current talent from all cultural backgrounds (e.g., Cox and Blake, 1991; Mor-Barak, 2014; Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016).

Table 1.2: Degrees offered by private and public universities in Beirut.

University	Degree offered	Type of universities
<b>American University of Beirut (AUB)</b>	Bachelor of Architecture/Graphic design	Private
<b>Notre Dame University (NDU)</b>	Bachelor of Architecture, Art and Design	Private
<b>University of Balamand (ALBA)</b>	Bachelor and Master of Fine Art (Architecture/Interior Architecture and Design/Graphic Design)	Private
<b>Lebanese University (LU)</b>	Bachelor of Fine Art (Architecture/Interior Architecture and Design)	Only public
<b>Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK)</b>	Bachelor and Master of Architecture/Interior Architecture and Design	Private
<b>Lebanese American University (LAU)</b>	Bachelor and Master of Architecture/Interior Architecture and Design	Private

Source: Adapted from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon, MEHE (2014).

### **1.6.3. The organisational context: Architectural and design sectors in Lebanon**

This research study reviews the development of creative industries in the UK as a guide for the establishment of creative industries in Lebanon. Creative industries are growing in the Western and Eastern countries (DCMS, 1998, 2015, 2016). The adoption of new lifestyles, cultural experiences, and heritage are important to encourage individual creativity and diversity in the architectural and design sectors (with an emphasis on furniture) in Lebanon. Architectural and design sectors are considered to be a ‘rapidly growing series of sub- sectors’ in the world (Hartley *et al.*, 2013). For example, the architectural and design sectors in the UK currently lead the world in design education (DCMS, 1998, 2016). The UK government continues to implement high-quality education for both designers and architects looking to make a difference in design in order to meet economic demand as well as to enhance the firm performance (Hartley *et al.*, 2013). Design is becoming recognised as a catalyst for a positive change and a mechanism to increase effectiveness and efficiency in an organisation (Verganti, 2009).

Verganti (2009) believes that design creates change and value in an organisation by helping individuals to foster creativity at work, and thereby bringing innovation, renewal, and success to the organisation. Cox (2001) states that design is a bridge between the arts, engineering sciences, and the business as a whole. Furthermore, the State of Victoria report (2010, p. 6) claims that ‘design can add value across all aspects of a business, including production processes, branding, and communications, leadership and company culture.’ Therefore, architectural and design sectors focus on implementing the skills of designers within organisations as well as nurturing their education and encouraging their professional development skills within the creative industries (e.g., The State of Victoria report, 2010; DCMS, 2016).

However, the definition of architectural and design sectors is not clear in Lebanon. There are around 544 small sized firms, owned by family members, that can be divided into sub-sectors: architecture, furniture, urban and landscape design and craft – each employing between 10 to 50 persons, located in Beirut (e.g., Kompas, official website,

2014). Table 1.3 outlines some dominant architectural and design companies in the Middle East and Lebanon. For example, engineering news-record, (ENR) (2013) confirms that Dar Al-Handasah (official website, 2014) and Khatib & Alami (official website, 2014) are considered leading local architectural and design firms, ranking second and seventh in the Middle East (see Table 1.3).

Table 1.3: Top 10 architectural and design companies in the Middle East (2012-2013).

RANK		Top 10 Revenue: \$4,330.6 Mil.
2013	2012	Sector's Revenue: \$9,769.6 Mil.
1	1	WORLEYPARSONS LTD.
2	2	DAR AL-HANDASAH CONSULTANTS
3	3	TECNICAS REUNIDAS
4	5	FLUOR CORP.
5	4	AECOM TECHNOLOGY CORP.
6	7	JGC CORP.
7	**	KHATIB & ALAMI
8	8	ATKINS
9	**	SNC-LAVALIN INC.
10	6	CH2M HILL

Source: Adapted from ENR (2013).

In summary, French colonisation and the Ottoman Empire created a complex and sectarian identity where ethnic and religious groups (Christians and Muslims) played an influential role in shaping the individual's thoughts and traditions in the Lebanese society. The government still follows a sectarian system based on religious identities with political, economic, and social tensions within the Lebanese society and individual communities. Lebanon provides an interesting site for this research study because it is considered an emerging market economy for international investors (EC, 2015). Diversity management is also becoming essential in global and local economies (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016). Diversity management is also becoming important in organisations to increase local or international investors, attract skills, and retain existing talent from different cultural backgrounds (Mor-Barak, 2014; Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016).

Therefore, this study examines and compares the different diversity management practices of two organisational types: international and local firms in the Lebanese context. Four organisations have participated in this research. Three organisations are international firms and one organisation has Lebanese origins. Those organisations provided secondary documentation data and ten sets of primary interview data from each organisation, which includes data relating to interviews with managers, employees, and employers. According to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, (UNIDO) (2017), 544 micro, and small, and medium enterprises are active in the wood processing sectors in Beirut. Most of the furniture companies are owned by family members and employ 10 to 50 people (UNIDO, 2017). The research study further investigates the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity and examines how diversity is managed to foster creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. The next section presents the structure of the thesis.

## **1.7. Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of seven chapters:

**Chapter 1** presents the introduction to the thesis. This chapter is divided into seven sections. Section one highlights the research problem. Section two presents the purpose of the study, including explaining the choice of design sector within the Lebanese context. Section three presents the research questions. Section four presents the research aims and objectives. Section five is divided into three parts: part one presents the geographical context of Lebanon, part two considers the employment policies in the design sectors in Lebanon; and part three addresses the organisational context and reviews the development of design sector in Lebanon. Finally, the chapter concludes by describing the structure of the thesis.

**Chapter 2** presents the literature review. It consists of five main sections. The first section presents briefly research about cultural diversity influences. It also discusses the effects of individualistic and collectivistic cultures on creativity. The second section discusses the literature about diversity management practices in developed and developing countries. In this section, diversity management in Lebanon is then presented.

Section three examines the role of creativity at a group and organisational level. It also discusses the role of family-owned businesses in various countries and explores some issues surrounding Lebanese family businesses and their management practices and creative performance in Lebanon. Section four illustrates the conceptual framework and develops the research questions. These research questions will be formulated in Chapters 6 and 7. Finally, section five examines the theoretical contribution of the research study.

**Chapter 3** is dedicated to discussing the methodology of this research project. This chapter discusses the research methods used in the early stage of the project. The chapter also highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the research strategy, in addition to the data collection instruments, sources of data and data analysis methods. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section presents the interpretive approach of the research study. The second section presents the qualitative case study by discussing the semi-structured interviews, the participant observations, and the data analysis. The third section discusses the validity and reliability of the research findings. The fourth section discusses the translation challenges of the research process. Finally, the chapter presents the research ethics of the research project.

**Chapter 4** presents and discusses the descriptive within-case analysis of this research study. The chapter highlights the case context, the secondary materials related to the role of HR, and the interviewing process in Lebanese family design businesses. This chapter describes the detailed investigation of four case studies as a stand-one single entity to understand the similarities and differences between the four companies operating within the Lebanese context (SA1, BR2, AM3, and LEB4). Finally, the chapter describes the processes or patterns that are revealed in the four case studies that can lead to produce and generalise the findings of the research project in Chapter 6.

**Chapter 5** presents and discusses the cross-case analysis of this research study. The chapter identifies the factors affecting diversity management in the four companies as perceived by HR managers, employers, and employees in the Lebanese context. This chapter presents an explanatory cross- analysis including the themes and sub-themes, the

interpretation of the interview data, and the secondary documentation data. The main objective is to analyse the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses. Finally, the chapter compares and explains the cross-case analysis in order to achieve validity and answer the research questions in Chapter 6.

**Chapter 6** presents the results of the qualitative data analysis. The chapter also presents the revised conceptual framework within the context of the four companies in Lebanon. This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section discusses the absence of intellectual property rights in Lebanon. The second section discusses the need of diversity management in the Lebanese family design businesses. The third section illustrates the findings of the revised conceptual framework and presents an evaluation of the three questions that have been undertaken to verify the conceptual framework in Chapter 2. Finally, the chapter presents how each case fits within the revised conceptual framework in the Lebanese context.

**Chapter 7** presents the conclusion of the thesis. The chapter is divided into five main sections. The first section discusses and re-evaluates the development of the research questions explored in Chapters 1 and 2. The second section discusses the implications of this research and states the research limitations. The third section presents some recommendations for future research. Section four considers the contribution of this research study, and the final section describes the researcher's personal reflexivity, which was undertaken during the research process.

## **1.8. Summary**

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the topic of this research. The chapter discussed the research problem and provided a section on the purpose of the study. It proposed the research questions and objectives. The chapter presented the background of the research within the Lebanese context. The chapter provided a discussion of the importance of creative industries and highlighted the significance of the design sector in Lebanon. The chapter then highlighted the classification of the creative industries in Lebanon and focussed on the design sector. The chapter then presented a section on the labour employment status, and the political tension in Lebanon. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted the researcher's motivation for selecting the design sectors and the furniture companies in particular. Finally, the chapter has concluded by describing the structure of the thesis. The following chapter reviews the literature and provides a description of cultural diversity, diversity management and creative performance in organisations in relation to the research problem and research topic being investigated in this research study.

## **2.0. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the literature review. The chapter consists of five main parts. Part one presents a discussion about cultural diversity influences. Part two reviews the literature on diversity management practices in developed and developing countries with a specific focus on the Lebanese context. Part three discusses the impact of creativity at a group and organisational level. It also discusses the role of family-owned businesses in the Lebanese context. Part four illustrates the conceptual framework and discusses the development of the research questions. Part five presents the theoretical contribution. Finally, the chapter highlights the benefits of diversity management and its impact on creativity in organisations.

### **2.2. Cultural Diversity Influences**

Culture is generally defined as the way in which people perceive their own personality, behaviour, beliefs and values (UNESCO, 2009). Culture becomes an essential challenge for every individual in terms of sharing their assumptions, values, expectations, attitudes and norms, in relation to groups (e.g., family members and non-family members) and organisations within both social and economic life (e.g., Cox, 1994, 2001). Cox (1994) claims that culture is manifest when people with different knowledge and skills become aware of the values of an organisation and embrace its values in the workplace. Culture is a reflection of an individual or group self-expression and creativity in which art and ideas are viewed as essential human needs in a particular society (Cox, 1994). Cultural values vary across society as each person behaves differently when influenced by different viewpoints in his/her society as well as in the workplace (e.g., Becker, 1996; Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Becker (1996, p. 16) notes,

Individuals have less control over their culture than over other social capital. They cannot alter their ethnicity, race or family history, and only with difficulty can they change their country or religion. Because of the difficulty of changing culture and its low depreciation rate, culture is largely a 'given' to individuals throughout their lifetimes.



This statement reveals that individuals from different cultural backgrounds may face difficulties in a particular society (Becker, 1996). Cultural differences within and between countries affect the management practices in organisations (Becker, 1996; Hofstede, 2001). McSweeney (2002) argues that it is important to highlight organisational and occupational differences in each country, rather than only focusing on comparing the same cultural values in other countries. It is also important that organisations implement and develop a dynamic business environment to increase the engagement of employees, because culture changes slowly in large or small organisations (Kolko, 2015). In addition, employees may have different skills, talents, personalities, and goals that serve to increase diversity through engagement (Becker, 1996). LaGuardia (2008) suggests that an organisation could apply changes through leadership and management strategies in order to improve the culture of the organisation and to encourage individuals to communicate and engage with one another. This argument is seen as good for adding value to humans' creativity and increasing diversity in organisations (UNESCO, 2009). Thus, it is essential that employers and employees maintain a positive message about diversity management practices in an organisation.

### **2.2.1. Definition of diversity related to cultural context**

In most countries, cultural diversity is associated with the political and social agendas and forms part of the major challenges of organisations and societies (UNESCO, 2009). Cultural diversity thus plays a legitimate role in the justification of special group rights (UNESCO, 2009). It helps an organisation to manage and enhance the individual's self-expression, skills, and experiences in the workplace (e.g., Amabile, 1996). Cultural diversity is perceived by individuals and groups as something that helps them to share and value new knowledge in society as well as to develop relationships between employees and employers (e.g., Hofstede, 2001).

For example, Western cultures consider the self-knowledge, attributes and behaviours of others and believe that individuals must work independently according to their own experiences (Hofstede, 2001). However, Hofstede (2001) claims that in non-Western cultures, people tend to show emotions across many generations. Hofstede (2001) noted

that the relationship between youths and their parents is conceived as sharing all practices and assumptions and respect for tradition in masculine societies, and particularly in Lebanon. Furthermore, researchers argue that cultural diversity has different meanings in different societies, as culture is different in each country (e.g., Hofstede, 1981, 2001; Becker, 1996). For example, Loden and Rosener (1991) state that the workforce diversity in the USA and the UK includes traditional dimensions of diversity along lines such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, social class, political association, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, immigration status and ex-offenders, among other categories. Managing diversity in the USA and the UK society is protected by laws and acknowledged in specific company policy (Loden and Rosener, 1991). Similarly, Liff (1996) pointed out that diversity management in the UK encourages employees to engage in diverse groups, thus breaking the frontiers of race/ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability and religion. As a result, employees share ideas and knowledge through engaging effectively with different cultural groups and increasing the number of minorities within an organisation (e.g., Cox, 1994; Amabile, 1996, 1998; UNESCO, 2009; Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013).

In most African countries, politics assumes vital importance in diversity management, while ethnicity dominates most national discussions on diversity, mainly owing to the 'historically antecedence of racial grievances, ethnic or tribal conflicts, and oppression' (Healy and Oikelome, 2007, p. 1923). In contrast, ethnic groups in Japan and Korea are relatively homogeneous. As a result, gender, women's marital status, and their related employment status are a vital source of workforce diversity (Cooke, 2010). Significant differences do exist within Asian cultures in the UK (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013), and some characteristics may not be socially or legally acceptable in some jurisdictions, particularly in China and India (Cooke, 2010). Age, gender, disability, and place of origin (e.g., rural or urban) are the leading causes of social inequality in China, India and other countries in which "inclusiveness" is the dominant politico-economic discourse at present (Cook and Sinai, 2010). Cook and Sinai (2010) found that managing diversity is a complex and unique Human Resource, (HR) issue in India due to its religious and cultural diversity and the use of legislation by the Indian state to tackle societal inequities

and complexities. Diversity management includes not only the social categories of affirmative action, including in relation to race and sex, but also personal characteristics (Cook and Saini, 2010). Implementing diversity management in an organisation has a positive impact on organisational values and goals, as well as on group and individual outcomes (Kochan *et al.*, 2003; Cook and Saini, 2010).

Cultural diversity has both positive and negative impacts in the workplace. Some negative effects include dysfunctional conflicts, lost productivity, and difficulty in achieving harmony in-group settings. Positive results include a strong knowledge base created by a variety of cultural experiences, an in-house resource of cultural trainers and informers, and a higher tendency to expand the business in foreign cultures. For the most part, the effects of cultural diversity in the workplace depend upon how well the organisational leaders manage it. With proper strategic planning, top management can enhance the positive impact and reduce the negative effects of cultural diversity in the workplace. Similarly, cultural diversity helps in the expansion of an organisation's perspective and approach and in the expansion of its strategy to improve creativity by launching new products as well as creating new ideas in the workplace (Adler, 2002; Bilton, 2007). Adler (2002) believes that although individuals may differ, they all need to accept a different culture and work on values, and in this way diversity can be managed among employees within the workplace. Adler (2002) confirms that some cultures consist of traditional ideas and values and that these values improve and enhance human behaviour and performance in the workplace.

Furthermore, Adler (2002) identified five fundamental strategies for the management of cultural diversity in the workplace, namely, cultural dominance, cultural avoidance, cultural compromise, cultural synergy, and cultural accommodation. Of these, the most desirable strategy is cultural synergy, which is acquired through managing diversity and values in other cultures (Adler, 2002). Cultural synergy helps an organisation to bring two or more cultures together to increase diversity among employees in the workplace (Adler, 2002). Therefore, managing cultural diversity among employees helps an organisation to combine different knowledge, perceptions, and viewpoints (Adler, 2002;

Mor-Barak, 2015). Managing cultural diversity also helps an organisation to implement training programmes in order to improve employees' attitude (motivation) and behaviours (performance) by enhancing employees' engagement and organisational performance (Mor-Barak, 2015).

The cultural diversity literature has recently alluded to the importance of culture and diversity and the need for academic scholars to accord systematic attention to diversity management definition and implementation (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009; UNESCO, 2009; Syed, 2010). Cultural diversity can have an impact on an individual's skills, personality, and experience within a specific country and therefore it is important to manage diversity and maintain open conversations among employees, thus fostering creativity. Cultural diversity theories have developed as two separate bodies of research, but there is a need for a more systematic study that links them (e.g., Syed, 2010; Syed and Özbilgin, 2009). Cultural diversity is increasingly recognised as the function that is capable of translating diversity into organisational practices and policies. Cultural diversity also provides an opportunity for employers and managers to demonstrate a strategic focus and act as business partners (LaGuardia, 2008) within the workplace. If family design businesses foster a diverse environment, they will be able to manage diversity efficiently and improve creativity in their organisational structures (e.g., LaGuardia, 2008; Syed and Özbilgin, 2009; Syed, 2010). The next section discusses the social context of diversity management in Lebanon.

### **2.2.2. Social context of diversity management in Lebanon**

The management of diversity faces significant challenges in Middle Eastern contexts (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009; Syed, 2010). The literature on diversity management in Arabic countries requires careful examination (e.g., Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Syed, 2010; Metcalfe, 2011), particularly regarding conservative cultures like Lebanon. Lebanon is considered a more liberal country than the Gulf countries are, but it is still characterised by a persistently masculine collective culture (Hofstede, 2001). The management of diversity practices in Lebanese organisations is mainly conditioned by the sociocultural and political contexts (e.g., Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Syed, 2010; Metcalfe, 2011). Some researchers believe that ethnicity, religion, and gender are the main sources of diversity in Lebanon (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010).

To understand the organisational context of cultural diversity management in Lebanon, it is essential to identify its societal context first. Lebanon is considered an Arabic country and has a significantly different societal context regarding diversity from that in Western countries (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Krayem, 2012). As previously noted, Lebanon is a multi-religious country and one of the most diverse nations in the Middle East (see Chapter 1, pp. 21-23). Islam is the dominant religion, and it is practised by 54% of the population (CAS, 2015). The Lebanese people speak three main languages: Arabic, French, and English. The Lebanese constitution (e.g., Krayem, 2012; CAS, 2015; see Chapter 1) officially recognises the Arabic and French languages (see Appendix C). The Lebanese government does not engage in long-term coordination planning and action (Ministry of Labour, 2015). In addition, the Lebanese government does not focus on adopting a plan of action to develop and implement diversity policies in order to eliminate discrimination against Lebanese citizens and non-citizens (Ministry of Labour, 2015).

In the Lebanese constitution, many articles recommend social and legislative reforms. However, the country still lacks accurate, reliable, and up-to-date data in research, education, and training systems (see Appendix C; Ministry of Labour, 2015). Several articles in the Lebanese constitution acknowledge that diversity is a source of discrimination because of multiple inequalities that limit the participation of women and

religious minorities in the workplace (see Appendix C; Ministry of Labour, 2015). According to Al-Ariss (2010), Lebanese (private) organisations owned by one confessional group only recruited people belonging to their own group. The term “confessional group” refers to an official religious scheme that distributes power among various religious communities in Lebanon (e.g., Haddad, 2002). Hence, positions in organisations in Lebanon are allocated between religious communities by sharing social power among different religious groups (e.g., Haddad, 2002). Discrimination continues to permeate organisations in subtle, nearly invisible, forms due to stereotypical assumptions prevailing in organisational values, norms, and everyday practices (e.g., Jamali *et al.*, 2010).

Diversity management in Lebanon would therefore allow family/non-family members to increase the diversity of employees and would encourage family design businesses to promote diversity programmes in their workplaces. Employee perceptions in Lebanese organisations are characterised by the predominance of gender and religious discrimination in workplaces. Religion, ethnicity, gender, and language remain major determinants of discrimination in social and political organisations, despite economic modernisation and laws countering discrimination against the lower end of the class structure (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010). Krayem (2012) notes further that diversity is not just a matter of demographics, but is also a matter of cultural identity, which features prominently in some workplaces where managers and other categories of employees, particularly those belonging to the higher cultural backgrounds, may prevent people from certain classes entering organisations (e.g., Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Al-Ariss, 2010; Tatoglu, *et al.*, 2016). The management of diversity in Lebanese organisations would ensure equity and fairness in hiring, selecting, and retaining employees, regardless of their cultural backgrounds (Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Mor-Barak, 2015). Several scholars link diversity management with organisational performance (Joshi and Roh, 2009; Singal, 2014; Mor-Barak, 2015; Tatoglu, *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, this research study explores the impact of workplace diversity on organisational performance and, in particular, on Lebanese family design businesses.

### **2.2.3. Types of diversity**

There are a number of demographic characteristics of diversity. This section provides an overview of the most widely recognised demographic characteristics related to the research, such as age, gender, religion, ethnicity (culture), and education, among other factors (race). This section further focuses on the composition of differences in team creativity by adapting a framework developed by McLeod and Lobel (1996), who assert that it is important to test team creativity, which is an essential driver of organisational success. McLeod and Lobel's framework (1996) demonstrates that a creative team, which relies on national origin, age, and gender diversity, could enhance people's ideas, attitudes, skills, and knowledge in the workplace. Patrick and Kumar (2012) affirm that a diverse and inclusive workforce is necessary to foster creativity and guide business strategies. A growing diversity in organisations could produce different ideas or even skills and experiences for an organisation (e.g., Shore *et al.*, 2011).

#### **2.2.3.1. Age diversity**

Age is an important factor in diversity, and the acceptance of all age groups in the work environment is essential for both individual and organisational performance (CIPD, 2015). Age diversity in developing and developed countries plays a significant role when managing employees in the workplace, and the challenges of managing an ageing population relate to national policy, organisational structures, decision-making, and individual lives (e.g., Harper, 2013; Hertell and Zacker, 2015).

An aging population also changes social norms of fairness and equity when managing employees. Individual employees from different cultures and generations or at different life stages have different needs, goals, and motivators (CIPD, 2015). According to Cox (2001), an aging population could lead to the creation of an inclusive workplace where employees could have greater flexibility and achieve work-life balance. Many organisations in developed and developing countries are adopting a variety of national policies to attract, motivate, and retain their ageing workforces (e.g., Harper, 2013; CIPD, 2015; Hertell and Zacker, 2015). Therefore, it is believed that if organisations recruited

and retained skilled and talented employees of diverse age groups, this would improve skills, knowledge, and practices that are used in the management of diversity, such as communication experience, education and training, employee involvement, career management, accountability, and cultural change (e.g., Cox, 2001).

The diversity of employees makes a positive impact in terms of the issues facing organisational diversity and culture in the workplace (Böhm *et al.*, 2011). A recent study by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, (CIPD) (2015) suggests that recruiting and integrating employees of all ages is essential to increase the mixture of ages in SMEs. SME employers are likely to see the benefits of an age-diverse workforce as, predominantly, improving knowledge-sharing and problem-solving in the workplace. Employers can ensure growth and development through recruitment decisions and management practices (e.g., Harper, 2013; Hertell and Zacker, 2015). In addition, organisations could enable employers to improve and manage the age diversity, cultures, knowledge, skills and experiences of employees by providing them with career opportunities (Hertell and Zacker, 2015). Harper (2013) propose that an organisation should provide great opportunities and set challenges for employees and employers by developing, managing, and retaining talents across the whole organisation in order to avoid age discrimination. It is important that organisations manage diversity without making assumptions and accepting stereotypes of and prejudices about individuals and groups in the workplace. Thus, age diversity can have a positive and a negative impact on an employee's performance and commitment within Lebanese family design businesses.



### **2.2.3.2. Gender diversity**

The lack of gender diversity refers to female or male stereotyping, where women are socialised into second-class citizenship and traditional gender roles in the Arab world, including in Lebanon (Jamali and Abdallah, 2010). The debates about the gender and workplace equality between men and women have been ongoing for a long time, but inequality for women and a lack of flexibility are entrenched in the labour market in the UK and continue to be so because of men's roles in a particular society and in the workplace (Eikhoff, 2012). However, women's participation and experiences in organisations is now encouraged through policies of "gender neutrality" and/or "affirmative action" (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009). Gender equality varies across cultures, and there is support for the management of gender gaps in organisations through improving skills and increasing corporate social responsibility commitments (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009). Syed and Murray (2009, pp. 415-416) note:

Women's participation is often circumscribed by the intersection with age, experiences, and exercise of voice among this sizeable minority. The tendency for a large proportion of females to exit the workforce at the age of 30 remained entrenched, despite the gender interventions implemented by firms. This could be attributed to not only social attitudes but also the shortcomings of the legislation in Lebanon to tackle gender discrimination.

Tatli and Özbilgin (2012) suggest that women may represent an important solution to the talent shortage in many countries. However, in most cases, the potential of female managers is not fully explored via firms' talent pools or remains completely unused (Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012). Attracting, retaining, and developing female talent at various levels of an organisation would improve the gender balance, as would organisational policies, targets, and even quotas in many organisations (Syed and Murray, 2009). With specific reference to Lebanese family firms, there are fewer women employed in various positions, including in top-line management positions or on boards of directors, than in many Western countries. It is important to note that the lack of gender diversity policies and practices remain limited with regard to women in Lebanon (e.g., Jamali and Abdallah, 2010).

Diversity management has not improved women's career advancement in Lebanon, owing to family involvement (e.g., Jamali *et al.*, 2006, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010). Furthermore, Lebanese women cannot perform the same jobs as men (e.g., Jamali *et al.*, 2006, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010) as other factors such as kinship and succession put women in family-owned firms at higher risk of coming up against barriers to diversity initiatives in comparison with those in non-family firms (Marques *et al.*, 2014). Barakat (1993) argues that kinship provides continuity between generations through biological relationships (blood, siblings, and cousins), marriage, and inheritance. In Lebanon, inheritance passes from father to son, as does succession to a business. Ownership follows a succession process and the successor is selected according to gender and the patriarchal structure, and Islamic principles are intertwined with this. A man's position as father and husband is the most important source of male authority in Islamic societies and in Lebanon (Barakat, 1993). In a business, a family member relies on a common culture expressing one person's point of view and their needs, values, emotional ties, and constraints in order to preserve the company for future generations (Miller *et al.*, 2013). Family members become influential in a business through embodying and expressing their parents' perceptions, practices, values, and beliefs (Barakat, 1993). Therefore, women may face succession and discrimination issues in Lebanese family design businesses.

### **2.2.3.3. Religious diversity**

Religious diversity is addressed in the literature at the individual and organisational levels. For instance, at the organisational level, research on European policy suggests that religious diversity encourages employees to improve teamwork and performance (Turner, 2007). Religious diversity is influenced by minority groups and group dominance in a particular society and in organisations as a whole. For example, religious diversity in Lebanon could be practised in terms of representing the way individuals or groups experience religious diversity throughout their career and could consider family, moral, and ethical issues (Barakat, 1993; Hanf, 1993; Maktabi, 1999; Al-Ariss, 2010).

Religious communities in Lebanon are commonly denoted by the term “confession” (Haddad, 2002), which can refer to Muslims and Christian religions. The confessional diversity in Lebanon is relevant to power-sharing between religious groups in political and socio-economic life. Previous studies note that recruitment in public and private institutions has a confessional character (e.g., Kiwan, 2005; Aoun, 2007). Therefore, Lebanese family businesses are normally operated and managed by people belonging to one confession (Mikdashi, 1999). The management of diversity in Lebanon faces religious challenges because of the increased migration that continues to grow rapidly in Lebanon, resulting in undermining of social cohesion, the creation of coordination, and communication barriers, and in economic development being adversely affected (UN, 2000; Turner, 2007). Turner (2007) notes that the restriction on the representation of individuals belonging to a religious minority (due to lack of conflict or trust) might affect the labour productivity and has an indirect negative economic impact through investment in the use of human capita for instability in Lebanese society. This negative effect can be mediated by social ties and frequent social interactions within Lebanese society (Barakat, 1993; Haddad, 2002).

The multi-religious Lebanese society reflects a power distribution among different religious communities rather than the freedom to practise a religion in organisations or in social life generally (Al-Ariss, 2010). Thus, if Lebanese family businesses encouraged the creation of representative groups and provided cultural awareness training, this would

improve teamwork. This would also increase diversity across the design firms, encouraging employees of different religious backgrounds to interact together and effectively neutralise the legitimacy of religious distinctions in Lebanese family design businesses.

#### **2.2.3.4. Ethnic diversity**

Ethnic diversity is based on cultural norms, values, and preferences (Fearon, 2003). It is evident that several countries (for example the United States and Canada) have within them a number of different categories of ethnic minorities (e.g., Fearon, 2003; Esteban *et al.*, 2012). Ethnic groups have contributed to the majority of the increase in the population of countries. In poor countries, groups with heterogeneous values, norms, and attitudes often characterise ethnic diversity (Esteban *et al.*, 2012). In rich countries, however, ethnic diversity often results in cultural divisions and the breakdown of social consensus (Esteban *et al.*, 2012). Ethnic attitudes express experiences of one's group and its relations with other groups (Esteban *et al.*, 2012).

According to the United Nations (UN) report (2013), equal opportunities in Lebanon are subject to institutional discrimination in terms of job opportunities and career advancement. However, Lebanon is characterised by thousands of low-skilled Asian workers and is a destination country for Arabic political refugees, mostly Palestinians, Iraqis, and Syrians, and this in turn makes ethnic diversity goals a socially, politically, and emotionally charged topic. As previously noted, the Lebanese labour market is characterised by high levels of immigration, generally amongst the low-skilled labour force in combination with the emigration of mainly young educated workers (in ETF, 2015). Low-skilled workers mainly come from the Arabic and Asian countries (e.g., Iraq, Syria, and Palestine). In 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees confirmed that 1.14 million Syrian refugees were living in Lebanon, 447,328 registered Palestinian refugees were living in twelve camps and 50,000 Iraqis were also living in camps in Lebanon (ETF, 2015). The Lebanese government has implied that the refugee figures have impacted on unemployment and productivity activities, where youth unemployment is high at 25%, women account for only 24% of the workforce, and 50%

of people work in informal jobs (IMF, 2014). The majority of workers have only secondary education or less in the creative sectors (World Bank, 2013b).

The ETF (2015) confirms that creative industries do not see the lack of skills as an obstacle to doing business in the Lebanese labour market. Furthermore, Nahass (2009) had previously confirmed that the creative industries have been concentrated in low productivity sectors that employed mainly low-skilled workers. The idea of creative industries has become prominent in cultural policy and economic planning in the global context (UNESCO, 2009; Hartley *et al.*, 2013). It is therefore essential to understand the role of creative industries in Lebanon by managing cultural diversity and fostering creativity among employees and employers in Lebanese family design businesses. Inglis, (2008) believes that managing ethnic diversity is equally important in the Middle East and Northern Africa. Therefore, it is necessary to identify a diverse ethnic group that participates in and contributes to society. This requires overcoming social exclusion and inequality and bringing a diverse group together to take advantage of having diversity in the workplace (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013) and help an organisation to attract new talents (Inglis, 2008). Managing diversity is becoming important in an organisation in order to embrace diversity, increase an individual's skills/responsibility, support promotion structures, provide job opportunities and decrease power imbalances as well as enhancing the organisational performance and further developing norms and values (Cox and Blake, 1991). A diverse team with a mixture of ethnic groups can promote competitive advantage and improve creativity in organisations (e.g., McLead *et al.*, 1996; Inglis, 2008).

#### **2.2.3.5. Racial diversity**

Racial diversity is an essential factor of diversity and leads some individuals and societies to form cultural prejudices and to practise discrimination in organisations. The lack of racial diversity prevents a certain type of employees (e.g., minority groups) who are subjected to high levels of discrimination from practicing their creative occupations within the cultural and creative industries in the UK (Saha, 2012; Saha, 2017). Saha (2012, p. 436) argues that the positive integration of minorities into ‘mainstream programmes’ merely leads to further repetition of ethnic and racial stereotypes in the cultural industries in the UK. This is often deployed in the distribution of power and job opportunities among creative workers, and therefore leading to inequality and discrimination frameworks in the UK cultural and creative industries (Gray, 2013, Saha, 2017). The lack of management of diversity in the cultural or creative industries is a process of race-making that focuses on reducing the number of minorities, inhibits creative practice, and continue to affect the individual’s status, skill, attitude, and experience in the workplace (Saha, 2017).

Gray (2013) focused on the representation and demography approach in the media industries and found that racial inequality was involved in producing racism and social differences among employees (particularly ethnic minorities) in the UK society. Kochan *et al.* (2003) also found that racial diversity is mostly absent in (white) organisations and argue that predominantly (white) organisations give preference to their (white) members to be valued and to have greater opportunities in making decisions and entering the labour workforce in Canada. These barriers to access employment in different Western societies may lead to negative stereotypes, discrimination, and uncertainty among women and racioethnic employees in different Western societies (e.g., UK, Canada). For instance, Saha (2017) found that there is a racial diversity within different cultures and explains that British Asian people still face inequality and racial discrimination in the cultural and creative industries in the UK because creative firms have a higher percentage of white people in senior management roles. He argues that solving racial inequality may be inadequate in the cultural industries in Britain because it can lead to positions being filled by white employees or unqualified workers, and can negatively affect the

recruitment and selection of an individual coming from ethnic minority groups (Saha, 2017). Therefore, the majority of ethnic minorities face significant barriers in terms of career advancement, recruitment, and divisions of labour within the cultural and creative industries in the UK (Saha, 2017). In 2016, the DCMS statistics showed the number of white workers continued to be predominant in the UK creative industries (DCMS, 2016). However, racial diversity in the USA has risen dramatically over the past two decades as whites declined from 83% to 73% of the labour force (Sparber, 2009).

However, Orlando's (2000) study on racial diversity, business strategy, and firm performance shows that the level of diversity improves organisational effectiveness and productivity and contributes to the production of new ideas in the USA society. Cox and Blake (1991) elaborate on this and note that diverse groups do tend to behave differently from homogenous ones when people from different racioethnic groups hold different attitudes and perspectives then cultural diversity can increase team creativity and innovation in organisations in a particular society. This may lead an organisation to increase the diversity of employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds and enhance working conditions between employees that will ultimately help employers to recruit and select a diverse group of people, and thus maintaining and increasing the number of women and minorities in different societies (Cox and Blake, 1991). Therefore, including different categories of individuals or groups in Lebanese society will enhance the organisational performance and improve creativity (Cox and Blake, 1991). It is therefore important that workers of different types also supply unique skills so that a diverse workforce provides a greater range of perspectives, ideas, and problem-solving techniques within the Lebanese family design businesses.

In Lebanon, there is a lack of academic work carried out to address the issues of racial diversity in organisations (Hage, 2005; Krayem, 2012). For example, Hage (2005) asserts that the Lebanese people are 'white, white to the bones, of an unaltered white, authentic, that leads to no ambiguity; a fanatical white in opposition to the Moroccan, the Algerian or the Senegalese' (p. 197), and thus they make the dominant population group in most of the Lebanese organisations. The significance of being 'white' is used in the Middle

Eastern countries like Lebanon to distinguish a certain group of people coming from ethnic minorities where social classification is rooted in religious, not racial difference in the Lebanese society and the workplace as well (Hage, 2005; Haddad 2002). This research study does not focus on ‘white’ as a racial category, however, it provides a closer examination to Saha’s argument on the negative aspect of diversity among a certain group of people (e.g., women and minority groups) in organisations within a particular society. Saha (2017) asserts that some employers can hold a superior power relation and can have strong (e.g., religious) identities in relation to others (minority groups), and he also demonstrated that under-represented groups face inequality and discrimination in the cultural and creative industries.

As previously noted in section 2.2.3.4, the Lebanese culture is based on different ethnicity and religious backgrounds (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Hofstede, 2002; Krayem, 2012). According to Krayem (2012), Lebanese culture is likely to be influenced by an increase in ethnic minorities in which the relations of the power structure and patriarchy interlace across the (Lebanese) government and the community. Lebanon is a sectarian country and the Lebanese constitution insists on the structuring influence by the power of gender, religion, and ethnicity categorisations (see Appendix C, Chapter 1). These power structures gain faster promotion to value the family ties, the political presentations, religious beliefs, and other communal characteristics (authority and predominance of males) in most of the private and public sectors in Lebanon. Moreover, the Lebanese constitution under Article VII does not state that equality is an inherent right across the Lebanese citizens, however, this article encounters legal restrictions by ruling religious court and juridical practices for enacting commitments to monitor and address equality in Lebanon (see Appendix C). For example, people coming from minority groups (gender, religion, and ethnicity) are seen as aspects of power geometries that place diverse people in different relations of power to each other in Lebanese organisations (Hofstede, 2002; Krayem, 2012). Therefore, it is important that Lebanese family design businesses employ a culturally diverse workforce in order to manage individual or group differences and reduce ethnic conflicts (e.g., interaction between family members and non-family



members) in the Lebanese society and the workplace as well. The next section presents the impact of educational diversity on organisational performance.

#### **2.2.3.6. Educational diversity**

Educational diversity refers to employees who possess different levels of education (DeFillippi *et al.*, 2006). DeFillippi *et al.* (2006, p. 12) state that individuals ‘undertake specialised occupational education to gain fundamental knowledge of their professions and the skills to apply the knowledge’. Thus, education level is an important aspect of diversity, but employees who have different educational levels, ideas, skills, and knowledge can communicate and engage effectively with each other. Through formal education, training, and development, they are able to develop great potential and improve organisational performance (e.g., Cox and Blake, 1991; Latimer 1998; DeFillippi *et al.*, 2006).

Educating employees in organisations provides a workplace free of all forms of discrimination where all employees have equal opportunities and the right to achieve professional and personal balance in the workplace (DeFillippi *et al.*, 2006, Ashton, 2015). A company enhances its diversity reputation by attracting and retaining highly talented employees who have an enhanced creative ability and by increasing employee motivation and efficiency (Wambui *et al.*, 2013). Diversity also fosters an increasingly diverse work culture, where all employees (educated or less educated) have the opportunity to be included, add value, and contribute to their fullest potential (e.g., Cox and Blake, 1991; Latimer 1998).

The level of education in organisations has a positive and negative impact on individuals and groups in those organisations (DeFillippi *et al.*, 2006). Florida (2002a) argues that education may not be an obstacle to the hiring process and employment and that creative individuals do not need to attain high education levels in order to create new ideas. However, encouraging employees with different educational levels to participate in training programmes is essential in order to increase employee skills and experiences and protect them from competition (Wambui *et al.*, 2013). Wambui *et al.* (2013) state that an

employee with a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree or a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) might have different beliefs, values, and personal characteristics from those of a high school graduate. Brown and Hesketh (2004) have shown that many graduates are not utilising the knowledge and skills they gained from their higher education (Brown and Hesketh, 2004). Brown and Hesketh (2004) have revealed there are still inequalities among graduates in the labour market. Ashton (2015) noted that individuals might face challenges and barriers to securing creative work employment in terms of their skills, identities, workplace cultures, and industry context within the creative industries.

However, Tomlinson (2007) argues that university graduates occupy an exciting position in the economy in terms of attitudes, responsibilities, and identities. In contrast to personality, traits, and creativity, the relevant skills and domain-specific knowledge reflect an individual's level of education, training, experience, and knowledge within a particular context (Amabile, 1996). Education provides exposures to a variety of experiences, viewpoints, and knowledge bases, reinforces the use of experimentation and divergent problem-solving skills, and develop individuals cognitively so that they are more likely to use multiple and diverse perspectives and more complicated schemas. In addition, by developing a more extensive skill set, employees should be more comfortable within trying new things and should be more aware of different alternatives and opportunities. Therefore, educational level as a dimension of diversity may have a positive impact on individuals in that they can select and retain different identities, values, and actions and improve their career development in the labour market, and this is particularly true in the Lebanese labour market.

This section focuses on cultural diversity reflected in individual skills and behaviours regardless of people's cultural backgrounds (age, gender, religion, ethnicity, and education), and that creates and sustains privileges for employees in Lebanese family design businesses. Cultural diversity allows for differences so that individuals and organisations can work together to eradicate all forms of discrimination in a particular society. The literature on cultural diversity management refers not only to those groups

that have been discriminated against or that are different from the dominant or privileged groups, but to ‘the mixture of differences, similarities and tensions that can exist among the elements of a pluralistic mixture’ (Thomas, 2005, p. 93). Working with different people from different cultures can develop a person’s identity in the workplace (Cox, 1994). As a result, diversity management has a positive impact on employees in the workplace (Cox, 1994). The literature review therefore suggests that diversity management practices are important within an organisation (e.g., Cox, 1994; Thomas, 2005). Diversity management in both the UK and the USA has focused on delivering equality between employees, although the approach and the agenda in each national context are different (e.g., Jones, 2005). For example, in the USA, policy tends to be driven by a commitment to ‘affirmative action’ (Jones, 2005; see section 2.3.3.2). In the UK, however, affirmative action has, to date, been perceived as positive discrimination, and has been effectively proscribed by law. Latimer (1998) argues that diversity in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, personality, and educational background promotes creativity and solving decision-making problems within a diverse group.

Latimer (1998) also suggests that diversity management promotes commitment among diverse workgroups and leads to lower levels of conflicts and improves creative problem-solving and decision-making. Therefore, it is important to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity in the Lebanese context. If Lebanese family design businesses foster a diverse environment, they will be able to make appropriate changes and retain employees from different cultural backgrounds as well as increase organisational productivity (creativity and performance) (e.g., Cox and Blake, 1991; Cox, 1994; Amabile, 1996). Amabile (1996) found that individuals could draw on their experience and knowledge to generate creative ideas in social institutions such as families. This means that Lebanese family design businesses could foster creativity in the workplace through equality and diversity among employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds (age, ethnicity, gender, religion, education). The next section discusses the management of organisational culture.

#### **2.2.4. Organisational culture**

Organisational culture plays an important role in determining how a diverse workforce conforms to organisational behaviour (e.g., Schein, 1999; Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000). Organisational culture involves six major categories: information systems, people, processes, leadership, a rewards system, and an organisational structure (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000). The management of organisational culture ensures an effective and efficient strategy for managing employees and enabling equal access to work environments and fair decision-making at a competitive level, for instance in relation to hiring, positions of power, and equal status (Davidson and Ferdman, 2002).

Furthermore, organisational culture emphasises the relationship between individuals, groups, and organisations, which helps to maintain a competitive advantage through effective problem-solving and decision-making (Schein, 1999). Organisational culture also plays a fundamental role in shaping talent management. Talented employees have different behaviours, values, talents, personalities and goals within an organisation (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1994). To overcome workplace challenges, it is therefore important that the Lebanese family design businesses understand the diversity of employees and employers and do not have any social pressures in relation to power, authority, tradition, and freedom (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1994).

According to some researchers, the Lebanese culture is based on kinship, bribery, power, authority, tradition (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, equality and freedom among employees and employers is not adopted in the Lebanese organisations (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). For example, Hofstede's model describes how knowledge, habits, beliefs, customs and values are transferred and integrated between a group of people and organisations in different societies (De Mooij, 2011). Hofstede (1991, 2001) proposed that cultures are comparable in five dimensions, which are common to all countries: power distance; uncertainty avoidance; individual versus group orientation; masculine versus feminine orientation; and short-term versus long-term orientation. These five dimensions of national cultural differences are:

- Power distance (high/low): represents power and inequality in institutions such as family businesses, where non-family members have the less powerful judgement or management positions. Lebanon has a high level of inequality, scoring 75 out of 100 (Hofstede, 2001).
- Uncertainty avoidance (high/low): concerns a society's tolerance. People tend to adhere to strict laws, rules, and religious beliefs, which makes them more emotional, uncomfortable, and nervous when they express their emotions. Lebanon scores 50 out of 100 in the uncertainty avoidance dimension (Hofstede, 2001).
- Individual versus group orientation: people in individualistic societies are not integrated into groups. Laws, rights, wealth, and freedom of choice protect individuals. By contrast, in collectivistic societies, people focus on family commitment, and therefore people in collectivistic societies are integrated into strong, cohesive family groups, prioritising family goals and identity over individual actions or identity. Lebanon is considered a collectivistic society, scoring 60 out of 100 (Hofstede, 2001).
- Masculine versus feminine orientation: this refers to the distribution of gender roles. Hofstede (1991, 2001) explains that women's values are sometimes different from men's values in different societies. For instance, in European countries, women have the same rights and values as men; however, in patriarchal countries like Lebanon, gender differences between men and women enable men to have more power, authority, and control in the workplace and in society. Lebanon is considered a masculine society, scoring 65 out of 100 (Hofstede, 2001).
- Short-term versus long-term orientation: long-term orientation scores low in Western societies such as the USA and the UK. The USA and the UK encourage thrift, savings, and a particular kind of values, perseverance towards achieving results, and a willingness to subordinate oneself for a purpose. By contrast, short-term orientation societies such as Lebanon focus on social pressure, have less savings, a preference for quick results, and a concern with not losing face (see Hofstede, 2001). Arabic cultures including Lebanon respect traditions and power,

protect religious practices, and accept bribes and gifts (Barakat, 1993; Ali, 1996). Lebanon scores 14 out of 100 in the long-term orientation dimension (Hofstede, 2001).

Hofstede (2001) also reveals that in certain cultural contexts, micro-individual beliefs and attitudes are generally involved in broader societal traditions and organisational norms and create unique organisational arrangements. Hofstede describes Arabic societies, including Lebanon, as exhibiting high-uncertainty avoidance, a high-power distance, high masculinity, low individualism, and short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001). Given Hofstede's clarification of Arabian national cultures, there is evidence of rising individualism in Lebanese society, resulting from the fact that Lebanese culture consists of a distinctive identity, social norms, value structures and traditions. The literature review thus far suggests that the sociocultural and legal contexts are closely intertwined with the organisational processes and individual outcomes of equal opportunity. For example, the literature review has identified the traditional themes of diversity (gender, age, ethnicity, culture, disability, and religion) to understand the topic of diversity and diversity management across different countries and, in particular, in Lebanon (e.g., Haddad, 2002; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010; Harper, 2013; CIPD, 2015; Hertell and Zacker, 2015).

Ali (1996) confirms that the link between organisational performance and leadership style is related directly to an employer. Ali (1996) indicates that Arab managers or leaders depend on a man, usually a husband, to run a business. Arabic societies share the same culture, beliefs, practices, and traditions, such as relying on family loyalty, power, experience, education, and age, for example, depends on the authority of a father (Barakat, 1993, Ali, 1996). Similarly, Sweeney and Hardaker (1994) observed the attitudes of East and West German managers and employees in a study comparing the two different nationalities. The study reveals that organisational culture has a significant impact on managers and employees in the workplace (Sweeney and Hardaker 1994). Effective business development goals help individuals to build trust, share their own values across different cultural groups, and participate effectively in the decision-making

process (Iivari and Huisman, 2007). The management of organisational culture could positively influence employee performance and satisfaction (Collings *et al.*, 2010). Schein's model (1999) further suggests that individual personalities, attitudes, and organisational values and goals have a direct influence on the level of trust and psychological activity in any organisation. Thus, it is important that an organisation can improve the engagement of employees in order to manage diversity among employees and employers within the workplace.

Following on from this, it is essential to understand the impact of cultural diversity on the creativity of employees and employers regardless of their cultural backgrounds. The literature on organisational performance and leadership is instructive in relation to this research study. Researchers point out that cultural norms and traditions influence an individual's performance in social institutions such as family businesses (e.g., Hofstede, 1991; Barakat, 1993; Ali, 1996; Meyer and Allen, 1997; Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000; Hofstede 2001). Cultural norms are reflected in a society's institutional practices, influencing an individual's skill, motivation, and behaviours (Hofstede, 1991; Amabile, 1998; Hofstede 2001). Amabile (1998) found that individuals draw on their skills, knowledge, and experiences to generate and evaluate creative ideas. This research aims to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity in Lebanese family design businesses.

This section has focused on the management of organisational culture. The literature review reflects the implementation of diversity management in Western countries and investigates the importance of diversity management in the Middle East. For example, in the United States and Canada, diversity has been considered the main advantage of immigrants working there, and they are allowed to stay and apply for citizenship (e.g., Inglis, 1995; Turner, 2007). The next section discusses the role of diversity management practices in the Western and Eastern countries and, in particular, in Lebanon.

## **2.3. Diversity Management Practices**

### **2.3.1. Diversity management definition**

Diversity management is defined as a variety of management issues and activities related to hiring and effective utilisation of personnel from different cultural backgrounds (Cox and Blake, 1991). The management of diversity is broadly defined by various authors to include values, personalities, family background, education, language, physical appearance, marital status, lifestyle, beliefs and background characteristics such as geographical origin, tenure within the organisation and economic status (e.g., Shore *et al.*, 2011; Podsiadlowski *et al.*, 2013; Mor-Barak, 2014).

Diversity management is also considered to be a characteristic of a workgroup or organisation that has demographic differences and includes both observable (e.g., gender, race, age) and non-observable (e.g., culture, cognition, education) attributes (e.g., Roberson, 2006; Nishii and Mayer, 2009). Diversity management therefore encompasses race, gender, ethnic group, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, physical abilities, religious beliefs, and political background or other ideologies (Patrick and Kumar, 2012). Cox and Blake (1991) also affirm that diversity management of aspects such as ethnicity, age, gender, personality, and educational background improves productivity, enhances corporate competitiveness, encourages innovation solutions to solving problems, and ensures flexibility. Diversity management is also viewed as an effective approach to managing individuals, groups, and organisations. Managing diversity in Lebanon is essential to achieve a competitive advantage (e.g., Triandis *et al.*, 1994; Beechler and Woodward, 2009). Patrick and Kumar (2012, p. 1) define diversity management as

a set of conscious practices that involve understanding and appreciating interdependence of humanity, cultures, and the natural environment; practicing mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from our own; understanding that diversity includes not only ways of being but also ways of knowing.



This definition reveals that diversity management practices have a positive impact on equality and diversity among employees, managers, and employers in the workplace (Patrick and Kumar, 2012). Furthermore, diversity management emphasises the importance of maximising organisational performance (Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015). Thus, it is important that Lebanese family design businesses understand the relationship between culture and diversity management in order to improve the experience and outcomes of different groups in a diverse workforce (Patrick and Kumar, 2012). Moreover, diversity management comprises two core dimensions. The first is the demographic dimension, which includes age, gender, race, and ethnicity. The second, subtler dimension includes social characteristics such as education, financial status, social class, religion, and sexual orientation. Therefore, diversity management highlights the development and implementation of equality and diversity policy and this area is generally positioned as a key component of HR practice that aims to improve employment opportunities in the workplace (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2015).

Some researchers assert that if diversity management is applied, both sociocultural and demographic characteristics are likely to be present in an employment setting (Cox and Blake, 1991; Cox, 2001). This implies that diversity management is enhanced by harnessing employees with different cultural backgrounds on the basis of their skills, experiences, perceptions, and perspectives (geographically and culturally), as suggested by Tatli and Özbilgin (2012). It is therefore important to explore the impact of having diverse employees within Lebanese family design businesses. Employees with diverse cultural backgrounds, ideas, skills, qualifications, and experiences can alleviate the high potential for prejudice and discrimination and can foster creative performances within the workplace (e.g., Thomas and Ely, 1996, 2001; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012).

Thomas and Ely (1996) distinguish three different perspectives regarding an organisation's approach to diversity: (1) the discrimination and fairness paradigm, (2) the access and legitimacy paradigm, and (3) the learning and effectiveness paradigm. These paradigms refer to organisational employees' beliefs and expectations by addressing the need for specific support for minority groups and reducing social inequalities within the workplace (Thomas and Ely, 2001; Konrad, 2003; Patrick and Kumar, 2012; Rivas, 2012;

Mor-Barak, 2014). Diversity management encompasses differences and similarities among employees to ensure equal employment opportunities and fair treatment and that stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination are dealt with social institutions such as family businesses, even though the raising of these issues depends on sharing power with minority groups (Konrad, 2003).

Diversity management also promotes moral and ethical concerns (e.g., ethics codes, role models, policies and practices and reward and punishment systems) (e.g., Konard, 2003; Ali and Al-Owaihian, 2008). Ethics are affected by culture, values, faith, education, race, and economic influences (Ali and Al-Owaihian, 2008). It is essential that the management of an organisation is culturally diverse, promoting equality by accepting differences, determining ethical behaviour, and modifying organisational practices and policies (Konrad, 2003). It is also important that an organisation adopts and encourages ethical practices and rules in the workplace (Mor-Barak, 2014). It is important to embrace cultural and ethical differences among employees and employers and particularly if organisations persist in making assumptions, referring to stereotypes, and engaging in overt discrimination (e.g., Konard, 2003; Ali and Al-Owaihian, 2008; Mor-Barak, 2014). If Lebanese family design businesses considered implementing diversity management in their organisations, this would increase the diversity of employees and employers and would avoid discrimination or unethical decision-making in the workplace.

Thomas and Ely (2001) propose adopting equal employment opportunity, (EEO) law and argue for the notion of equal opportunities regardless of group characteristics such as gender, race, and sexual orientation. They suggest that all potential employees be provided with equal access to the organisation and that current employees engage effectively with new employees (Thomas and Ely, 2001). This also implies that employers can ensure equal employment opportunities without acknowledging potential cultural differences among employees and can focus on the new abilities, skills, and attributes and experiences of employees to avoid institutional discrimination and legislation in terms of job opportunities and career advancement (e.g., Thomas and Ely, 2001; Patrick and Kumar, 2012; Rivas, 2012).

Tomervik (1995) notes that diversity includes four basic themes: (1) age, disability, educational level, ethnicity, family structure, function, geographic location, race, religion, sexual orientation, and values; (2) Individual and organisation effectiveness; (3) cultural differences and change within organisations such as in management structures and human resource practices and (4) communication as an equal employment opportunity.

Similarly, Morrison (1992) categorises diversity into four levels: (1) racial/ethnic/sexual balance, (2) understanding other cultures, (3) diversity as culturally divergent values, and (4) inclusiveness (cultural, subcultural, and individual). Griggs (1995) classifies diversity into primary and secondary dimensions. The six primary dimensions includes (1) age, (2) ethnicity, (3) gender, (4) physical abilities/qualities, (5) race, and (6) sexual orientation. The secondary dimensions of diversity includes educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, and work experience.

According to Mor-Barak (2014), diversity management presents as two different types: (1) intra- national diversity management, which will improve and manage a diverse workforce of citizens or immigrants within a single national organisational context. (2) cross-national diversity management, which, refers to managing a workforce, composed of citizens and immigrants in different countries. This means that a company can implement the laws and social norms of its home country and establish headquarters outside its home country. This section of the study deals with “intra-national diversity management”, which requires considering a different set of policies and programmes within the legislative and cultural contexts of a specific country. Cultural norms are essential for an organisation and require flexibility so that they can adapt and operate within a specific country (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014; Storey *et al*, 2014). Furthermore, managing or working with employees from diverse cultural backgrounds in teams can help to engage with a global mind-set (Storey *et al.*, 2014). It is important that employers and managers promote diversity in their organisations to increase the job satisfaction and commitment of employees in the workplace.

The “intra-national diversity management” has been studied at three levels: the individual level, the team level, and the organisational level. At the individual level, diversity has positive outcomes, such as higher levels of job satisfaction, commitment, productivity, and higher perceptions of fairness (e.g., Leslie and Gelfand, 2008; Gonzalez and Denisi, 2009). At the team level, diversity leads to greater creativity and more effective decision-making and communication (Boone and Hendriks, 2009). At the organisational level, workplace diversity drives organisational performance, lowers levels of employee turnover and engagement, and improves innovation (Gonzalez and Denisi, 2009). Ostergaard *et al.* (2011) found that the relationship between employee diversity and firm/innovation performance would increase the firm innovative capabilities, which are improved if there are high levels of diversity. However, according to Mor-Barak (2014, p. 136), having a diverse workforce alone is insufficient to gain the potential benefits of diversity:

Workforce diversity refers to the division of the workforce into distinction categories that (a) have a perceived commonality within a given cultural or national context and that (b) impact potentially harmful or beneficial employment outcomes such as job opportunities, treatment in the workplace, and promotion prospects—irrespective of job-related skills and qualifications.

Therefore, effective management of diverse workforce focuses on building diverse teams and on practising a culture of inclusion through effective, flexible adaptation of local and global diversity management policies, which have a set of positive performance outcomes (Singal and Gerde, 2015). Managing diverse groups can lead to improved problem solving and decision making skills. According to Singal and Gerde (2015), the relationship between racial/ethnic diversity and performance is positively correlated with productivity in firms that display a family orientation in a specific environment. Managing diverse groups can lead to improved problem-solving and decision-making skills. According to Singal and Gerde (2015), the relationship between racial/ethnic diversity and performance is positively correlated with productivity in firms that display a family orientation in a specific environment. However, Kochan *et al.* (2003) found that diversity can have both negative and positive effects on the creativity and performance of employees and organisations. For example, some studies identify that workforce diversity

may have negative consequences at each of these five levels: communication problems, lack of relationship among staff, lower levels of job opportunities, disharmony, and conflict (e.g., Stahl *et al.*, 2010; Mahadeo *et al.*, 2012). Thus, diversity management offers can have both negative and positive impacts on groups, organisations, and society. Developing a more diverse workforce can increase diversity such as ethnic diversity and other individual differences in organisations through a cultural change so that they remain competitive (Jones, 2005; Wrench, 2005). It is therefore essential to understand the relationship between creativity, culture, and diversity within Lebanese family design businesses so that they can be helped to adapt to rapid change and avoid discrimination in their business environment.

As mentioned earlier, this research study will explore the impact of diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses. Studies on diversity management practices in Lebanon reach unclear conclusions in the private enterprise and, in particular in, Lebanese family design businesses. Only a few literature reviews have focused on demographic backgrounds (ethnic and individual differences) within the Lebanese context (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010). Applying diversity management would make a significant difference to the degree of cultural intelligence and to employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. The definition of diversity management used in this research study premised on identifying how diversity management could improve performance in Lebanese family design businesses (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014). Thus, this research considers the combination of three factors: (1) cultural diversity influences (e.g., age, experience, and qualifications of employees), (2) diversity management perspectives, and (3) creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses. The combination of these factors will improve the diversity of employees and employers and increase creativity, performance, and diversity (inclusion) in the workplace, which is becoming important in organisations and, in particular, in Lebanese family design businesses (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015).

The literature review shows the critical role of the diversity management practices that are used by comparing the role of diversity management in different countries (e.g., Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2011; Mor-Barak, 2014). Therefore, in this study,

diversity management refers to the policies and practices that are designed to support diversity between employees and increase creativity in organisations (e.g., Konard, 2003; Ali and Al-Owaihian, 2008; Mor-Barak, 2014). Previous researchers have discussed the importance of diversity management in organisations and have suggested that cultural diversity in global and local firms possibly leads to less radical creativity (non-creative performance) (e.g., Thomas and Ely, 2001; Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015). However, managing diversity does help individuals and groups to bring new skills, resources, and creativity to the organisation, which increase the business's competitiveness at local and regional levels (Bilton, 2007). The next section draws on some important factors regarding the role of employees (e.g., engagement, talent acquisition roles; recruitment and selection, training and development, and conflicts) in organisations, particularly in family businesses.

### **2.3.2 Core dimension of diversity management**

#### **2.3.2.1. Employee engagement**

Employee engagement is considered to be an important factor in diversity management practices. Researchers argue that employee engagement is influenced not only by individual differences but also by socio-cultural factors (Ferguson, 2007; Azoury *et al.*, 2013). Emotions, experiences, well-being, and “flow” are also related to the engagement of employees (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). However, individual and group differences can positively affect the engagement of employees and can increase personal and team performance (Cook, 2010). Individual differences and unique personalities reflect the skills, experiences, knowledge, and expectations that need to determine an employee's potential level of engagement (Roberson, 2006). Focusing on employee engagement in the form of aspects such as involvement, commitment, meaningfulness of the work, empowerment, manager support, loyalty, and development of a team's knowledge can drive their engagement in organisations (Mone and London, 2010). In addition, practices such as praise and recognition, trust and respect, job enrichment, good communication, incentives, removal of barriers to promotion, provision of optimal learning and provision of the necessary tools by employers can have a positive impact in terms of attracting and retaining talented employees (Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015).

According to Azoury *et al.* (2013), employee engagement differs between family firms and non-family firms. Recent studies have found a positive correlation between particular HR practices and the performance of family firms (El-Chaarani, 2014). Thus, family firms are embracing a longer-term approach to business performance and management in order to ensure success. The management practices of family firms can be identified through their organisational structure (e.g., firm size, firm age). El-Chaarani (2014) also stated that employee engagement is connected to organisational behaviour in relation to enhancing the performance and the goals of the organisation. Employees are therefore encouraged to engage positively in sharing innovative and creative ideas within a diverse workplace. This commitment can also increase the level of skills, motivation and job satisfaction of the employees (e.g., Azoury *et al.*, 2013; El-Chaarani, 2014). However, employees who are not engaged positively can negatively affect the relationship between teamwork and the future of the business, since ‘they try to focus on tasks rather than goals and outcomes’ (Azoury *et al.*, 2013, p. 2). Therefore, family design businesses in Lebanon can effectively increase the talent of their employees by integrating non-family members into their local or international firms (e.g., Fahed-Sreih, *et al.*, 2010; Grosberg and Bell, 2014; Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015; Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016). This creates balance in the engagement of employees and increases the level of individuals’ skills and the diversity in organisations.

#### **2.3.2.2. Talent acquisition roles**

Talent acquisition is a challenging and complex area of diversity management within an organisation. Many organisations in Western countries focus on managing diversity to integrate talent in areas such as succession planning and performance management (Laurano, 2013). Organisations in Northern and Western Europe face more competition regarding recruiting talent than organisations in other parts of the continent (The Global Talent Competitiveness Index, GTCi, 2014). According to Laurano (2013), 78% of organisations are building a talent community that can be recruited to create stronger employers, hire more talents, and improve their businesses. Talent acquisition improves the human resources performance and business performance, and increases the overall diversity of employees.

Laurano (2013) asserts that a talent acquisition strategy includes three pillars of success: (1) Plan & Prepare; this helps organisations to adjust their talent acquisition goals and organise business priorities through a diverse workforce, core human resources, and talent management. (2) Identify & Evaluate: this pillar includes key practices that are included in most talent acquisition processes, such as candidate relationship management, managing and maintaining a relationship with an employee, and building skills and experience. (3) Acquire & Engage: this encompasses the selection and recruitment stages; it helps new talents to engage effectively with other employees, improves the quality of those hired, and encourages employees to enter into a successful and lasting career within the organisation. Lahey (2015) also affirms that talent acquisition is no longer a strategy that includes recruiters and hiring managers but is about establishing a collaborative talent acquisition process in which each member of the organisation can play a role in improving the management process so that it will effectively identify and hire talent. Rawlinson *et al.* (2008) identify three strategies for attracting and retaining talented employees:

- Creating different strategies to meet the needs of a diverse workforce and varying aspirations for a career;
- Focusing on employer branding by articulating a few key attributes with an emphasis on shared purpose above the profit motive; and
- Creating talent acquisition strategies to look ahead and act with prescience – hire exceptional talent when you first find them and then look around to see where they fit and what they do.

Solving talent management challenges helps organisations to attract, develop, and retain talented employees (Schuler *et al.*, 2011). The recent literature on talent acquisition and talent management focuses on areas of HRM (Cheese *et al.*, 2008), multinational corporations (Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016), and an organisation's efforts to attract, select, develop, and retain key talented employees on a global scale, specifically in relation to global talent management (e.g., Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Stahl *et al.*, 2012). Schuler *et al.* (2011) claim that the success of firms today is dependent on how effectively they



identify and manage the (global) talent challenges. Talent management and talent acquisition are generally adjusted to fit the internal and external organisational contexts (Cheese *et al.*, 2008). Cheese *et al.* (2008, p. 46) define talent as follows:

Talent, therefore, is used as an all-encompassing term to describe the human resources that organisations want to acquire, retain and develop in order to meet their business goals.

This statement reveals that talent management practices contribute to the overall performance of the firm (Cheese *et al.*, 2008). Talent management can also improve the diversity of employees in terms of their skills, knowledge, experience, personal traits, and education (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). Talent management is an essential feature of HRM in organisations in order to select, recruit, and retain employees regardless of their cultural background (Thomas and Craig, 2008). Cappelli (2008) argues as follows:

Talent management is not an end in itself. It is not about developing employees or creating succession plans, nor is it about achieving specific turnover or any other tactical outcome. It exists to support the organization's overall objective, which in business essentially amounts to making money.

However, Collings and Mellahi (2009) seek a multiple-aspect approach to talent management to overcome the deficiencies of other perspectives. They base their definition of talent management on a combination of several theories on human capital and talent management. Talent management plays an important role to the success of organisations. Collings and Mellahi (2009, p. 304) define talent management as follows:

Activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization.

This definition reveals that talent management focuses on the adequate flow of human capital throughout the organisation (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). Talent management has a great deal of resemblance to succession planning or human resource planning that is

intended to be used to fill specific positions such as top management or a chief executive officer, a line manager or a human resource manager (e.g., Stahl *et al.*, 2007; Collings and Mellahi 2009; Stahl *et al.*, 2012). Martin and Schmidt (2010) suggest that talent management could have a negative impact on organisational performance, as some organisations do not focus on resources that would enhance their competitive advantage. Collings and Mellahi (2009) argue that talent management strategies have an indirect positive relationship with organisations and employees. Highly engaged workers produce better business results than disengaged workers and strategies that include rewards, appraisals, the encouragement of development, and resourcing and salary review processes which are aligned to business objectives, goals, and strategies will improve customer satisfaction and employee retention (e.g., Cheese *et al.*, 2008; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Cheese, 2010).

Schuler *et al.* (2011) argue that effective talent management is a major contributor to the success or failure of businesses. Therefore, an organisation could focus on employing a diverse workforce by increasing motivation and commitment and encouraging the improvement of human behaviour (e.g., Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Höglund, 2012). Integrating talent management into business practices in the Lebanese context will facilitate the organisation's approach to employee management and will improve the organisational performance. It will develop, motivate, and retain people's skills (self-development), education, and expectations in order to enhance the organisational effectiveness, develop HR approaches to change demographic factors and skills shortage (e.g., attracting, keeping, and motivating people from minority backgrounds) to achieve competitive advantage. In addition, if Lebanese family design businesses attempted to improve the diversity of employees and implement diversity management practices, this would identify the critical factors required for selecting, developing, and retaining the most talented employees and the best employers.

The literature review describes how talent management can help an organisation to explore, invent, or create new knowledge that brings creative activities to the organisation and improves its structural diversity (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Höglund, 2012).

Consequently, several researchers have stressed that organisations may become involved in the talent management process to improve a workforce diversity, including increasing employees' knowledge, skills, experience, and education and improving their positive personal traits (Stahl *et al.*, 2007; Collings and Mellahi 2009; Schuler *et al.*, 2011; Stahl *et al.*, 2012). This literature review stresses on the role of talent management, which is, less well developed in Lebanon. Talent management is seen as a process in an organisation that supports creativity by providing an enabling structure through which to capture, exploit, or implement existing knowledge by 'generating truly novel ideas' (Hamel, 2006, p. 76). Talent management, therefore, is an impactful aspect of diversity management in the workplace that is used to attract, develop, manage, and retain employees in organisations regardless of their backgrounds, and it is particularly used in Lebanese family design businesses.

#### **2.3.2.2.1. Recruitment and selection**

Recruitment is a process of identifying and attracting suitable people to meet an organisation's needs (Porter, 2008). Recruitment is therefore aligned with other HR practices and enhances the benefits of other HR functions, such as selection, performance appraisal, or awarding compensation (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). The process of selection and recruitment of employees is undertaken within a framework of external and internal factors such as the business strategy, the size of the organisation, the cultural differences between organisations, labour market factors, government policy, and legislation (Beardwell and Claydon, 2007). According to Boxall and Purcell (2003), recruitment may add value to an organisation by identifying and attracting talent from diverse backgrounds. Employers should ensure that the recruitment process depends on skills, abilities, and the potential employees' qualifications, and experiences. Therefore, the recruitment of talented employees is related to substantial investment in their training and development, professional skills, and qualifications (e.g., Cook and Saini, 2010; Kullarni, 2015).

Cook and Saini, (2010) suggest that the recruitment process is linked to age and generational expectations or aspirations. Therefore, organisations that expand rapidly will recruit new staff to exploit job growth opportunities. An example of what the

organisation is looking for is an employee's ability to easily interact and communicate with other young or old members of staff in the workplace. This ability would also indicate that individuals' thinking, values, and career behaviours are different (Cook and Saini, 2010). The need to recruit this type of employee means that some organisations hire employees of different genders, ages, religions, and races (Rubb, 2003), as well as focusing on equal opportunities and fair treatment by applying the relevant legislative actions and by treating everybody the same (Thomas and Ely, 2001).

According to Kulkarni *et al.* (2015), employees who possess more knowledge and skills may already have a relevant job that meets their qualifications and experiences. Thus, this type of employees brings additional skills to the job and improves opportunities and advantages for their employers (Erdogan *et al.*, 2011). Employees are more engaged when they understand their roles and responsibilities within their position. An understanding of a job's responsibilities results in higher levels of firm performance and commitment by the employees (Erdogan *et al.*, 2011). However, some employees accept work positions that do not fully utilise their skills and capabilities (Maynard *et al.*, 2006), while others with higher educational qualifications and experience that exceed a job's requirements are hired. In order to gain the benefits of diversity, it is important that Lebanese family design businesses follow recruitment procedures that vary according to an organisation's size (i.e., small, medium and large enterprises). The majority of small enterprises in Lebanon do not follow any particular recruitment procedures (ETF, 2015). Medium-sized companies do not focus on recruitment procedures either; they select and recruit employees from within their circle of contacts, while the large companies sometimes publicise their vacancies and follow a set of recruitment procedures (ETF, 2015).

#### **2.3.2.2.2. Training and development**

Training enhances employees' value as well as their employability in the job market. In addition, most companies offer higher wages for skilled workers, to compensate them for their greater value and to discourage turnover. Training and development might be needed for enhancing employee skills and experiences. According to Thomas (2005), training and development encompasses three main activities: training, education, and development. Thus, employees and managers are encouraged to undertake training courses to increase their motivation in the workplace.

Rothwell (2005) argues that training and development may ensure continuity for an organisation. Through training, employers help new and current employees to acquire knowledge and skills while they perform their jobs (Thomas, 2005). Employees who enhance their skills through training are more likely to engage fully in their work, because they derive satisfaction from learning new tasks. In terms of positive outcomes, training for employers and employees emerged as significant in recognising and addressing race-based discrimination and its consequences. Organisations can offer training programmes that will help minorities (e.g., non-family members) and women (Eikhoff, 2012) to increase their representations and enhance the level of their creativity, knowledge, and skills in the workplace. If organisations invest in training and development, it will help employees to manage and invest in relationships with other employees and to increase their skills developments, performance, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy. Therefore, Lebanese family design businesses can reframe their organisational structure in order to manage a diverse workplace and increase creativity, which could enhance their competitive advantage as well.

### 2.3.2.3. Conflicts

Conflict exists ‘between two or more interdependent individuals over perceived incompatible differences in beliefs, values, and goals, or over differences in desires for esteem, control, and connectedness’ (Wilmot and Hocker, 2011, p. 11). This statement emphasises that conflict can increase if individuals are not encouraged to share experiences, solve creative problems, or make decisions in a group. The presence of emotional tensions and conflicts in the organisation is one dimension of the organisational environment (Mohr 2005; Wambui *et al.*, 2013).

According to Wambui *et al.* (2013), conflict is a significant barrier to diversity and creativity that affects employees from an ethnic minority and one factor that creates conflicts is the issue of poor communication or lack of it. Conflict usually occurs due to language and communication barriers, poor management experiences, and not being visible within local organisations, which decrease the productivity of an organisation. Communication problems being addressed by using appropriate language and the involvement of employees in decision-making are important factors in building employee trust (Wambui *et al.*, 2013). In addition, language differences can indicate positive and negative results for individual or team-level organisational performance (Mohr, 2005). Martin and Parson (2007) underscore the fact that the use of verbal and non-verbal languages among diverse teams can have negative effects on individual interaction and communication. This means it is essential that employees who use different languages have at least one language in common. It is imperative for an employer to achieve organisational objectives by focusing on the performance of individuals in a group while resolving disputes or conflicts that occur at any level in the organisational hierarchy. Thus, it is important that employees who are engaged and interacting within a diverse workforce share a common language so that they can have different experiences, learn new skills, learn about different ideas, beliefs, and knowledge and understand themselves across different cultural boundaries in order to develop a talent mindset within the Lebanese family design businesses.

Different cultures have different ideas about age, blood ties, and the hierarchical nature of a society as well as about individual and organisational interaction they have with each other. An inclusive working environment can improve communication and make it easier and can remove barriers to interaction between employers and employees. For example, negative behaviours or practices of individuals could reveal conflicts and tensions between employees and employers and that an employee is in danger of giving up on his or her commitment (Cook and Saini, 2010). A potential communication problem based on the age or maturity of employees or on differences in the level of employee experience is often difficult to manage (e.g., Harper 2013; Hertell and Zacker, 2015). Effective communication focuses on understanding the challenges faced by employees and avoiding group biases in order to create a more positive workplace environment (Thompson, 2011). In addition, it also contributes to diversity within an organisation (Thompson, 2011). Employees are required to work in harmony to achieve organisational goals. Wambui *et al.* (2013) argue that employers are keen to be involved organisational innovation because they want to foster an organisational culture that is conducive to creativity, innovation, and a conflict-free and challenging environment.

It is therefore important that employers examine the existence of conflicts and provide an effective platform for interaction or communication between employees and employers. Most employees want to be treated with a degree of fairness and transparency and do not want to be manipulated in the organisation by fellow employees or employers (Thompson, 2011). Guilherme *et al.* (2010) found that people who shared experiences, conversations, and storytelling could come to understand one another. Holmes (2011) also opines that shared moral choices and values help individuals and groups to engage with each another and to manage workplace diversity.

Other researchers found that ‘the lack of, and the difficulties associated with the communication are a major problem within the interaction between the partner firms’ (Mohr, 2005, p. 15). Thus, it is more important to improve global communication between firms (local and international firms) rather than within a firm (Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016). Differences in culture and language make communication difficult, and if

organisations hire bilingual employees or managers, they can ease language and communication barriers (Mohr, 2005). This reflects the complex interaction/interplay that goes on between macro- and meso-level processes affecting employees' experiences and the merits of a more layered and relational perspective when studying diversity management (Syed and Özbilgin, 2009). For this reason, it is essential to understand and explore different sets of factors in diversity management research, particularly in the context of traditional cultures and societies where gender stereotyping is common and where women are socialised into second-class citizenship and conventional gender roles (Jamali and Abdallah, 2010). As articulated by Syed and Murray (2009, pp. 415-416):

Organizational approaches to diversity management are profoundly influenced by macro national forces external to the workplace; some of these include anti-discrimination and human rights laws and socio-political policy towards issues such as gender, cultural diversity and migration. It is therefore important to recognize that workplace experiences of diverse employees are not only shaped by organizational and or legal contexts but also by ethnic, linguistic and religious bargains within the interplay of multiple roles and cultural mores. Individual choices, organizational processes and macro national structures, collectively account for power parity and advantage within societal and employment contexts.

This statement reveals that diversity management becomes important in organisations in order to manage equality and diversity among employees (Syed and Murray, 2009). Managing diversity is important in organisations in order to increase equal employment opportunities among family members and non-family members. Previous studies have found that inequality and discriminatory practices may be legally protected in certain countries, particularly in Muslim countries (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010). Conflict arises when individuals do not share the same interests, values, or views and do not take the same actions or directions in Muslim societies that they do in Lebanon.

Previous studies in the field have laid bare the limitations of the original conceptualisations and measures of diversity management that were either developed in a single country or characterised by mono-cultural dominance in the workplace (Mohr, 2005; Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Hertell and Zacker, 2015; Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016).



Diversity management remains a concept and is isolated from the multilevel factors responsible for individual and group differences in the workplace (Mor-Barak, 2014). For example, power relations within a specific society remain generally visible, including the legal framework for diversity and equal opportunity, cultural traditions, and political ideology in status hierarchies, particularly in family businesses (Barakat, 1993; Hofstede, 2001; Al-Ariss, 2010). The role of patriarchy in religious or cultural traditions influences gender relations within a given society (Barakat, 1993; Haddad, 2002; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). The Lebanese context thus represents the most difficult challenge faced by diversity management as it grapples with discriminatory practices and stereotypes, which are invariably deeply rooted in centuries-old traditions or cultural identity and which may influence diversity outcomes in organisations.

Therefore, the literature review highlights the importance of diversity management (training, recruitment, diversity inclusion, and managing diverse groups) in order to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity within Lebanese family design businesses. Diversity management not only minimises the negative impact of diversity but also helps organisations to capitalise on diversity in non-Western contexts (e.g., Lebanon). Diversity management is defined in this research study by following Olsen and Martins (2012, p. 1169) suggestions, which define diversity management as:

the utilization of HR (human resource) management practices to (i) increase or maintain the variation in human capital on some given dimension(s), and/or (ii) ensure that variation in human capital on some given dimension(s) does not hinder the achievement of organizational objectives, and/or (iii) ensure that variation in human capital on some given dimension(s) facilitates the achievement of organizational objectives.

This definition reveals that HR practice becomes a key part of diversity management in organisations. Olsen and Martin (2012) argue that implementing HR management practices help organisations to hire and retain individuals from different cultural backgrounds, as well as increasing the number of women and minorities within a diverse workforce, and thus enhancing performance. Furthermore, the literature review on HRM suggests that employers select or choose individuals regardless of their cultural backgrounds to ensure equality and diversity in the workplace (e.g., Hamel, 2006;

Collings and Mellahi 2009; Schuler *et al.*, 2011; Stahl *et al.*, 2011; Olsen and Martins, 2012). Several studies have shown how functional diversity leads to reduced conflicts and tensions among a diverse group, and this positively affects the organisational performance (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Schuler *et al.*, 2011; Stahl *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, it is essential to enforce the use of tools (law) to manage diversity and foster creativity within Lebanese family design businesses. Researchers argue that a collectivist orientation can improve the creativity of a team and solve a creative problem to deliver new ideas (e.g., Jones, 2005; Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015). The literature on diversity management is characterised by focusing on organisational culture, particularly regarding human resource management, which includes recruitment, offering rewards, training and development, monitoring job satisfaction, organising teamwork, and measuring individual behaviours. The next section discusses how diversity management can have a positive impact on organisational practices and structures (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015).

### **2.3.3. Organisational diversity management**

Diversity provides the knowledge and skills and facilitates individuals' successful participation in rapidly globalising economies (Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016). Individuals with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and cultural background are also sought by local and international businesses (Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, diversity in organisations could produce different ideas or even skills and experiences for an organisation (Shore *et al.*, 2011). Shore *et al.*'s (2011) theoretical framework of inclusion identifies employee experiences, values, strategies, decisions, and practices as antecedents of perceived workgroup inclusion. To create a culture of inclusion, it is important that employers view and treat their employees as unique; engaging with them as a diverse group will ultimately increase organisational outcomes.

Diversity management is a systematic approach that helps an organisation to survive and promote an inherent value in the form of its diversity (Cox, 2001; Kreitz, 2008). Organisational diversity can create a competitive advantage in areas such as marketing, problem-solving, and resource acquisition (e.g., talent pool) (Cox, 2001). This requires an organisation to increase commitment among diverse employees at all organisational

levels and across all functions, focusing on diversity in age, gender, culture, and ethnicity. Schneider and Northcraft (1999) believe that organisations should address three social problems if they wish to encourage diversity with the aim of achieving organisational success: ‘organisation participation’, ‘managerial participation’, and ‘individual participation’ (p. 1445). More importantly, individual participation plays a major role in effective diversity management. Therefore, a strong corporate culture and systematic diversity policies and practices could be established to correspond to the needs of a specific company (e.g., family business) and facilitate the utilisation of diversity management as a competitive advantage. Thus, diversity management would be integrated into the company strategy and all its practices, processes, structures, and planning.

Diversity management practices in Lebanese organisations are limited in their scope (e.g., Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010) and a considerable gap exists between employees’ and managers’ perceptions within organisations (Cook and Sinai, 2010). Managing employees from different cultural backgrounds in family-owned businesses is important for a number of reasons, including recruitment, customer attitudes/relations, and shareholder value (Cook and Sinai, 2010). In family firms, the patriarchal bias in employment is particularly visible in the Asian and Middle East contexts (e.g., Rowley *et al.*, 2010; Syed, 2010), and is entrenched in cultural and religious traditions and role expectations (Rowley *et al.*, 2010). These cultural or ethnic and religious diversities create devotion, generosity, and solidarity, which brings significant disadvantages or advantages for the company (e.g., Al-Ariss, 2010; Gersik and Neus, 2014).

Poorly managed diversity creates unequal job opportunities for employees, employers, and managers in family firms (Cook and Sinai, 2010). Family firms usually incorporate weaker diversity management policies and have less diverse representation in top management positions such as on boards of directors or chief executive officers (CEOs) (Wilmot and Hocker, 2011). This is because family firms choose affiliate directors who are probably appointed as family members or persons with long-standing close

connections to the family who can be trusted to understand the businesses, respect the family's traditions and values, and take decisions that may enhance the resources of future generations (Gersick and Neus, 2014). Nishii and Özbilgin (2007) suggest that diversity management interventions do not coincide across countries and should account for the socio-historical power discrepancies within each cultural context, as well as address the roots and implications of addressing discrimination against the disadvantaged group.

In this context, the literature review reflects positively and negatively on organisational performance. Mor-Barak (2014) suggests that diversity management is essential to increase diversity and improve creativity. If Lebanese family design businesses support diversity, diversity management will have a positive impact on the engagement and job satisfaction of employees and will enhance creativity, as suggested by Cox (2001); Nishii and Özbilgin, (2007); Al-Ariss, (2010); and Jamali *et al.* (2010). Diversity management challenges in the Lebanese family-owned businesses are due to the multicultural environment of Lebanon, employees' cultures, and lack of communication and interaction between employees and managers. If Lebanese family design businesses adopted diversity management, they would manage diversity and foster creativity among individuals regardless of their cultural backgrounds (Cox, 2001). The following section discusses Equal Employment Opportunities, (EEO) legislation in organisations.

#### **2.3.3.1. Equal Employment Opportunities, (EEO) legislation**

EEO means that each individual has an equal chance of gaining employment regardless of race, sex, age, religion, or any other category, and it promotes competition among employees in relation to the value of social justice (Noon, 2007; Syed, 2010, Saha, 2017). EEO is implemented by Affirmative Action, (AA) programmes to ensure that equality of opportunities is translated into equality of outcomes in the workplace, and it has been used to improve the employment of individuals and organisational practices in the USA (Syed, 2010). Recent studies undertaken in the USA and the UK have confirmed that equal opportunity laws and organisational initiatives continue to persist among disadvantaged and disempowered ethnic minorities, including women, and other

historically discriminated-against groups in organisations (e.g., Noon 2007; Saha, 2012, 2017). For example, Saha (2017) argues that in the UK, people with an Asian background faces inequality and discrimination, and he suggests that issues concerning diversity and discrimination, such as those related to ethnic minorities' integration and social cohesion, are complex, shaped as they are by a range of historical, political, and socio-economic structures in organisations (e.g., creative and cultural industries).

Similarly, Noon (2007, p.780) argues that diversity is 'essentially a concept that marginalises the importance of equality and suppresses the significance of ethnicity in the workplace'. He further argues that managing diversity cannot replace the traditional policies of equal opportunities and social justice in the workplace in the USA (Noon, 2007). Thus, including diversity management within an organisational policy fails to capture the relationship between the organisational structure and the individual identity in terms of gender and race in order to manage diversity and ensure equal opportunities among employees in the workplace (Noon, 2007; Syed, 2010; Saha, 2012, 2017).

Previous studies on diversity management argue that the business case of diversity management has been unable to achieve equitable employment outcomes for diverse employees in organisations in the USA (Noon, 2007). Therefore, the management of diversity may reproduce racial, religious, and ethnic stereotypes in terms of recruitment and human resource management, (HRM) in organisations (e.g., cultural and creative industries).

Some researchers have argued that social cohesion and equity in the workplace influence the formulation and implementation of diversity policies in organisations (Pollert, 2003, Noon, 2007; Saha, 2017). In her study of gender, work, and equal opportunities in the post-communist countries of Central Eastern Europe, Pollert (2003) observes that views on equal opportunities need to be contextualised in a broader political economy, drawing together the threads of social and economic change, ideologies regarding gender relations, and institutional and legal developments. Prasad *et al.* (2006) argue that socio-political factors, the legal framework, demography, and history also determine the individual's identity in society and the workplace. In other words, issues concerning

diversity and discrimination in the workplace have a significant impact on organisational structures (laws, social organisation, religious structures, and gender and race relations) (Noon, 2007; Saha, 2017). The absence of egalitarian traditions in the cultural industries reflects a hierarchical organisation of discriminatory practices, including those relating to gender and race relations (Saha, 2017).

Diversity management, therefore, focuses attention on group differences and requires different approaches to or treatment of employees in order to achieve positive outcomes for them and the organisation. Yet in cultural industries, indifference among employees to the wider implications of profoundly political issues (Saha, 2017) indicates a lack of representation and the presence of issues relating to social justice. Hesmondhalgh and Saha (2013) further argue that the dominance of white people over British Asian and ethnic minority populations in the UK is increasing in cultural industries (in media industries) and say that ‘both policy and academic research alike have exposed general patterns of discrimination in the media industries’ (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013, p. 180). Therefore, implementing “diversity management” and an “equality policy” have become important in organisations in order to manage diversity, increase the proportion of people with an ethnic minority background and women, improve productivity, opportunity and competitiveness in organisations (e.g., Lebanese family design businesses).

Several scholars have also criticised that diversity management it is not a substitute for affirmative action and equal employment opportunity policies because diversity initiatives do not (sufficiently) empower minorities in the workplace (Noon, 2007; Saha, 2017). The implementation of diversity management appears to have a negative impact on employees, whereas racial equality appears to be the predominant issue in the UK (Saha, 2017), the USA, and South Africa (Noon 2007). Thomas (1991) argues that the business case perspective on diversity represents a better argument for increasing the representation of minorities and implementing EEO and AA programmes in order to use (cultural) diversity policies efficiently and to comply with the relevant laws. However, research has shown that diversity management perspective can improve the recruitment

and selection of employees in order to increase diversity and promote creativity in the workplace (Mor-Barak, 2015).

The business case rhetoric for diversity management has been adopted by European companies (e.g., Netherlands and Sweden) and some international companies in the UK as well (Mor-Barak, 2015). For instance, several studies argue that diversity management is had become increasingly used in domestic settings and focused on competitive advantage, group and organisational performance, and creativity (Cox and Blake, 1991; Mor-Barak, 2015) with little attention to diversity management in global contexts and, in particular in, Middle East countries (e.g., Lebanese context) (Özbilgin and Syed, 2010). Thus, it is essential to explore the role of diversity management in non-Western countries and, in particular in, the Lebanese context. The Lebanese culture is different to cultures in other national contexts (e.g., the UK or the USA) due to differences in socio-economic conditions, national legislation, tradition, demography, and history (e.g., Barakat, 1993). Therefore, this study examines an aspect of diversity management that is focusing on competitive advantage, organisational performance, and creativity in the design sectors within the Lebanese context (e.g., Cox and Blake, 1991; Mor-Barak, 2015). The following section explains the Affirmative Action, (AA) legislation and policies (e.g., AA programmes) in organisations.

#### **2.3.3.2. Affirmative Action, (AA) programmes**

Diversity management is linked to AA programmes, which emerged from the civil right movement of the 1960s in the USA (Holzer and Neumark, 2000). AA programmes involve giving preferences to women and people from minority groups (Williams, 2015) who are less qualified than other candidates in order to enhance their job or educational opportunities and to overcome their underrepresentation in organisations. AA programmes, for example, support the values of compensatory or corrective justice, and recognise the importance of diversity (Agocs and Burr, 1996). Affirmative action policies originated in the USA and intended to deal with the systematic discrimination deeply embedded in traditional employment policies (Agocs and Burr, 1996; Williams, 2015).

AA programmes in the USA emerged as a response to ‘deeply entrenched patterns of racial discrimination in institutions of employment and education, and the resulting exclusion, segregation and disadvantage of blacks’ (Agocs and Burr, 1996, p. 32) and sought to redress past discrimination. They caused a major shift from the “passive” no discrimination policy that had been issued by President Kennedy in 1961. In Australia, AA programmes began with the AA (Equal Employment for Women) Act of 1986 (the Act). Although the Act did not specify any firm targets or quotas, it required organisations to establish objectives and estimates for the future, but these were not binding. However, the term “affirmative action” was resisted by mainstream groups, resulting in its removal and the enactment of the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act, (EOWA) 1999. The EOWA continued the previous narrow approach that had no stringent legal penalties for non-compliance (Syed and Murray, 2009). AA programmes in the USA are more active in their pursuit of social justice and non-discrimination (Holzer and Neumark, 2000). Therefore, employers subject to affirmative action law can expand their recruitment efforts and hire more employees from disadvantaged groups (Holzer and Neumark, 2000).

The approaches towards equal opportunities have gradually evolved from “affirmative action” to the current “diversity management” approach. The diversity management approach is based on the premise that managing the diversity of a workforce will increase the cultural diversity of employees, increase the proportion of individuals from disadvantaged groups, and improve creativity, which will help to achieve organisational objectives and improve performance (Cox and Blake, 1991; Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015). However, unlike affirmative action in the USA, diversity management is not legally implemented in Lebanon (Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). The policy of AA conforms to the American ideal of fairness and is a necessary policy in organisations in order to manage a diverse workforce and to enhance the organisation’s efficiency (Williams, 2015).

According to Williams (2015, p. 73), the policy of AA is ‘a set of techniques for rectifying discrimination which consist mainly of forcing personnel systems to become



more objective and to eliminate preferences built in not viciously but because the way the society was organized.’ AA is considered a radical approach to equality; as in the USA, it demands that employers take ‘every opportunity to employ individual applicants from specific minority groups’ (Executive order 10925 signed by President John. F. Kennedy in 1961) (EEOC, 2018). However, the companies in the UK and other EU companies have adopted a more liberal approach that focuses on removing the obstacles to achieving a meritocratic culture. For example, the UK and other European companies have been implementing HRM practices with the aim of addressing the issue of gender discrimination in recruitment, redundancy decisions, and have established rights (law) to improve flexible working, maternity leave, and part-time work (e.g., Kandola and Fullerton, 1998). The UK version of diversity management is based on implementing diversity management initiatives, which has been placed on HR practitioners in order to achieve ‘equal opportunities and managing diversity issues’ (Kandola and Fullerton, 1998, p. 2).

Therefore, it is essential that Lebanese family design businesses implement HRM practices and benefits from the UK and EU companies in order to increase the management of diversity within a certain type of people (e.g., women, non-family members) in the workplace. This would help Lebanese family design businesses to focus on individuals regardless of their cultural backgrounds in order to have recruitment and selection targets, and therefore bringing out various workplace programmes outlawing discrimination, reducing inequalities, integrating AA/EEO legislation, and avoiding conflicts between employees (family members and non-family members). This research study, therefore, proposes that diversity management practices are equally important in Lebanese family design businesses in order to manage diversity, encourage creativity, and increase productivity within the workplace (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014). The next section discusses the impact of creativity on employees and organisations, particularly in Lebanese family design businesses.

## **2.4. Creative Performance in Lebanese Family Design Businesses**

### **2.4.1. Definition of creativity**

Creativity helps individuals to generate original ideas and produce something novel in the workplace (Amabile, 1996). Creativity is defined as an act that develops creative ideas, communicates with others, and transforms existing idea into new ones, meaning that companies and individuals or groups can be creative and can solve potential problems regarding economic success and reduce social issues (e.g., Boden, 1990; Amabile, 1996). Creativity is also embodied in individual personality, intelligence, reactions, and personalities (e.g., Boden, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Runco, 2007). Creativity is viewed as having the potential to impact positively on the economy, organisations, and employees. Creativity is essential to increase human skills, knowledge, and experience in organisations within a particular society (Amabile, 1996; Florida, 2002a).

The term “creativity” is seen as a positive characteristic in the fields of business studies and creative management (e.g., Jeffcutt and Pratt 2002; Bilton, 2007; Runco, 2007). Bilton (2007) states that creativity can also develop the evolution of individuals, every human can develop new skills and can share and change ideas differently and independently in order to employ creativity in their daily life. Therefore, creativity is part of human behaviour; it allows individuals to become flexible. For example, Runco (2007) believes that creativity helps individuals to develop their own skills, grow self-confidence, and be able to solve creative changes in their day-to-day lives. Similarly, Thompson (2011), for example, concludes that people could quickly solve technical problems, learn about their skills, and freely adapt their experience, development, and assumptions towards making money if they were creative. Furthermore, the creative personality may encourage other creative people to compete productively with other persons (Thompson, 2011). Creativity can have a positive impact on individuals and groups in order to create new ideas, develop personalities, and increase productivity in the workplace.

Amabile (1983) suggests a framework of individual creativity within a social context. This framework illustrates the way in which domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills, and task motivation might contribute to stages of the creative process. The framework also describes the human abilities, personality characteristics, and social factors. Amabile (1983, p. 361) proposes two essential elements that determine creativity: (a) creativity involves the production of new ideas and (b) it depends on ‘individual performer’s knowledge’. In Amabile’s model (1983), creativity focuses on individual behaviours, personalities, skills, and motivations to avoid social constraints. Creativity, therefore, may influence both human activities and social structures. In fact, creativity represents the expressions and beliefs of individuals who are independent, inspired but isolated by communicating and expressing their own ideas.

Boden (1990) notes that creativity consists of two elements: h-historical involves on sharing knowledge that is “largely accidental” (p. 77) and p-personal depends and focuses on the creativity of human beings. Boden defines creativity as more than just novelty-production thought but instead as a new exploration and creation of mental representations. Boden’s model (1990) illustrates that creativity represents a discipline as part of the social, cultural, and environmental factor. She considers that individuals who depend on their self-knowledge, commitment, and self-confidence, motivation might explore and transform different ideas to new ones (Boden, 1990). Boden (1990) further argues that creativity affects the individual’s performance, motivation, emotion, and thinking. While, Runco (2007) believes that creativity plays a role in human personality, motivation, intelligence, and reactions and that this leads to people sharing ideas differently and independently. Creativity is therefore essential to attract employees on the basis of their skills, knowledge, and experience in organisations (Boden, 1990; Runco, 2007).

On the other hand, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) points out that creativity consists of three elements: a culture that includes a set of rules and procedures, a person who creates new ideas and decides their symbolic domain, and a field of people who bring new ideas to change a domain. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) further emphasised that creative people rely

on self-happiness and enjoyment during a state of consciousness called flow. Therefore, creativity focuses on creative engagement achieved in such a flow. The flow of creativity helps individuals address a challenging task. Individuals, therefore, can produce and discover something new in the workplace. Furthermore, Bilton (2007) confirms that people from different cultural backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and perceptions, which can foster creativity within an organisation. Therefore, sociocultural factors may have a positive impact on creativity in organisations that could enhance diversity and foster creativity between employers and employees within the Lebanese family design businesses.

Recent studies have shown that creativity can help individuals to increase their perception and improve their skills, performance, and experiences, and, in particular, can encourage women and men to pursue a professional career and attain high levels of achievement in the workplace (Runco, 2007; Runco and Kim, 2013). However, Runco (2007) acknowledges that men demonstrate a higher level of creative achievement than women do. Creativity, therefore, has a significant impact on gender difference and performance in the workplace. Some researchers believe that knowledge is not sufficient for creativity if individuals cannot improve their creative thinking and their formation of creative solutions (Amabile, 1983; Runco and Kim, 2013). The differences between individuals can enhance the performance of a team and increase creativity in the workplace. Runco and Kim (2013) conclude that individuals should work on their personal creative potential to achieve self-fulfilment, self-encouragement, and self-motivation. Certainly, creativity requires individuals to work freely and allows easy access to resources. Moreover, creativity is seen as achieving incremental improvement in Western organisations through transforming ideas and practices into something else. In particular, some researchers have argued that creative industries have become prominent in cultural policy, particularly in relation to culture and creativity in a particular city (e.g., Bilton, 2007; Pratt, 2010). Therefore, it is important to manage creativity by facilitating the generation of original ideas, developing human skills and knowledge, and helping individuals to solve problems within organisations, particularly in Lebanese family design businesses.

Furthermore, Sawyer (2012) explains that there are two main approaches to creativity: the individualist and the contextual approaches. Sawyer (2012) describes the relationship between groups and individuals and believes that creativity affects the human mind, thinking, and personality. Individuals can work independently and freely to produce a new creative idea in the workplace, yet 'groups are more creative than individuals when they have worked together for a while, when they share a common set of conventions and knowledge' (Sawyer, 2012, p. 121). The OECD (2000, p. 9) confirms that 'creativity, working in teams and cognitive skills are needed as economies become more based on innovation'. This statement reveals that creativity in business becomes a source of flexibility, innovation, and change that can improve teamwork and firm performance in a specific country. The impact of creativity strengthens competition, employment, productivity, and growth in organisations. The OECD (2000) believes that creativity makes individuals use technological tools, equipment, and computer-aided facilities, and thus improves people's lives, careers, and educational backgrounds in European countries. However, the lack of resources and investments and the level of skilled people can affect the process of creativity in small countries (OECD, 2000), but, in several European countries, creativity improves organisational and managerial outcomes and performance, enables networking among firms, enhances individual or team performance, and creates a wide range of resources for economic growth (OECD, 2000).

Creativity provides output measures (intelligence, skills, knowledge) and environmental factors (cultural factors, socio-economic factors, educational factors) in the workplace, and also helps to develop an individual personality (motivation, personality) (Amabile, 1983; Boden, 1990). Researchers note the importance of interaction between people and the environment as well as the role of social appraisal (Lundvall, 1992; Edquist, 2005; Pratt, 2010). Creativity, therefore, plays an essential role in the economy, society, culture, and politics in a particular city. The United Nations Development Programme report, (UNDP) on the creative economy suggests that creative industries comprise a set of knowledge activities that 'produce tangible goods and intangible intellectual or artistic services with creative content, economic value, and market objectives' (UNDP, 2008, p. 4). The creative economy relies on ideas generated by individuals that improve and

increase their skills at different levels and across teams (UNDP, 2008). From a business perspective, Hawkins (2001) describes the creative economy as entrepreneurial activity and states that it concentrates on several factors: communication skills, networking skills, and team approaches. These activities improve the economy's development, and they have an impact on the labour market in family firms in Lebanon (Fahed-Sreih *et al.*, 2010; Fahed-Sreih and Pistrui, 2012).

For the study, creativity is therefore explored to understand how the cultural values and norms of individuals (family members and non-family members) can be seen as productive as well as competitive in the Lebanese context and, in particular, in Lebanese family design businesses. Creativity is also a key ingredient of developing skills, solving a problem, and managing HR strategies and communication among employees in Western organisations. The literature review provides a theoretical grounding for creativity and management related to individual and team performance (e.g., Amabile, 1998; Runco and Kim, 2013), organisational performance (e.g., Cox and Blake, 2001; Sawyer, 2012), and society (Florida 2002b; Darroch 2005). Furthermore, the literature review focuses on Western and non-Western cultures regarding promoting creativity within an organisation. The recent literature in this field demonstrates that Western organisations usually adopt radical creativity as a strategy for overcoming challenges that arise among their employees (OECD, 2000).

The literature review also suggests that creativity plays an important role in improving individual knowledge, skills, and thinking in the workplace (e.g., Amabile, 1983, 1996; Boden, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Florida, 2002b; Runco, 2007; Runco and Kim 2013). It is therefore essential that (Lebanese) employers provide a clear definition of creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses; this would identify the critical action required for selecting, developing, and retaining the best-talented employees in order to allow the development of original ideas among diverse groups within the Lebanese context (see sections 2.5 and 2.6). Bilton (2007) argues that individuals can embrace a different way of thinking to foster creativity and solve a problem without constraints among diverse groups in the UK creative industries. Therefore, creativity may

have a positive impact on the cultural diversity of employees in organisations. Understanding the link between creativity and diversity is essential in order to explore the effect of creativity on the diversity of employees and employers in Lebanese family design businesses.

#### **2.4.2. Employee creativity and performance**

Employee creativity is an important factor in many organisations and it is claimed to have positive relationship with firm performance (Von Nordenflycht, 2007). Specifically, when employees display creativity at work, they generate new ideas that are useful in dealing with creative tasks (Amabile, 1996, 1998). Employee creativity gives an edge over competitors and helps a company succeed in terms of multiple measures of firm-level performance (Erdogan *et al.*, 2011). Geroski (2000) suggested that organisations notice an increase of profit growth when encouraging creative behaviours. Von Nordenflycht (2007) observed a relationship between creativity and performance in advertising agencies located in the United States of America, determining a positive, linear relationship between employee creativity and firm performance. Creativity often increases profit growth and return on assets in an organisation.

Erdogan *et al.* (2011) also noted that organisations that exhibit creative behaviours generate competitive advantages and better performances. Managers, for example, can motivate employees through transformational leadership that inspires them and puts a premium on creativity (Gong *et al.*, 2009). Thus, employee creativity can add value to organisations, mainly in overcoming challenges and finding innovative ways to grow (Von Nordenflycht, 2007). Barney and Wright (1998) argue that an organisation may build a sustained competitive advantage by managing their employees and developing their structure and practices. Furthermore, Florida (2002a) posits that creativity can help a particular city to select and attract individuals and talents from a diverse background to invest in different cultural facilities and technologies, which will ultimately bring economic growth and wealth. Furthermore, other studies found that Western countries do have policy goals of stimulating the creative economy, and several Asian countries such as Korea and Singapore have become the home to leading creative industries (Bilton,

2007; EC, 2008; Hartley *et al.*, 2013). However, the role of creative industries in Lebanon remains unclear. Amabile (1998) found that creativity helps individuals to generate original ideas in a creative outcome within the workplace. Therefore, Lebanese family design businesses may increase creativity by bringing together different streams of existing knowledge to create a new idea or an invention.

Recent studies suggest that human resource practices are essential to sustain effectiveness and increase productivity between employees and employers within the workplace (Laprade, 2006; Mor-Barak, 2014). The literature review regarding the fields of creativity and diversity suggests that organisation can depend on human resource strategies and practices in order to create and retain a viable creative (diverse) workforce (Mor-Barak, 2014). The role of human resources management and creativity is significant in organisations and, in particular in, Lebanese family design businesses. As a result, it is essential to explore the impact cultural diversity on creativity and performance in Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, this research study aims to address how managing diversity and encouraging creativity can affect creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. A good creative performance will have a positive effect on cultural diversity and creativity engagement among employees. Managing creativity creates and maintains a positive environment where similarities and differences among individuals are valued to maximise their potential skills, enhance their self- development, and foster creativity to increase solve problems, reduce conflicts, and generate unique ideas within an organisation and particularly in the Lebanese family design businesses. The next section discusses the issues of intellectual property and creativity in Western and Eastern countries and in Lebanon in particular.



### 2.4.3. Creativity and intellectual property law

The purpose of intellectual property, (IP) law is to enhance creativity in organisations (WIPO, 2009). Creativity plays an important role in implementing new ideas in firm management, investment, and leadership (WIPO, 2009). The Western concept of copyright protection is different from that in Arabic countries (WIPO, 2009). In Western countries, creativity helps firms to sustain economic growth by using supportive national macroeconomic and competition policies such as those intended to protect a design (e.g., patent design, patent, trademark, or copyright), maintain sustainable business environments, and allow the creator, or owner, of a patent, trademark, or copyright to benefit from his or her own work or investment.

Furthermore, the intellectual property reforms set out in the Millennium Copyright Act in the United States and the Information Society Copyright Directive in the EU reveal that fostering creativity and protecting the economic interests of artists is difficult within the creative industries (Hawkins, 2001). The existence of copyright helps organisations to sell products and protects the interests of creative artists (WIPO, 2009). These rights are outlined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Intellectual Property Alliance, 2010), which sets out the right to benefit from the protection of moral and material interests resulting from authorship of any scientific, literary, or artistic production as defined by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) (2009).

In Lebanon, however, the IP law was imposed and implemented under colonial rules (French mandate) and has not been upgraded to account for organisational goals and strategies since in most organisations, copying designs and the corresponding names is done without limitation (The Daily Star, 2009). The *Daily Star* (2009) reveals that Lebanon is a signatory to several international agreements relating to intellectual property rights and started the process for accession to the World Trade Organisation in 1999 but could not join until 2018 because of its failure to properly implement the basic required conditions (International Intellectual Property Alliance, 2010; Ministry of Economy and Trade, 2016a). However, WIPO (2013) declares that it is important to make a distinction

between originals and imitations. These imitations are identified as violations, and in order to protect the rights of designers, the design and any labels must not be copied (WIPO, 2013).

Furthermore, the Lebanese design sectors, such as graphic design, interior design, furniture design, clothing design, branding, and advertising, show a lack of appropriate decisions, and this is preventing the government, via the judicial authorities, from enforcing the intellectual property law when a violation takes place (The Daily Star, 2009). Thus, the current copyright regimes in Lebanon are inappropriate (International Intellectual Property Alliance, 2010; Ministry of Economy and Trade, 2016a). The Ministry of Economy and Trade (2016a) confirms that the design sectors have failed to address the legitimate need to implement IP law or design law in order to access resources, exchange knowledge through organisational strategies and policies, and improve the performance of their firms.

Therefore, it is important to follow design law in Lebanese family design businesses in order to facilitate and protect their internal resources. For example, Amin and Roberts (2008, p. 23) claim that ‘organisations are taking a fresh look at their internal resources, seeking ways to channel the creative energies of their employees and divisions in new ways’. This statement reveals that an organisation can increase its effective knowledge by helping its employees to create new ideas or inventions, thereby fostering new approaches to problems as well as enhancing organisational innovative capabilities and management learning (Amin and Roberts, 2008). This would help Lebanese family design businesses to protect their internal resources so that they can foster and manage creativity in their organisations. In this way, creativity can enhance business performance, develop institutional structures, and stimulate changes in organisational policy in order to avoid resistance, inequality, division, conflict, and the abuse of power in an organisation (Edquist, 1997, 2005; Amin and Roberts, 2008). Thus, it is important that a creative industry relies on design law to protect its creative products in order to achieve market objectives and foster innovation (such as technology), thereby enhancing productivity (human development) within an organisation. This would also improve creativity and performance within Lebanese family design businesses (EC, 2014).

#### 2.4.4. Organisational creativity and performance

Creativity facilitates and enhances an organisation's performance (Sanzo *et al.*, 2012). Creativity also generates and develops existing ideas and transforms them into new ones, which is very important when managing change and knowledge, in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (EC, 2014a). Swann and Birke (in DTI, 2005) assert that creativity improves an organisation's performance and productivity (see Figure 2.1). Swann and Birke's model illustrates how creativity, innovation, and design are important in promoting business performance and gaining a competitive advantage (in DTI, 2005, p. 3):

Creativity has been looked at from many different perspectives, particularly in the management literature, and there are proxies - such as the creative industries - to assess national performance.

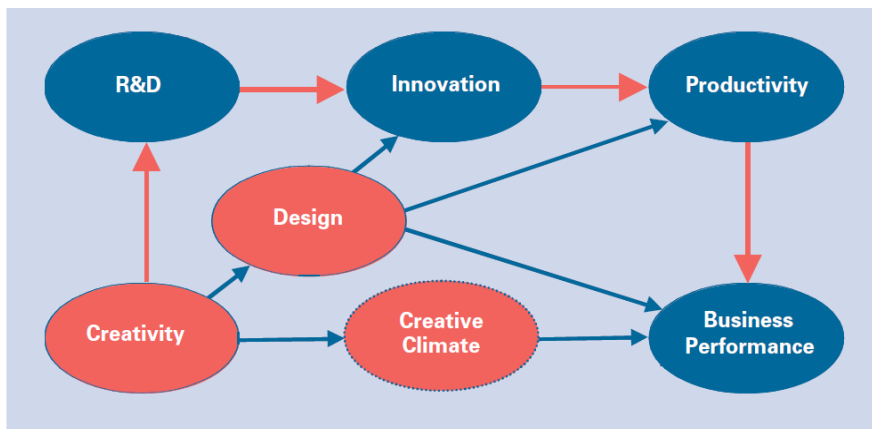


Figure 2.1: Business performance model (adapted from DTI, 2005, p. 3).

Numerous studies demonstrate the importance of understanding the role of creativity in an organisation (Lundvall, 1992; Cox, 1994; Freeman, 2002; Schneider *et al.*, 2010). Creativity is seen as a learning process that aims to produce new creative ideas, transform existing ideas, and solve problems in organisation (Verganti, 2006; Schneider *et al.*, 2010). Cox (1994) argues that creativity is promoted by individuals, groups and organisations to improve the level of organisational performance in small and large organisations. Thus, it can be said that creativity involves diverse employees implementing new ideas through teamwork to increase performance within the

organisation (Lundvall, 1992; Freeman, 2002; UNCTAD, 2005). Creativity therefore improves the learning skills of teams through education and job experience (Schneider *et al.*, 2010).

Creativity can have a positive impact on organisations, ‘if they are flexible, innovative, customer focused, and both proactive and reactive in their business strategies’ (Lenihan *et al.*, 2010, p. 3). Firm size plays an important role in organisational creative performance (Hall *et al.*, 2009). Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) typically employ less than 250 employees and are considered to be key drivers of economic growth (EC, 2005). The current definition of what constitutes a SME is set out in a Recommendation of the European Commission adopted on 6th May 2003, which initially defines small and medium-sized enterprises in relation to three size criteria: medium (1) with less than 250 employees, small (2) with less than 50 employees and micro (3) with less than 10 employees. Studies reveal that small firms (less than 50 employees) are key drivers of creativity and employment in the European economy (EC, 2014) and creativity brings sustained job creation and encourages European enterprise policy to manage diversity and foster creativity in the workplace (EC, 2009, 2014). Furthermore, previous studies have shown that firm size can have both a positive and negative impact on creativity (Rogers, 2004; Roper *et al.*, 2008). Schumpeter (1934) posits that creativity is essential in establishing and running small firms. Higgs *et al.* (2008) further argue that small firms boast more creativity than larger firms do. Higgs *et al.* (2008, p. 3) also note that

small organisations, individuals and groups... have new ideas and are mobile, quick and able to cross-pollinate to find big receptive ‘trees’, i.e. big organisations such as governments, companies or non-governmental organisations, which are generally poor at creativity but good at implementation and have the resilience, roots and scale to make things happen. Much social change is a result of a combination of the two.

However, according to the Ministry of Economy and Trade (2016b), small and medium enterprises, (SMEs) face challenges in Lebanon, and they do not follow any European or international standards such as intellectual property law (see section 2.4.3). The private sector is characterised by small firms and their contribution to the Lebanese economy exceeds that of medium and large firms (Ministry of Economy and Trade, 2016b). This

assertion strengthens the argument that family design businesses in Lebanon, which are mainly small and medium firms, could implement diversity management practices in order to increase diversity and foster creativity within a diverse workforce. The next section discusses and compares the definitions of creative industries in the UK and Lebanon.

#### **2.4.5. Definition of creative industries in the UK (London) and Lebanon (Beirut)**

The concept of creative industries was first documented in Australia in 1994 (Department of Communication and the Arts, 2017). The UK started to acknowledge the creative industries concept in 1997. The definition of UK creative industries reflects human creativity and the exploitation of intellectual property. Within the UK, the creative industries are divided into four groups:

1. The first group constitutes the spectrum of creative industries (Hawkins, 2001)
2. The second group is made up of a group of certain occupations or fields of activity (Florida, 2002a)
3. The third group embodies the concept of a creative city (Landry, 2000)
4. The fourth group consists of an economic system that supports the workers, firms, institutions, infrastructures, communication channels and other active ingredients (Scott, 2006).

In the UK mapping document, the term “creativity” reflects the development of new products and strengthening the extension of copyright protection. The creative industries are defined as ‘those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property’ (DCMS, 1998). This definition has not changed and was documented in the mapping document in terms of creative inputs and intellectual property within the UK and in terms of information society policy in a competitive global economy (e.g., Hawkins, 2001; Hartley *et al.*, 2013; Flew, 2013). However, in particular, the recent evidence of the huge growth in the cultural production sector needs to be

addressed and explained rather than being swept under the carpet or dismissed as “consumption”. A report for the London Development Agency notes that the cultural sector was the third largest sector of the London economy in 2004 (GLA Economics, 2004).

The development of creative industries in the UK contributes to economic activity and creates social and cultural benefits. For instance, the gross value added, (GVA) of the creative industries in London was estimated to be £42.0 billion in 2015, accounting for 11.1% of total GVA in London and 47.4% of the UK total for the sector (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2016). According to UNIDO (2017), there is no agreement on the definition of creative industries in Lebanon. Some researchers have argued that creative industries are considered to be cultural, leisure, copyright, and content industries (e.g., Hawkins, 2001; Bilton, 2007; UNESCO, 2009). The creative industries in the UK are divided into thirteen different types (DCMS, 1998, 2015; see Chapter 1, section 1.4).

The growth of creative industries in London is attributed to the performance of the firms and allowing highly talented employees to work together and exchange ideas (DCMS, 1998). In London, employees in creative occupations are able to improve local economic development, and graduates are encouraged to work in the city (DCMS, 1998; Pratt, 2010). The creative industries can help individuals to pursue a professional career, thereby improving their skills, experiences, and living standards and this allows these industries to engage with a diverse workforce in a particular city (Florida, 2002a; Pratt, 2008, 2010). Many practitioners have extensively discussed the creative economy, and often questioned the importance of human capital in their citations (Florida, 2002a; Pratt, 2008, 2010). For example, Florida (2002a) reveals that human creativity reflects available economic resources. The economy promotes jobs and the income generated directly by the creative firms reaches local and overseas markets. Florida (2002a) also examines the effect of creativity, which has become important to the economy in the 21st century.

Creativity plays an important role in attracting and encouraging creative workers in US society and the rest of the world. Bilton (2007) further argues that the relationship

between management and creativity is essential for firms to remain competitive and creative. Thus, creativity facilitates positive effects regarding the diversity of employees in organisations in a particular city. Therefore, working in a creative place provides stability in the economy and social life of Lebanese family design businesses and fosters creativity, expectations concerning a particular job, and opportunities for individuals. This research study therefore suggests that creativity plays a significant role in developing organisational structure and performance and thus in managing the diversity of employees in the workplace.

The history of the cultural development of Western society is different from that of Eastern societies. Numerous cultural industries' mapping documents have shown that cultural industries can play a significant role in the economy, society, and community support in developed countries (e.g., DCMS, 1998; UNDP, 2008). However, there is little research on creative industries within the Lebanese context and it does not address the issue of what are the most valuable ideas in these industries. For example, the creative industries in Middle East regions represent the development and maintenance of lifestyles and cultural identities in society (CAS, 2014b). This research study focuses on the creative industries in Lebanon. Lebanon has been considered to be the gateway to the Middle East because it is strategically located on the Mediterranean coast (see Chapter 1, section 1.6). The creative industries in Lebanon are owned by private sectors, and the implication of this often causes confusion, both among policymakers and the broader public (CAS, 2014b).

According to the EU Private Sector Development Programme, (PSD) (2017) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, (UNIDO) (2017), the creative industries in Lebanon are divided into twelve clusters of cultural and creative industries. However, Najjar (2007) divided and classified the creative industries in Lebanon into seven sectors, so there is no agreement on a definition of creative industries in Lebanon (UNESCO, 2009). Najjar (2007) found that the design-based industries include clothing and footwear, jewellery, furniture and home decoration, and crafts and textiles, and spreads across three major Lebanese cities: Beirut, Saida, and Tripoli. Architectural

design businesses in the UK include architecture, furniture, interior design, landscape, urban design, physical planning, engineering, and model-making (DCMS, 1998). This thesis focuses on architectural design with an emphasis on furniture companies. The Lebanese government does not recognise the importance of design in adding value to manufactured goods, improving export performance, developing elaborately transformed manufacturing, and succeeding in niche markets.

According to Schwab (2015), the creative industries contribute 5% to Lebanon's economic development and 4% to national employment. The design sector represents a significant technological and skill investment, which is critical to sustaining a high-quality global manufacturing industry. Furthermore, the design sector is a primary indicator of the cultural, technological, social, and economic standing of any nation. Therefore, this research study focuses on furniture companies located in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon. Beirut is considered to be a trading city that is situated between the Western and the Eastern worlds (IDAL, 2013; World Bank, 2014). Unlike the case in London, the creative industries in Beirut depends on family-owned businesses that have a limited art market, a lack of financing, and a lack of copyright and IP laws (e.g., Najjar 2007; UN report, 2013; Schwab, 2015). In Lebanon, the first mapping document highlighted the Lebanese creative industries and selected three creative sectors: advertising, fashion, and performing arts. This mapping document divided the Lebanese creative industries into seven major sectors (e.g., Najjar, 2007; see Chapter 1).

Thus, this thesis focuses on the design sectors located in Beirut. This research study focuses further on one sub-sector, furniture companies, to explore the importance of creativity in the Lebanese context. The main objective of this study is to highlight the strategy that the creative industries employ to enhance creativity and expand the development of Beirut's creative sector. According to UNIDO (2017), the creative industries aim to contribute to inclusive growth by fostering entrepreneurial cooperation in cultural and creative industries through the promotion of promising cluster initiatives. UNIDO (2017) argues that the Lebanese government tends not to show any interest in supporting the creative industries, which includes designers, entrepreneurs, and artists,



and integrating creativity into the Lebanese economic performance rely on an unlimited resource. Therefore, this research study examines the assessment of creativity based on individual creativity, skill, and talent and on the importance of intellectual property in the design sectors (particularly furniture companies) within the Lebanese context (see sections 2.5 and 2.6). This research study therefore contributes to explore the definition of creativity in Lebanese context in order to understand how creative workers assess and produce creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses.

From the Western perspective, the definitions of creativity have been fairly consistent since the early 1930s (e.g., Amabile, 1998; Runco, 2007; Runco and Jaeger, 2012; Weisberg, 2015). Earlier research has shown that countries that have adopted a Western background tend to emphasis on creative products and use novelty and appropriateness as criteria for evaluating creative work among a diverse group (Runco, 2007; WIPO, 2009). In particular, some researchers believe that individuals with a Western background consider that creative performance emerges more when individuals work in groups in order to produce new ideas that require both originality and effectiveness (Amabile, 1998; Runco and Jaeger, 2012). In contrast, Eastern cultures, which tend toward collectivism, often value creativity as an aspect of personal fulfillment, with guidance and reverence for authority and traditions between individuals/groups in (creative) organisations (Runco, 2007).

Some researchers argue that creativity is influenced by an individual's culture and aesthetic values in the UK cultural and creative industries (Wolff, 1981, 1983; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Banks, 2017; Saha, 2017). Banks (2017) proposes that aesthetic value is not (only) the result of social structures or social conventions but it creates organisational barriers that hinder the retention and promotion of employees (particularly women) within the UK creative industries (McRobbie, 2002; Eikhoff, 2012). Wolff argues productively that if 'the sociology of art is the study of the practices and institutions of artistic production', then this 'necessarily involves the study of aesthetic conventions' (Wolff, 1981, p. 139), which allow creative workers to retain and develop technical skills (aesthetic ideas) rather than enhancing training skills in the workplace.

Born (2010) also found that creative persons are interested to generate cultural products that have an aesthetic value and evoke intellectual pleasures among a certain type of people (creative professionals) within the UK creative industries (Born, 2010).

Furthermore, Paul and Kaufman (2014, p. 6) believed that creativity can be achieved by producing cultural objects that are novel and valuable:

There is an emerging consensus that a product must meet two conditions in order to be creative. It must be new [...] it must also be of value.

This definition explains that creative workers are able to produce an idea that is both novel (i.e., original, unexpected) and valuable because an idea involves social judgement. Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2010) claimed that the critical role of value of an item or object is not arrived at by instinct, it is evaluated by individuals to express aesthetic value and identity, which can increase the value of work among creative workers in the UK cultural and creative industries. Therefore, creative workers can use their skills along with good judgement and good-quality traditional work, to produce cultural objects, and these skills are good-quality to the production of valuable objects as creative in the cultural and creative industries in a particular society (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010). However, some researchers believed that creativity can have a negative effect on creative people engaged in the same types of creative activity, and this will move away from defining creativity on the basis of judgment of value (Weisberg, 2015). For instance, Weisberg (2015) proposed a new definition of creativity based on novelty and intention and argued that value is useless among creative persons in organisations. In contrast, Carroll (2003, p. 217) noted that creativity relies on tradition and does hold the objective value of an artist:

Tradition ... is indispensable for creativity ..., because it serves to fix the horizon of possibilities that lie before the artist. It focuses the artist's attention upon those options that will be intelligible—to the artist and her audience—against the historical background of a practice.

According to Carroll (2003), creativity requires traditions, which are essentially influenced by the backgrounds of individuals and their cultural values and aesthetic values. In addition, Banaji and Burn's (2007) argue that the romantic view of creativity is heavily enforced by the judgement of an individual who possesses the genius of the artist

and who works for the love of art in the UK creative industries (Banaji and Burn, 2007). Creativity is inherent in the everyday cultural and symbolic practices of all human beings in the workplace (Banaji and Burn, 2007). Therefore, creativity is seen as an aesthetic exercise and focuses on cultural objects that are exceptional, fertile, superior, and often pathological, and thus creativity is interpreted as beauty and should have an actual purpose in a particular society. Banaji and Burn (2007, p. 12) also state that cultural products help gifted and talented individuals to create and produce ideas, which reflect ‘aesthetic judgment and value, manners, civilisation and the attempt to establish literary, artistic and musical canons’ in the UK creative industries.

Creativity is therefore associated with a social and cultural context and reflects the conceptions of creative workers in organisations (e.g., cultural and creative industries). The concept of aesthetic values in the creative industries is associated with artistic values and judgement and is influenced by polarising cultural objects and creativity is seen as a choice that concerns making beautiful objects or being creative in another way and also recognising the combination of people from different social levels in the creative industries. Rudowicz (2003, p. 285) argues that the interaction between culture and creativity is not only influenced by culture, and suggests that ‘culture clearly has a profound influence on the conceptualisation of creativity and on creative expression’ among individuals in Western societies (UK). Several researchers believed that creativity can be viewed as a socio-cultural psychological process, and it is transformed by the identity of an individual who makes or uses cultural resources, materials, and semiotic tools in their creative work in the UK cultural and creative industries (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Banks, 2017). Furthermore, individuals can produce ideas through artistic expression, social interaction, and cultural acts, where certain types of workers cannot be isolated from people coming from dominant groups can express their creative freedom in the workplace (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Saha, 2017). Therefore, the critical judgement about creativity based on novelty and values requires an understanding of the cultural work of artists (e.g., architects, interior designers, and craftsmen) in a particular society (e.g., Lebanese context) and reflects on cultural production and consumption in

organisations, instead of transcending the existing power structures in family firms for their own benefits, and this applies particularly to Lebanese family design businesses.

Born (2010) suggests that cultural production is based on value of a product in the creative industries and requires the reinvention of five key themes: aesthetics and the cultural object; the place of institutions; agency and subjectivity; questions of history, temporality, and change; and problems of value and judgement. These themes are deeply connected; each can be seen as ultimately subordinate to the first, that is, to providing a non-reductive account of the aesthetic aspect when theorising cultural production in the evaluation of creative works within the workplace (e.g., creative industries). When considering the value of art and cultural goods, it should continue to be recognised that cultural goods have aesthetic qualities that not only objectively exist, in a realist (if not idealist) sense, but also have some significant bearing on how they are judged and why they matter to those who produce and consume them (e.g., Wolff, 1983). These are all ways of conceiving culture to enrich the critique of the creative economy in a particular society (e.g., Florida, 2002a). The creative economy is not only failing to provide the conditions that would allow ordinary people to enter the labour market and participate in the production of culture but is actively exacerbating social inequalities among creative individuals in the workplace through its structures and style of management (e.g., Campbell, 2014; Saha, 2017). Thus, the intersection of the creative city, class inequality, and the economic imaginary of creative labour (e.g., Campbell, 2014) require critical scrutiny in Lebanese family design businesses.

Some work on creativity in (Western) organisations has been developed in relation to the management field (Bilton, 2007). For instance, Bilton (2007) argues that a diverse team can increase the number of new ideas and thereby can enhance the group's ability to produce novel solutions and use new approaches in the workplace. Therefore, managing a diverse workforce can have a positive impact on team creativity by encouraging individuals or groups to create new ideas that take account of diversity regarding viewpoints, perspectives, knowledge, expertise, and personalities and that also rely on innovative products and technologies in the workplace (Florida, 2002a, 2005). However,

some researchers have found that a lack of resources and job dissatisfaction can have a negative impact on creativity (Shalley *et al.*, 2004; Weisberg, 2015). For instance, Shalley *et al.* (2004) argue that creativity can contribute to inhibiting the production of ideas by individuals and teams in the workplace. Similarly, Saha (2017) argues that creativity can reduce individuals' motivation and personal resources and restrict the scope of justice in the creative industries because it fails to bring social structure and organisational contexts in the UK. However, Amabile (1996) argues that creativity plays a critical role in organisations and helps employers to police their contents and products and to understand better the value of IP (WIPO, 2009). Therefore, this research study examines the assessment of creativity based on novel products that are brought by the intentional actions of an individual in order to address a significant gap on the role creativity in the Lebanese context, and particularly in Lebanese family design businesses.

Previous studies have found that creativity is 'good for the economy, good for the individual, good for society and good for education' (Jeffrey and Craft, 2001, p. 11). For example, Florida (2002a) also argues that creativity helps individuals to improve their knowledge, skills, and experiences, and that it also helps to attract different types of people to generate knowledge and produce new ideas in the workplace. Creativity is therefore seen as the production of new ideas that attracts and holds the attention of individuals to create works that are novel and leading to a professional labour force to the creative industries in different Western societies (Florida, 2002a). However, Banks (2017) comments that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of the role of creativity within the UK cultural and creative industries. In the UK context, the definition of creative industries encompasses 'those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (DCMS, 2001). Furthermore, WIPO's model (2009) is based on industries involved directly and indirectly in the creation, manufacture, production, broadcast, and distribution of copyrighted works within the creative industries in different European societies. Amabile (1996) argues that the term "creativity" is defined as the generation of ideas, products, or procedures that are (1) novel or original and (2) potentially useful to the organisations.

The focus of this research study is thus on intellectual property as the embodiment of creativity in order to solve problems, accumulate knowledge, which would lead to greater career opportunities in sustaining and improving creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses.

In Lebanon, the definition of creativity is still unclear. The management of family businesses follows a culture that is based on family values, male dominance, and power in the Lebanese context. It is therefore important to assess the production of originality and intellectual property as suggested by WIPO (2009) and DCMS (2001) in order to enhance creativity in an Eastern context (e.g., Lebanese context). As previously, noted, creative performance in a Western context plays an important role in organisations and individuals prioritise originality and novelty over usefulness as their counterparts (employees) within an Eastern background. However, employees in an Eastern background (norms) may be concerned with producing useful (e.g., copy the same products) ideas rather than original ideas, and this may lead to inhibit creativity among individuals in the workplace (see sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3). Therefore, if Lebanese family design businesses promote creative performance similar to the Western background, this would enhance performance and achieve (cultural) creative production based on novelty and originality that requires creative people to produce new ideas among a diverse group of people in order to create new (power) structures within the workplace (e.g., inclusion of non-family members' employees and women).

The relationship between culture and creativity has increasingly depended on cultural (aesthetics) activities and the degree of autonomy that exists in different local and national contexts (McRobbie, 2002; Arvidson *et al.*, 2010; Saha, 2017). Some researchers assert that there is a relationship between creativity and autonomy and that this influence of “expressive value” extends beyond the cultural and creative industries (McRobbie, 2002; Arvidson *et al.*, 2010; Saha, 2017). For instance, some previous studies argue that creativity becomes entwined with questions of aesthetics, politics, identity, and meaning in both the cultural industries and the creative industries in the UK (e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Arvidson *et al.*, 2010; Saha, 2017). Eikhoff (2012, p. 10), for example, found that

employers want to hire employees they can trust and that this is ‘established through personal contract and affirmed by reputation in the workplace’ rather than through interaction with raw materials, tools, or machines. However, the term “creativity” poses a problem for those who would argue that the primary importance of cultural activities might affect the economy in a society (e.g., Florida, 2002a; Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015) or increase inequality in the workplace (e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Eikhoff, 2012). For these reasons, this research study will explore the relationship between culture and creativity in the Lebanese context. The research study will also discuss how creativity is defined and managed in the context of cultural production in the Lebanese family design businesses. The next section describes the creative labour force in Western and Eastern societies and particularly in the Lebanese context.

#### **2.4.5.1. Autonomy and creativity in the creative labour force**

Creative labour has become a dominant topic in discussions about government policy and academia in most Western and some Asian societies. The management of creative labour appears to give workers relative freedom and autonomy in order to produce successful ideas or products where workers utilize their own identity, interests, employment structure, work ethics that are distinct from other talents in the workplace (McRobbie, 2002; Florida, 2002a). Researchers have found that autonomous creative work is associated with problems relating to gender, age (McRobbie, 2002; Eikhoff, 2012), and ethnicity (Saha, 2017) in the UK cultural and creative industries. Furthermore, creative work involves a difficult set of working conditions, earnings that are distributed unequally, and health and pension benefits that are limited in the UK (McRobbie, 2002).

The lifestyle of creative workers has become of focus of organisation theory and management in the creative industries in a particular society (Florida, 2002a; McRobbie, 2002; Eikhoff, 2012). For instance, some creative workers are more integrated into complex production processes with a high degree of labour division and irregular contracts in the UK creative industries (McRobbie, 2002). At the same time, creative workers tend to work with a short-term contract and have become self-employed or freelance workers in the UK creative industries (McRobbie, 2002). However, the number

of workers (especially women and minorities) pursuing creative and knowledge-intensive jobs tend to suffer underemployment and insecurity in the UK cultural and creative industries (McRobbie, 2002; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Saha, 2017).

In the UK cultural industries, Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2010) found that creative labour is very unstable, uncertain, and unregulated in these industries (e.g., especially music sectors). Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2010) also demonstrated that creativity is seen as a cultural production with unique emotional and aesthetic capacities that affect the worker's judgements and their creativity in society. Furthermore, Wolff (1983) has shown that culture is seen as the reframing of art production in which work of equal value can serve as political goals that are aimed at the transformation of individuals and society as a whole. While, Ryan (1992, p. 5) disputes the idea that cultural production is 'reducible to capitalist demands' because it must encompass other forms of value derived from art. However, other researchers found that autonomy can increase the level of individualism and that this becomes problematic when it evolves into a lack of ethical concerns for social justice (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Banks, 2017; Saha, 2017). Banks (2017), for instance, describes how autonomy and self-realisation evolve around conceptions of producing good work, living an ethical life, and social justice (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Saha, 2017). Therefore, autonomy means producing creative products that have cultural and economic value in organisations (e.g., Lebanese family design businesses).

Similarly, Saha (2017) demonstrated that cultural production brings social justice to ethnic minorities in the UK cultural industries. In addition, Banks (2017) found that cultural production is associated with aesthetic values and products in the cultural industries. For instance, Banks (2017) asserts that the cultural industries have to accept the uncertainties and unintended consequences that arise from aesthetic and artistic values. Stahl (2006) recognises that the cultural industries depend on novelty and have to give creative workers significant degrees of autonomy. Furthermore, Stahl (2006) points out that historical and legal development in the USA has reduced autonomy and self-realisation in the film industries. According to Arvidson *et al.* (2010), creative workers



face a low level of job satisfaction and self-perception because the work they do is underpaid, repetitive, uncreative and generic in some creative industries. This problem derives from power relations that affect employers and employees is marked by high levels of fragmentation and insecurity in the workplace. Specifically, Arvidson *et al.* (2010) discuss how labour demand is shaped by individual's identity, motivation, and lifestyle and is also marked by a strong division between employees and employers in the fashion industry in Milan. This strong division between employees and employers is also reflected in salary differences and leads to inequality between different types of creative workers and particularly the gap between salary for workers and bosses remains unfairly distributed across all age groups in the workplace (McRobbie, 2002; Arvidson *et al.*, 2010).

In the UK creative industries, Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2008, 2010) and McRobbie (2002), for example, found that inequality can increase strong hierarchical divisions between men and women in relation to salary differences, imposed hyper-flexibility, autonomy, and part-time employment (full-time employees are also working long hours). However, Florida (2005, p. 36) believes that creative work is associated with excitement, flexibility, and prestige, which produces talented individuals who are mainly motivated by the search for 'abundant high-quality experiences, an openness to diversity of all kinds, and above else the opportunities to validate their identities as creative people' rather than anonymity and a work routine. The creative industries do not only generate economic growth but also they can embrace tolerance, promote social inclusion and cultural diversity, and create jobs opportunities for creative workers in a given society (Florida, 2005). Therefore, creativity serves not only as a way to recruit talented individuals but also as a form of a valorisation process in which the value of the products can be sustained and may help to improve equity and social justice in organisations, particularly in Lebanese family design businesses.

The development of the creative industries discourse (as opposed to that of the arts or the cultural industries) was the first to break free (Hartley, 2005) from traditional cultural policy concerns ranging from market failure to issues concerning identity politics (Potts

*et al.* 2008). Flew (2013) demonstrated that the creative industries focus on generating original and novel values and that intellectual property plays a crucial role in this activity; he also suggests that the creative industries need to be protected so that they can adapt to recent technologies that support their creative processes. As De Beukelaer (2015) argues, culture is not generally understood in developing countries as a creative artistic expression, but rather it is regarded as a set of human beliefs and behaviours and seen as following rules that exist in a given society. According to Florida's (2002a) definition of the creative industries, it is important that employers support creative processes and be open to diversity. Florida (2002a) focused on the role of tolerance, diversity, and creativity. In particular, Florida (2002a) highlighted that the rise of bohemianism creates an environment that attracts and retains highly skilled people (regardless of their cultural backgrounds), invest in a particular location (e.g., Lebanon), as well as engaging with a tolerant governance framework (public and private). Therefore, it is important that Lebanese family design businesses focus largely on attracting and retaining a highly skilled people and other types of talented people in order to improve the performance of individuals through restructuring the type of employment contract between employees and employers and creating IP value within the workplace and the Lebanese society as well.

Nevertheless, McRobbie (2002) found that employees (in particular women) face challenges in the creative industries and are consequently forced to accept low pay and insecure employment (going freelance or having short-term contracts). Creative workers are encouraged to use their autonomy and ability to self-organise, but only 'within a highly restricted and controlled environment' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008, p. 103). Therefore, autonomy and creativity are becoming important in the creative industries in Western societies. In the Lebanese context, creativity and autonomy have been mostly absent in the creative industries, particularly in the design sectors (furniture sectors). Recent studies found the participation of women and ethnic minorities has become essential to the cultural and creative industries in the UK (McRobbie, 2012; Saha, 2017). For instance, McRobbie (2002) argues that there is a predominance of self-employed or freelance workers in an irregular work in the UK creative industries. McRobbie (2002)

also found that creative work is associated with a gender pay gap, volunteer work, and free labour in the UK fashion sectors. The conditions of creative labour have affected certain types of employees and risk generating labour markets marked by irregular, insecure and unprotected work in the UK creative industries (McRobbie, 2002; Eikhoff, 2012) or the UK cultural industries (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Banks, 2017). This means there are little job protection and insecurity leading to career prospects, which are uncertain; and has resulted working with short-term and earning low rate wages among individuals or groups in the creative and other industries within different Western societies.

Despite the growing attention to the film, fashion, television, media, and music industries in Western countries, the management of creative labour have remained little examined in Eastern countries and particularly in Lebanon. It is therefore important that employees from a minority background (e.g., non-family members and women) are offered formal employment contracts so they can be encouraged to improve their skills, knowledge or activities and sustain their jobs in the creative industries similar to the Western (European) societies (particularly in furniture sector). If employers can invest in their human resource management practices by emphasising and improving the legal labour market, this will help the Lebanese family design businesses to ensure flexible employment contract and maximising the productivity, diversity, and interaction between all types of workers in the workplace. Thus, this research study examines the management of creative labour within the Lebanese context in order to understand the role of creativity and creative workers within the Lebanese family design businesses. The next section discusses the concept of social justice in the creative industries.

#### **2.4.5.2. Social justice in relation to creativity**

The growth of work in the cultural and creative industries raises serious questions for social justice regarding respecting the values of cultural objects and practices within the workplace (Banks, 2017; Saha, 2017). Banks (2017), for example, wants to “do justice” to cultural objects by acknowledging their intrinsic value. In his contribution to the current debates about the value of culture in the creative economy, Banks proposes that the value of culture has the potential to enhance ‘non-commercial experiences, including progressive elements of social or political critique’ (Banks, 2017, p. 4). Measuring the value of culture would therefore reduce the inherent quality of objects to the quality provided by the market (Banks, 2017), and not only in economic terms (e.g., Florida, 2002b). However, the value ascribed to cultural objects and the subjective experience of individuals are extremely ‘unfair and unequal in the cultural industries’ (Banks, 2017, p. 146). Therefore, creativity can contribute to prevent equity and social justice between employees (especially people from minorities) and employers in the UK cultural and creative industries (Saha, 2017).

Ross (2008) argues that creative justice is an attempt to pay respect and do justice to low-skilled workers and migrants, which includes respecting the rules and laws that exist in the workplace. One of Banks’s main arguments is that not all cultural objects are considered to be equal in the cultural industries in the UK society. For example, Banks (2017) argues that cultural objects have an intrinsic value and the intrinsic value given is unfair and unequal in the cultural and creative industries in the UK. Drawing on Nussbaum’s theory of capabilities (Nussbaum, 2003), Banks (2017) intends to give value and justice to cultural work by making evaluative and normative judgements about the ethical qualities of work and its contribution to well-being. For example, inequalities between ethnic minorities (not white), working class and the middle class, and those of different genders in the cultural industries in the UK reflect on personal income (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010), education, society, and culture (Banks, 2017), and other individuals’ traits or abilities cannot make the differences between ethnicity and gender in organisations. Furthermore, Banks (2017, pp. 108-109) shows that inequalities are ‘cumulative and cross-compounding’ in the cultural industries. However, Florida (2005) argues that

creativity does not increase inequality and that it may lead to increased tolerance, job opportunities, and diversity among talented employees in the workplace. Therefore, creativity is exposed to other forms of social distinction, including differences in fairness, equity and social justice, and this increases the personal development of employees within the organisation and society, and it may or may not affect employment opportunities in the cultural and creative industries in general and in Lebanese family design businesses.

Banks (2017) proposes three concepts as the basis of ethical guidelines for the creation of justice in creative industries: objective respect, parity of participation, and reduction of harms. Objective respect means being critical and expressing the aesthetic nature of objects in relation to cultural products and process within organisations. Parity of participation implies that the cultural industries should develop as a field in which people from minority backgrounds could thrive. And, finally, reduction of harms is conceived through a pluralist notion of well-being. Banks (2017) shows that having access does not mean redistribution of resources in as much as executive and managerial positions remain dominated by race and gender preferences (white, upper-class male) in the UK. Banks (2017) also found that job positions cause inequalities between employees (especially between those from a minority ethnic background and women). The author also notes that there should be a distinction between working without payment in a ‘non-commercial community context versus working without payment in the commercial or publicly subsidised sphere’ (Banks, 2017, p. 135). Saha (2017) found that inequalities and unfairness in the UK cultural industries tend to be caused by white men from relatively privileged backgrounds. Therefore, removing inequalities and making certain judgements about the values and freedom of employees are critical in a particular society because (creative) organisations can promote creative justice in the workplace.

Furthermore, O’Brien *et al.* (2016) have demonstrated that the range of social exclusions in the creative industries occupations has a negative impact on people coming from minority groups in London. A survey of the media sectors (film, TV, radio, and photography) revealed that women aged 35 or older are particularly under-represented

compared with both men of the same age and women aged less than 35 in the UK (Creative Skillset, 2014). Several researchers argue that inequalities affect employment and are maintained, in that those who can take up job opportunities in the creative industries are, in fact, causing more positions for family or relatives to be created in the family businesses (e.g., Campbell 2014; Banks, 2017). Banks (2017) shows that talent in organisations is not (only) a matter of biology but also of social inheritance. The author highlights the polarisation of workers' wages between those who earn little or nothing in the cultural industries and those who earn almost all of their income in these industries (Banks, 2017). Banks (2017) argues that the wages of employees decrease because managers and organisations are determined to extract value from artists, not because of the global financial crisis or public sector cuts; this determination is activated through 'internalised externality of class and social position' (p. 76) and favours middle-class employees and excludes other categories of the population (e.g., non-family members).

Oakley *et al.* (2017) found that inequality in pay does exist in the creative industries in the UK, and McRobbie (2002) discovered that women are paid less wages than men in the fashion sectors in the UK. Eikhoff (2012) also found that women face inequalities in the workplace, for instance, women cannot undertake the same aspects of work that men undertake in the UK creative industries. Eikhoff (2012) argues that gender inequality is related to the locations and sectors that women typically work in and the allocation of paid and unpaid work within households in the UK. Women continue to be under-represented in many occupations that are centred on male predominance (or skills) in the creative industries, and these industries still offer low pay and little recognition (e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Eikhoff, 2012). Therefore, inequality in wages does exist in the creative industries in the UK, and it contributes to inhibiting creativity among a certain types of employees and often affects under-represented groups (women and employees from minority backgrounds) in the workplace.

According to the Lebanese Ministry of Labour, women in Lebanon are entitled to be paid the minimum wage in the private and public sectors (the salary for new women graduates is \$450 per month, and \$700 for five years of experience). In addition, some employees

with few skills (or without any experience) earn the minimum wage rate in all fields of work particularly in the creative industries (IDAL, 2018). During the civil war, which lasted from 1975 to 1995, it appeared that free access to education did not provide individuals with access to creative industries (see Chapter 1). According to the Lebanese Ministry of Labour, women cannot access free education unlike middle-class men, which has resulted a lack of gender gap in terms of employment in both private and public sectors (see Chapter 1). In addition, the Lebanese Ministry of Labour confirms the largest industry gender gap in Lebanon are found in education, engineering, and manufacturing (Ministry of Labour, 2015; IDAL, 2018). Therefore, a significant gender gap still exists in Lebanon and continues to have a greater impact on the presence of women and men in both private and public sectors and, in particular in, the creative industries..

As previously noted, most of the private and public sectors in Lebanon have always implemented unequal income distribution between different groups of people, even during the civil war (IDAL, 2018; Chapter 1). There is still limited research that has explored income inequalities in Lebanon, which could be a complex process due to the dichotomy of managing and attracting qualified non-family members and women in general. For instance, the Ministry of Labour confirms that 86% of workers tend to work in the private sectors, however, the participation of women in the workforce remains low, causing a vast gender gap in wage. Therefore, solving income inequalities in Lebanese family design businesses requires further understanding in Lebanon's patriarchal society. Banks (2017) acknowledges that a transformative creative justice requires the 'deepest restructuring of social relations' (p. 151) and the addressing of structural inequalities in 'society at large' (p. 151) because the underlying structural biases are so ingrained in institutions and in practices, in terms of 'what talent is, and who might have it' (p. 153). Therefore, it is important to evaluate a cultural work and provide a sound theoretical foundation for the debates about the link between culture, diversity, and creativity in order to address the level of inequality among employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. The next section presents definitions of family business management in Western and Eastern countries, and particularly in Lebanon.

#### **2.4.6. Definition of family business management**

Family-owned businesses constitute the majority of businesses in Europe, the United States, Asia, and the Middle East (EC, 2009; PWC, 2012, 2013). In general, a family business is composed of three family members and an external manager: the owners, two board directors, and one external manager employed by the owners (Astrachan and Shanker, 2002; Ward, 2004). Family members hold various business roles, involving husbands and wives, parents and children, and extended families and multiple generations playing the roles of stakeholders, board members, working partners, advisors, and employees (Ward, 2004). Usually, the ownership of the business transfers to family members (Ward, 2004; Ward *et al.*, 2010). The prioritisation of family members and the personal wealth of the family have been found to increase the number of family owners (Miller *et al.*, 2013).

Emens and Wolper (2000) confirm that owners have a clear idea, vision, or dream regarding the continuity of the business in the light of the current situation and the future one. Family involvement may ensure the unity of the family or the end of family conflicts and business strategies may be improved to help family members to remain active. Ward (2004, 2008) indicates that the owners have a sense of loyalty and devotion towards family members and therefore help and prepare them by supporting their views and executing their values in the workplace. The role of the family in the business determines the goals and visions of the family members and the long-term success of the family business (Handler, 1994; Sharma *et al.*, 2003). Lansberg and Astrachan (1994) state that a family vision requires individuals to share their needs, fears, and dreams. Thus, family members share common values that help the family business to achieve the strategy and mission of the company (Ward, 2008). If family members were to understand and support one another while they work together, this would increase communication and harmony with the other employees (family or non-family members) (Ward *et al.*, 2010).

Nevertheless, family owners may face particular challenges, depending on the relationships and collaboration between the owners and the family members of the business (Gersick, *et al.*, 1997). Conflicts frequently arise due to the overlap of roles and



pressure to hire relatives or close friends rather than non-family employees. Some family businesses may also face a lack of continuity, for instance, a rivalry between parents, siblings, and cousins might present obstacles to managing and controlling the business. To avoid such problems and personal conflicts, several researchers have suggested that the family may share values, power, traditions, individual behaviour, and strong family ties, and this means that they can develop a successful succession plan and remain in business (Litz, 1995; EC, 2009; Niebler, 2015). Niebler (2015) has shown that family members will face challenges in the future regarding ensuring business continuity, sustaining or satisfying the increasing the needs of individuals, and the way in which he/she changes the direction of the business. Therefore, it is important to manage the cultural diversity of employees in the workplace. This would improve diversity management in relation to family members and non-family members within an organisation or enterprise, and, in particular, in Lebanese family design businesses.

Astrachan and Shanker (2003) presents three definitions of a family business. The first definition is that it is a family firm in which the family controls the strategic direction of the company and also participates in the business. In such cases, the founder runs the business, which is intended to remain within the family (Astrachan and Shanker, 2003). The second definition is that multiple generations participate in a family firm and have a significant impact on the company; usually one or two members have management responsibilities. The third definition is that it is a family business that is owned, governed, and managed by the family members who own it. Some researchers have identified the importance of family-owned businesses to the economic stability of a nation, and have explained the role of the individuals who are employed (either family members or non-family members) and, in particular, young people who are seeking work experience (Litz, 1995; EC, 2009; Niebler, 2015). Family businesses have become one of the key drivers of national growth and development, and therefore achieving creativity is important (Miller *et al.*, 2013). For example, family businesses generally play a significant role in regional development in terms of employment and business development that has the potential to encourage entrepreneurship and motivate other families to start their own family businesses (EC, 2009). According to the European

Commission (EC) (2009, p. 4), the EU definition of family business states that a firm of any size is a family business if all of the following apply:

- The majority of decision-making rights are in the possession of the natural persons who established the firm, or in the possession of the natural persons who have acquired the share capital of the firm, or in the possession of their spouses, parents, child or children's direct heirs.
- The majority of decision-making rights are indirect or direct.
- At least one representative of the family or kin is formally involved in the governance of the firm.
- Listed companies meet the definition of family enterprise if the person who established or acquired the firm (share capital) or their families or descendants possess 25% of the decision-making rights mandated by their share capital.

Table 2.1: The percentage of family owned businesses worldwide.

Categories	Firm size	Firm percentage	Employee percentage
<b>Europe</b>	Small, medium, and large	70%-80%	40%-50%
<b>Asia</b>	Small, medium, and large	90%	66%
<b>Middle East</b>	Small and medium	85%	30%
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	Small and medium	80%	43%
<b>United States</b>	Small and medium	90%	63%

Source: Adapted from Family Firm Institute, (FFI), official website, 2014.

According to a report by McKinsey (2014), the influence of family businesses will increase significantly over the next ten to fifteen years. Indeed, the analysis suggests that 80% of companies will be family enterprises (McKinsey, 2014). Table 2.1 illustrates the percentage of family businesses in Europe, demonstrating that currently 70%-80% of enterprises are family businesses. Moreover, family businesses have created five million jobs in Europe and they account for 40%-50% of all employment (FFI, 2014). The percentage of family businesses in France, Italy and Germany ranges between 60%-95%, 70% in the UK and 80% in Finland (FFI, 2014). Furthermore, family businesses account for 9% of the GDP of the European Union (FFI, 2014). Outside the EU, 86% of private enterprises in China are family-owned businesses and in India, 79% of private enterprises are family-owned businesses. These private enterprises account for 27% of all employment (13% survive to the second or third generations and 4% to the fourth generation) (FFI, 2014).

The percentage of family businesses in Europe is quite similar to that of the Middle East and China (around 80% of private enterprises are family-owned). Greece, for example, has one of the largest percentages of SME businesses in Europe, and the majority of these are family businesses (Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). Moreover, most of these family businesses are micro enterprises and operate within traditional sectors such as retail, services, and construction. The three most important challenges faced by these Greek family businesses are managed and influenced by the members of a family; he/she makes an essential contribution to the formulation of the business strategy, to staff employment, and to the transition of ownership or control to the next generation (Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). This means that the business owner is also involved in the management and decision-making of the company. In addition, the chief executive officer or chair of the board of directors has equal rights and they are well protected under Greek legislation (Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). Therefore, family members control the business and all related family affairs and possess 25% of the voting rights. As a result, in Greece, the family is an important asset for the business. Nevertheless, family businesses in Greece have to overcome some weaknesses. The main challenges

faced by family businesses concern the decisions made by policymakers in relation to the economic and social contribution of family businesses (Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014).

Furthermore, some family businesses face challenges in attracting younger generations and promoting diversity and flexibility among non-family members (Miller *et al.*, 2013). A further important factor is the economic crisis affecting most European countries. For example, the situation in Greece has not changed and the hiring of non-family members is often limited and related to succession within the family (Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). Another important issue relating to family businesses is succession (Sharma, 2004; Chrisman, *et al.*, 2005). In general, the owners determine who will take over leadership and/or ownership of the company when he/she retires or dies (Ward, 2004; Chrisman *et al.*, 2005). The owners discuss with family members who will take over and make the necessary preparations. When succession is postponed, older relatives are able to get involved in the family firm and may share leadership positions (Ward and Dolan, 1998). However, the business owner may not remove his relatives from the daily operations of the firm if he refuses to take risks and alter the structure of the company (Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). In addition, confidence in the family, religion, trust, and loyalty are highly valued in Greece; thus, family businesses may use financial gifts to strengthen and balance their financial growth and transfer the succession of owners to offspring (Ward and Dolan, 1998; Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). Therefore, family commitment, culture, and religion are largely dominant in all managerial settings in most European countries.

In Lebanon, the structure of family-owned businesses is typically managed according to a patriarchal and hierarchical form in which the father holds all of the power and expects employees to obey his rules and instructions (Barakat, 1993). The father is responsible for directing employees and can select the roles or positions of family and non-family members (Barakat, 1993). The dominance of the father as head of the family and businesses relies on shared values and the characteristics of the father, since he can trust the family members in the workplace, has the same culture as them, and shares decision-

making with them too (Fahed-Sreih *et al.*, 2010). This relationship can prevent a succession of employees as the patriarch controls what is done and what family members and non-family members can do (Barakat, 1993). Fagenson (1993, p. 16) argues that ‘an individual cannot be understood separately from the society and culture in which he or she works’. Studies have shown that family members in Lebanon control the finances and operations for personal profit, which leads to reduced managerial choices (Fahed-Sreih *et al.*, 2010; Fahed-Sreih and Pistrui, 2012).

Therefore, the relationship between family members and non-family members is usually based on religion, cultural norms, and power (Barakat, 1993). Furthermore, Islam has a strong influence on family businesses, although Lebanon has a long history of Christianity dating back to the French mandate (see Chapter 1). Family businesses in Lebanon also rely on a system of hierarchical status that is based on age and gender differences, as women are still subordinate to men (Barakat, 1993). These sociocultural values characterise masculine societies and are consistent with Hofstede’s findings that Lebanon is moderately masculine (Hofstede, 2001). Thus, the importance of the family is central to Lebanese history, culture, politics, and religion and has become a significant factor in selecting and recruiting employees according to their religion, confession, political views, or lack of relationships with the family that owns the business.

In summary, the literature review has discussed the debate about culture, diversity, and creativity, which is empirically examined in Chapters 4 and 5. Recent studies have found that the presence of creative workers may improve and enhance the success of any leading creative industries (e.g., Pratt, 2008). It is, therefore, necessary to analyse how creative sectors become useful in relation to the cultural and social value of any city (e.g., Pratt, 2008). Pratt (2008) argues that creative industries can enhance local culture and manage differences among employees through developing policies that promote creativity and attract investments, as well as encouraging individuals to work as a member of a diverse group in a particular cultural milieu. This research study therefore compares and analyses the diversity of employees and their impact on creativity in

Lebanon and, in particular, in local and international design companies. The next section presents the conceptual framework.

## **2.5. Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework seeks to capture the key relationships between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance as identified in the literature review (see Chapter 2). The conceptual framework illustrates the significance of diversity management and creativity in the workplace context (e.g., Lebanese family design businesses). The literature review highlighted the importance of organisational conditions that leverage the benefits of diversity management, which is positively related to creative performance (see Chapter 2).

This conceptual framework can be applied to understand the research questions of the research study step by step (see sections 2.6 and 2.7). The conceptual framework has therefore been proposed to represent the key themes in the literature review and develop and test the three research questions within the Lebanese family design businesses (see section 2.6). The conceptual framework is then used to explain or predict the impact of cultural diversity within and across the four organisations (in Lebanese family design businesses). Additionally, the conceptual framework contributes to understanding the role of diversity management in order to manage diversity and enhance creative performance within the Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, the conceptual framework serves as a guide for future research. Each part of the model is explained and examined through the three main aspects as illustrated below:

The first aspect consists of implementing diversity management perspectives in organisations, which is lacking in the Lebanese context (Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010). Diversity management practices are essential in the context of legislation, labour law, and regulations concerning the hiring, promotion, and development of employees to promote a diverse workforce. It is therefore important to understand and explore whether perceptions of diversity and inclusion can be attributed to a specific group characteristic. This understanding will allow managers and researchers

to understand which groups perceive diversity less positively and therefore which groups contribute to a potentially high-quality performance. This aspect further links cultural diversity influences (family and non-family membership) to the performance and creativity of family firms to show how they can enhance their competitive advantage. This can be done through implementing diversity management practices to improve team level performance and creativity within an organisation (Herring, 2009; Joshi and Roh, 2009; Singal and Gerde, 2015). There is a limited number of studies linking diversity management practices to business performance and creativity (Herring, 2009; Joshi and Roh, 2009; Singal and Gerde, 2015). Therefore, this framework seeks to build a relationship between cultural diversity influences and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses, which represents a significant gap in the knowledge that this thesis seeks to bridge.

The second aspect, which is, cultural diversity influences is limited in its scope in Asia and the Middle East and particularly in the Lebanese context (Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali and Hmaidan, 2010; see Chapter 2). In Lebanon, organisations are struggling to take the steps towards creating a multicultural workplace environment that reflects differences in gender, ethnicity, age, religion, experience, academic qualifications, and nationality. Therefore, the role of cultural diversity in Lebanese family design businesses is examined and compared with how a diverse workforce can harness a variety of perspectives, experiences, and insights, which is vital to business success. Individuals within an organisation may have different backgrounds and perspectives (Cox and Blake, 1991). These individuals from diverse backgrounds may bring to the organisation different perspectives on how to solve problems and enhance creativity, which will lead to a better performance in the workplace (Cox and Blake, 1991; Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007). It is therefore necessary that organisations are classified into homogeneous (e.g., integration of the same or a similar culture) or multicultural identities (e.g., organisation that values a diverse workforce) (Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007). Lebanese organisations can be classified as homogeneous, where discrimination and prejudice are prevalent and demonstrate a lack of commitment to cultural diversity (Jamali *et al.*, 2010). This second aspect will ultimately positively influence employee engagement and

inclusion in teams and will perpetuate the development of a multicultural organisational culture in contemporary Lebanon. Cultural diversity aims to preserve integrity while encouraging those from an ethnic minority to interact and coexist harmoniously in the workplace (Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007).

The third aspect, which is, creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses, explores the role of creativity in organisational performance (e.g., family design businesses). This aspect focuses on the multiple dimensions of diversity (e.g., age, gender, religion, education) to examine the team performance in the workplace (e.g., behaviour, attitude, opinion, knowledge, skills, and abilities). Furthermore, this aspect focuses on managing work teams or utilising an increasingly a diverse workforce to increase creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses as proposed by Cox (2001). This aspect also develops the assessment of creativity based on problem-solving, generation of original ideas/novelty, patents or intellectual property, (IP) and rewards for idea generation within the Lebanese family design businesses, which is employed by WIPO (2009, 2013). This aspect suggests that creative performance is influenced by the cultural diversity of employees through the management of individual skills, performance, and experiences. Creativity positively impacts organisational performance and the ability of the organisation to create and protect new ideas within the workforce (e.g., Cox, 2001; Bilton, 2007; WIPO, 2013).

Thus, the conceptual framework seeks to demonstrate that diversity management practices will stimulate creative performance in the Lebanese family design businesses. The researcher employs a circular diagram in order to develop and test the three questions in a theoretical form. The conceptual framework illustrates a more nuanced approach to diversity management that should positively impact organisational outcomes (Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012; Mor-Barak, 2015; Singal and Gerde, 2015). In addition, the conceptual framework illustrates that creativity has an influence on employees and their creative activities in the Lebanese family design businesses. The three research questions (RQ (1), RQ (2), and RQ (3)) are illustrated below:



- RQ (1): How does the Lebanese culture affect diversity and creativity in the family design business's structures?
- RQ (2): To what extent do the Lebanese family design business's structures provide equal opportunities to diverse workers?
- RQ (3): To what extent do the Lebanese family design businesses encourage creative performance?

## **2.6 Development of the Research Questions**

As mentioned earlier, the three research questions are used to explain the key relationships between the various factors identified in the literature review (see Chapter 2). Thus, the research questions are declarative statements that serve to identify an association between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance. Understanding these distinctive characteristics will help to understand the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity in the Lebanese context. This relationship also reveals the impact of culture and diversity has on individual (employee) motivation, which is a key driver for creativity, as argued by Bilton (2007).

For the purpose of this thesis, the conceptual framework is constructed because of the lack of diversity management and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, this research study suggests that Lebanese family design businesses success depends on managing the diversity of employees and improving creativity, as suggested by Bilton (2007). The conceptual framework, therefore, identifies dimensions of diversity that can be used to evaluate and test the three research questions mentioned earlier. These research questions are reviewed and used as a theoretical guide for the research study. The literature review examined these themes (cultural diversity, diversity management, and creative performance) across the different dimensions of diversity with the goal of identifying the impact of creativity on organisation within the Lebanese context.

In summary, these three main research questions present the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity and explore how creative performance takes place in the design

sectors in Lebanon. The literature review identified theories on the critical relationships between culture, creativity, and diversity management. To address these theories, the researcher considers the causal relationship between the main three research questions to develop a conceptual framework (see Figure 2.2). As mentioned earlier, the first question is as follows:

- **RQ (1): How does the Lebanese culture affect diversity and creativity in the family design business's structures?**

The first question outlines that an organisation's structure may affect the selection and recruitment of employees in the workplace. This question also examines that managing organisational culture, which involves beliefs, opinions, structure, and homogeneous versus heterogeneous workforce is critical to increase the diversity of employees and improve creativity within a diverse workforce (Amabile, 1996; UNESCO, 2009). This question further articulates the significance of the study by following Bilton's (2007) example, who suggests that a diverse workforce would increase the employee's abilities and experiences to create and develop new ideas in an organisation. Furthermore, Bilton's argument (2007) provides an explanation for the impact of creativity and focuses on work teams in relation to managing and increasing a diverse workforce in organisations.

The literature review defines cultural diversity as the way in which people can perceive their personality, behaviour, beliefs, feelings, habits, language (s), knowledge and lifestyles regardless of their cultural backgrounds (UNESCO, 2009). Therefore, cultural diversity can have a positive effect on performance in the workplace, as suggested by UNESCO (2009). This question further reflects on individual skill, talent and commitment that enable the exploration of original ideas and the development of new ideas among a diverse workforce (e.g., Amabile, 1996; Bilton, 2007). The literature review draws on cultural diversity and its impact on creativity (Cox, 1994, 2001; Bilton, 2007). Managing cultural diversity focuses primarily on issues related to diversity in order to select and recruit employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds (Cox,

1994). Cox and Blake (1991) found that team members who have different abilities are more diverse and creative. Therefore, this question suggests a positive effect on the creative performance of employees (regardless of their gender, religion, age, education, and job position) in order to recruit and retain people from different backgrounds (Cox and Blake, 1991).

- **RQ (2): To what extent do the Lebanese family design business's structures provide equal opportunities to diverse workers?**

The second question examines that diversity management is becoming important to ensure equal opportunities, an integrated approach to manage a diverse workforce in Lebanese family design businesses. Mor-Barak (2014) suggests that the emphasis on diversity management perspectives originated with legislation that prohibited discrimination and created accountability for monitoring diversity. This question confers value on diversity as a moral imperative and as beneficial for performance, for example by enabling organisations to attract and retain diverse employees and to leverage different cultural perspectives in Lebanese family design businesses. Thus, this question describes that diversity management is achieved by having multiple and broader resources in the organisations.

Mor-Barak (2014) found that diverse teams make better decisions in an organisation than homogenous groups. As suggested in the literature review, diversity management could motivate HR staff to get involved and bring unique expertise and communication skills to the workplace as indicated by Özbilgin and Tatli, (2008), Özbilgin and Syed (2010), and Mor-Barak, (2014, 2015). Therefore, this first question explores the importance of HRM that leads to increasing the diversity of employees by having different cultural groups in organisations. Additionally, firms with global diversity management practices in place will also tend to have more efficient cross-national teams due to higher levels of global competence among employees, and will, therefore, be better able to capitalise upon talent worldwide (Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015). This question can help Lebanese family design businesses to manage and increase the diversity of employees among family members

and non-family members through the implementation of diversity management practices and policies in order to select and recruit employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds.

- **RQ (3): To what extent do the Lebanese family design businesses encourage creative performance?**

The third question describes that individual's lifestyles and values may influence their integration and their creative activities in the workplace. This question examines the cultural diversity of employees and the organisational performance, which is significant for the study because it follows the work of Cox and Blake (1991), who suggest that creativity has a positive impact on the cultural diversity of employees in organisations. This question also examines that the generation and utilisation of ideas by employees from different (two or more) cultural backgrounds is important in order to enhance creativity and positively influence the organisational performance of the Lebanese family design businesses.

The literature review argues that creativity appears to be stronger where a diverse cultural group creates original ideas through their skills, knowledge, and performance. Therefore, this question indicates that creative performance can have a positive impact on the cultural diversity of employees by shaping an individual's perceptions, skills, and experiences within the workplace (e.g., Cox, 1994). Cox and Blake (1991) suggest that creativity is a key factor that increases the diversity of individuals or groups and help employees remain creative. This question examines the assessment of creativity in order to achieve positive outcomes for individuals, groups, and organisations. A critical focus on a number of key activities in Lebanese family design businesses will help the researcher to analyse the sources of creativity in terms of invention:

1. Creativity refers to the invention of new knowledge in terms of products, processes, and techniques.
2. This invention of new knowledge increases an employee's creative performance.
3. This invention of new knowledge is certified by a legal authority (IP or patent).

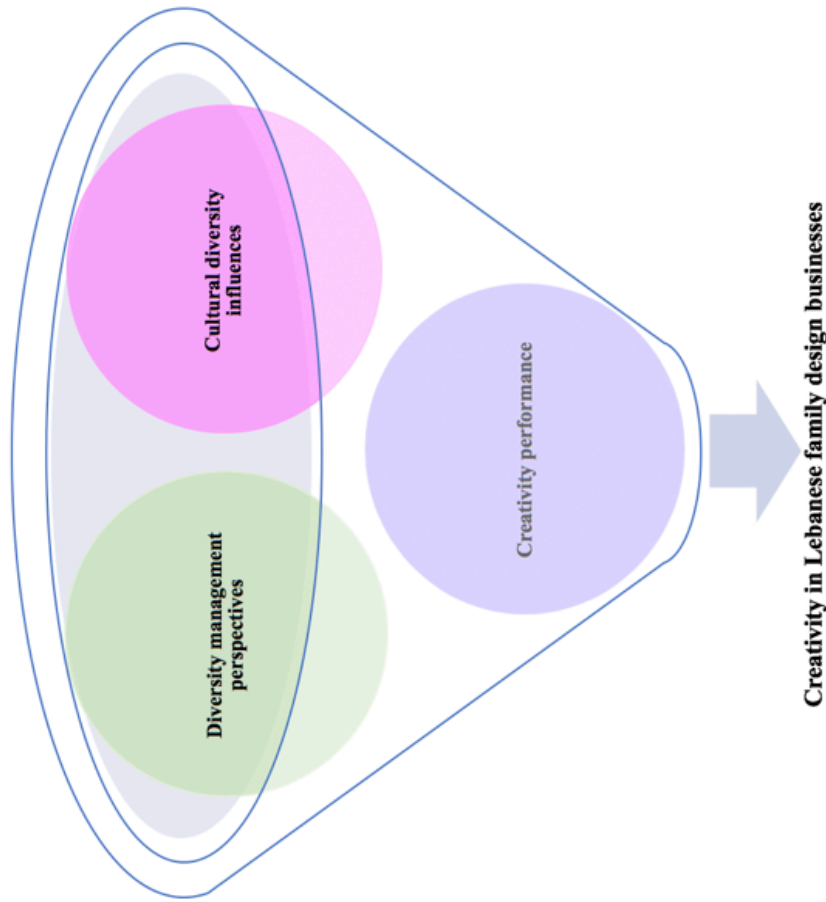
It is therefore important to explore the role of creativity in Lebanese family design businesses in order to emphasise the role played at the source of invention by creativity, which is the capacity to combine ideas in order to solve problems or explore new ideas. This third question considers the engagement of employees by examining team performance in the Lebanese family design businesses. Within the literature on creativity, researchers argue that creativity is essential in the fields of businesses studies and management (e.g., Jeffcutt and Pratt 2002; Bilton, 2007; Runco, 2007). The researcher, therefore, argues that creativity helps individuals to create ideas, increase their skills, and improve the business's structure. Thus, this question explores the importance of creativity in employee activities and performance within the workplace. The literature review suggests that creative performance plays an important role in sustaining a diverse workforce and increasing the individual's skills, talent, knowledge, and organisational commitment (see Chapter 2) and particularly in the Lebanese family design businesses.

The literature review also identified theories on creativity in organisations. For example, Amin and Roberts (2008) bring up several issues about the extent to which creativity is practised in a community and, in particular, how members should be provided with resources to help them to use their expertise for the benefit of the community and the organisation as a whole. Furthermore, this question argues that creativity is essential to create and improve new ideas in order to solve problems among employees by encouraging individuals or groups to make technological changes and improve the quality of his/her product (e.g., Jeffcutt and Pratt 2002; Bilton, 2007; Runco, 2007). This question examines that creativity is a key ingredient of managing diversity in organisations, and particularly in Lebanese family design businesses. Based on this perspective, this question involves the organisation's performance and levels of creativity with the aims of facilitating positive interactions between employees (family members and non-family members) within the Lebanese context.

This question is based on problem-solving, generation of original ideas/novelty, project patents or intellectual property (IP) and rewards for idea generation within the Lebanese family design businesses as employed by the WIPO (2009, 2013). Therefore, creativity

can help employees and employers to increase diversity and improve their performance as well. The literature review supports the argument that creativity mainly impacts diversity and performance but has the potential to encourage job and wealth creation innovatively and independently. The literature review argues that creativity is determined by social backgrounds and include respect to rules and law (e.g., Banks, 2017) in order to dilute legal and social obligations to employers, shape educational policies and practices, and thus expanding the creativity community that are limited in the Lebanese context, and particularly in Lebanese family design businesses.

In summary, these three research questions have been developed from the existing literature review, which has incorporated three different theoretical fields: cultural diversity influences, diversity management practices, and creative performance (see Chapter 2). The three research questions explain, therefore, the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity in organisations. As a result, the conceptual framework aims to act as a foundation for the empirical research study and to provide an analytical tool for interpreting the data produced during the interview and observation process (see Chapters 4 and 5). The analytical interpretation constitutes comparison and categorisation of the statements made by participants and forms the theoretical knowledge base for the research study (see Chapters 4 and 5). Miles and Huberman (1994) state that a conceptual framework is developed to describe the phenomenon to be studied, and so precedes the empirical collection data. Therefore, the development of these questions and the conceptual framework, as shown in figure 2.2 are further justified and developed in Chapter 6 (see section 6.3, Figure 6.1).



- RQ (1): How does the Lebanese culture affect diversity and creativity in the family design business's structures?*
- RQ (2): To what extent do the Lebanese family design business's structures provide equal opportunities to diverse workers?*
- RQ (3): To what extent do the Lebanese family design businesses encourage creative performance?*

Figure 2.2: A detailed conceptual framework related to the literature review.

## 2.7. Theoretical contribution

First, this research study compares and analyses the secondary data, which relates to employees' engagement in local and international companies in local and international companies (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014; Storey *et al.*, 2014). This study also acknowledges the theoretical contributions of various scholars who tried to define diversity management practices (e.g., Cox, 2001; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2008; Özbilgin and Syed, 2010; Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015) and cultural diversity theory (e.g., Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Saha, 2017) and other authors on managing creativity in the workplace (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Amabile, 1998; Gino and Ariely, 2011). The research study explores the importance of creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses and seeks to establish the role of cultural diversity in promoting creativity in these businesses.

Second, this research study draws inspiration from the various literatures of Lebanese writers such as Barakat (1993), Al-Ariss (2010), Jamali *et al.* (2010), and Krayem (2012). However, there are limited academic resources related to diversity management practices in the Lebanese context (e.g., Al Ariss, 2010; Jamali *et al.*, 2010), which gives this research an advantage. This research will establish that diversity management practices are essential at the organisational level to encourage employees and managers to achieve creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses (see conceptual framework, Figure 2.2, section 2.5). This research study also focuses on the role of creativity, which has not been explored in Lebanon.

Finally, it is important to focus on the cultural diversity of employees and employers and its impact on creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. Workforce diversity could have a positive impact in organisations where the similarities and differences of individuals are highly valued (Cox and Blake, 1991; Cox, 1994, 2001). This research study seeks to understand whether the engagement of talented employees in the Lebanese organisations is based on diversity aspects such as age, education, experience and qualification because these are essential to influence creative performance or strategic execution, innovation, and growth, as noted by Singal and Gerde (2015).



## **2.8. Summary**

This chapter discusses the literature on diversity management, cultural diversity, and creativity. The chapter then provided background information about the importance of diversity management and creativity in organisations. It went on to argue that diversity management is important in order to increase diversity and enhance creativity in organisations, particularly in Lebanese family design businesses. Following DCMS's and Florida's arguments, this research study focuses on the role of creativity in Lebanon with the aim of encouraging and improving the cultural diversity of employees within Lebanese family design businesses. The literature review suggests that the creative industries in Lebanese society can be open to diverse talents in order to increase the diversity of their workforce and to foster employment in Lebanese family design businesses. The chapter argues that diversity management practices play an important role in organisations in order to increase diversity and promote creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. Finally, the chapter proposed a conceptual framework for this research study that draws on the findings of the literature review. The following chapter presents the methods employed in this thesis and describes the research process and participants in this research study.

### **3.0. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This methodology chapter explains the decision-making process that resulted in selecting semi-structured interviews and observations as the main methods. The chapter is divided into four main sections. Section one presents an interpretive (subjective) approach to share the views of the participants in the Lebanese family design businesses. Section two presents a qualitative case study, including the semi-structured interviews, the participant observations, and the data analysis. Section three explains how the data was collected and analysed, thereby establishing the validity and reliability of the key findings of the study. Section four discusses the translation challenges of the research process. Finally, the chapter presents the research ethics and describes the role of the researcher at each stage of the research process.

#### **3.2. Interpretive Approach**

This research study presents a critical assessment of the interpretive approach. The interpretive methodology has been widely applied to interdisciplinary research over recent decades (Collis and Hussey, 2013). The purpose of using the interpretive approach in this research is based on the researcher's subjectivity and realistic assumption, which requires the researcher to understand and rely on the views of the participants (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Morse, 2005; Collis and Hussey, 2013). The interpretive research establishes the common meanings of phenomena in the participants' lives, thoughts, and ideas within the design companies in Lebanon (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The interpretive approach is appropriate for studying human behaviour and organisational research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002) and provides a new perspective attached to a particular theoretical approach to reporting and interpreting an objective reality, which is being investigated in this research study (Creswell, 2003; Morse, 2005). The researcher seeks to observe and to interpret meanings in human behaviour in an organisation rather than to generalise and predict causes and effects, which are suitable for qualitative investigate techniques within the Lebanese family design businesses (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002, Creswell, 2003). Therefore, the goal of the interpretivist research is to

understand and interpret the meanings in a specific context like Lebanon in order to gain an insider's view of the field and to evaluate the source of knowledge and not merely accept statement as fact (Creswell, 2003).

The interpretive approach allows the researcher to develop in-depth understandings of how employees perceive their social realities and in consequence, how they act, what people think about diversity and creativity and what that thinking means, implies, and signifies within the Lebanese context and, in particular in, family design businesses (Morse, 2005). This research study explores the views of participants on the impact of diversity management and creativity in a specific country and according to their culture. For this reason, the interpretative approach was used in order to describe and understand a different meaning from the perspective of different people in different life settings; thus the reality is constructed in the context to understand the subject matter and provide some in-depth insights from employees and employers in Lebanese family design businesses (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002; Creswell, 2003).

This research study is based on an interpretive approach in that it undertakes multiple data collections through interviews and observations and by analysing and understanding transcriptions (texts). Interpretivists, therefore, seek to understand the sociocultural context of the participants by sharing knowledge, investigating, and understanding the learning process, and therefore the researcher's position is to gather information personally through participant observation, various written texts, and face-to-face interviews and then interpret what is discovered (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

The interpretation in this research study is shaped by the researcher's own knowledge, experience, and background within Lebanon's sociocultural context. One of the key decisions made at an early stage in this research was to observe participants to help the researcher to develop and reflect on her own involvement with and perspectives on the topic under investigation (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Interpretation can help the researcher to determine the significance of what he or she observes (Collis and Hussey, 2013). Thus, the researcher adopted people's views (their attitudes, values, and relationships) on the reality she was investigating (Collis and Hussey, 2013). However,

Hughes (1997) points out that interpretive approaches are difficult, and therefore the researcher aims to remain sensitive in order to develop the relationship between researcher and the participant (Hughes, 1997). Creswell (2003, p. 9) adds,

The researcher's intent is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world which follow from their own personal, cultural and historical experiences. Rather than starting with a theory as positivism, inquirers generate or inductively develop a theory or patterns of meaning.

Interpretive approaches give the researcher greater choice in how to address issues regarding influence and impact and to ask questions such as “why” and “how” (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Walsham (1993) asserts that the purpose of the interpretive approach is to justify the researcher's choice of hermeneutics as the philosophical rationale for a study. The interpretive approach can generate new knowledge and provide valuable information for future work and practice (Walsham, 1993). For instance, practitioners' perspectives concerning their career choices can be revealed and understood by their description of their experiences in the workplace in Lebanon. Such information expresses the role of participants in the context of the social and cultural situations and explains the barriers they come up against in practice in an organisation (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Smith *et al.* (2009) advocate the view that the interpretive approach is essential to reveal the role of practitioners and the experiences they have had through participation, collaboration, and engagement in a particular society. In addition, qualitative descriptions can play the important role of suggesting possible relationships, causes, effects and dynamic processes; therefore, the researcher's presence has a profound effect on the subjects of study.

In the interpretive approach, the researcher is a participant observer who engages in the activities and understands the meanings of actions as they are expressed within social and behavioural contexts (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). The purpose of interpretive social science ‘is not to provide causal explanations of human life, but to deepen and extend our knowledge of why social life is perceived and experienced in the way that it is’ (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 90). These authors argue that interpretive research could lead to a more sensitive analysis of the social, cultural, economic, and political frameworks within a

particular society/environment (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). Thus, this research study aims to define and provide information about social and behavioural relationships within the Lebanese context. Therefore, a qualitative approach is taken to explore the reasons for employer and employee behaviours and experiences (including their opinions). The preliminary stage of this research aims to understand social and cultural phenomena relating to the participants. The researcher seeks to understand the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of employees, owners, and managers (particularly HR managers) in Lebanon. This research study addresses how members of Lebanese society understand diversity management practices. For this reason, this research study employs a qualitative research approach, which was considered as more suitable to understand the views of the participants and how they manage diversity and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses.

### **3.2.1 Qualitative approach**

Qualitative and quantitative methods are often best used to address different kinds of research questions and objectives (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The researcher's fundamental research questions unify the significance of the qualitative research (see Chapter 1, section 1.3). The researcher posed several questions to small groups to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity in the Lebanese society and particularly in Lebanese family design businesses (see Appendix A). This qualitative research, therefore, consists of semi-structured interviews and participant observation to define phenomena/categories during the research process and to identify the research questions and the research objectives (see Chapter 1, sections 1.3 and 1.5) (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Myers, 2013). According to Myers (2013), qualitative data sources include observation and participant observation (fieldwork), interviews and questionnaires, documents and texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions to ensure qualitative forms of reliability and validity (see sections 3.4 and 3.4.1). To generate findings and transform data into new knowledge, the researcher interprets and analyses the views, thoughts, and feelings of participants throughout all phases of the research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). It is important, therefore, to understand and

interpret the data to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses.

In this research study, objectivity in qualitative research often implies measuring aspects taken as ‘intangibles such as meanings, reasons, and understanding’ of the research subject (Berg and Lune, 2012, p. 340). These concepts only exist because we can interpret them. For this reason, this qualitative research implies objectivity and allows the researcher to impose her theoretical constructs on data, interpret and analyse the data collection in Chapters 4 and 5, and address the research questions in Chapter 1 and 2. In contrast, quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things and the extent and distributions of any subject expressed by numbers (Berg and Lune, 2012). The aim of this research is to explore the impact of diversity of employees on creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. In recent years, studies show the lack of qualitative studies on the creative industries in the form of Lebanese family design businesses (e.g., Najjar, 2007; UNIDO, 2017). However, this research study aims to identify the factors that facilitate or inhibit creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses to understand the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses. For the purpose of this study, a qualitative research methodology was selected as this fitted and shaped the research questions (see Chapter 1, section 1.3). The qualitative approach allows the researcher to gain in-depth information about the research topic and to understand the role of diversity management in the Lebanese context. This objective is achieved by explaining people’s experiences, views, and feelings within the Lebanese family design businesses (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Denzin and Lincoln (2002) argue that qualitative research is characterised by the assessment of a small population sample. Subjectivity is also an important limitation. This often causes problems when a researcher is trying to validate the research (Bryman, 2006). This is in contrast with quantitative research, which collects broad statistical data from a large number of people. Qualitative data can be collected using a variety of

methods, including interviews, case studies, and observations. The current study relies on the case study method to enhance the theory generated, and to provide additional validity to assertions made either by the researcher or by the participants in the case study (Creswell, 2003). There is also discussion in the field about how much a researcher is part of any particular presentation of a case study and how much effort the researcher should make to manage subjectivity while at the same time letting the case study speak for itself (Stake, 2010).

In this research study, the qualitative research method was selected to generate rich data and explore the questions and objectives of the research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Using this method is an important part to explain the research topic in order to explore relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses (Creswell, 2003). The qualitative research method is a subjective and narrative method, which involves verbal communication with participants to understand social or human situations relating to the role of diversity management within Lebanese family design businesses (Miles and Huberman, 1994). For example, the researcher asks the participants the interview questions to put their understanding or experience of the diversity management definition into words, and then transform their experience and verbal communication into a written representation (e.g., quotes; see Chapters 4 and 5). Denzin and Lincoln (2002) noted that narrative approach is used by researchers for exploring new ideas, methods, and questions. Thus, narrative analysis is a strategy employed in this qualitative research to identify and understand the views of the participants within the Lebanese context (Hammersley, 1990). For this reason, the insights about each participant's experience are generated in order to analyse themes across the data and to answer the research questions (Hammersley, 1990; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The qualitative data is also derived from direct observation of behaviours, from semi-structured interviews, from written opinions, and from public documents to obtain an in-depth understanding of the role of diversity management in the Lebanese family design businesses (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The researcher analyses and transcribes the data

collected from recordings, transcripts, notes, and words/conversation. Coding and analysis allow the researcher to access the data several times. This qualitative approach allows the researcher to interact with participants and allows them to give comprehensive information by answering the semi-structured questions about the role of diversity management and creative performance in the four companies selected, and this information cannot be expressed by numbers or by using a statistical approach (quantitative results and analysis) (Berg and Lune, 2012). The next section illustrates the case study strategy employed in this research.

### **3.3. Case Study**

A qualitative case study methodology enhances the value of a research design and provides an understanding of participants' viewpoints, perspectives, and positions (Yin, 2003; Berg and Lune, 2012). A case study involves gathering enough information about a particular individual or group to permit the researcher to examine a simple or a complex phenomenon and understand how the subject operates (Berg and Lune, 2012, p. 325). A case study approach helps the researcher to create a deep understanding of individuals or groups and interact with them in order to interpret their actions or share their opinions about a certain subject (e.g., Berg and Lune, 2012).

For this reason, a case study method helps the researcher in this study to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses in order to collect and analyse data to address the research aims and objectives (see Chapter 1, section 1.5). The researcher conducts a case study approach to make a comparison between the data collected and to assure fair interpretation and analysis (Berg and Lune, 2012). This research study relies on using different sources, such as semi-structured interviews, direct observation, internal documentation belonging to the company (e.g., company brochures, annual reports, newspaper and magazine articles) and external information, to identify and reflect on the information (data) collected and to contribute to the elaboration of the research project and the literature (Perry, 1998; Yin 2009; Berg and Lune, 2012).



Yin (2009) indicates that a case study with an interpretative approach allows the researcher to answer the research questions and to exhibit objectivity when collecting data. A case study consists of using a single or multiple-case design to explore or produce theory (Yin 2009; Stake, 2010). This research adopts a descriptive case study to follow the conceptual framework and the research questions throughout the study during the research process (fieldwork, interviews, and direct observation) (Yin, 2003). This research employs a multiple-case study, and it is suitable to use this type of study in new research areas; this helps the researcher to explore the role of diversity management in different (four) organisations (Stake, 2010). Multiple-case studies provide a comprehensive analysis that can be used to address the research questions and the research problem, and such studies are suitable for validation purposes (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Furthermore, because this research seeks to explore the role of diversity management in four organisations, sampling requires four cases as a minimum, although a maximum of fifteen cases is favoured (Yin, 2003). It is essential to choose several cases to be able to conduct cross-case analysis and explore the role of diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2010).

The case studies of organisations help the researcher to gather information about a particular organisation (furniture company) and explore the role of diversity management among employees and employers (Stake, 2010; Berg and Lune, 2012). For this reason, the researcher will examine and explore the role of diversity management in four organisations operating in Lebanon to allow investigative insight into the life of those organisations. The research will focus on exploring diversity management and creativity in each organisation. This will help the researcher to treat social action and human activity as texts (Berg and Lune, 2012). Interviews and observational data can be transcribed into written text that can be analysed. This approach provides a means for discovering the practical understandings of meanings and actions in organised data to uncover patterns of human activity, action, and meaning (Berg and Lune, 2012). Codes are transformed into categorical labels or themes to identify the data or transcript (Berg and Lune, 2012).

For this study, the researcher could use one single case study or combine more than one case to form a multiple-case study. The researcher chose to study four design companies (Saudi Arabian or SA1, British or BR2, American or AM3, and Lebanese or LEB4) at the analysis stage (see Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1). These four companies were selected from the relevant non-governmental website (the Lebanese Directory of Businesses) since the government does not provide accurate information about the names, or addresses, or the total number of design companies in Lebanon (see Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1). The Lebanese Directory of Businesses includes three main websites:

- Directory of Exports & Industrial Firms (DEIF, 2016),
- Kompass, (2016),
- ArchiLeb, (2016).

According to the Lebanese Directory of Businesses, the Lebanese organisation (LEB4) is listed as the sixth leading (local) Lebanese design company. The three international firms with a Lebanese franchise (SA1, BR2, and AM3) are Fortune Global 500 international companies (Fortune Globe, 2016) (see Table 3.1). The reason for choosing these four companies is because of the bilateral relations between the USA, European countries, Gulf countries, and the Lebanese government, as claimed by the Ministry of Labour (2015).

Table 3.1: List of the four companies in the case study.

Name of Furniture firms	Nationality	Activity	Year of operation	Number of employees	Listed in Lebanese directories* and Fortune Globe
<b>Company 1</b>	Saudi Arabian	Manufacturers of furniture interiors, architecture and interior design	1962	20-50	Yes
<b>Company 2</b>	British	Manufacturers of furniture interiors, architecture and interior design	1976	20-50	Yes
<b>Company 3</b>	American	Manufacturers of furniture interiors, architecture and interior design	2001	100-200	Yes
<b>Company 4</b>	Lebanese	Manufacturers of furniture interiors, architecture and interior design	1988	50-100	Yes

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research (adapted from Fortune Globe, 2015; ArchiLeb, 2016; DEIF, 2016; Kompass, 2016).

The researcher had to rely on networking to access local and international firms. Through direct email and telephone contact, access became possible. Each case study is fully analysed taking into consideration the three identified research issues: culture, creativity, and diversity (Miles and Huberman, 1994), using matrices and tables to provide an overview of the case study, as well as direct quotations to supply further details (see Appendix B). However, case study research has its limitations. Therefore, it is important when evaluating case study research not to interpret it exclusively through the ‘prism of statistical methods’ (George and Bennet, 2005, p. 22). This approach allows for triangulation of perspectives, which also strengthens the findings of the research (Yin, 2009). For this research, triangulation uses multiple perspectives to examine and interpret data, such as comparing and analysing local and international firms and comparing employees’ and employers’ different opinions about creativity, culture, and diversity.

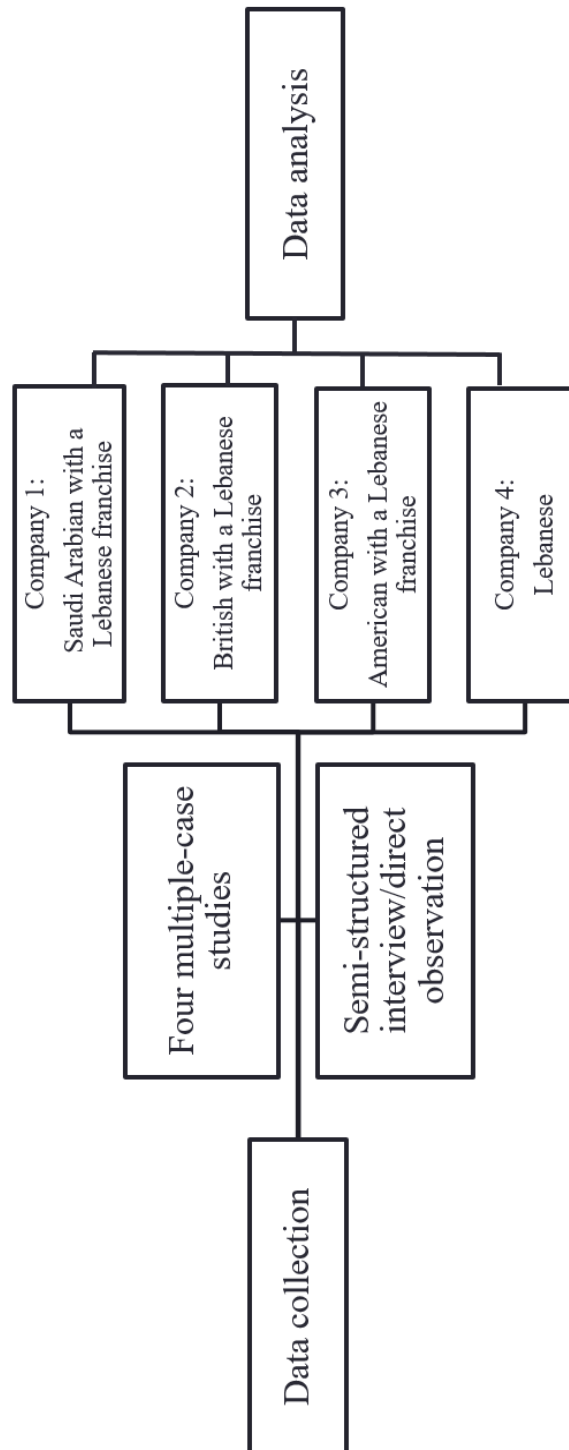


Figure 3.1: Case study method process.

### **3.3.1. Semi-structured interview**

Interviews are conducted to gain in-depth information about the participants' views and opinions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to describe each participant's attitudes in the Lebanese family design businesses. Qualitative interviewing is a form of research that aims to reveal the experiences, perspectives, and knowledge of interviewees (Silverman, 2013). Yin (2009) argues that semi-structured interviews in case studies help the researcher to ask questions before, during, and after the data are collected. This method helps the researcher to observe and listen to participants in order to deliver in-depth opinions about their experiences and interests and provide sufficient or useful information (Berg and Lune, 2012; Silverman, 2013). Berg and Lune (2012) suggest that interviews in case study research help researchers to gain direct information from participants during the data collection.

For these reasons, semi-structured interviews are often used in the process of data collection and provide the researcher with a freedom to investigate, interpret, and analyse the data once it is collected, the researcher is able to identify contradictory results, as suggested by Yin (2009). According to Silverman (2013), semi-structured interviews allow researchers to discuss and explain the meaning of the questions asked of participants. In addition, Weiss, (1994) argues that a qualitative interview is often only part of a small case study, and yet still affords an in-depth understanding of the research. Using the semi-structured interview allows respondents to make suggestions and give critical feedback regarding their responsibilities and skills (Weiss, 1994; Cooper and Schindler, 2011; Silverman, 2013).

The semi-structured interviews in this case study were constructed based on the literature review (see Appendix A, part 2). The researcher conducted the semi-structured interviews in Arabic and then transcribed them and translated them into English. The interviews were scheduled for 30 to 45 minutes with additional time allotted at the end of each interview for participants to offer concluding thoughts and ask questions. During and after the semi-structured interviews, the researcher took field notes as a supplement to recordings. The researcher often wrote these notes by hand, and the forty interviews

were translated into and typed up in English and later stored as text files, including 80,000 words of transcription. Interviews are structured according to an interview guide in order to encourage participants to give long, elaborate answers, and outline themes to be covered during the interview (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The interview guide helps the researcher to take notes by hand as data material and store them as text files (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Thorpe and Holt, 2008).

The semi-structured interviews in this case study research helped the researcher to determine the role of diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses, and they followed standard procedures regarding raising various questions (see Appendix A, part 2). The interview questions were developed by listing a number of questions (see Appendix A, parts 1 and 2) to map the research questions in Chapters 1 and 2. A series of open-ended questions based on the topic gave opportunities for the researcher to interpret data through interviewing and then by translating, transcribing, and analysing the research process. The answers to these questions became the background motivation for carrying on with fieldwork, analysis, and reporting on the major themes and sub-themes that emerged throughout the interview discussions (see Chapter 5, Appendix B).

The semi-structured interview questions were developed to reflect the research questions (see Chapters 1 and 2) and the influence of the literature review (see Chapter 2). For example, the semi-structured interview questions were listed in three main sections: (1) diversity management practices, (2) employee engagement, training, development and management, and (3) performance and creativity. The semi-structured interview questions ensured that all participants were asked the same questions to facilitate further exploration of the research subject and to enrich the data, fulfil the research aims, and reflect what was drawn from the literature review (see Appendix A, parts 1 and 2).

Topics and wording were repeated by the interviewer across all interviews with the aim of facilitating and ensuring cross-case comparability and findings (Yin, 2003). This method allowed the interviewees (employers or employees) to answer the questions and elaborate on the role of diversity management in their organisations. The qualitative semi-structured questions also allowed the researcher to adjust existing questions and themes as the interview developed and interviewees responded.

This research study draws on existing literature reviews on diversity management in Western and Eastern countries. Consequently, the qualitative semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to elaborate on specific themes and topics to explore the relationship between the three key themes of the conceptual framework: diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.1). This interview data assisted the researcher in identifying the goals and values held at family firms and explained how managers allow their craftsmen, designers, or architects freedom and how various cultural aspects may or may not affect an individual's job satisfaction and career. The disadvantages of interviews are that they are time-consuming and involve only a small number of participants, which can affect the results somewhat (Silverman, 2013). However, the researcher argues that for this study the semi-structured interviews offered useful feedback regarding the research questions, which increases the value and validity of the case study research.

### **3.3.2. Participant observation**

Participant observation helps researchers to discover and analyse aspects of the study of human experiences and interaction and communities in a particular context (Van Maanen, 1995). The role of the researcher in this study was to observe forty participants in Lebanon and to understand their ethnic and national cultures, their workgroups, and their personal circles and associations in Lebanese family design businesses (Van Maanen, 1995). The researcher took notes, made images, or recorded voices and asked semi-structured questions that were intended to reveal the meaning behind the views and behaviours of employees and employers in a particular social milieu (in the context of Lebanon).

Furthermore, participant observation helped the researcher to understand how people perceive creativity and culture in a particular society (Boyle, 1994). As Van Maanen (1995) argues that participant observation can increase individual concerns and opportunities by establishing how to learn, understand, and listen respectfully. This research took place in Beirut, the capital city of Lebanon. As participant observation



involves considering the social and cultural factors associated with each individual in a specific city (Boyle, 1994), the primary goal was to observe individuals/groups within the Lebanese family design businesses and the Lebanese community.

This method included direct observations, in depth-interviews, and written communications to conduct formal research. Direct observation and face-to-face interviews are the key data collection methods used in this study. Participant observation can help to connect verbal and actual behaviours in order to gain a deeper understanding of the exact meaning of an event (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002). For instance, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) point out that participant observation can assist the researcher not only to gather data from the text (transcript) or conversation, but also to observe the participants' behaviours, expressions, and other non-verbal suggestions in the same settings as the interviews were conducted. For this reason, the participant observation was performed by taking notes, recording sounds, making images, and interrogating the actions or views of the participants to interpret the meaning of creativity or diversity within the Lebanese family design businesses (Boyle, 1994; Van Maanen, 1995).

As mentioned earlier, it is essential to understand how people live, what they say about themselves and what they value, and successfully explore the key issues related to religion or diversity, which are noted as being part of the research subject (Madden, 2010). The interaction between the researcher and the participants is also considered. For example, Madden (2010) argues that the importance of being sensitive to the perspectives of others is necessary if one is to understand and respect each answer as valid, correct, and true for both the participant and researcher and the culture in which the study is being conducted (Madden, 2010). For this reason, this research focuses on how participants share different cultures and interact with small groups (forty participants) in the Lebanese family design businesses. Furthermore, the analysis of the data obtained focuses on the diversity of employees and employers in order to see how they value their assumptions, experiences, and skills in the workplace.

Therefore, participant observation is necessary to describe the cultural context of a group (e.g., differences between ethnic, racial or cultural minorities; religious minorities) (Boyle, 1994). One of the aims of this study is to identify the problems faced by Lebanese employees, concerning groups of people sharing a common identity, and identify a business management style within the Lebanese community. Thus, this research study was conducted to examine and understand different attitudes, behaviours, and experiences (e.g., in meetings, workshops, and other activities) across a specific community. The aim of participant observation research is to generate new narrative descriptions that help to report a fact or tell a story and explain the behaviour, perspectives, feelings, and experiences of members in a single study (Hammersley, 1990). The process of conducting this type of fieldwork involved gaining entry into the four organisations and selecting participants in order to facilitate the development of the formal interviews or conversations and clarify the effects of diversity management and creativity on Lebanese family design businesses (see Table 3.2).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), participant observation helps the researcher to clarify his or her findings through selecting participants, conducting formal interviews, and informal conversations, and keeping organised, structured field notes to facilitate the development of a narrative description that explains various cultural aspects to the reader. In this research study, participant observation involved the researcher's involvement in a variety of activities over an extended period of time that enabled her to observe the participants in their daily lives and to participate in their activities to facilitate a better understanding of their behaviours and activities. The participant observation method captured the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. The information gained from observing the participants was compared to the research questions and literature review to formulate the themes, and conceptual framework and to establish the facts arising from or the conclusions of the research findings. This approach enabled the researcher to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance illustrated in the Lebanese family design businesses.

This research study took place on four different research sites over a period of three months (see Table 3.2). The fieldwork consists of 40 semi-structured interviews, asking participants how to create a piece of furniture completed within three to four days a week, and including a total of 35 hours of participant observation within four different research sites (Field site 1: SA1, Field site 2: BR2, Field site 3: AM3, Field site 4: LEB4) (see Table 3.2). During the observation, images were taken of employees working on a piece of furniture as well as communicating with each other to spend time both building rapport and observing participants for three to four days in four different research sites (see Table 3.2). Taking photographs helped the researcher to analyse images and record each picture as evidence of human communication in order to address the research questions and analyse the data in the Lebanese family design businesses. The participant observation provided rich information about the relationship between employees and employers and their creative activities in the Lebanese family design businesses. The researcher took full notes and photos so that she could interpret and encompass both the notes and the photos and analyse them within a societal context (Rose, 2007; Kolb, 2008). Field notes were recorded as carefully as possible by writing an account of the observations at the end of each day. The field notes focused on the structural and organisational features that influenced employees' creative performance in the Lebanese family design businesses and pictures taken during observations were analysed to understand the meaning of creativity through the participants' point of views; the aim was to find an answer to the research questions and the research aims.

Furthermore, the researcher encouraged respondents to speak freely about the photos that were taken of them. For example, participants were asked to describe their photos and why they took each one to help in the storytelling, which was of an episodic nature, to build shared knowledge about the research questions and the situation being shown in the images during the interview/observation process (Rose, 2007). This process enabled the researcher to observe participants and take photos of them but also to let them describe their activities in their own words in a non-scientific language, and the researcher encouraged them to speak about their personal or creativity value. This approach established dialogue and trust between the participants and the researcher by expressing

the participants' ideas, feelings, and concerns about the Lebanese family design businesses (Kolb, 2008).

Therefore, participant observation helped the researcher to provide an accurate representation of creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses. Participant observation is a strength of fieldwork and is used to explore the role of creativity in the Lebanese context (Hammersley, 1990; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Madden, 2010). This method, therefore, helped the researcher to facilitate the development of a narrative that enabled her to observe participants in their organisations and to explain the various cultural aspects to the reader. It also helped the researcher to facilitate a better understanding of the role of diversity and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses in order to define the research problem, identify the literature review, and increase the validity and reliability of this research study (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Table 3.2: Fieldwork from four different research sites.

Research site	Activity/method	Duration
<b>Field site 1: SA1</b>	Participant observation, 11 images, 1 workshop, three project meetings.	Four days a week and about one to two hours (two visits).
<b>Field site 2: BR2</b>	Participant observation, 11 images, 1 workshop, two project meetings.	Four days a week and about two hours (one visit).
<b>Field site 3: AM3</b>	Participant observation, 12 images, 1 workshop, four meetings.	Three days a week and about one hour (one visit).
<b>Field site 4: LEB4</b>	Participant observation, 13 images, 1 workshop, two project meetings.	Four days a week and about one to two hours (two visits).

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.

### 3.3.3. Research sample

Lebanon is therefore selected for the research study in order to understand the differences between Western and Eastern societies. This study is the first step towards a better understanding of the research topic and highlights the importance of implementing diversity management practices in the Lebanese family design businesses. For instance, the research examines the differences between local and international firms. These differences can vary widely from country to country, an aspect that may be worthy of consideration in future research (Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016). In addition, this study explores the impact of diversity of employees on creativity in the design companies (e.g., furniture companies), operating in Lebanon. The study describes the details of interviewees such as gender, religion, education, age, and work experience (if mentioned), which can vary from one group to another.

The number of sample interviews were based on two main factors: the aims of the research and the number of participants or organisations willing to contribute to the project. To acquire a sufficient number of participants and companies, a self-administrated online sampling tool such as a personal email was sent to the design companies operating in Lebanon (see Appendix A). Several emails were sent to companies, and this helped the researcher to collect information from participants in a timely manner (see Appendix A). For this research study, a sample of four companies was analysed at the final stage of the project (see Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1). The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with one partner of each business and nine employees (e.g., craftsmen, interior designers, architects, and HR managers) (see Table 3.3). The sample size of forty participants helped the researcher to build and maintain a close relationship with participants in order to answer the research questions and objectives.

At the literature review stage, data was gathered from academic journals, textbooks, and the internet. At the end of this stage, the data collected revealed the importance of increasing creativity and diversity in the workplace. The research design focused on addressing the research aims and answering the research questions. In order to collect and

test the data, the research questions were developed to investigate the main factors raised by the research study. The qualitative research methods are now an important part of organisational research (Creswell, 2003). This research provides an in depth analysis of qualitative research which includes interviewing, participant observation, use of secondary sources, and narrative analysis in order to reveal whether or not Lebanese employees are affected by cultural diversity management influences. In doing this, the researcher has justified the choice of conducting interviews, which was to collect qualitative data about Lebanese employees, owners, or managers in Lebanese family design businesses in order to reveal whether or not (Lebanese) employees are affected by cultural diversity management influences, as suggested by Creswell (2003).

### **3.3.4. Data analysis**

The data was analysed by reading and reviewing notes from the transcripts prepared of the interviews and comparing them with the literature review to ensure the credibility, reliability and validity of the results. Qualitative data often focuses on smaller numbers of people than quantitative data, yet the data tend to be detailed and rich through interpretation and analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2003, 2009). As an example, the researcher presented and analysed forty individuals' interviews in the form of notes, quotes, transcripts or audio recordings. The data collection was summarised by using a descriptive label for each category and has been presented in matrices or tables (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2003).

This qualitative research examined and analysed four case studies in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the cross-case study (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2008). Thus, the qualitative data analysis focuses on the responses of employees and employers to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses. The researcher selected, reviewed, and reflected on individuals' interviews to carefully gather data and reduce the problems of data selection, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). The qualitative data analysis is an important element of data reduction and selection as the researcher drew on various data (e.g., interviews, observation) to provide

a full answer to the research questions, which are exploratory (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Thus, the data analysis is completely interpretive and subjective, which is an important feature of qualitative data analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The researcher further presented and interpreted data to reflect the purpose of the research, develop codes, and identify themes in case- analysis and cross-analysis as presented in Chapter 4 in order to empirically evaluate, analyse, and understand the research project (see Appendix B; Chapters 4 and 5). The researcher used descriptive codes and categories to describe, explain, and understand the views of the participants in and across the four organisations selected (see Appendix B; Chapters 4 and 5). The interview texts were translated line by line, transcribed according to interviewees' core words and phrases, and coded manually to identify the major themes and sub-themes that emerged and to evaluate the empirical data in relation to the research questions, the literature review, and the conceptual framework (Yin, 2003, 2009). In creating codes and themes, the researcher examined each case to redefine and reformulate the conceptual framework (see Chapter 6, Figure 6.1, section 6.3) in order to generate the research findings and explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 6).

### **3.4. Validity and Reliability**

The research design aims to combine observations with the interview method to determine how members of a diverse team interact and communicate with one another during the design process. In this research study, forty participants were purposively sampled as a good round number for the semi-structured interviews, and this was complemented with participant observations. Perry (2008) confirms that the number of participants falls within the recommended range of twenty to fifty. Perry (1998) indicates that this number of participants represents an acceptable number for a research study and offers useful insights into the research objectives. A case study approach was employed to ensure the research questions were fully relevant and that valid resources were being used in the literature (Svengren, 1993). The researcher presents the theoretical relationships (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2009) and the plausibility of the explanation in Chapters 4 and 5 using the causal cross-case analysis method, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). This case study approach seeks to understand how Lebanese family design businesses could implement diversity management practices in order to increase performance and to explore the impact of diversity of employees on creativity (Cox and Blake, 1991).

The researcher presents a sample of four case studies within the Lebanese context. The researcher also defines the three key concepts: cultural diversity, diversity management, and creative performance) before data collection and explains the relationship between diversity management, cultural diversity, and creative performance as they emerge from the empirical findings within the four case studies. In this research, the validity of findings was achieved by using the triangulation technique within a case and across cases, which benefited from the presence of secondary data (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2009), the conceptual framework, and the research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The importance of triangulating multiple sources is essential to strengthen the construct validity of the research and to provide evidence of the role of diversity management in Lebanon (Yin, 2003, 2009).



However, in quantitative research, validity is defined as the extent to which a concept is measured by statistical and numerical data when compared against the empirical findings, which means that the researcher as a social actor in the process of testing the hypothesis reduces the validity of the results. The implementation of this research finding involves establishing credibility from the perspective of participants to describe and understand the phenomenon of interest from the participants' point of views and sustain trustworthiness of the results. Therefore, the researcher's position requires authenticity and confidentiality when presenting problems to achieve the validity of findings across the study sample. This research study explores the relationship between diversity management, cultural diversity, and creative performance. This relationship was examined against the empirical findings to evaluate whether or not it explains the role of diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses.

In this research study, two different ways were used to explain the validity and reliability of this qualitative research. The first way was conducting face-to-face interviews, observing forty participants, collecting data within the four case studies, and preparing the within-case analysis for the empirical findings. The researcher translated and transcribed forty interviews with diverse individuals such as employees, managers and employers in order to ensure the validity and reliability of this qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Thorpe and Holt, 2008). The problem of adequate validity or reliability requires some major issues to be dealt with, such as identifying the viewpoints of the researcher and the participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Thorpe and Holt, 2008). The concept of validity in this qualitative research is applied to explore and understand the research questions (see Chapter 1, section 1.3) and reflect the perceptions and opinions of interviewed employees and employers within the four case studies (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The researcher develops the research questions and presents a primarily conceptual framework in Chapter 2 before collecting and analysing the data (see Chapter 2, sections 2.5 and 2.6). The researcher conducted the within-case analysis and cross-case analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 to explore and verify the role of diversity management and creativity in

Lebanese family design businesses. The researcher also provides a revised conceptual framework in Chapter 6 (see section 6.3, Figure 6.1) in order to explain the role of diversity management, and facilitate the development of the research questions as they emerge from the empirical findings within the four case studies. According to Maxwell (2005), measuring the validity of the findings in qualitative research is different from the approach used in quantitative research results. In quantitative research, validity is the objective truthfulness of the research problem when compared against the empirical findings. However, the validity results in this qualitative research fit with the research proposal and the correct way in which the fieldwork was carried out where the researcher used a case study design to achieve validity of the findings of the qualitative research. In this research, the researcher followed and marked the course of the divergence of findings from the research questions, the research problem, and the literature review (Yin, 2009), combining multiple sources by using the triangulation technique within each case and across cases and benefiting from secondary data (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2009), the conceptual framework and the research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

According to Yin (2009), the case study design emphasises the importance of triangulation. The researcher conducted triangulation such as analysing the four case studies, to strengthen the link between primary and secondary data. The same method was applied in the within-case and multiple-case study levels. Yin (2009; 2011) states that this approach allows the researcher to assess and explain the conceptual framework (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.2) and the literature review (see Chapter 2) and presents the data analysis methods of the study (see Chapters 4 and 5). Therefore, this qualitative research adopts an interpretive and exploratory approach pertaining to a subjective approach (Yin, 2009; 2011). Yin (2009) argues that subjectivity does not necessarily require testing the predetermined hypothesis and is mainly concerned with generating theories, which will guide researchers to answer their research questions and achieve their research objectives (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thus, establishing the validity of the empirical findings is essential in order to help the researcher to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives. The researcher aims to contribute to knowledge and adopts an interpretive paradigm to explore the relationship between diversity management

perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses. This is important to answer the research questions, achieve the research objectives, and produce reliable and relevant information that underpins subjectivity within the four cases selected and the data analysis.

#### **3.4.1. Reliability of the case study**

The reliability of the four case studies is achieved through following formal procedures that were conducted in all four of these cases (Yin, 2009). Figure 3.2 illustrates the procedures followed by the researcher. The multiple-case study design in figure 3.2 was conducted in three main stages. The first stage includes the definition of the research questions and the conceptual framework. The second stage includes the fieldwork, the collection of data within the four case studies, and the preparation of the analysis for the empirical findings. This level of analysis is descriptive and reflects the perceptions and opinions of participants. In the third stage, the researcher conducted the cross-case analysis and explored the role of diversity management and creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. At this stage, the analysis aimed to define the research objectives using the cross-case analysis method, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Thus, the multiple-case studies design aims to analyse the conceptual framework and increase the reliability of the research study, as depicted in figure 3.2. According to Yin (2011), cross-case analysis increases reliability and validity in qualitative research. The cross-analysis helps the researcher to present and analyse the beliefs and views of the participants by exhibiting objectivity and providing a contemporary real-life phenomenon when collecting data and cross-analysis is adopted in this research study.

Figure 3.2: Case study method procedures (adapted from Yin, 2009, p. 57).

In this research study, the four case studies were conducted through using semi-structured interviews and participant observations as discussed earlier. The sample was selected by using different coding based on aspects of the three themes of the research study (social – cultural diversity, diversity management practices, and creative performance) (see Appendix B). For example, religion, level of communication, activities, workplace environment, training and development, rewards for employees, skills, talents, family power, legal responsibilities, policies, and practices were predetermined and explained the relationship between employers, employees' engagement, and the goals of the business.

Feedback from employees and employers were collected about their experiences within Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapters 4 and 5). The sample allowed the formal procedure used in conducting multiple-case studies (Yin, 2009) and gives a rationale and justification for exploring the relationship between diversity management and creativity in Lebanese family design businesses (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). The qualitative study adopted a multiple-case study approach to gain an appropriate sample of cases and establish a cognitive clarification of these themes to ensure accurate cross-case analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). It is essential to define the codes, develop each category, and then re-build the conceptual framework, in addition to defining the limitations to generalising the research findings. In this case study research, the setting was a sample of four case studies from the Lebanese context. During the research process, themes emerged from the coded data categories and subcategories that were identified through reading the transcript and identifying each code in relation to the four companies. This case study research explored a theoretical explanation of the role of cultural diversity in Lebanese family design businesses. This process was conducted in the following steps:

Step 1: Reading and reviewing the data before defining codes in two stages: first, the list of codes noted in Chapter 5 was highlighted (major themes: social– cultural diversity, diversity management practices, and creative performance). The codes were defined inductively from the field as they emerged from the empirical findings. For example, repetitive codes such as religion, gender, family power, value, behaviour, identity,

tradition, authority, and obedience were generally applied and predetermined by the participants. Second, identifying these repetitive codes helped the researcher to define the main codes and verify the relevant features in the literature review, the research questions, and the conceptual framework prior to data collection and further analysis of qualitative data. As explained earlier, this case study research focused on different aspects of the themes and codes such as inequality, religion, trust, diversity, and creativity, which were already predetermined by the participants (see Appendix B; Chapter 5). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest using different coding methods for generating categories or themes. This will allow the researcher to accept and identify codes as they emerge from the field and employ them to build ideas about the lack of diversity management and creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. The objective of analysing qualitative data in the research study is to determine the categories and the relationships between employees and employers in Lebanese family design businesses.

The coding process plays an important role during the data analysis in organising, evaluating, and making a list of major themes and sub-themes to identify the research topic, the research aims, the conceptual framework, and the research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2003). The coding process involves symbolically assigning to a word or short phrases summative, salient, essence-capturing, and evocative attribute and also applying such an attribute to portion of language-based or visual data (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2003; Sipe and Ghiso 2004). In this research study, the data were coded manually and descriptively during the coding process from a single word to full texts or images to generate major themes and sub-themes (see Chapter 5, sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4). Coding involves labelling and linking the idea described by participants to represent and capture one-word which summarises the analysis and interpretation of each interview and the field notes (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2003). Sipe and Ghiso (2004, pp. 482-483) note that ‘all coding is a judgment call; since we bring our subjectivities, our personalities, our predispositions, [and] our quirks’ to the process. In this research study, the data collected during the coding process consisted of listening to the interview tapes, translating and transcribing forty interviews into English, writing field notes, and labelling photographs to provide a transitional link

between the raw data and the codes (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The data is presented to describe the thematic relationship identified during the analysis and interpretation process (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2003). The thematic relationship contributes towards the development of an appropriate instrument that is used in the qualitative phase of this research study (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This coding process helped the researcher to define the open coding stage within each case, link themes, select quotations, and explain the statements about the theoretical relationships drawn in this research study (see Appendix B; Chapters 4 and 5).

Step 2: Defining the importance of triangulation: Yin (2009) emphasises the importance of triangulating multiple sources of evidence to strengthen the construct validity of the research study and to answer the research questions in Chapters 1 and 2. The researcher includes triangulation of primary data that relates to information gathered from interviews conducted with employers, employees, and managers. The triangulation provided the researcher with a general framework of the type that is often used to compare primary and secondary data (e.g., participant observation and interviews) in the descriptive/interpretive qualitative research. It further allowed the researcher to build a richer and more balanced picture of the phenomenon and served as a cross-validation method within the single and multiple-case study levels. This approach allowed for a better assessment of explanations presented for the research study (Yin, 2009).

Step 3: Matching codes and examining the outcome of the data analysis method (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The researcher aimed to carefully examine available knowledge and explain the phenomena that appeared across the study sample. The codes were matched to other cases with the same outcome and were examined to determine whether a pattern found in one case is replicated in the other cases as well. The final cross-case analysis examined and defined the various elements in a cohesive interpretation. This approach allowed the researcher to evaluate and empirically explain the role of diversity management and creativity within the defined setting of the four case studies. As in qualitative research, it is important to organise categories to identify relevant features of the research participants and their life circumstances (see Table 3.3). The interview process was conducted in Lebanon between June 2016 and September 2016 with forty

participants responsible for answering the qualitative questions (see Appendix A). The interviews were conducted with a wide range of respondents, such as craftsmen, interior designers, and architects; each group is represented in table 3.3 below:

Table 3.3: Respondents interviewed during the final data-collection session.

Organisation	Type of respondent	Gender	Age	Religion	Academic qualification	Number of responses
<b>Company 1</b>	Owner	Male	48-55	Muslim	Secondary school+ Master's degree	2
	Craftsman	Male	38-46	Muslim	Diploma	3
	Interior designer	Male	31-32	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	2
	Architect	Female	38-45	Muslim	Master's degree	3
<b>Company 2</b>	Owner	Male	58	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	2
	Craftsman	Male	45	Muslim	No degree	2
	Interior designer	Female	34	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	2
	Architect	Male	29-35	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	3
		Female	28	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	1
<b>Company 3</b>	Owner	Male	34	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	1
	Craftsman	Male	46	Muslim	No degree	1
	Interior designer	Male	36-42	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	2
		Female	36	Christian	Bachelor's degree	1
	Architect	Male	41-43	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	2
		Female	28-37	Christian	Bachelor's degree	3
<b>Company 4</b>	Owner	Male	44-58	Muslim	Secondary school	2
	Craftsman	Male	34-50	Muslim	No degree	2
	Interior designer	Female	36-45	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	2
	Architect	Male	37-43	Muslim	Bachelor's degree	3
		Female	37	Christian	Bachelor's degree	1
<b>Total responses from interviews</b>						40

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.



### 3.5. Translation Challenges

This research study aimed to present a range of decisions while translating words from Arabic to English. The researcher focused on establishing and using the same words and sentences to introduce the general background of the research topic. In addition, it was essential to choose the right words and expressions carefully when translating the interview responses into English.

The researcher translated each word from Arabic to English by changing its core meaning into English. The researcher first defined the word recognition and then explained the most influential accounts of how readers recognise a word. The selection of words influenced the translation during the translation phase. The researcher identified which words were neutral and objective during the translation and interpretation phase. The researcher identified the exact meaning of each word, which involved the use of the Arabic language when asking the interview questions to check the validity of the analysis and engage with the views of the participants during the research process. Twine (2000, p. 16) suggests that the researcher offers an epistemological and ontological point in discussing and translating each word without racial matching of interviews:

We see, then, that the utility of racial matching is contingent on the subordinate person having acquired a particular subjectivity ... In my experience ... they [US scholars] presume that different ideological positions are attached to one's location in racial hierarchies. It should be evident, however, when racial subalterns do not possess a developed critique of racism or idealize the racially privileged group, race matching may not be an efficacious methodological strategy.

In this research study, the translation was identified through epistemological implications as the researcher engaged in critical reflexivity regarding the views of the participants to explore the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses. The idea of reflexivity provides opportunities to the researcher to explain and understand the similarities and differences between participants (e.g., age, gender, generation, culture, education, national origins, religious belief, family members or non-family members) with the aim of facilitating critical attention at all stages of the research process. The

researcher translated each word in the interview in different ways to extend the beliefs and views of the participants. The term “family power” demonstrates the rich, complex, sometimes random, unpredictable relationship between the different aspects of a person's experience within ‘the complexity of social relations’ (Burham, 2012, p. 143). There are other meanings of the same power, which can be raised in each use of these words in a given context. For example, family power relates to the authority and strength of the owner because these words refer to the authority and strength in Arabic and so they cannot be translated without regard to the Arabic context in which they occur. To explain this definition, the interviewed participants define the word “family power” in the following ways:

1. Force, the strength of the owner.
2. Influence, authority.
3. Effect, impact, rule.

When considering these examples of a definition, the researcher identified the core meaning in the Arabic context to understand, re-assess, and produce an original translation during the data analysis. In this research study, translation aims to bridge the gap between the social and cultural aspects of the Arabic language. In addition, translation helped the researcher to overcome linguistic barriers between the participants and the readers to understand the meanings of diversity and creativity, which were expressed by the participants. The translation is essential to determine the meaning and definition of diversity and creativity in the Arabic (Lebanese) context. The translation strategy helped the researcher to present and explain the meaning of each word in the English language, which is acceptable and comprehensible to English readers (Kushner, 2003).

To overcome the problem of translation, the researcher provided a clear translation by translating and analysing each word in a sentence. The researcher found the equivalent word or phrases in English, and these words and phrases are used to create an original piece of text during the data analysis. The quality of a translation follows the personality of the participants and the researcher’s experience in translation. The original work is

carefully completed, transcribed, and translated into English to understand the views of the participants and incorporate their religious identity. In this qualitative research, the translation between languages involves interpretation, which is essential to transferring and understanding the meaning of each word. The researcher presented the meaning of each word in order to interpret the views of the participants who speak languages other than English. To facilitate reading the interview transcripts, the researcher used her local (Arabic) language, translated and modified words, and used simple and familiar words to translate from Arabic to English. The translation involved discussing and presenting rich descriptions of the findings as the data was gathered in the researcher's native language. The translation helped the researcher to transfer the role of diversity management from the Lebanese (Arabic) context to the English context during the coding and data analysis phases.

Thus, the researcher checked, analysed, and verified each word throughout the translation process in order to provide a specific view on the research topic and subject (Kuchner, 2003). Translation is considered an important part of qualitative research so that the findings can be fully presented and the validity and reliability of the research process can be enhanced (Kushner, 2003). This research study focused on the interpretation and representation of the codes and themes, which is central to expressing the meaning or difference (from the Arabic) of each word in English and to improving the validity of any findings in qualitative research, as suggested by Kushner (2003). For this reason, the translation done during the coding phase presented an accurate understanding of the role of diversity management, and it is presented to the readers so that they can consider it and decide on the main or most likely meaning expressed by the interviewed participants. Therefore, the translation is important to explain, reflect, and express the views of the participants within and across the four case studies in the Lebanese context. The translation aimed to contribute to the validity of the research, which includes the trustworthiness, subjectivity, and reflexivity of this qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002; Kushner, 2003; Burham 2012).

### **3.6. Research Ethics**

This research study examines the relationship between employees, employers, and managers, and it is important to consider how people's ethical values and principles suit their aims and goals. Ethical norms are essential and can help participants to express their actions, feelings, and thoughts, the researcher can consider these when assessing the problems and issues faced by Lebanese designers in an organisation and when deciding how a diverse group acts in a particular society (Resnik, 2011). Moreover, this research topic examines the cultural diversity within Lebanese society, requiring the researcher to focus on ethical values and norms in business, as well as those that are relevant to creative activities, to understand why it is important to adhere to ethical norms (Resnik, 2011). Considering ethical norms helps the researcher to analyse the aims of the research, which include promoting truth and avoiding errors when collecting data (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Furthermore, this research study often involves interacting with different people in shared cultures. The role of the researcher is to make the respondent feel more at ease, and therefore more willing to share their views, feelings, and opinions during the interview. During the interview process, respondents signed a consent letter to protect his/her data to ensure anonymity of the respondents, and it has therefore been necessary to erase or change all names in transcripts (see Appendix A; Chapters 4 and 5). The qualitative data (interviews, photos) are therefore documented and stored to strengthen the researcher's loyalty towards respondents (see Appendix A). It is essential to understand participants' points of view and to collaborate with them to promote ethical standards and values, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness (Resnik, 2011).

Moreover, ethical norms assist researchers in gaining public support (e.g., government support) in order to obtain data as a secondary source of information. The researcher considered contacting people working in the public sector (e.g., Ministry of Labour) to determine the names or number of local and international furniture firms operating in Beirut. In addition, the researcher collected data from four non-government websites

(e.g., ArchiLeb, 2016; DEIF, 2016; Kompass, 2016; PSD, 2017) and has presented the number and size of the four case study companies in a table (see Chapter 3, Table 3.1).

The ethical norms of this research study have been approved by the University of Southampton (Ethics and Research Governance Online, (ERGO) forms were submitted and approved by supervisors and Ethics Committee, ID number 19535). It is important to consider ethical norms when conducting research and to abide by regulations and guidelines related to law, institutional and governmental policies. Therefore, the researcher has deleted or sometimes changed information (e.g., names, cropping a face in photographs) that pointed directly to an individual in order to respect the anonymity of the respondents and keep communication confidential between the researcher and the respondents. Ethical norms are therefore necessary to respect social values and avoid causing harm, damage, or discrimination to participants (Resnik, 2011; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

### **3.7. Summary**

This chapter presented the methods of data analysis that are used across the four cases in the Lebanese context. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted the use of qualitative research and the multiple-case study research, which is explanatory (Yin, 2009). The chapter then discussed qualitative research methods that analyse the codes as they emerged from the empirical findings. The chapter also discussed the validity and reliability, translation challenges, and research ethics in this research study. Finally, the chapter explained the within-case analysis and cross-case analysis that will result in producing the final findings and conclusions of this thesis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The following chapter discusses and presents the analysis of the within-case studies, as suggested by Yin (2003, 2009).

## **4.0. CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF WITHIN-CASE STUDIES**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the analysis of the within-case studies data in relation to the literature review (Chapter 2), the research questions (Chapters 1 and 2), and the research problem (Chapter 1). The chapter presents the within-case study and discusses the data collection stages of this research, including the conducting interviews in each organisation (see Sections 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5). The chapter compares the similarities and differences between the four companies operating in Lebanon (SA1, BR2, AM3, and LEB4). Finally, the chapter describes the processes or patterns that are revealed in the four case studies that can lead to produce and generalise the findings of the research project in Chapter 6.

### **4.2. Overview of company 1**

Company 1 or SA1 is a Saudi Arabian furniture design company with a Lebanese franchise. Company 1 holds an independent partnership agreement between Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. It was founded in 1962 and comprises five partners, a design team; the total number of the entire team at the company is twenty-five. Furthermore, company 1 is also specialised in the design and production of customised fine furniture and high end bespoke architectural woodwork. Company 1 has expanded its operation locally and regionally catering for projects in the whole of the Gulf Region with an emphasis on the Saudi Arabia and Africa markets.

The empirical evidence shows that company 1 operates by distributing power and authority among individuals through the organisations. Most of the participants revealed that company 1 distributes authority among non-family members. For instance, most of the craftsmen noted that the authority of the owner means that they privilege family members by allowing them to engage more in groups. The major strategy adopted by company 1 is to lower the positions of non-family members but work with family members to increase their roles and responsibilities in the workplace. For example, one of the HR manager and partner confirmed that employees cannot cope with diversity.

Moreover, a small number of participants revealed that they cannot cope with diversity because they have not understood the perception of diversity and equality activities. For instance, some craftsmen noted that diversity is not included in human resources policies and procedures, particularly in the areas of recruitment, compensation, and promotion.

Furthermore, most of the participants revealed that the general managers within the organisation carefully recruit employees by selecting family members and friends who share the same culture or tradition, or have the same attitude or personality. In company 1, most of the craftsmen emphasised the lack of diversity among employees. One craftsman also noted that HR managers cannot establish communications among employees, which steadily promotes conflicts and increases tensions between employees (non-family members) and employers. He also mentioned that general managers did not focus on formal structures and systems. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

You cannot control employees at the workplace, the company focuses on the participation of family members, and their own culture (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 1).

Discrimination was the most frequently encountered barriers to accepting workplace diversity. For example, some of the HR managers noted that the owner does not give individuals an opportunity to understand diversity and to change some management practices to embed diversity into the company's core business and values. The HR manager in company 1 revealed that the company identifies the key sources for recruitment according to the owner's goals. Furthermore, most of the participants (e.g., HR managers, craftsmen, interior designers, and architects) confirmed that the recruitment process is not clear and family members take part in every activity or idea. For instance, the HR manager explained that company 1 is an independent franchise. Most of the participants noted that the company 1 focuses on recruiting and selecting employees in the office. An applicant has to go through three or four interviews with three or four different managers. The process is time-consuming, and it takes about three to six months to select the correctly qualified employees. The owner is independent so resolves conflicts between employees according to his own principles or Lebanese law.

The empirical evidence shows that company 1 tries to ensure franchising transparency when the partners want to exercise their right to choose the legislation of a different state, such as carrying out its commercial and administrative activities in Lebanon, which is different from Saudi Arabian market. Furthermore, most of the participants also revealed that the owner can protect his legal right by choosing employees and terminating the contract regarding his business interests that involve both Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. For example, some participants (particularly HR managers) confirmed that the company 1 is independent and can continue a business relationship without having to adhere to an international agreement or to engage in rewarding a family member. One HR manager further considered that the owner gives opportunities to family members to earn some bonuses. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

We only negotiate hire or provision of employees with the owner. The company only adapts bonuses and salary scales for family members. Additionally, some employees cannot apply for rewards because the owner does not attract the competent employees nowadays (HR manager, male, 55 years old, company 1).

The empirical evidence also shows that the owner's responsibility is to coordinate with any franchise headquarters in Lebanon and each member of the design team depends on the director (the owner) and his delegation of authority to decide the final design process. Company 1 has a local group that serves the Lebanese and Saudi Arabian markets. The company's regional strategies are different. However, company 1 tries to balance global equity and focus on each market to meet the targeted clients. For example, figure 4.1 shows that the partner makes choices of each detail to support a commercial strategy and to broadcast a particular set of business values. Moreover, most of the participants noted that non-family members (including women) could not express their opinions, share ideas, or use resources for equipment and training, particularly those with a lower level of education. Furthermore, some female participants pointed out that the owner does not encourage them to use hand tools or to work with material, which are considered men's work in Lebanese culture. Most of the non-family members also pointed out the owner is responsible for supervising the designs (the product) and ensuring that a project is successfully completed within the family environment (see Figure 4.1).



Furthermore, some architects and craftsmen noted that they could not communicate effectively or share new ideas with family members. Moreover, most of the architects and craftsmen revealed that the owner and family members do not seek feedback from non-family members by listening to them and sharing different ideas to discuss their opinions and avoid conflicts among employees. At the same time, some participants (craftsmen, architects) revealed that they always share ideas in the owner's office and this is difficult because the workspace there is very small. Additionally, one of the partners stated that he is responsible for making choices about wood or a design before employees do their job, and individuals may rarely work in the same place or express shared values, which are activities that would hold people together in teams and groups. The partner also noted that the office environments cannot support corporate objectives, business cultures, or a business direction. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

Our clients must know the brand and our design team associate it with a product or service in order that our target clients obtain the desired response from our design team. This reaction towards the brand and the clients is built through trust and loyalty (2<sup>nd</sup> Partner, Architect, male, 48 years old, company 1).



Figure 4.1: The owner makes the decision and discloses the colour, size, style, and the type of wood of a piece of furniture during a meeting with designers, architects, and craftsmen in his office.

Figure 4.1 reflects on the power of the owner while deciding on a piece of furniture with his employees. Most of the participants mentioned that they struggle to work because the space they work in is not adequate, and it is difficult to ensure direct access to and connections with peers and partner workers. For example, most of the craftsmen noted that they cannot work outside the boundaries of the formal workplace. Some craftsmen further mentioned that they feel isolated because they cannot communicate well with other colleagues or engage in multi-tasking or work in workspaces that may allow them to communicate directly with individuals in shared spaces. Instead, they feel isolated. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

I hope that the company will change its business environment so that every person shares the same space, makes their ideas and share ideas within a group (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 40 years old, company 1).

The empirical evidence shows that company 1 lacks creativity and has resource constraints. For example, figure 4.1 illustrates the role of the owner in the company. This figure also presents the power of owner when he decides the colour, the style, and the material to be used to make a piece of furniture without sharing opinions with others (see Figure 4.1). The empirical evidence shows that creativity is limited, resulting in a lack of resources and growth prospects among employees and employers. Most of the participants confirmed that the owner always controls their views and ideas, which affects their skills, motivation, and performance in the organisation. For example, craftsmen noted that they cannot exchange new ideas with family members. Some of these points are illustrated in the quote below:

I still work with traditional tools. It is very difficult to share idea with the owner because he prefers to work with family members. I cannot create and share any ideas among my colleagues (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 40 years old, company 1).

This complicated relationship is coupled with cultural sensitivity and inequality among employees in relation to building trust, sharing resources, and moving to higher positions. Additionally, most of the participants believed that the owner is involved in choosing the wood colours, the design style, and the materials and relies on family members when making these decisions. All this increases uncertainty and complicates the performance evaluation of the employees and employers in company 1 (see Figure 4.1).



Figure 4.2: An example of creative activities: a craftsman in a small group used traditional tools and produced a piece of furniture. The owner does not let some participants use technology despite their personal experience.

The empirical evidence shows that traditional tools can limit employees, as they cannot express their ideas and this could inhibit creative processes, making knowledge sharing and knowledge creation difficult across the organisation. For example, figure 4.2 illustrates the traditional tools used by craftsmen. The figure illustrates the lack of resources in company 1 (see Figure 4.2). Most of the participants revealed that they work with traditional tools and cannot register their ideas as intellectual property or by registering a trademark due to the level of uncertainty in the labour processes in company 1. For example, most of the craftsmen pointed out that company 1 does not update its materials and tools, which is an important feature of improving creativity and reducing creative problems in organisations. Figure 4.2 illustrates Islamic patterns, particularly the floral forms, which are depicted in mosques to refer to the nature and characteristics of Islam (see Figures 4.2 and 4.3). Most of the participants pointed out that religion plays a key role in the generation of ideas. Some participants also revealed that the “mother-of-pearl chair” has a direct relation to design the religious approaches in Lebanon, and it is evaluated as a phenomenological representation of Islam, as set out in the Quran (see Figure 4.3). Furthermore, some architects, interior designers and craftsmen noted that the owner controls each creative activity through applying and imposing his opinion,

thinking, and religious beliefs. Most of the participants believed that religion is an essential underpinning when sharing ideas among individuals and in the organisation and within the Lebanese community in general. For instance, some architects, interior designers, and craftsmen noted that religion is part of the owner's daily life and they must draw religious forms and copy ideas from magazines or international websites that relate to religion.

Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that company 1 lacks resources, which inhibits creativity and prevents the employment intellectual property law from protecting the individual's creative work. For example, each idea is developed and accepted by the owner, who is the only person responsible for delivering a product and speaking with clients when the project is completed. Furthermore, religious systems appear to support the owner's traditional religious authority and thereby increase conflict between employees. For instance, non-family members believe it is impossible to understand the nature of religion within the organisation as they cannot create ideas and register their ideas in their name, which is a rejection of their intellectual progress.

However, the literature review argues that resources and technology are necessary to foster creativity in an organisation. Furthermore, the literature review further suggests that organisations must employ intellectual property law to protect a creator's ideas and to reject all forms of religious commitment (see Chapter 2). The literature review confirms that creativity includes the rejection of the establishment of social norms. The literature review argues that the majority of people are religious in Lebanon (54%), with Islam being the biggest religion (see Chapter 2). The literature review also argues that Islam leads people to embrace certain principles and rules in Lebanese society, thus preventing individuals creating meaningful new ideas (see Chapter 2). Most of the participants revealed that the owner asks them to follow his culture and work with traditional ideas, rules, and religious patterns. Thus, religion affects the behaviour of employees and their creative performance within the workplace.



Figure 4.3: An example of a chair known as a “mother of pearl chair” is used in furniture making. This chair shows inlay works. For some participants, this chair reflects the identity of the Lebanese community.

Figure 4.3 illustrates a chair with some religious forms (floral, arabesque forms). Most of the participants explained the importance of the “mother-of-pearl chair” to the Lebanese community by reflecting the relationship between architecture, identity and history in Lebanon. Most of the participants noted that the “mother-of-pearl chair” reflects the cultural identity and lifestyles of employees and their local community. Some respondents (e.g., architects, interior designers, and craftsmen) pointed out that company 1 is an affiliated religious organisation and shares a national identity with its employees. For example, most of the craftsmen noted that religious forms are clearly dominant and are illustrated in every detail of the chair (see Figure 4.3). The empirical evidence shows that religion has an impact on an employee’s beliefs, identify, and vision in the workplace. Most of the participants noted that the owner reveals his view and religious background during a creative activity. Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that the owner promotes religious forms to interpret ideas, which is an essential feature of understanding religion. Understanding the characteristics of Islamic beliefs and attitudes is becoming a prominent element of Lebanese society and the organisation as a whole.

Some participants noted that company 1 lacks awareness and respect for copyrights, resulting in the copying of ideas. In addition, most of the craftsmen confirmed that working with religious forms is essential at company 1, which is part of the development of religion across individuals and teams in the workplace. However, the literature review argues that organisations should promote creativity regardless of religion and cultural background to create ideas and foster creativity in an organisation. The empirical evidence further shows that company 1 lacks resources as the owner depends on religion, specifically the adoption of the Islamic form of religion, which inhibits creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. The empirical evidence confirms that company 1 focuses on strengthening the role of family members and relatives within the workforce.

Table 4.1: Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity at company 1.

<b>Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity</b>	<b>Company 1</b>
Encouraging creativity and performance	x
Increasing employees' productivity and retention	x
Increasing resources or improving relationships or communication with non-family members	x
Enhancing employee education, engagement, motivation	x
Examining employee practices to ensure that the company is not discriminating against anyone because of his or her religion	x
Providing training to employees	x

x Means no

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.



Table 4.1 also illustrates that company 1 does not engage in improving diversity and creativity. Furthermore, table 4.1 describes that company 1 does not rely on training and development programmes. For instance, most of the participants revealed that company 1 uses several tools to control the code of conduct, the organisational culture, and the information technology system in Lebanon and abroad as stated earlier. Most of the HR managers further mentioned that the franchise headquarters coordinate continuously with the company through different communication channels. However, the Lebanese franchise does not offer talents or creative opportunities. This is because the company is only interested in increasing the number of the family members and makes its management adequate to the Saudi market. One of the HR managers further stated that the competition between Lebanon and Saudi Arabia could increase the market advantage in Lebanon or Saudi Arabia; however, the company does not achieve diversity management in the Lebanese headquarters.

At the creativity level, most of the HR managers specified that although the Lebanese franchise does not generate the highest revenues, it has constant growth regarding profits and new market opportunities. One of the HR managers further stated that owners are unable to learn innovative approaches and change an entire organisation; this is because the owners rely on their family power and impose responsibilities and relationships on employees. The HR manager also mentioned that the owners are unable to change the organisational structure and systems and align it with the new management practices. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

We cannot respond positively to creativity and change behaviours of people. However, we are interested in unlocking opportunities with the international communities (HR manager, Architect, male, 55 years old, company 1).

Company 1 focuses on the Saudi market because the company shares many opportunities in the Saudi Arabia region. In addition, Saudi Arabia market is a significant market, therefore shares in such markets can be grown quickly. Company 1 was a suitable market to open a franchise in Lebanon; however, the company has limited investment and does not select employees based on their talents, experiences, and skills. One the HR managers confirmed that it is difficult to recruit fresh graduates and run training programmes in the

organisation. The HR manager also declared that it is challenging to manage young employees who are unable to work closely with managers and to change an entire organisation. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

When we decided to open in Lebanon, we expected that Lebanon has a very strong pool of talents and a good educational system, which allows recruiting and selecting fresh graduates. However, we found difficulties in the Lebanese market and we are still finding difficulty in sourcing young talents and changing their attitudes and roles (HR manager, male, 55 years old, company 1).

The empirical evidence shows that the owners select and recruit family member employees since they follow his direction and obedience. However, the literature review argues that a positive approach to diversity allows HR managers to select and recruit employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds (see Chapter 2). The empirical evidence shows that HR managers, for example, cannot have discussions around the selection and recruitment process, if they would reduce the possibility of family members discriminating against non-family members in the workplace. The empirical evidence also shows that non-family members cannot transform or create new ideas in the workforce. However, the literature review suggests that creativity is complex; it can lead to new, creative, and exciting ideas where different knowledge bases are brought together through open discussion between individuals with different perspectives. The empirical evidence confirms that company 1 focuses on religious concerns, tradition, and loyalty among family members and relatives within the organisational goals and culture.



### **4.3. Overview of company 2**

Company 2 or BR2 is one of the largest British furniture design companies with a Lebanese franchise. It was founded in 1976. It comprises two partners (two males) and a design team of fifteen persons. Furthermore, company 2 has completed 161 projects in Lebanese and international markets. Company 2 is an independent franchise and is entitled to terminate any employment contract between its Lebanese business and its English business according to the Lebanese law. BR2 has expanded its operation across countries by selling and manufacturing its furniture projects in the Middle East, Europe, and the USA, and exporting its furniture projects to residential or commercial space in those countries.

According to the HR manager (one of the partners of BR2), in Lebanon, the management is entirely accepted by employees, although it does not include any diversity in terms of nationalities and cultures but is restricted to contributions by family members. The company does not initiate diversity activities, as interviewed participants at company 2 revealed. Their activities are designed to respond to the company's needs and expectations. Diversity activities and programmes are not undertaken within the community environment and are not defined or prioritised in a systemic way. Furthermore, interviewed participants revealed that diversity initiatives at company 2 are not planned to meet the needs and expectations of employees. The empirical evidence shows that training and development approaches affect employee's roles and relationships. One of the HR managers reported that the family members hold power to dismiss employees if they come from a different culture and engage in certain behaviours and activities in the organisation to impede productivity.

Table 4.2: Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity at company 2.

Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity	Company 2
Encouraging creativity and performance	X
Increasing employees' productivity and retention	X
Increasing resources or improving relationships or communication with non-family members	X
Enhancing employee education, engagement, motivation	X
Examining employee practices to ensure that the company is not discriminating against anyone because of his or her religion	X
Providing training to employees	✓

✓ Means yes

X Means no

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.

Table 4.2 illustrates that non-family members cannot share new ideas in groups within the workplace. The empirical evidence shows that the owner liaises with family members and friends to gain power in the organisational systems, policies, and procedures. Most of the female participants confirmed that they cannot take part in any decision-making in a group because family members and friends always oversee all management and supervision procedures. The empirical evidence shows that non-family members feel dissatisfied because they cannot attend training programmes at company 2. Despite these limitations, company 2 offers training programmes through international training centres, that family members can attend. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

The director has supported family members and a certain number of people to register and complete some training and educational courses. We also offer internships with some universities. However, it is not possible to guarantee a place every year (HR manager and partner, male, company 2).

Diversity also remains restricted as explained by participants. Most of the participants noted that the owner controls and manages the viewpoints of employees. At company 2, diversity is linked to power distribution; the owner is involved in developing and sharing ideas with family members and depend on their positions and the experience. Company 2 relies on its own sources (friends and networks) to select and recruit employees, as explained by participants. There is no adaptation of training programmes; however, employees are technically trained to produce any unusual piece of furniture. Most of the participants revealed that they are not permitted to make mistakes or engage with customers.

At the creativity level, company 2 restricts ideas that come from non-family members. Most of the participants (including craftsmen) explained that the element of culture is essential to the delivery of ideas or products. However, creating ideas remain restricted among non- family members. Most of the craftsmen further mentioned that managers control creativity and they are unable to create ideas or to compete with others. Furthermore, some craftsmen revealed that they work with religious forms to create ideas and achieve productivity. One of the craftsmen further noted that religion has the potential to influence their creativity and how their religious beliefs and practices affect their performance within the workplace. Some of these points are illustrated in these following quotes:

Ideas come from the God...I am blessed that I can work on producing all day ideas that serve our culture and tradition. The senior manager always controls the design presented inside the organisation in Lebanon (1<sup>st</sup> Craftsman, male, company 2).

Culture has a strong relationship on creating ideas. The culture is expressed through the director and his kids. The organisation does not have a clear strategy. The design team cannot work on delivering new ideas without considering the competition between employees or departments (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 2).

Creativity remains underdeveloped as explained by participants earlier. Company 2 is not prepared to encourage new ideas or support its customers, managers, and staff through implementing a coherent management framework and using laws relating to the protection of creativity, as explained by participants. Creativity, therefore, remains

restricted to some employees (family members). For instance, most of the participants revealed that the owner relies on generating ideas that come from family members and these ideas are protected within the organisation. One participant confirmed,

I always hear that the director give his kids money to produce foreign ideas and then use them within the workplace. It is very difficult to convince the manager about sharing new ideas and understanding the ideas that inspire my work for the gallery (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 2).



Figure 4.4: An example of informal communication between a family member and the owner. Some participants thought that this increases friendship, loyalty, and trust among family members in the workplace.

Figure 4.4 illustrates the informal communication that takes place between family members at Company 2. Some of the respondents pointed out that company 2 is becoming discriminatory, with increasing cordiality and communication among family members in the workplace and a lack of cordiality and communication among non-family members. The empirical evidence shows that family members are treated differently from non-family members in company 2. Figure 4.4 shows the level of cordiality among family members in company 2. Furthermore, the figure illustrates that the owner protects family members and works towards family members making personal achievement and being loyal to the company with the aim of defending family honour (see Figure 4.4). Therefore, the empirical evidence demonstrates that it is impossible to solve this problem and foster the creativity of different employees in the workplace.

Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows there are many tensions between employees and employers. Moreover, non-family members noted that social interaction is impossible and thereby increases conflicts between family members and non-family members to the detriment of the creativity of the teams. The empirical evidence shows that company 2 does not eliminate activities with politicians or facilitate the performances of individuals and teams. The empirical evidence also indicates that the owner engages with politicians to improve the franchise's (organisation's) performance and commitment to Lebanon. Some participants revealed that the owner does not commit to international agreements because he maintains a strong relationship and networks with politicians in order to recruit politicians' relatives and improve the organisation's financial funds in the Lebanese market. However, the literature review argues that organisations should eliminate unnecessary activities in order to enhance the diversity of employees, improve productivity, and reduce conflicts among employees and employers (see Chapter 2).

#### **4.4. Overview of company 3**

Company 3 or AM3 is an American furniture design company with a Lebanese franchise. It was founded in 2001. It comprises three (males) partners and a design team of twenty-five persons. Company 3 has expanded its operation across Gulf and European countries. Furthermore, company 3 works on projects in MENA and the USA designing furniture or residential projects associated with highly crafted production. It is an independent franchise that operates within the family system.

According to the co-founder (one of the partners), AM3 management practices are fully understood by Lebanese employees and managers. However, employees have minimal sensitivity to the issues of diversity. The co-founder confirmed that the company creates potential opportunities for Lebanese employees because the Lebanese government is not providing any basic employment services. Company 3 provides support to family members while restrictions are applied to non-family members, as explained by the co-founder. The owner revealed that family members have a positive impact on the organisation; they share common values and respect the owners because they appreciate the attributes of the owners and do not make any judgments. Furthermore, most of the participants revealed that family members improve the organisational goals and objectives and that this is one of the significant factors in the success of the business. The empirical evidence shows that the family ties in company 3 help employers (owners or managers) to secure their position and increase the financial assets of the business inside and outside Lebanon.

Furthermore, most of the participants noted that the owner's responsibility at company 3 is evidence that only family members receive positive emotional support and motivations. Participants confirmed that this problem affects employees' behaviours and performance at company 3. Some participants revealed that the owner gives opportunities to or rewards family members when they create and generate ideas, resulting in discrimination between employees. The owner also considers ideas coming from family members and takes decisions based on his beliefs and ideas by claiming that 'it is not easy to share new ideas with different individuals' experience' (Co-founder, male, 34, company 3). The

empirical evidence shows the three partners in company 3 control each activity that the employees do. Furthermore, most of the participants noted that AM3 does not engage with an international franchise to improve resources and foster creativity. Some participants noted that company 3 does not follow legal and public documentation about increasing the use of intellectual property and trademark laws, which would provide resources to increase individuals' skills, knowledge, and performance (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity at company 3.

<b>Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity</b>	<b>Company 3</b>
Encouraging creativity and performance	X
Increasing employees' productivity and retention	X
Increasing resources or improving relationships or communication with non-family members	X
Enhancing employee education, engagement, motivation	X
Examining employee practices to ensure that the company is not discriminating against anyone because of his or her religion	X
Providing training to employees	✓

✓ Means yes  
X Means no

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.

Table 4.3 highlights the issues to accepting the link between diversity and creativity at company 3. Table 4.3 also illustrates that diversity is underdeveloped in company 3. For example, one of the HR managers noted that company 3 follows a standard plan and scheme to select and recruit employees. Furthermore, the HR manager revealed that company 3 follows strict rules and guidelines to strengthen its family values and benefits regardless of policies created in the Lebanese law. The empirical evidence shows that the three partners control and manage most of the decision-making process at company 3. Most of the participants confirmed that the owner or one of the partners is responsible for monitoring any legal tradition or law enforcement practices across Lebanon. In company

3, the owner sells what he produces according to a contract, which allows him to be the sole distributor in Lebanon. However, the owner does not share its profit in the USA or have an agreement with the USA. Most of the participants revealed that company 3 does not monitor diversity in the domestic firm (in Lebanon), which affects the way businesses practise diversity and performance among its employees.

At the creativity level, company 3 focuses on traditional elements because it is rooted in the Lebanese culture and keeping the authentic flavours of that culture has always been the trademark of the organisation, as explained by the participants (the partners). The interaction of family members has a positive impact on the relationship between the owner, the employees, and the clients within the organisation. However, non- family members struggle to gain power in the workplace, some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

The owner is still practicing his power to control our ideas during the meetings. Some designers do not have the exact information to design or budget for any piece of furniture. I cannot complete or evaluate any new ideas during the development phase. It is hard to protect some ideas (style and appearance) because the owner does not change their products (Craftsman, male, 46 years old, company 3).

The empirical evidence shows that creativity remains limited among employees. Most of the participants revealed that the three partners do not perceive creativity and diversity in the workplace. Although the owner relies on generating ideas with family members, some opportunities may be missed by others. Furthermore, participants noted that the company does not engage with diversity to allow more autonomy for resolving a conflict between family members and non-family members. Because of this, most of the participants noted that the owner does not encourage ideas through increasing trust and communication between employees and employers. Furthermore, some participants confirmed that they cannot access regular business meetings, procedures, proper equipment, or materials in the organisation (see Figure 4.5). Figure 4.5 illustrates the equipment and material used by craftsmen, which requires particular attention in terms of their age and affect the contribution of craftsmen, and this influences their work as stated by participants. As illustrated in figure 4.5, most of the craftsmen noted that the organisation relies on old



equipment and cannot facilitate sufficient resources or demonstrate knowledge of methods, techniques, and skills appropriately and productively to others as also explained by participants. The empirical evidence shows that creativity remains limited and makes individuals uncomfortable about exchanging ideas with their colleagues and customers inside the organisation. Furthermore, non-family members revealed that it is difficult to share ideas with non-family members who have a different point of view, skills, and different ways of thinking. The empirical evidence shows that the three partners provide traditional management to increase the organisational vision, and they cannot distribute creative responsibilities among their craftsmen and designers.



Figure 4.5: An example of a craftsman's activity in his workshop. Some participants used traditional tools and worked hard to draw or produce a piece of furniture.



Figure 4.6: An example of a craftsman who used traditional tools to draw a floral form as an analogy to tell the story of their collaboration and how they envision working individually or in groups in the workplace.

Figure 4.6 illustrates the traditional tools and materials at company 3. The empirical evidence shows that creativity is not "comprehensive" in nature because older craftsmen confirmed that creativity is seen as a way of teaching morals and they think that the younger generation has different morals to them. The figure also highlights the lack of resources in company 3 (see Figure 4.6). Most of the respondents (e.g., craftsmen) pointed out that company 3 provides support to family members as part of a creative response. The empirical evidence also shows, however, that even though a person (designer, craftsman, and architect) can create original ideas, the owner provides support to family members only which implies that creativity is the reserve of privileged persons at company 3.

The empirical evidence also shows that employees are not allowed to behave imaginatively and improve their skills, knowledge or thinking in the workforce. For example, most of the respondents (e.g., designers, craftsmen, and architects) confirmed that the owner only allows them to copy ideas, which does not promote originality in the organisation, and foster creativity in teams. Nevertheless, respondents (e.g., craftsmen) noted that creativity could be seen as a secondary option in the organisation because they are only allowed to copy ideas from international magazines. The empirical evidence finds that creativity reflects the concerns of employees and their ability to create original

designs rather than focusing on making a profit from illegally copying ideas, which does not respect the ideas of the creators (the designers). Furthermore, most of the participants pointed out that the owner does not listen to the vision of employees to promote creativity and build up knowledge, understanding, and skill within the organisation. Moreover, some participants (e.g., designers, craftsmen, and architects) confirmed that they could not develop their talents, which has an important role to play in creating ideas and promoting diversity in organisations. The empirical evidence shows that the owner does not encourage the development of ideas in the workplace. However, the literature review argues that everybody should be allowed to be creative regardless of his or her cultural background. Furthermore, the literature review also suggests that a diverse workforce helps to defuse the tensions that can arise in the workplace and thus encouraging creativity (e.g., particularly in the creative sectors) becomes important across the organisation. The literature review further suggests that creativity helps organisations to produce something original freely and improve performance among individuals and groups.

#### **4.5. Overview of company 4**

Company 4 or LEB4 is a local furniture design company. The company is a leading name in luxury furniture in Lebanon. It is a medium-sized company and was founded in 1988.

Company 4 comprises four partners, a design team of thirty-five persons, and ten craftsmen. Company 4 works on projects across foreign countries by designing residential apartments and villas, boutiques, spas, restaurants, hotels, and many high-quality designs inside and outside the Lebanese market. Company 4 has expanded its operation across Middle Eastern countries, Europe, and the USA.

Company 4 has an informal programme and procedures in its operations. One of the owners noted that company 4 aims to keep control of the family relationship inside and outside the company. Moreover, the owner confirmed that the company ensures a continuous communication with its local and regional offices. The owner also discusses several issues with his regional office. For example, the owner noted that he could discuss the plans, the target volume, the pricing strategy, the promotions, increase exportations and follow other initiatives in order to increase profit in the Lebanese market. The owner acknowledged that having a robust family-oriented culture at company 4 would help family members to increase profits in Lebanon and across the Middle East. Table 4.4 illustrates that diversity is not considered to be relevant at company 4.

Most of the participants noted that there is a difference among employees and that non-family members in particular are not allowed to work or collaborate with their employers. The empirical evidence shows that the administrative function of HR is irregular and limited regarding managing diversity. For example, most of the participants noted that the HR department at company 4 is not prepared to engage with employees by reporting on and monitoring their performance. Most of the family members' participants noted that company 4 plays a vital role in the Lebanese economy, and the presence of family members reflect the fact they share cultural values and perspectives. However, some participants (particularly non-family members) pointed out that diversity cannot bring

any change for non-family members at company 4. Some of these points are illustrated in the quote below:

Our aim is to control members of the same family and concentrate on how to pass on the business to future generations (General Manager, owner, male, 58 years old, company 4).

Table 4.4: Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity at company 4.

<b>Issues relating to accepting the link between diversity and creativity</b>	<b>Company 4</b>
Encouraging creativity and performance	X
Increasing employees' productivity and retention	X
Increasing resources or improving relationships or communication with non-family members	X
Enhancing employee education, engagement, motivation	X
Examining employee practices to ensure that the company is not discriminating against anyone because of his or her religion	X
Providing training to employees	X

X Means no

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.

The empirical evidence also shows that company 4 focuses on only putting limited resources into pursuing international services and franchising. Table 4.4 illustrates that company 4 does not engage with diversity and creativity to demonstrate commitment and employment opportunities for both family members and non-family members in the Lebanese market. Most of the participants revealed that the founder of the business imposes a common history, culture, values, and future objectives throughout the company. For example, one of the HR managers stated that the owner uses loopholes concerning voting rights to control the contract between the owner and employees. The HR manager also confirmed that company 4 does not offer training and development programmes to increase individual skills, motivation, and performance. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

It is difficult to offer training and development programmes. The owner does not focus on training employees and developing their engagement, skills, and performance in groups due to lack of unequal access and inadequate training opportunities in Lebanon, as Lebanon and the neighbouring countries live in a tragic war (HR manager, male, 44 years old, company 4).

Moreover, the empirical evidence shows that family power promotes inequality between family members and non-family members. Most of the participants revealed that family power creates poor performance and increases conflicts between employees and employers. At the firm level, company 4 protects the business by using a conservative management style. The owner does not use a formal appraisal procedure. All the decisions are made and all the rules are observed by using strict management practices. Furthermore, company 4 does not engage with the concept of diversity because of the company's culture and the influence the company has on employees. Additionally, the recruitment process is a traditional one because the owner is committed to selecting a large number of family members and relatives. The general manager must choose and train a member of his family who will lead the firm's continuity successfully and increase the business performance. By using a succession plan, the family managers, therefore, play a significant role in helping the continuity of family membership and structure.

For example, one of the HR managers confirmed that training programmes and rewards for performance are managed by the owner to sustain a solid family connection among family members. The HR manager considered that some rewards must follow specific systems and guidelines, which are standard in the Lebanese market. He further explained that the outcome of the performance of an employee is different from one market to another. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

The company follows specific bonuses and salary scales; however, the rewards are different in Lebanon and we do not adapt any performance appraisal for example. For instance, the outcome of the performance of the employee is different from one market to another (HR manager, male, 44 years old, company 4).

At the creativity level, company 4 has many small franchises across Lebanon; the company's distribution of furniture in Lebanon to the rest of the world has the highest growth percentage of any other furniture design company in Lebanon, as stated by the owner. Company 4 is working hard to promote a positive culture from within its cultural groups, although the representation of women is restricted, as explained by participants. Most of the participants noted that the Lebanese market features racist images and reflects a prevailing culture and tradition that is based on the dominance of the male and recognises that women have no particular influence on how the job is done. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

The company has a limited number of talent, and the misrepresentation of women in getting jobs and specifically in interior design exists in many Middle East societies. Women stereotypes existed in pre-colonised countries like Lebanon and it is greatly affected by the dominance of men and their influence over women. Woman's presence is limited because these stereotypes are not necessarily inaccurate in the creative industries and the business in general (HR manager, male, 44 years old, company 4).

Furthermore, most of the participants revealed that the owner does not encourage their engagement and creativity in the workplace. Some female participants revealed that they feel intimidated by technology because the owner does not support their engagement and participation by using it in groups. Furthermore, female participants pointed out that they share ideas and deliver original (Islamic) ideas with the presence of the founder of the

company. For example, one of the interior designers noted that the owner does not encourage their participation in groups. One interior designer confirmed that she cannot share ideas when she is working in just one group because the owner follows rules, principles, and values which influences her skills and experience in the workplace, and this affects her abilities to work in groups. Some of these points are illustrated in the quote below:

The owner is responsible to protect the family name and interests, which may affect my ability to discover any creative ideas or to help us to design and succeed in a very Islamic environment (Interior designer, female, company 4).

Moreover, some participants admit that they do not understand how to speak with the owner or managers, which shows that the design teams at company 4 cannot explain their ideas and spend a lot of time seeking feedback from the owner. As a result, there is not a relentless focus on managing teams as well as developing personal relationships with the general managers or executive managers. This complicated relationship affects the employee's motivation and productivity in the workplace. For example, one of the HR managers stated that the owner does not speak directly with him in framing problems and discussing solutions into a group. The HR manager further noted that the owner does not identify the right mix of employees in order to engage employees into a group and resolve problems. For example, the owner depends on family members knowing about any unresolved conflicts and finding out what happened between employees. Most of the participants noted that the owner does not engage in dialogue about potential problems since the owner depends on people who are influential in the workplace to do this. Some of these points are illustrated in the quote below:

I have to communicate with the owner to reflect on an employee's progress and share their problems and experiences. The owner does not share my concern at meetings. The owner takes actions and makes decisions with family members in everyday situations (HR manager, male, 44 years old, company 4).





Figure 4.7: An example of an incomplete piece of furniture. For some participants, religious form and material reflect the identity of the Lebanese community and Islam influences individuals in the workplace.

Figure 4.7 illustrates the religious form and material in a piece of furniture at company 4. This figure reveals the influence of religion which is an important factor in company 4. Most of the respondents (e.g., designers, craftsmen and architects) pointed out that company 4 is an affiliated religious organisation as the owner promotes a religious requirement to create ideas. Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that owners request employees to produce items with religious connotations regularly. Most of the respondents (e.g., designers, craftsmen and architects) confirmed that a person who believes in God could create ideas which are a vital ingredient in creativity. For instance, some respondents (e.g., craftsmen and architects) define creativity as a traditional idea, a rule or a norms, which is followed by Lebanese culture.

The empirical evidence shows that the owner depends on religion and adopts explicitly Islamic forms of decorations in the products in company 4. Figure 4.7 presents religious items with Islamic patterns and connotations. The empirical evidence shows that the owner is committed to religious beliefs by the way in which he employs creative methods for the organisation (see Figure 4.7). Most of the participants noted that the owner further relies on faith (devotion to God) to deliver religious forms of decoration on items and

thereby requires employees to inscribe religious and theological inferences in all their drawings or sketches at company 4. Furthermore, some participants (e.g., designers, craftsmen, and architects) confirmed that religion affects their behaviour, attitude, and personality because religion influences their creative performance and thus increases conflicts in teams within the workplace. However, the literature review argues that creativity is not transformed with religious ideology and principles. The empirical evidence shows that employers cannot manage creativity among employees. The owner follows his religious beliefs and thinking in company 4 as well as cultural norms which are associated with religion and the presentation of family power.

#### **4.6. Summary**

This chapter presents the within- case data analysis. The chapter provides a discussion on the analysis of data collected from the semi-structured interviews, photographs, and field notes within a sample of the four organisations selected within the Lebanese context. The chapter then highlights the explanatory part of the multiple-case study research as suggested by Yin (2009) which goes beyond description and enhances the validity and reliability (e.g., Maxwell, 2005) of the research results. Finally, the chapter evaluates and analyses the empirical data in order to answer the research questions in Chapters 1 and 2 and to present the findings of the research project in Chapter 6. The next chapter presents the descriptive cross-case data analysis of this research project.



## **Chapter 5: ANALYSIS OF THE CROSS-CASE STUDIES**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the cross-case analysis of the multiple case studies. The chapter describes the major themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis regarding the four organisations. The chapter then shows and analyses the diversity dimension in the Lebanese context. This chapter discusses the data collected to answer the research questions in Chapters 1 and 2. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. Based on the examination of the coded interview data collected from each participant, the thematic approach identified three major themes: social – cultural diversity, diversity management practices, and creative performance in the four organisations in Lebanon. Finally, the chapter will examine the different relationship between three major themes selected: (1) social – cultural diversity, (2) diversity management practices and (3) creative performance to demonstrate a causal connection between the literature review and the research background.

Before presenting the analysis of the four-case studies data, it is important to note that the coding process consisted of open coding from field notes and transcripts, which were marked and labelled in a descriptive manner (see Appendix B). The focus of open coding was on naming, phrasing, context, and consistency, which was arranged in major themes and sub-themes (see sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4). The coding was done by hand on a hard copy of the transcript by making notes in the margin and naming part of a text. The codes were then evaluated and listed in (major) themes and sub-themes (see sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4). The (major) themes were categorised under the major headings: social – cultural diversity, diversity management practices, and creative performance (see sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4). This coding process enables the researcher to begin to understand the role of culture, diversity management, and creativity from each participant's perspective. Therefore, this chapter provides a discussion on the analysis of data collected from the semi-structured interviews, photographs (see Chapter 4), and field notes regarding the four organisations operating in Lebanon.

## **5.2. Social – cultural diversity**

The first major theme (social – cultural diversity) is a key factor of cultural diversity (the theme as described in the conceptual framework) and reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and behavioural patterns that define an organisation's operating culture. The social – cultural diversity of an organisation presents a collective identity and a traditional cultural (Lebanese culture) heritage that was noted by the participants. The three main sub-themes will be explored under the social – cultural diversity: religion, gender, and family power. These sub-themes (religion, gender, and family power) first emerged from coding the data at the final stage of analysis.

These sub-themes (religion, gender, and family power) provide a common direction and reflect the views and opinions of participants in Lebanese family design businesses. The participants identified the importance of religion, gender, and family power, which are captured and coded to ensure the accuracy of the data and the result of analysis (e.g., Saldana, 2015). The three main sub-themes: religion, gender, and family power as mentioned earlier are discussed in detail in the following section to understand the participant's views on the Lebanese family design businesses.

### **5.2.1. Religion**

The first sub-theme religion reflects on respecting values, attitudes, and beliefs of the owners. Religion also reflects on practicing religion of the owners. Most of the participants declared that religion affects their behaviours, generosity, and experiences. For example, HR managers further believed that religion affects their thoughts, dignity, beliefs, and attitudes. HR managers highlighted on diversity issues such as tensions between family members and non-family members that can arise in the workplace. Furthermore, HR managers mentioned that the owner helps to increase these tensions by preventing certain employees to practise different religion and perspectives in the workplace in order to promote the family religion in all its forms. One of the HR managers also believed that religion concentrates on the existence of worship across individuals in Lebanese family design businesses. As one HR manager and partner (male, 55, company 1) confirmed upholding the same religious practices in the workplace is a

fundamental factor to appreciate values of the organisation, so employees should all follow the same religion or belief within the workplace. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

We look for people who share the same religion and values. We make sure that they understand our personal belonging and beliefs across Lebanon and Saudi Arabia (HR manager and partner, male, 55 years old, company 1).

Moreover, most of the employers and managers in company 2 consider whether they share confidence in each employee. Some HR managers mentioned that having the same values, attitudes, traditions, and a certain level of personal responsibility provides support for the family and improves the identities, beliefs, and expressions of individuals. For example, the HR manager stated that he could not compromise on a multitude of ideas, understandings, and values. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

The company cannot handle any diversity problems and issues because it is difficult to convince the owner to change his perspective and opinion about learning to engage with people from a different religion (HR manager and partner, male, 58 years old, company 2).

On the other hand, employees in companies 3 and 4 revealed that religion is essential to do a job or to comply with the religious or belief ethos of the organisation. These ethical values affect employee's skills, experiences, and performance in groups because the owner believes in promoting his religious opinions. Furthermore, some managers or senior executives discriminate against employees who wish to practise their religion. Most of the participants also noted that if they cannot complain, their only option is to resign. For example, interior designers and architects' participants further explained that they are not given equal opportunities to work and to develop their skills because of their religion, which confirms that religious discrimination affects their abilities and personal beliefs. Additionally, some interior designers further mentioned that they cannot have specific responsibilities in the workplace (e.g., for resources, skills, time management, training, performance, promotion, pay, or benefits) because of their religion. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

I engage with employees who share the same knowledge and experience. I demand my internal team to share the same traditions to avoid any problems, and re-think about their action if we face problems (Senior Interior designer, male, 42 years old, company 3).

We follow customs and habits. I have values associated with my religion. I make ideas that are associated with my Lebanese ways that are respected and understood. I follow Lebanese culture and I have to create traditional things (Junior Architect, male, 38 years old, company 4).

Furthermore, most of the employers and HR managers consider having the same religious practice in the workplace as good practice that will provide a suitable organisational attitude. Some of these assertions are illustrated in the following quotes:

We always work with people with the same way of thinking and culture. In my opinion, the company is not committed to building and practising a range of local (cultural) approaches (HR manager and partner, male, 58 years old, company 1).

We cannot uphold diversity in the firm because we were raised on our family ethics and values– that are necessary to follow in the company (General Manager, owner, male, company 2).

In company 4, most of the craftsmen expressed a lack of enthusiasm about religion as they asserted that religion or belief creates a bad feeling among staff and causes more problems than it solves. For instance, some craftsmen contended that there is a discrimination against employees from a different religious background. Most of the craftsmen noted that the aspects of Muslim life inspire employees. Furthermore, one of the craftsmen pointed out that employees follow Islam because they are inspired by the quality of the Muslim religion practised by the owner of the company, but this restricts the way that things can be done and limits what is acceptable to others. Some of these points are illustrated in these following quotes:

I wish to work with freedom and dignity. I feel that we cannot operate with freedom because we follow moral, habits and standards to satisfy the owner (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 34 years old, company 4).

I always have had bad experiences under the owner authority. I profess different faith and I cannot achieve leadership (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 34, company 4).

The owner prefers to work with the same habits, and religion. We do not implement diversity within a group, the owner demands some rules, and we have to follow them and ensure that we can do them (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 34 years old, company 4).

Furthermore, some of the female architect participants (non-family members) noted that Lebanese employers communicate well with older employees, in particular, family members who share the same religion or belief, and turn their ideas into traditional products. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

I communicate with old employees, and I work efficiently with them. We cannot change this culture, and we can only practise one standard of care and value (Senior Architect, female, 42 years old, cousin of the owner, company 1).

I do not express my point of view freely, but I share the same cultural values. We are working together as a family to improve the business by understanding and accepting the owner's beliefs and desires (Senior Architect, female, 42 years old, cousin of the owner, company 1).

On the other hand, non-family members confirmed that religion affects their attitude and behaviours. Most of the participants pointed out they face some challenges in creating and developing religious ideas required by the ownerships. Most of the non-family member participants further mentioned that they face difficulties in communicating with family member employees, as they need to adhere to the long-term objective of the company. For instance, some interior designers (especially freelance employees) stated that they are not offered equal opportunities in the workplace. One of the interior designers (freelance employees) further mentioned that they could not improve or develop mutual trust and respect with teams as they face conflicts and tensions across managers, employers, and organisations. Some interior designers also stated that family members and friends are always getting promoted to a new position at work, including being paid more money for doing the same job. Some of these points are illustrated in these following quotes:

Diversity can help an individual to live in faith. If I have a problem in communicating with others, I learn to do things that are easy to understand without affecting my personality and representing my identity (Interior designer, freelancer, female, 36 years old, company 3).



The company fails to provide appropriate religious services. There is a difference in the quality of treatment. Family members can always receive appropriate services such as legal and financial services and such as advance salary, a new position, and maternity allowance (Interior designer, freelancer, female, 36 years old, company 3).

The empirical evidence shows that religious diversity has increasingly become an issue in Lebanese family design businesses. For example, most of the participants were of the view that the HRM practices are not consistent with diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses. It is evident that religious diversity in Lebanon is considered as a complex phenomenon for participants owing to the contradictions and tensions arising from the contextual nature of Lebanon. Religious discrimination prevents employees from increasing their role and performance in the workplace, and this is pointed out by the participants. The religious attitudes in Lebanese family design businesses identified through the empirical study affirm the research objective by revealing the growing inequalities and differences between participants in Lebanese family design businesses.

In addition, the social, political, and legal actors/institutions in Lebanon play a crucial role in the workplace as the Muslim communities shape the overall mindset of the Lebanese society (e.g., Barakat, 1993). In Chapter 3, table 3.3 illustrates the distribution of respondents' organisational role and Religion. The empirical evidence shows that Lebanese employees are involved either directly or indirectly in the same religion (more generally Islam), lifestyles, and loyalties, and that there is a minority of Christian employees. In Lebanon, Muslims are mainly residents in the major cities: Beirut (in which the four companies were located in this area), Tripoli and Sidon (International Business Publication, 2013). Furthermore, the empirical evidence finds that religion increases the levelling out of the labour status between family members and non-family members because family structure shares the same culture, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, and customs within the workplace.

Moreover, the empirical evidence shows that religion can increase kinship ties among family members through various methods that aim at inculcating feelings and values of identification and loyalty in order to regulate the reproduction of its members and their engagement in the workplace. Therefore, religion is a fundamental aspect of family systems because it is needed to promote the owner's own interests (including power) by providing bonding experiences and family links and ensuring that family members are recruited and selected first before non-family members. The empirical evidence further shows that religion enforces rules among family members and non-family member by promoting cooperation within the kinship group and, in particular, it facilitates contract enforcement and creates stronger familial ties to the Lebanese family design businesses.

The literature review argues that managing religious diversity is associated with equality, anti-discrimination activities and the promotion of tolerance and respect (e.g., see Chapter 2; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2008). However, the empirical evidence shows that managers and owners ignore ethics and legal guidelines that protect Lebanese employees and that there is an absence of collaboration among the different concerned institutions. At company 1, the owners do not follow any clear policy or strategy and instead focus on their religious and personal achievement to create a climate that strengthens the family members' relationships and promotes their reputations in their family-owned companies, as explained by participants. For example, most of the participants noted that family members do not monitor or modify diversity among employees when they are hiring people or filling power positions, they do not consider the issues of equal status in Lebanese family design businesses. It is therefore important to recruit and select employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds in order to manage diversity and foster creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. The empirical evidence also shows that the four organisations follow the ties of kinship, tribalism, and family, which all equally reflect the traditional or religious norms within the Lebanese society (see Chapter 2).

### 5.2.2. Gender

The second sub-theme gender shows that inequality and discrimination still widely exist in Lebanon. Most of the participants expressed their views on equality and answered each question openly. For example, most of the participants (especially HR managers) revealed that understanding, accepting, and valuing differences between genders is affecting their behaviours. Furthermore, some of the HR managers revealed that gender identity at management levels does not promote gender equality in Lebanese family design businesses. At companies 1 and 2, one of the HR managers noted that inequality is associated with cultural values because those whose actions lead to inequality share the same tradition, personal beliefs and social responsibilities as they come from the same cultural background, the same generation (or age) and the same gender (in particular men). Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

Equality is not common in Lebanon. Women face many problems in finding job, securing a job and it varies from one city to another. I think despite their superior education, women still abide by the rules and authority of men in Lebanon (HR manager, male, 55 years old, company 1).

We choose participants based on their gender and religion. The partners trust the family members because they can retain and build the family name (HR manager and partner, male, 58 years old, company 2).

In company 3, some of the female participants (interior designers) claimed that gender identities are critical aspects of Lebanese culture. Therefore, social attitudes and behaviours are negatively affecting their jobs in the workplace. For instance, the female participants (interior designers) were willing to answer each question about gender identity and equality problems while some participants explained the implications of a male-dominated work place for the female employee. One female participant (interior designer) revealed that women are expected to have different priorities, to be less committed and to be more stressed in the workplace. Most of the female participants (non-family members) found that women who engage in male-dominated occupations struggle to construct coherent identities in the face of competing with family members at work. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

I feel that the company does not protect the role of women. It is stressful to work with men. I feel less of a connection with my colleagues. I have difficulty in sharing my ideas with my colleagues. It is something related to the way the owner can fight against a woman at the office (Interior designer, freelancer, female, 36 years old, company 3).

For instance, most of the female participants confirmed that Lebanese culture values masculine ways of working and leading. Hofstede (1980) also describes the effects of Lebanese culture on women. Thus, women in family design businesses face conflict and performance pressures that are caused by the social circumstances of Lebanon. Some female participants also pointed out that HR managers like to recruit family members and they focus on male employees. The recruitment procedures in Lebanese family design businesses do not favour female employees. For instance, female participants (architects) revealed that personal opinion, family influence, and life circumstances are among the factors that impact men's inability to support gender equality. In company 2, female participants (non-family members) believed that women should have the same freedom as male employers (e.g., the owner) in the organisation. Furthermore, other female architect participants (family members) revealed that inequality in Lebanese family design businesses prevents them from working with freedom, aligning their work with their personal values and share ideas with their colleagues. Moreover, some female participants found that women are not allowed to determine their own success, construct coherent viewpoints or develop everyday experiences with male colleagues (e.g., family members or owners). Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

Equality represents a sensible assumption to develop your personal opinion and values. I feel that women cannot find the right skills and experience to share ideas (Freelance Architect, female, 28 years old, company 2).

I cannot freely develop my experience and my roles. I cannot share my ideas with male colleagues. We have ethics to share principle, habit and respect family members (Senior Architect, female, 42 years old, cousin of the owner, company 2).

On the other hand, male participants (craftsmen) revealed that equality is not practised in the workplace; they still held traditional views about women's roles. Furthermore, some of the interior designers (male participants) also showed that gender inequality has an impact on employee conflicts if they embrace diversity (see Chapter 2). For example, in company 2, most of the craftsmen stated that they risk workplace conflicts by promoting equitable treatment of employees. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

Equal employment is essential, however you cannot control young employees at the workplace. The company is focusing on spending more time with senior family members and I cannot enhance my skills (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 2).

Equality is not learned between individuals. It is very difficult to convince a man about what a woman can do. I understand that equality is difficult to achieve while we live in a male society. Women take care of the home and cook for the family. I am always responsible for getting involved in deciding an idea then helping women to make better choices (Senior Interior designer, male, 42 years old, company 3).

The empirical evidence shows that women's roles are not well placed for creating gender sensitive policies (unethical business practice) and for promoting a balanced development of administration. Furthermore, some female participants mentioned that men have traditionally handled policies in the workplace. The empirical evidence also shows that male participants are not willing to involve women in the planning and implementation of such strategies in organisations, as they are inherently patriarchal institutions. One of the female participants further stated that Lebanese ownerships (males) gain power by planning for their organisational structures without the views or participation of females. They also mentioned that men do not take into account women's multiple responsibilities in their homes and within the Lebanese community. Furthermore, most of the female participants stated that they face difficulties because of their different communications and decision-making styles that are used by men.

The empirical evidence shows that gender equality and family influence still exist in Lebanese family design businesses, leading to more support for having males in the workforce rather than females. Tatli and Özbilgin (2012), though, suggest that women may represent an essential solution to the talent shortage in many countries. However, in Lebanese family design businesses, the potential of female managers is not explored fully in firms' talent pools or remains unused as mentioned by the female participants. The skills and traits attributed to the feminine do not align with essential business values. Moreover, gender stereotyping excludes women from leadership roles as noted by female participants. Most of the male participants argue that women are judged on appearance and communication style. The male participants also stated that employed women are excluded from leadership positions because there is a weak tradition of women being awarded such promotions and cultural barriers too.

The empirical evidence also highlights the challenge of finding paid work and fulfilling the traditionally masculine role of being a provider in times of economic uncertainty, particularly in Lebanon, which is affected by war. The effects of conflict and unemployment were frequently cited as reasons why conflicts occurred between females and males in the workplace. Most of the female and male participants often mentioned that women face cultural, financial and relational barriers in Lebanese family design businesses. For example, one of the female participants frequently indicated that they face conflict, financial difficulties, and professional development potential barriers that prevent them from improving their skills, knowledge, and performance. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

I made sacrifices in my career. I struggle and I cannot gain or retain access to all professions and I did not come close to gaining equal pay similar to men. I feel less successful than men (Senior Architect, female, 42, years old company 1)

It is difficult to work with females. I cannot encourage women to share their views in the workplace. I try to restrict the information or to share ideas with working mothers (Architect, male, 48 years old, company 4).

The empirical evidence shows that gender stereotyping is associated with religion and traditional norms. Furthermore, the empirical evidence confirms that gender stereotyping is also associated with the links that women have with their family, resulting in inequality in the workplace; this is the main factor that prevents women interacting with teams. In companies 1 and 4, most of the female participants noted that they risk losing their job if they share more ideas with men. For example, most of the female participants pointed out that the problem of sharing ideas and approaches arises from the fact that men in power are in a position to make the right decision by consulting only their family members, resulting in inequality and inappropriate competitions among female and male employees in the workplace. Furthermore, this inequality can help to raise tensions among family members and non-family members in the Lebanese family design businesses.

In the literature review, some researchers showed that gender stereotypes exist in Lebanese society (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.3.2). Most of the Lebanese organisations are not able to sustain a high level of commitment to a diverse workforce (see Chapter 2). The empirical evidence shows that women are often afforded less opportunities for career advancement within the four organisations. Most of the participants confirmed that they face some cultural barriers, which directly affect them. For example, the female participants pointed out they are not encouraged to share ideas, opinions, and make decisions in groups because family members work according to existing hegemonic masculine norms in the workplace. The empirical evidence shows that masculine norms and other factors such as kinship perspectives put women at higher risk of being stopped because of barriers to diversity initiatives in comparison with men. Furthermore, the literature review confirms the presence of a gap between women and men in Arabic societies like that of Lebanon. The literature review argues that participation in organisations and gaining experiences of them are critical for creating and encouraging through policies of “gender neutrality” and “affirmative action” (e.g., Syed and Özbilgin, 2009).

In Chapter 3, table 3.3 illustrates the distribution of organisational role by gender. The empirical evidence shows that Lebanese employers are comfortable to work directly with a male guardian. The literature review also shows that diversity is restricted to different gender groups (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Al-Ariss, 2010; Jamali and Abdallah, 2010). Gender stereotypes and perceptions in Lebanese society have a significant impact on gender roles and the local culture. The empirical evidence shows that employers' work on attitudes towards women and their relation to work performance has been scant; existing evidence suggests that Lebanese culture plays a pivotal role in determining the lack of gender diversity on company boards through its influence on the behaviours and attributes of Lebanese society. Furthermore, Lebanese employers do not address employment discrimination in the recruitment procedure, as explained by female participants, because the owners seek to adapt to the norms of the family authority resulting in a loss of a valuable talent pool.

### **5.2.3. Family power**

The final sub-theme family power plays a significant role in the Lebanese culture. Family power operates by distributing authority among employees and employers in the workplace. Family power also reflects the influence and administration of the owners, family members, and relatives in the workplace. The empirical evidence shows that Lebanese business owners rely on family power and avoid changes and commitment among non-family members. Most of the participants stated that managers and owners are not comfortable with change and diversity, but remain loyal to the organisation's vision, values, and goals. Family power in the Lebanese family design businesses is mainly based on the owner's authority, behaviour, benefits, and affiliations with friends and family members.

Furthermore, in companies 2 and 4, non-family members and particular craftsmen revealed that power affects their motivation and work outcomes particularly at high managerial and professional levels (receiving rewards is limited to family members). Most of the female interior designer and craftsmen participants also confirmed that decision making is limited to family members and, in particular, non-family members



stated that they could not express their own opinion as the organisation cannot solve the problem of power allocation between employees. Some craftsmen also reveal that they feel frustrated when they communicate with the owners. Some of these points are illustrated in these following quotes:

The owner does not hire qualified employees and he is doing wrong by focusing on family members (2<sup>nd</sup> craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 2).

The owner can withdraw money from my salary and I do not want that so I have to listen to him even if he is wrong. During Eid [religious celebration event], he always gives a rise to everyone and I enjoy it so he is strict but he is loyal to his culture (Interior Designer, freelancer, female, 36 years old, company 4).

However, in company 1, most of the HR managers and family members' participants stated that managers have legitimate power in motivating employees and dealing with organisational problems. Furthermore, one of the HR managers believed that they are encouraged to secure and use power in a familiar environment in business. The HR manager also noted that power could change their goals, help their career, and develop their personality when they make a decision about power distribution and improving the quality of organisational life. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

...only family members get the chance to travel abroad and attend training courses or international exhibitions (HR manager and partner, male, 55 years old, company 1).

The empirical evidence shows that organisational power (legitimate power, rewards, coercive power) and personal power (expert and referent) have a negative impact on productivity, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment. In addition, some researchers state that power influences each activity of employers throughout the organisation (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; Ward *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, family power (power of the owner) in a family business can lead to enthusiastic and unquestioning trust, compliance, loyalty, and commitment from employees. This means that power can also be regarded as being rule oriented in the sense that it focuses on respect for authority,

leadership, division of work and normalisation of family members (e.g., Hofstede, 2001). The centre of power is a formal authority, holds control, and influences activities within the organisation. For example, in small organisations power is steered by family involvement and rests on their ability to share their needs, fears and dreams (e.g., Lansberg and Astrachan, 1994; Hofstede, 2001).

Conflicts between employees and employers frequently arise due to the overlap of roles, pressure to hire relatives or close friends rather than applicants who are not family employees (e.g., Gersick *et al.*, 1997). This implies that in family design businesses, there is the tendency to instil fear in the employees and to abuse power. This can also lead to nepotism and favouritism across the Lebanese society (e.g., Barakat, 1993). For instance, employers (partners) revealed that they practice their power to recruit individuals by giving or denying them access to privileged position and meeting the requirements, which involve status being determined by gender. Some of these powers, which can be used against family and non-family members are illustrated in the following example:

We certainly occupy a privileged position based on gender but we also try to listen to our employees (2<sup>nd</sup> partner, Architect, male, 48 years old, company 1).

The empirical evidence showed that power is oriented towards and associated with people with significant authority. Most of the participants declared that they are encouraged to engage in dishonest or unethical behaviour to stay in the workplace. Furthermore, female participants confirmed that power reflects on positions and authorities, which are controlled by employers in Lebanese family design businesses. The empirical evidence shows that ownerships provide a power base for individuals. Most of the participants declared that the owner gains power in making decisions on how to distribute authority in organisations. For example, non-family member participants noted they cannot develop their skills and ideas in a family environment. Furthermore, non-family members stated that the Lebanese family design businesses tried to impose rule in their situation by exercising an absolute power to dominate and control individuals. Some of these points are illustrated in the quote below:

I am not encouraged to share my vision or communicate with family members in the workplace. In particular, the owner does not encourage, motivate, or accept my participation and productivity among family members (Architect, female, 37 years old, company 3).

Furthermore, some owners and managers see power (role) sharing in a managerial post as losing power because their authority needs to come from a higher position. Some researchers argue that power is essential to encourage productivity and develop a political culture easy for employees to understand the organisational goals (e.g., Cox, 2001; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2008). However, most of the participants noted that Lebanese family design businesses establish a strict policy but that does not make them spend more time on producing quality work. In addition, the lack of communication between employees and employers provides an unequal environment between them and gives rise to a conflict that can reduce productivity. The empirical evidence shows that the four organisations cannot develop a clear policy to prevent negativity and conflict throughout the organisations.

The literature review argues that power is linked to the family values of Lebanese society and the culture of family that drives organisational goals and beliefs (e.g., Barakat, 1993; Hofstede, 2001). For example, Hofstede (2001) also argues that Lebanon with a score of 40 is considered the collectivistic community in which employees in an organisation are expected to perform according to the employer's interests and the employer plays a central role in each person's identity, particularly that of family members and friend's relationships. Furthermore, the literature review shows that family members share common values that help the family business to achieve the strategy and mission of the company (see Chapter 2; Ward, 2008). Hofstede (2001) highlighted that cultures differ based on five dimensions, namely power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individual versus group orientation, masculine versus feminine orientation and short-long term orientation.

Therefore, exercising power in such family systems is a problem for other employees because it indicates that owners can control each activity and tends to successfully impose rules by making non-family members fearful. Ward *et al.* (2010) argue that if family members understand and support one another while they work together, this will

increase communication and harmony with the other employees (family or non-family members) (e.g., Ward *et al.*, 2010). Several researchers have suggested that the family may share values, power, traditions, individual behaviour and this will result in the development of a successful succession plan and family members remaining in the organisations (see Chapter 2; Litz, 1995; EC, 2009; Niebler, 2015). The empirical evidence shows that Lebanese employers regarding origin, status and family structures develop loyalty segments in the organisation and distribute power by working with families and friends. Thus, family power has a significant influence on employees and employers in Lebanese family design businesses. The following section describes the second theme of this research study, diversity management practices, and discusses further the participant's views on diversity management within the four Lebanese family design businesses.

### 5.3. Diversity management practices

The second major theme (diversity management practices) explains what employees perceive about diversity and how it affects organisational performance. Managing diversity is a significant organisational challenge in Lebanon. In company 2, participants stated that organisations underestimate the importance of diversity. They further noted that embracing diversity in the workplace remains difficult because the owner is unable to improve the quality of management's decisions and share different view or ignore others' backgrounds. In addition, most of the participants revealed that hiring people from the same background affects their behaviour and skills. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

You cannot control employees at the workplace, the company is focusing on family members and I cannot enhance my skills (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 2).

Diversity management practices are not implemented in the four organisations. For example, in company 1, most of the participants (in particular the owner) revealed that Lebanese family design businesses have ineffective diversity management practices. In company 1, the owner also confirmed that employing people from the same cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds is a significant issue for management. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

Diversity helps individuals to adhere the same traditions, religions, and behaviours from one person to another. In the company, individuals or teams are very conservative, and we have to respect the same social norms and traditions of the owner (HR manager and partner, male, 55 years old, company 1).

The empirical evidence shows that diversity remains a challenge for managing and engaging with employees (family members and non-family members) and employers in Lebanese family design businesses. The empirical evidence shows that team members cannot provide a broader range of ideas and potential solutions to a given problem. For example, Table 5.1 illustrates that non-family members perceive unfair training behaviours, resulting in direct conflict among family members as well as reducing productivity in the workplace. Most of the participants noted that employees with strong ties and relationship with owners are affecting the organisational performance by limiting

the rewards offered to non-family members and increasing the competition and discrimination they face in the workplace. Table 5.1 also indicates that training and development opportunities for non-family members are not included in the organisational goals and commitment. Most of the participants noted that the owners find it difficult to adhere to specific diversity management practices within the four organisations.

Table 5.1: Detailed overview of diversity management within the four organisations.

Diversity management practices	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3	Company 4
Learning about diversity	X	X	X	X
Providing training and development opportunities for family members	X	✓	✓	X
Discrimination in selecting employees for training and development	✓	✓	✓	✓
Developing the skills need to work in a team (a diverse workforce) and offering the same jobs to equally qualified employees	X	X	X	X
Examining employee practices to ensure that the company is not discriminating against anyone because his or her religion; ignoring stereotypes	X	X	X	X
Providing rewards to non-family members	X	✓	✓	X

✓ Means yes  
 X Means no

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.

Table 5.1 illustrates that there is a discrimination in the four companies. The empirical evidence showed that discrimination is still used to have a significant impact on internal workforce production, and the ability to retain and select employees. Discrimination relates to the behaviours, age, gender, religion of individuals in the Lebanese family design businesses. Discrimination also affects the employee engagement since non-family members cannot improve their skills and experiences to enhance competition among employees or to enable them to gain a reward. For example, non-family member

participants confirmed that they still face competitive disadvantages because equality and diversity are not ensured among family members within the workplace. The family environment also affects individual's productivity in the Lebanese family design businesses. Table 5.1 illustrates the factors influencing the diversity management among employees and employers in the Lebanese family design businesses. The empirical evidence shows that most of the participants (particularly non-family members) are not encouraged to increase and embrace diversity in the workplace. For example, non-family members pointed out that they cannot seek justice, rewards, or equality as they feel that the owner does not believe or understand what diversity means and how it can enhance performance and contribute to organisational success. Therefore, the empirical evidence shows that diversity management remains limited in the four organisations.

However, the literature review argues that Western organisations implement diversity management to become more creative and open to change (e.g., Mor-Barak, 2014; Storey *et al.*, 2014). Managing diversity is a social or moral or an issue that involves the conscience and it directly affects the organisational performance. The literature review also suggests that diversity management is a key component of effective employee management, which can develop their different social identities and achieve the organisational goals (see Chapter 2, sections 2.3 and 2.3.1). The literature review also argues that diversity management is related to positive business performance (e.g., Thomas, 1990; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2008). Furthermore, diversity management is becoming essential in organisations to recruit and retain employees with diverse background and abilities. The literature review suggests that managing diversity is becoming important in organisations to recruit employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds. However, the empirical evidence shows that diversity management is not implemented in Lebanese family design businesses as the owners recruit and select individuals based on their age, religion, and gender. The following section discusses and presents the challenges of managing creative performance within the Lebanese family design businesses.

## **5.4. Creative performance**

The third major theme (creative performance) describes the participants' experiences, performance, and activities in the workplace. Most of the participants noted that the engagement of talented employees based on their individual personalities also depends on their age, gender, religion, and age as well as experience. Furthermore, some participants stated that the way applicants for a job produce an idea or engage in a debate with the owner is considered to be an important factor in selecting or recruiting employees (non-family members) regardless of their level of creative thinking and the performance they are likely to produce in the Lebanese family design businesses.

The participants' personal views further identified the importance of religion, gender, and power within the data, which were then captured, evaluated, and given codes to ensure accurate data and accurate analysis results. The main sub-themes are: idea, trust, family strategy, law, gender, religion, and age. These sub-themes were identified during the analysis phase as key factors that contribute to creative performance. These sub-themes also provide evidence of lack of team spirit in the creative process and decision-making within design companies, as stated by participants. Identifying the relationship between creative performance (theme) and these sub-themes results in presenting meaning, thoughts and opinions of each participant. The researcher focuses on the coding and categories that emerged throughout the analysis process. Some participants confirmed that some managers do not encourage them as individuals to share new ideas. Furthermore, participants pointed out that they cannot share their strengths in promoting creativity. They also noted that this situation has resulted in tension and conflict within the workplace.



### 5.4.1. Idea

The first sub-theme that emerged from the data analysis was an idea. The idea is a key factor of creativity and the views of the participants within the Lebanese family design businesses. It is unclear how participants understand diversity and inclusion or act on emerging ideas. In company 1, most of the participants asserted that the identification of creativity is limited and the encouragement of creative workers remains low and undefined within the Lebanese family design businesses. Some participants (architect) confirmed that their employers reject their new ideas, which does not facilitate creativity in the workplace. It is evident from the assertion of the participants that individual creativities or inclinations towards promotion of a new idea are suppressed resulting in conflicts and tensions within the workplace. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quote:

We cannot share different feelings and ideas because the owner like to do the things that his ancestry believes is right for the business (2<sup>nd</sup> partner, Architect, male, 48 years old, company1).

Furthermore, it is difficult to find a definition of creative performance or creativity, as some participants did not address what constitutes the implementation and creation of creativity. For instance, in companies 2 and 4, some participants (owners) gave a basic definition of creativity and stated that creativity could influence and reflect their cultural values and practices that shape their daily habits or routines. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

Creative performance reflects on skills and experiences. It helps employees to learn and reflect on work that comes from their experiences and their personal skills by learning different ideas that are transformed into something original (General Manager, owner, male, company 2).

Creativity comes through principles and values because our employees deliver any original ideas with the presence of the founder in the company (General Manager, owner, male, 58 years old, company 4).

According to some craftsmen, the promotion of creativity is not undertaken in company 2. It is important to note that most of the participants revealed that they are not equally creative. For instance, some female participants stated that they do not have the same creative ability or the same personalities, and differ in terms of aspects such as self-control, conceptual flexibility, tenacity and perseverance, self-discipline, and the ability to integrate themselves into the creativity process without making prior judgements. The engagement of employees (non-family members) is also not related efficiently by organisations to their human resource strategies and practices, as captured by participants. Furthermore, it is evident that a creative process in the workplace is not harnessed to creating and retaining a viable creative (diverse) workforce within the Lebanese family design businesses. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

It is difficult to explain certain ideas because some employees compete against you and you cannot share your own ideas (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 2).

I cannot change the family and their business...I personally work hard but I was never assessed because it is a religious environment and I cannot get promotions (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 45 years old, company 2).

The empirical evidence shows that creative insights can occur during unexpected moments. Most of the participants confirmed that creativity, or what appears to be inspiration, is in many instances (no more than) a dawning realisation of concepts that have been germinating silently in the subconscious for some time. Furthermore, some participants noted that it is difficult to show their level of creativity, as they cannot establish positive communication with the owners or managers, which would provide employees with positive feelings of achievement and would encourage employees to think around ideas rather than reject their ideas and understand their knowledge, opinions, and experiences. For example, most of the participants noted that they could not generate or protect new ideas, resulting in tensions and conflicts among groups. In particular, some architects believed that new ideas do not flow across different level of employees because the owner controls each design and project. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

We may face technical problems because we work with old techniques, smelling and making wood is my passion...I trust family members and I am able to speak to any employees if he/she follows the same rules and values that I provide in the office (2<sup>nd</sup> partner, Architect, male, 48 years old, company 1).

We create ideas in a limited time. We use traditional forms so that we are inspired by our tradition and history. It is a difficult thing, and we listen to the owner if we fail as a group. His power forces us to finish the project in a specific time (Junior Architect, male, 38 years old, company 4).

While employers and managers in companies 2 and 3 confirm that creativity is not essential, the companies also lack resources and skills and cannot provide sufficient tools to manage employee performance. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

Employees are working with limited resources at the company because the family company works on connecting family members together and building their professional development (HR manager and partner, male, 58 years old, company 2).

We are still suffering from a lack of professionals; the company does not support manufacturing processes in order to create ideas and produce a design (Co-founder, male, 34, company 3).

Creative performance protects the business by using a traditional management style. We rely on internal and external networks to take advantage of all opportunities and to improve our business (Co-founder, male, 34 years old, company 3).

The empirical evidence shows that creativity affects individual performance in the workplace, which is confirmed by participants. Most of the participants further emphasised that creativity has a negative impact on an individual's skills and experience. However, the literature review suggests that creativity has a positive impact on individuals and results in organisations achieving a sustainable competitive advantage (see Chapter 2; EC, 2014a). This means that reflecting upon creativity is also always about questioning the meaning of creativity in a social context, particularly in the Lebanese context. Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that the effect of creativity remains unclear in the four organisations.

The literature review also argues that creativity requires domain expertise and knowledge; creative performance also requires a set of skills specific to creativity (e.g., Amabile, 1998). Previous studies demonstrate the importance of understanding the role of creativity in an organisation (see Chapter 2). The literature review on this subject also suggests that creativity can have a positive impact on individuals, groups within an organisation, 'if they are flexible, innovative, customer focused, and both proactive and reactive in their business strategies' (Lenihan *et al.*, 2010, p. 3). Amabile (1998) argues that creativity reinforces different problem-solving skills and experimentation to improve employee creativity (see Chapter 2). However, participants noted that it is difficult to generate new ideas since they are allowed to copy any ideas from magazines or online websites and do not need to ask for the right to reproduce and imitate the ideas. The literature review argues that imitation is visible among the majority of the design companies in Lebanon. Therefore, it is essential to implement intellectual property law to foster creativity among employees, managers, and employers in the Lebanese family design businesses.

### 5.4.2. Trust

A second sub-theme that emerged from the data analysis was trust. Trust is an essential factor in leadership style and creative performance. In the empirical evidence, participants stated that there is a high level of conflict in the organisations, which inhibits trust and creativity in the workplace. For instance, most of the participants revealed that managers are not equipped to recruit and develop creativity in the workplace. Architect participants also said that they are not able to share different viewpoints on creativity or put forward new ideas, and this has led to mistrust and low motivation. Furthermore, in companies 3 and 4, interior designer participants stated that their knowledge, intelligence, personality, and motivation do not stimulate team performance in their organisations because the owner shares decision-making or new ideas among family members only.

Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

The owner teaches the team to recognise every ideas; listening and interacting among our design team is always difficult (Junior Architect, male, 38 years old, company 4).

It is difficult to share [your] own ideas because your manager will not accept them. Some designers feel embarrassed because the owner does not reply or comment on their own idea (Senior Interior designer, male, 42 years old, company 3).

The empirical evidence also revealed that trust has an impact on creativity. Most of the participants noted that they cannot communicate well or make decisions that will create ideas among groups within the workplace. For example, some craftsmen revealed that they cannot share their ideas with family members. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

Creative performance makes individuals reject power. I only share ideas with the owner and I cannot express my opinion freely. I should respect his power and authority and sometime I cannot adjust my ideas. He controls everything (2<sup>nd</sup> Craftsman, male, 34 years old, company 4).

I use traditional tools or products rather than focusing on preserving craft objects and encouraging artisans to continue to produce craft and to pass my skills and knowledge onto others. Many of these objects are used for a short time and should not be taught to outsiders (Junior Architect, male, 38 years old, company 4).

In company 2, HR managers and owners revealed that they cannot escape getting involved in conflicts with employees about sharing ideas, and this results in mistrust within the workplace. It is also evident from the empirical study that managers cannot promote trust and creativity among employees. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

I struggle to share ideas and my father (the owner) is responsible to collect the ideas and finish the projects (HR manager and partner, male, 58 years old, company 2).

It is difficult to have an excellent team. We tend to overcome conflicts by giving employees commission and rewards for their activities within the company (General Manager, owner, male, company 2).

The empirical evidence shows that trust is not achieved in the Lebanese family design businesses. Some of the participants confirmed that employers and managers do not motivate them or encourage them to share different ideas and opinions in groups. Other participants also revealed that they could not enhance their creative personalities, personal skills, or competencies because of a lack of creative performance in the workplace. Similarly, the owners choose to select and recruit family members, they are likely to trust. The empirical evidence further demonstrates that trust is negatively associated with creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses. Many participants have argued that managers focus on understanding their family members and friends, which does not encourage new ideas or implementation of creative ideas. Most of the respondents also agreed that communication between employees and employers is essential to effectively reduce conflict in the workplace. The empirical evidence shows that employees in design companies are unable to overcome mistrust and conflicts in the workplace, resulting in the increasing need to manage diversity and change the organisational goals of the Lebanese family design businesses.

The empirical evidence demonstrates that managing creativity and diversity is difficult to achieve within the Lebanese context. Creativity is restricted, and employees struggle to share ideas together due to mistrust and conflict among non-family members (minority group) and family members. These components of the complex relationship between trust and creativity reflect on individual behaviours, moods and job dissatisfaction. The

relationship between emotions, moods, and creativity is revealed in the participants' response to the empirical evidence. Most of the participants stated that they feel angry and sad when they cannot share ideas, receive recognition or support in teams and they do not receive rewards for their achievements. Amabile (1998) also affirms that it is possible that moods affect creativity indirectly and prevent employees from producing creative ideas.

The empirical evidence also shows that individuals have low motivation when they cannot quickly engage with managers in teams, as they cannot contribute to high levels of creative performance. Particularly when they work with ideas and materials, they cannot access new ideas from other employees, a situation that has resulted in the loss of employees and their creative performance. The empirical evidence, however, shows that employers risk reducing organisational creativity by recruiting employees who are unable to share common values, attitudes, and interests in the creative process. However, the literature review suggests that a diverse group with different knowledge and skills can increase autonomy and diversity, which are essential stimuli for creativity and can improve the implementation of ideas within Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 2). Ely and Thomas (2001) argue that poor communication between teams can affect employee performance. The empirical evidence indicates that distrust, poor quality creative performance, and a lack of creative performance can have a negative impact on employees' skills and individual development in the workplace.

### 5.4.3. Family strategy

The sub-theme family strategy emerged from the data analysis. Family strategy reflects the owner's authority and responsibility in promoting or inhibiting creativity in the four organisations. Family strategy explores the behaviour of the owner and focuses on issues and challenges influencing creativity among employees and employers in the Lebanese design businesses. Most of the participants expressed their views on creativity and struggled to openly answer the research questions about creative performance.

For instance, in companies 2 and 4, most of the participants revealed that creativity has directly affected their personality, thinking, achievement, and motivation. For example, craftsmen participants confirmed that they could not think creatively and solve problems efficiently, which affects their creative performance. Furthermore, architects declared that the owner controls their identity by making decisions that are only suitable for their family members or business objectives. In addition, architects mentioned that the owner gains power, particularly at high managerial and professional levels, and depends on power to transform individual interests (family members) into activities. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

We follow the owner's strategies and directions (1<sup>st</sup> craftsman, company 2).

It is still difficult to communicate with others because some employees always tend to ignore my skills and experiences. Some designers sometimes reject my ideas and rely on one group over another. To avoid these problems, I communicate with the senior manager or the owner and explain my ideas before the meeting (Senior Architect, male, 29 years old, company 2).

I work with designers and we always try to identify our views. It is a difficult thing, and we listen to the owner if we fail as a group. His power forces us to finish the project in a specific time (Junior Architect, male, 38 years old, company 4).

The empirical evidence shows that employers in companies 1 and 3 focus on family strategy, which includes belief, knowledge, art, and customs of a family member. Most of the participants noted that the owner shares the benefit of his position and personal status



to others (family members) and uses it against non-family members. Furthermore, some participants in company 2 also confirmed that employees cannot suggest new ideas due to company's policy and management. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

I make sure that my employees take these initiatives to attract our client's attention and protect our heritage and history not only from a family perspective but also from a community side that I believe it is very an important part of the Lebanese society (2<sup>nd</sup> partner, Architect, male, 48 years old, company 1).

Family members and relatives can be engaged and obtain an appropriate job provided by the owner (HR manager and partner, male, 58, company 2).

I trust the family members and senior peers who worked with us in the previous years. Employees cannot identify their ideas due to the company's complexities and because they cannot overcome their limited technological knowledge (Co-founder, male, 34 years old, company 3).

Therefore, the empirical evidence shows that the family strategy affects employees within the workplace. The literature review research found support in Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimension theory, with Lebanon scoring 75 in the power distance dimension and 65 in the masculinity dimension. Similarities and support were found in the extensive literature regarding the reasons why some people in the Lebanese family design businesses suggest that engaging with employees as a diverse group will ultimately increase the organisational outcomes (see Chapter 2).

#### 5.4.4. Law

The sub-theme law presents an organisational structure that does not protect employees' creativity and creates limitations for individual employees. Law also reflects on the achievements of employers in Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the participants revealed that managing the IP internally and externally is difficult to undertake in Lebanese family design businesses. In addition, participants confirmed that IP is not formally protected in Lebanon. For example, one of the HR managers and owners confirmed that some legal issues prevent them from managing and developing the organisations' creative performance. In companies 1 and 2, most of the participants (managers and owners) declared that the owners do not register any piece of furniture and thus invention does not take place when an object or product is successfully introduced in the firm's strategy. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

The company has the right to include only their brand name without including the name of any craftsmen and their aspirations. We are a private company and it is not necessary to register freelancers or make contracts with them. We are not free to send any documentary progress to the Lebanese government (HR manager and partner, male, company 1).

We do not grant protection of the design in the meantime (HR manager and partner, male, 58 years old, company 2).

We do not have any direct job related to changes in legislation or government targets as a privately owned business (General Manager, owner, male, company 2).

I regret to say that we do not have a law to protect idea (General Manager, owner, male, company 2).

On the other hand, in companies 3 and 4, most of the participants noted that they cannot protect their ideas because the owner does not give them an opportunity to share skills, views, and ideas. For instance, most of the craftsmen revealed that the owner shares the same customs and ideas as family members and abides by the same laws as them. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

The owner owns every idea; he also gives a formal warning if he finds that some designers are selling ideas (Architect, male, 41 years old, company 3).

The owner controls every idea. He is responsible for valuing our ideas and accepting them, he can also refuse any ideas (1<sup>st</sup> Craftsman, male, 50 years old, company 4).

The empirical evidence shows that Lebanese family design businesses ignore the diversity and creativity dimension but act within the constraints of the WIPO's law and agreement. Most of the participants noted that they find it difficult to register an idea under intellectual property law. The empirical evidence also shows that the owners do not record any ideas in an international agreement. The empirical evidence also finds that most of the owner do not introduce intellectual property rules or rewards into the organisations. As a result of this, as the empirical evidence shows, ideas and knowledge in the workforce are not associated with WIPO's law. Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that most of the participants are not encouraged to promote creativity or foster diversity in the workplace. Therefore, the empirical evidence opposes the literature review and illustrates that employers do not follow the WIPO's agreement or rules about protecting the creativity and identity of a design or a product within the Lebanese family design businesses.

The empirical evidence from this research shows that creativity is different in Eastern societies like Lebanon. However, the literature review shows that Lebanon is a signatory to several international agreements relating to intellectual property rights. Lebanon started the process for accession to the World Trade Organisation in 1999, but could not join until 2018 because of its failure to properly implementing the basic required conditions (The Daily Star, 2009, International Intellectual Property Alliance, 2010; Ministry of Economy and Trade, 2016a). However, the empirical evidence confirms that the development of new ideas remains limited because most employers do not encourage this. This is because employers do not reference any piece of furniture in a particular legal document, such as a licensing agreement. Although the government inspects private companies occasionally to make sure that security measures are respected and enforced within the workplace, most of the participants indicated that most of their employers have

been struggling to maintain security measures such as implementing diversity, training programmes, and preventing IP violations among employees.

The literature review shows that the private sector does not always respect Lebanese law and employees often do not sue their companies for the non-application of the law (see Chapter 2; WIPO, 2009). It is therefore essential to protect ideas in firms to sustain economic growth through supportive national macroeconomic and competition policies such as those that protect a design (e.g., patent design, patent, trademarks, or copyrights). The empirical evidence shows that Lebanese family design businesses cannot maintain sustainable business environments and allow the creator, or owner, of a patent, brand, or copyrights to benefit from his or her work or investment). Meanwhile, the literature review further acknowledges that creativity varies from one society to another. In Western societies, creativity can help employees in organisations to embrace diversity as a management concept to reduce conflict and increase their creative skills in the workplace (see Chapter 2).

### 5.4.5. Gender

The sub-theme gender reflects individuals' behaviours, activities, and performance in Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the participants revealed that creativity has a direct effect on their emotions, motivations, and perceptions during a workday. For example, female participants found it difficult to make progress within the Lebanese family design businesses. A few female participants declared that they could not cope with diversity and equality in the workplace. Female participants also revealed that they could not share their views, skills, or experiences among employees to create ideas and make decisions within the workplace. Because of these limitations, female participants highlighted barriers to career progression and career advancement along with prejudices that make it difficult for them to enhance their performance within the organisation. Moreover, some female participants mentioned that they had difficulty in coping with men, including men's lack of support for them, and they had a lack of confidence in their own abilities to coordinate their activities and ideas with those of men. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

I am not encouraged to create new ideas. The owner does not support me. I am required to work on the same idea and every idea belongs to the owners even if I am the first designer who creates it (Junior Architect, female, 28 years old, company 3).

I cannot make decisions about the ideas that would be interesting or useful. There are some restrictions if I need some equipment that I do not have (Junior Architect, female, 28 years old, company 3).

These statements confirm that gender stereotypes still exist in Lebanon. For example, female participants confirmed that gender roles have been influencing their personalities and their relationships with other employees. The empirical evidence shows that gender inequality is still a distinguishing feature in Lebanon, a Middle Eastern country, where women are often excluded from exchanging and exploring ideas with teams; they are likely to find it much more difficult to cope with employers' cultures and competing responsibilities. Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that women see themselves as working with traditional values and norms, which affects their career and professional development. Most of the female participants revealed that gender inequality means that support is provided to male family members but the perception and role of women are

excluded and their roles continue to be traditionally predetermined by males; men see women's main role as taking on family responsibilities. Therefore, women do not enjoy freedom or protection; they are likely to encounter constraints to working freely and sharing their ideas with employees in Lebanese family design businesses.

In addition, in companies 3 and 4, most of the participants (non-family members) explained that they feel that they are sometimes isolated as they cannot interact well with teams and owners as Lebanese family businesses have traditionally reinforced patriarchal patterns of authority within the business world. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

Traditional ideas are true and real. I try to work with traditions to give clients the best ideas they are thinking [about] or looking for. I think that tradition can solve problems between employees and employers through maintaining the same tradition (Junior Interior Designer, male, 36 years old, company 3).

It is a closed environment and the company shares specific things with family employees and I am not able to share my views (Junior Architect, male, 38 years old, company 4).

I am not promoted to the top management position. My role and performance are not fairly evaluated in the workplace. I cannot enhance my choices, decision-making style, and work values among other employees. Sometimes, my salary is unpaid and I cannot charge the director (Junior Architect, female, 28 years old, company 3).

The empirical evidence shows that women face discrimination when they try to establish their identity and their creative performance. Thus, it is important that Lebanese family design businesses distinguish between men and women and provide a policy that aims at improving women's experiences throughout the company. The literature review suggests that an organisation may build a sustained competitive advantage by managing its employees and developing its practices in a way that increases the uniqueness of the organisation, which is key to gaining a competitive advantage (Mor-Barak, 2014). Specifically, when employees display creativity at work, they generate new ideas that are useful in dealing with the tasks at hand (e.g., Amabile, 1998, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that women in Lebanese family design businesses cannot challenge existing masculine norms and power. The empirical evidence also shows that most of the female participants adhere to principles and rules that affect their performance and creative work (including having temporary or illegal work) in the Lebanese family design businesses in this study. For instance, the empirical evidence reveals that employees, including women in Lebanon, face a low level of job satisfaction and self-perception because the work they do is underpaid, repetitive, basic, and unproductive because they have to adhere to the owners' beliefs, principles, and rules in the workplace. The empirical evidence also shows that an individual's identity, ambitions, and lifestyle affect all employees' work in the creative labour force (family members and non-family members) in Lebanese family design businesses.

For example, most of the female participants pointed out that the owners do not allow them to create new ideas, this restriction on creativity can contribute to inhibiting the production of ideas by individuals and teams and therefore it can reduce individuals' motivation and personal resources in the workplace (see Chapter 2). In addition, the empirical evidence indicates that the level of creativity that an employer allows an employee to use affects the creative work of individuals, particularly women. Most of the female participants noted that the owners do not encourage individuals (including women) to create new ideas or allow them to express their viewpoints, perspectives, or knowledge in groups within the Lebanese family design businesses. This problem derives from family power relations and creates an imbalance between employees, and this affects the performance of employees (especially women) and their opportunities to create original ideas in the Lebanese family design businesses.

The lack of gender diversity has a negative impact on team creativity, and it increases inequality between women and men in the Lebanese family design businesses. The literature review acknowledges that women are consequently forced to accept low pay and insecure employment (going freelance or having short-term contracts) (e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Oakley *et al.*, 2017). The empirical evidence reveals that inequality in Lebanon is associated with salary differences between men and women. The empirical

evidence also shows that there is a lack of knowledge about and understanding of the role of creativity in Lebanese society. Most of the female participants noted that a talented woman cannot, as a creative person, create and produce ideas or express their skills and experiences in groups at work, and this therefore leads to increasing conflict between women and men (including non-family members) in the Lebanese family design businesses.

The literature review argues that diversity improves decision-making and problem-solving among employees (see Chapter 2). According to Florida (2005), diversity can improve decision-making, increase tolerance, and create job opportunities for creative workers in organisations (e.g., creative sectors). However, the empirical evidence shows that the lack of gender diversity cannot sustain diversity; it increases ethnic conflict between women and men in the workplace. For example, most of the participants noted that (ethnic) conflict has a negative impact on diversity and institutional efficiency because the owners always favour members of their own group (e.g., recruiting and selecting males for high positions, paying low wages to women, and undervaluing women). Furthermore, some female participants noted that this conflict can result in the promotion of stereotypical forms of creative activity done by women and men when managing diversity, accepting individuals' differences, and promoting creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. In Chapter 2, following Florida's creative city policy, the literature review argues that diverse and tolerant cities can attract companies and investment, especially in the design sectors, in order to attract and retain employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds in Lebanese society.

The empirical evidence reveals that women aged 35 or older are particularly under-represented compared with both men of the same age and women aged under 35 (see Chapter 3, Table 3.3). The literature review argues that women are still offered low pay and little recognition in organisations (e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Jamali *et al.*, 2010; Eikhoff, 2012; see Chapter 2). Therefore, inequality in wages does exist in the creative industries in Lebanon. The empirical evidence shows that women continue to be under-represented in many occupations. Most of the female participants revealed that they are not promoted



into senior positions and that they face a powerful class pay gap in Lebanese family design businesses including male predominance regarding craftspeople skills in Lebanese family design businesses. For example, most of the male participants (especially General managers and craftsmen) pointed out that women are paid a low salary because they must look after their children and household as men household as men are more likely to be able to provide a higher level of financial support than women, who usually have a lower income. In addition, some female participants noted that their salary is often unpaid because the owners are facing some debt and they wait for clients to pay in full their purchases before paying this salary.

This inequality between men and women in Lebanon inhibits the creative work of employees and often affects under-represented groups (women and employees from minority backgrounds) in the Lebanese family design businesses. This gender inequality highlights the organisational structures and working conditions and shows some significant barriers for women and uncertainty between men and women in the workplace. This inequality is also characterised by the reproduction of powerful family networks, hiring men as senior managers and administrators (such as human resource managers), providing training programmes for family members only, and increasing discriminatory pay gaps in the Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, the lack of gender diversity has a negative impact on creativity and culture in the Lebanese family design businesses.

#### 5.4.6. Religion

The sub-theme religion plays an important factor in creating ideas within the Lebanese family design businesses. The interconnection between religion and creativity describes a belief system that is inflexible, intolerant of new ideas, and encourages conformity to traditions and authority in organisations. In company 1, most of the participants showed that creativity is negatively associated with faith, power, and culture. For instance, participants confirmed that creativity is related to religion and that they are responsible for providing religious design forms when producing an idea. For example, in companies 2 and 4, some participants stated that they cannot freely express themselves when trying to find solutions to problems because religion directly or indirectly has to shape creativity because that is the unwritten rule of the organisation. This means that religion affects their view of creativity and their behaviours as individuals. Some of these points are illustrated in the quotes below:

Creating new ideas does not dynamically influence the owner and the company as a creative industry. We always work to present traditional religious ideas (2<sup>nd</sup> partner, Architect, male, 48 years old, company 1).

We share tools and activities with employees that have the same point of view and beliefs. We also believe that family members have the same personal development and benefits (General Manager, owner, company 2).

I create ideas and materials that are possible to use with a religious style. It is better to work with cheap and traditional materials because you can then create more ideas (Junior Interior Designer, female, 45 years old, company 4).

I am surprised that we cannot separate my ideas from religion. For example, I have signed some papers that make the owner control my idea and I have to use religious forms in my drawings. We cannot build a sofa if we do not include arabesque or Islamic forms (Junior Architect, male, 38 years old, company 4).

The empirical evidence shows that creativity becomes increasingly important in assessing and examining employees' and employers' performance in the Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the participants confirmed that religion encourages traditional norms, which are related to increased submissiveness and conformity. In the workplace, the impact of religion provides an extensive research agenda which has not been empirically

tested in Lebanese family design businesses. The relationship between creativity and religion demonstrates that employees are likely to share the same customs, values, morals, beliefs, and creates the same art in the workforce. The literature review argues that religion has an impact on employees and the organisation as a whole. The presence of conceptual skills (e.g., communication) does distinguish between the different employees depending on skills they have but employers focus on religion in Lebanese family design businesses (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.3.3). The empirical evidence further shows that the owners consider religious affiliations when they accept or create ideas. The Lebanese family design businesses view religion as a creative boundary of their development and achievement.

Furthermore, most of the participants noted that religion is a fundamental aspect of tradition and family links in the workplace. For instance, some participants noted that religion (specifically Islam) is considered to be a dominant religion in Lebanese family design businesses, and the family structure and in particular the owner often focus on obedience, authority, loyalty, and respecting other members of the family in everyday life. The empirical evidence reveals that religion supports the perception that family responsibilities are one of the main barriers to career advancement among family members and non-family members. Thus, the owners rely on religious loyalties that are influenced by emotions and family ties to engage with employees by promoting religious affiliations, which increases conflicts between family members and non-family members and affects the creative performance of employees in the workplace.

The empirical evidence indicates that the owners recruit and select employees who are loyal and obedient and who express the same human beliefs and behaviours as them in order to continue the family power and rules that exist in the workplace through family structures and the style of management. This situation discusses that creativity is associated with traditions, values, and judgements which are mainly influenced by the backgrounds and judgement of individuals and their cultural values and aesthetic values to produce cultural products (e.g., Banaji and Burn, 2007; see Chapter 2). The empirical evidence reveals that creativity is inherent in the everyday cultural and symbolic practices of all human beings in the Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the participants

noted that cultural products do not help gifted and talented individuals to create and produce ideas. For example, some craftsmen pointed out that they are not allowed to learn new talents and skills and they have to work on ideas which reflect religion and certain values, have a particular material form, and are physically attached to human imagination across Lebanese society.

The empirical evidence shows that creativity has to be in religious forms, including working with religious materials and colours, and this enforces religious devotion and increases conflict family members and non-family members in the Lebanese family design businesses. The literature review argues that creativity is associated with a social and cultural context and reveals the conceptions of creative workers in the creative industries (Banaji and Burn, 2007; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010). The empirical evidence shows that creativity is influenced by Lebanese culture and that this culture has a profound influence on the identity of an individual who makes or uses cultural resources, materials, and traditional tools in the Lebanese family design businesses. For example, most of the participants noted that employers select and recruit employees they can trust in order to produce original ideas rather than using materials or tools or interacting with machines. Furthermore, some participants pointed out that managerial practices can influence their interests, behaviours, and creativity while completing a project or idea.

The literature review acknowledges that critical judgement about aesthetics and work values requires an understanding of the cultural work of artists (e.g., architects, interior designers, and craftsmen) and reflects cultural production and consumption in organisations (e.g., Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Saha, 2017). For instance, some participants noted that they could produce ideas through artistic expression, social interaction, and cultural acts in the workplace in order to satisfy the owners. The literature review argues that creativity is a concept marked by ambiguities and influenced by personal characteristics, interpersonal processes, social interactions, novel combinations of different perspectives, and information-sharing (e.g., Runco, 2007). The empirical evidence shows that creativity has a negative impact on individual differences,

personality, cognitive style, work style, and domain expertise. This example proposes that managing individual-level traits and behaviours can help the creative person to produce new ideas (e.g., Amabile, 1996; see Chapter 2). The empirical evidence also shows that owners do not provide resources (support for creativity) to individual employees, and this affects their performance, skills, and experiences, and the artwork produced by teams across the workplace. For instance, most of the participants (including women and non-family members) pointed out that the owners do not trust them and they feel less motivated and uncertain because the owners do not allow them to use materials or tools or to interact with machines; this contrasts with family members, who have the trust and confidence of the owners and are supported by them. This uncertainty and doubt have a negative impact on creativity and this affects the performance of employees, increases conflict, and reduces creativity in the workplace (see Chapter 2).

The empirical evidence reveals that the owners have faith in family members, relatives, and friends regarding in order to entering the labour market, and they support their ideas and participate in the production of Lebanese culture within the workplace; but employees from a minority background (those with a different nationality, women, and non-family members) experience assimilated social inequalities and is experienced unequal opportunities and rewards in the Lebanese family design businesses. The empirical evidence also shows that the owners control women's performance and skills and distrust their artistic ability to execute creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, the lack of religious diversity has a negative impact on creativity and creativity is shaped by the spiritual (faith) practice which underpins the creative work of employees in the Lebanese family design businesses.

#### 5.4.7. Age

The final sub-theme that emerged from the data analysis was age. Age is a key factor of creative performance in the workplace. Most of the participants revealed that the relationship between creativity and age influences their behaviours, interests, and experiences in an organisation. For example, some female participants mentioned that creativity affects their personality and skills, resulting in conflicts between young and older generations. Furthermore, most of the participants noted that the owners control the employees at high managerial and professional levels and make it difficult for individuals to develop their ideas when working in a team. On the other hand, some participants highlighted that age directly affects team creativity. Furthermore, some participants explained that being the same age has negative implications for management practices in the workplace. In companies 1 and 2, participants also stated that it is essential to work with the employees of the same age because it helps them to communicate even if they are unable to produce original and beneficial ideas. Some of these points are illustrated in the following quotes:

I am safe and secure when I communicate with old [of the same age] employees. It is necessary to follow rules and work with people with the same background, same educational level, and same culture. It makes me know them personally. I earn a salary based on my age and occupation (Architect, female, 38 years old, company 1).

I earn too little money, I am lower paid than family members, managers, and friends within the workplace. The director is overpaid and he earns more money than non-family members and acquaintances (Interior Designer, female, 36 years old, company 3).

I work with old craftsmen and we are unprepared to create better ideas. We always fail to communicate because of issues related to religion, norms, and beliefs that are affecting my personality and performance in the workplace (2<sup>nd</sup> craftsman, male, 45 years old, and company 2).

I only engage with the old male generation. We have mixed feelings and I make seniors feel comfortable and have a clear understanding about my contributions to the operation. I earn a small amount of money compared to the work I make every day. The owner and family members earn triple the money than I do (2<sup>nd</sup> craftsman, male, 45 years old, and company 2).

The empirical study shows that young employees cannot exchange or develop their ideas effectively with an older generation. Most of the participants are aged between 38 and 58 (see Chapter 3, Table 3.3). The empirical study shows that companies 1 and 2 control young generation and prevent them from sharing ideas and making decisions in groups. The young generation does not participate generally in Lebanese family design businesses. The owner selects employees based on their cultural and religious backgrounds, allowing the older generation (particularly family members) to find jobs quickly. The empirical evidence shows that the young generation faces barriers such as having their work and skills controlled within the organisation. Most of the participants revealed that the owner follows Lebanese culture and tends to control the level of commitment of an employee by executing power and making him or her follow the owner's beliefs and values, which affects the performance of employees in the Lebanese family design businesses.

The literature review argues that there are differences in creativity, particularly between the East and the West (see Chapter 2). The literature review also shows that creativity in the West fosters intrinsic motivation in a team (see Chapter 2). Therefore, the relationship between individuals' creativity and individuals' values influences cultural differences between Western and Eastern countries (e.g., individualism/collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, as noted by Hofstede, 2001) and creativity too (e.g., Amabile, 1998). It is therefore important to promote diversity and work with teams that are also made up of diverse individuals so that this will lead to creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. The literature review further suggests that recruiting and integrating employees of all ages is essential in order to increase the mixture of ages in small and medium enterprises (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.3.1).

Furthermore, some researchers claim that accepting all age groups in the workplace has a positive impact in terms of the issues facing organisational diversity and culture in the workplace (e.g., Böhm *et al.*, 2011). However, the empirical evidence shows that employers are likely to see the benefits of having older employees as a predominant benefit in the workplace, as articulated by participants. For example, most of the

participants also mentioned that an age restriction of 28 would have the effect of excluding more women than men, as many women often take time out of work in their twenties and thirties to look after children. Table 3.3 illustrates the distribution of organisational role by age (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that Lebanese employers engage with and accept ideas from older employees. In addition, table 3.3 shows that the participation of young employees is limited since participants noted that young employees are not recognised to any great degree by the owners in the four organisations.

The empirical evidence shows that young participants face competitive disadvantages compared with older employees and managers. For example, young participants explained how they experienced career difficulties in the workplace. This is evidence that opportunities are linked to demographic factors in Lebanon. There are age differences between employees and employers in Lebanese family design businesses, and it is important to examine the effect of age on creative performance. This research study provides evidence on the impact of age differences on creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the participants also revealed that there is a lack of motivation to work with people of different ages and to socialise, train, and have other experiences with employees of different ages within the Lebanese design businesses. As discussed in the previous section, the employer's goal is focused on building and influencing family connections, which does not allow family members to build strong social networks and relationship with employees of different ages.

Therefore, the empirical evidence explores the relationship between age, culture, and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. The literature review argues that age is a key component that reflects employee perception in an organisation and in society (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.3.1). However, most of the participants revealed that they face difficulties in working with people of different ages affects their interests and motives, resulting in conflicts between individuals and teams in the workplace. They also mentioned that competition between young and older people (including competing in groups because of age differences might affect their careers and activities in the



workplace. Having mainly older age groups in Lebanese design businesses indicates the low level of participation of young employees. Therefore, age is one of the main barriers to women's and men's career advancement in the Lebanese family design businesses.

The literature review also demonstrates that creative justice is an attempt to pay respect and do justice to low-skilled workers and migrants, which includes respecting the rules and laws that exist in the workplace (e.g., Banks, 2017; see Chapter 2). The empirical evidence reveals that the attitude towards younger employees in the workplace has a negative impact on the development of creative ideas under the conditions of workers having a low level of control over their job and a low level of support that exist in the Lebanese family design businesses. Furthermore, the empirical evidence showed that most of the employers prefer to work with employees of similar age. For example, some participants pointed out the owners continue to share creative ideas with older employees, and this may affect the performance of employees and leads to cut down the salary between young and old employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. Some of the young employees (aged between 28 and 38 years old) and craftsmen (non-family members) noted that family members, especially men, are paid the highest salary rate available in the workplace but that no women are paid at that rate in the Lebanese family design businesses.

The empirical evidence shows that female participants and non-family members earn the lowest wage (US\$450 to US\$900 per month); the older employees (e.g., general managers) aged between 45 and 55 years earn the highest wage. Most of the participants revealed that a general manager can earn US\$6,000 to US\$9,000 per month and a human resource manager (male) can earn US\$600 to US\$2,500. Most of the female participants said that they earn less money because they have a low level of control over their job and that the negative attitude towards young people in the workplace regarding the relationship between age and the development of creative ideas negatively affects their occupations, skills, and experiences in the Lebanese family design businesses. Furthermore, female participants noted that these work conditions prevent them from fostering creativity and freely generating creative ideas when they are working with other

employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. The literature review suggests that generating more creative ideas in this situation includes improving the employee's position and performance at work when necessary and enlarging certain degrees of employees' freedom (e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Eikhoff, 2012; Amabile, 1998; see Chapter 2).

The literature review also indicates that women are paid less than men in the UK creative industries (e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Eikhoff, 2012; see Chapter 2). The empirical evidence suggests that older employees have the experience and the self-confidence to develop creative ideas independently and to control the jobs and the creativity of younger employees (including women and non-family members). For example, most of the older male participants noted that younger employees face constraints and that they might lack the skills to successfully create ideas and to carry out the creative work task in groups; they thought that this stimulates learning and the application of knowledge and skills leads to a higher salary. The empirical evidence also shows that older employees in the Lebanese family design businesses seem to stick to the routine way of solving problems and developing ideas that is less creative. Moreover, some of the young participants noted that they get stuck in work routines because older employees do not allow them to develop their skills and creativity.

Furthermore, most of the participants pointed out that the owners do not allow them to work with free resources that could be used for some of the creative tasks, including creative problem-solving. For example, younger employees (participants) stated that they should be able to create ideas and be motivated to introduce original ideas to improve their experiences and skills and gain a benefit from increasing their chances of promotion and being rewarding for their performance at work. They also said that a positive relationship among employees (especially between older and younger employees) should be observed to reduce conflict, improve the performance of employees, and facilitate the process of taking decisions; they added that employees' salary should be increased and that training programmes should be provided for younger employees within the Lebanese family design businesses. Younger employees emphasised that when they were

discussing problems and creative solutions with others, older employees were attributed with an expert status because they have more expertise and knowledge due to their increased working experience, their senior positions earn more money, and their experience in dealing with problems and speaking to clients within the workplace. Consequently, the empirical evidence shows that older employees' motivation can affect the role of younger employees, because older employees tend to be less creative, and this affects younger employees' position, experience, knowledge, and skills when they are generating creative ideas in teams within the workplace. Thus, older employees maintain family power or even reduce creativity to strengthen their position at work when younger employees are trying to generate creative ideas in the Lebanese family design businesses.

In addition, the empirical evidence indicates that younger employees are discouraged from developing creative ideas in the workplace. The literature review suggests that creativity facilitates and enhances the quality of an original idea used by individuals in order to increase an individual's motivation, performance, and skills (e.g., Amabile, 1998) and help older employees to overcome negative age stereotypes (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.3.1). However, the empirical evidence shows that the level of control that employers have over employees' job cannot generate and enhance creative ideas at work. For example, most of the participants (non-family members) noted that they feel less motivated in the workplace because they do not receive supportive feedback that involves sharing knowledge and skills to develop a creative idea in order to solve problems easily or to improve their original work. These negative age stereotypes are related to a lower self-efficacy regarding performing creative tasks (e.g., Amabile, 1998); older employees are likely to have a lower self-efficacy regarding their creativity at work and their expectations of themselves.

Furthermore, most of the younger employees pointed out that older employees are generally perceived and evaluated as less productive, less creative, and less flexible. The empirical evidence reveals that older employees generally possess more working experience, task-specific knowledge, and skills and have therefore developed more routines in their professions in Lebanese family design businesses. However, the

literature review argues that experience and the associated knowledge that includes domain-relevant skills are essential in organisations for producing ideas and increasing creativity among employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds (e.g., Amabile, 1998; see Chapter 2). Therefore, the lack of age diversity has a negative impact on creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses.

## **5.5. Summary**

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the cross-analysis and interprets the findings of this research study. The chapter also analyses the data collected through the view of employees, HR managers, and employers to explain the role of cultural diversity, diversity management, and creative performance within the design company's context. The chapter then discusses the data collected and presents the major themes and sub-themes arising from the point of views of the participants in order to maintain the quality of the data analysis by assuring the validity and reliability of the research results across the entire sample, as suggested by Yin (2009). Finally, the chapter identifies the different interpretations applied to analyse the findings and show the challenges of diversity management and creativity in the Lebanese context. The following chapter discusses the outcomes of the revised conceptual framework.



## **6.0. CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the outcomes of the revised conceptual framework. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section discusses the absence of implementing IP in Lebanon. The second section discusses the factors affecting the role of diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses. The third section presents the findings of the revised conceptual framework and discusses the results of evaluating the three questions that were explored in Chapters 1 and 2. Finally, the revised conceptual framework is constructed using the findings from the literature review, the empirical evidence, and the research questions in order to illustrate the key relationships between the three main aspects selected: cultural diversity influences, diversity management perspectives, and creative performance across the four organisations chosen from within the Lebanese context.

Before presenting the outcomes of the revised conceptual framework, it is important to note that the empirical findings revealed existing contextual factors (religion, gender, age, family power, issues concerning IP rights and law) that affect creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. It is thus highly important to assess the findings of this research within the parameters of existing Lebanese contextual realities. It is also important to highlight that diversity management in Lebanon is not practised within Lebanese family design businesses with less emphasis on and recognition of its strategic application and implications. Therefore, this chapter discusses the definition of diversity and creativity in order to present a cumulative knowledge base in the study of creativity within the Lebanese context. Answers to questions about how creativity influences people's beliefs, judgment, decision-making, and actions in Lebanese family design businesses will be discussed in the next section.

## **6.2. The absence of implementing IP in Lebanon**

This Thesis presented the lack of creativity in the four organisations within the Lebanese context. The findings revealed that the implementation of IP is negatively affecting the work of employees in the creation of new ideas in the Lebanese family design businesses. The findings also revealed that the definition of creativity is based on creating traditional designs and copying ideas from someone else without copyright. The findings also showed that the owners do not give some individuals the rights to produce original ideas so that they can register these ideas in their names as well. Therefore, the results show that the Lebanese family design businesses cannot exploit the invention of new ideas through the production of new ideas and licensing these ideas in a legal agreement, which means IP law is not sufficiently implemented in Lebanese family design businesses.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the four organisations do not adhere to the standard requirement and international agreements on strengthening the protection of IP rights (copyrights, patents, and design) in Lebanon (WIPO, 2009, 2013). The findings also revealed that the owners have not provided an adequate examination of the use of IP rights in their organisations because of the absence of effective patent protection within the administrative system in the Lebanese labour market. In the absence of effective patent protection, Lebanese family design businesses have not developed distinctive IP law to have a license agreement in order to produce a product and protect the employees' creative skills and rights, which is a strong factor contributing to the limited use of patents and copyrights in Lebanon.

Moreover, the empirical findings revealed the impact of religion on creativity within the four organisations. The findings found that the presence of religious objects had a negative impact on the skills of employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. Furthermore, the findings showed that employers in Lebanese furniture companies focus on enforcing family power and rules that allow family members to produce and create traditional (religious) ideas rather than focusing on the creation of new ideas among a certain type of employees, including women and non-family members. The researcher identified the need for creativity based on novelty and the protection of IP rights is

viewed as an incentive to product development in the Lebanese furniture companies. The implication of religious institutions determines the political and social governance of people in Lebanese family design businesses. The Lebanese family design businesses emphasise on existing framework to remain grounded in kinship dominance to create social control and family authorisation to maintain their religious beliefs and reinstate their management on an illegal agreement, and bringing patriarchal and sectarian structure, which is destabilising the legal right of implementing IP in Lebanon. The researcher identified the need for creativity based on creating and reinforcing IP law in Lebanese family design businesses. Previous studies highlighted the importance of the definition of creativity based on novelty and on the implementation of IP in Western organisations (e.g., WIPO, 2009, 2013). Creativity based on novelty and the value of IP can increase the creation of new products in order to solve problems among groups, enforce IP law against infringement within the administrative and juridical system in Lebanon (WIPO, 2009; 2013). The next section presents the role of diversity management practices in Lebanon.



### **6.3. Diversity Management Practices in Lebanon**

The investigation into the role of diversity management within the Lebanese context showed that diversity management is understood differently to the dominant literature, in a cultural context and so is practised differently within the context of the four organisations. The findings further revealed that Muslim religion is affecting the engagement of employees in the workplace. The findings also revealed that the absence of diversity management is affecting the organisational structure, values, and principles within the four organisations and in the Lebanese society as a whole.

This thesis presented the relationship between diversity management practices, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses. The role of diversity management was the focus of this thesis in the Lebanese context. The empirical findings revealed existing cultural factors (e.g., religion, gender, and age) had an influence on shaping the understanding and practice of diversity management and accordingly affects the role of employees, employers, and HR managers in Lebanese family design businesses. The findings showed that employers in Lebanese furniture companies focus on family members and give less emphasis to non-family members. The researcher identified the need for diversity management in Lebanese furniture companies.

Furthermore, the findings revealed the absence of the diversity perspectives and management in the furniture companies within the Lebanese context. Previous studies highlighted that diversity management is becoming important in organisations in order to increase the cultural diversity of employees (e.g., Cox and Blake, 1991; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2011). Diversity management can promote creativity and solve problems among employees by emphasising on human resource practices (e.g., training and development and performance) in order to foster social interactions within a group and therefore improved performance (Mor-Barak, 2014, 2015). The next section illustrates the revised conceptual framework and discusses the results of the research questions.

## 6.4. Revised Conceptual Framework

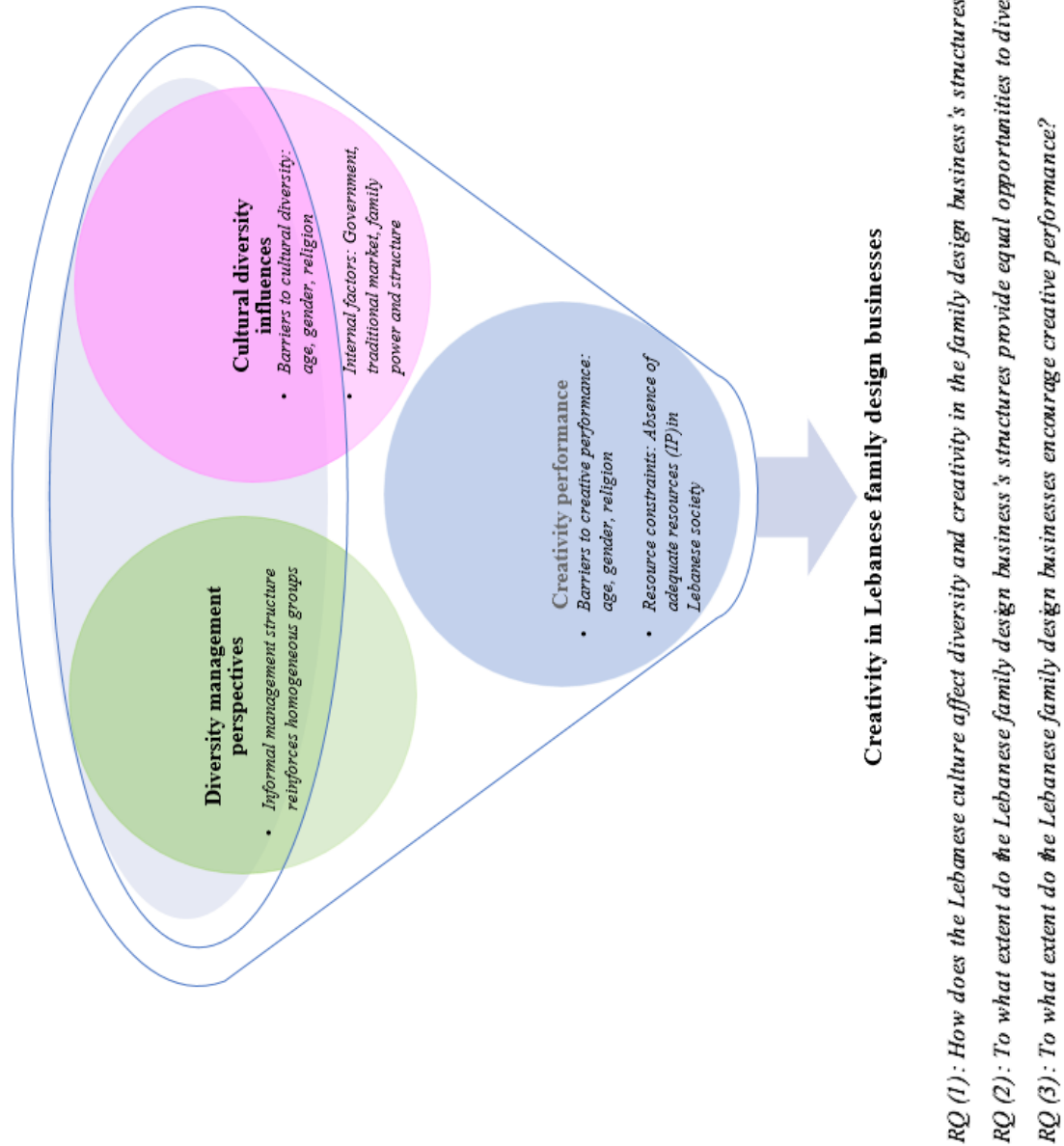


Figure 6.1: Revised sample of the conceptual framework.

Figure 6.1 presents the results of evaluating the research questions discussed in Chapter 2 (see section 2.6). The three main aspects of the conceptual framework are also included to verify the development of the three research questions of the research study (see Chapters 1 and 2). This revised conceptual framework includes a review of diversity management practice and creativity in the Lebanese context. Moreover, the revised conceptual framework (see Figure 6.1) presents the lack of diversity management and creativity within the Lebanese context. Furthermore, the data analysis allows an evaluation of the research questions (see Figure 6.1). In this revised conceptual framework, each question follows the data analysis and the findings of this research and its influence on cultural diversity, diversity management, and creative performance within the Lebanese family design businesses (see Figure 6.1). The three research questions included in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 and the empirical analysis in Chapters 4 and 5; indicate the absence of diversity management practices and creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses.

The results from the examination of the four organisations revealed that diversity management is not practised in the workplace. Furthermore, the results revealed that promoting a diversity management approach within the four organisations and raising employees' awareness of diversity issues are crucial to change the organisational processes and culture. The findings of this research also indicated that there are different interpretations of diversity management. For example, some organisations view diversity management as adhering to their social principles rather than focusing on cultural differences between employees in order to encourage creativity and the development of a diverse workforce. Such an understanding of diversity management may result in a recruitment practice through which HR managers can select individuals who are like themselves. Moreover, the findings revealed that the contribution of HR managers and the influence of the founder of the family-owned business play an essential role in shaping diversity initiatives because there is limited engagement of non-family members in top managerial positions. The results of examining the three research questions (RQ (1), RQ (2), and RQ (3)) are discussed as follows:

- **RQ (1): How does the Lebanese culture affect diversity and creativity in the family design business's structures?**

In terms of RQ (1), the findings revealed that cultural diversity influences affect the diversity of employees and their roles within the four organisations. The findings found that age, religion, and gender were identified as the main factors affecting the relationships between family members and non-family members, and that these were everyday issues. The results revealed that the four organisations could not embrace cultural diversity and thus promoting respect for human creativity. This cultural diversity factor reflects on the environment, economic and legal situations in Lebanon and covers the impact of culture, religion, and gender in Lebanese family design businesses. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the Lebanese contextual realities that have been the main influences on the diversity management approach within the four organisations. The findings revealed that Lebanese family design businesses do not abide by the law and regulations under which a company is expected to operate.

The empirical evidence shows that the performance of employees is homogeneous and is supported by the owners. The findings revealed that the owner's beliefs have a negative effect on employees' creative performance. This negative effect is supported conclusively by the owners, his family members, and his friends. Therefore, family power and the religious beliefs of the owners in an organisation negatively affect the relationship between family members and non-family members as all employees are expected to abide by them. The findings showed that family members form the majority group in the organisations and that most managers are relatives of the owners. This inequality of position is often presumed or taken for granted among employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. The findings also indicated that family members hold different positions from non-family members within the workplace. In most of the organisations, the position of non-family members reflects the organisation's primary focus on discrimination and stereotyping and illustrates the consequences of being the minority group. The literature review argues that cultural diversity is a form of appreciating the differences in individuals.

The findings also revealed that the differences between family members and non-family members affect the cultural diversity of employees in the workplace. The evidence showed that conflicts arise between non-family members and family members. In particular, non-family members cannot improve their skills, experiences, or productivity, which affects their behaviours and performance in the workplace. The findings illustrated that the most important factors affecting cultural diversity in Lebanese family design businesses are based on gender, age, religion, and positions whether a person is a relative or a friend of the owners. Most of the participants from the four companies revealed that the owners have a tendency to develop their personal relationships with family members and friends, which directly affects the role of non-family members who have these different opinions, thoughts, beliefs, norms, customs, values, trends, and traditions and also affects the notion of acquiring a diverse workforce. Thus, the dimensions of culture and religion are the basis of much discriminatory behaviour within the workplace. However, the literature review argues that cultural diversity can increase an individual's identity, skill, and knowledge in a group so that a goal can be achieved by way of mutual effort and collaboration, so these differences of opinion and other variables can actually hinder the development of new ideas.

Moreover, the findings showed that companies 1 and 4 do not provide equal job opportunities among family members and non-family members. In companies 1 and 4, most of the participants noted that the owner does not give them the same opportunity as other employees (this applies particularly to non-family members) to apply for jobs within the organisation in order to reduce discrimination and increase diversity in the workplace. However, companies 2 and 3 work on providing rewards for non-family members. The findings revealed that the four companies cannot manage the differences through shared experiences when employees work in a team. It is important to manage the cultural diversity of employees to increase diversity and improve creativity, as suggested by Cox and Blake (1991). The findings revealed that managing the cultural diversity of employees is hard to achieve when employees belonging to the same culture are asked to analyse the same matter. The literature review suggests that employees coming from different cultures have different experiences, which can increase diversity in

the organisation by introducing a sound and vast knowledge base. Therefore, this research is undoubtedly needed to specify the performances of family members and non-family members in which religious diversity has negative effects on the cultural diversity of employees in the Lebanese family design businesses.

Second, the observations made of the performance of employees in organisations revealed that gender diversity has negative results on performance. Female participants reported that the owners prefer to recruit males and support the work of craftsmen, which are predominantly male. The empirical evidence predominantly shows adverse effects regarding social integration and communication, which increases the conflict between males and females in organisations. In companies 1, 3, and 4, the evidence shows that women have a less positive work attitude than men have. Most of the female participants noted that they cannot have equal pay or positions in their organisations. The findings revealed that women are not permitted to communicate or engage regularly with men, particularly when they want to share ideas and opinion about a piece of furniture within workgroup activities. This result shows that gender diversity affects the women's attitudes to work. The empirical evidence also indicates that Lebanese family design businesses maintain a homogeneous workforce. Most of the female participants noted that they are not permitted to make decisions while they are working in teams. Therefore, the results found that a group of people damages women's attitudes in organisations, as women are not allowed to air their opinions because they are not supplied with the relevant resources to create new ideas with a number of employees (craftsmen) during the creative activity.

The findings also showed the adverse effects on females' activities as well. Furthermore, the evaluation of this question concluded that difference between employees and employers both exist as the owner's reactions to subordinates initiating interaction when he is working with predominantly male subordinates. Furthermore, the owners determine the role of each employee when dealing with mixed groups. The results showed that employees and, in particular, females still face discrimination when certain factors are being compared (e.g., behaviours, gender, conflict management). In addition, the results

showed that women are not allowed to create new products with older employees, because some old male participants noted that they prefer to work with people belonging to the same gender and age, which can have impact on women and decrease their creative work. However, the literature review suggests a diverse workforce has a positive impact on employees' performance in organisations. Furthermore, there has been an absence of the role of the government in organising and understanding of ethnic and cultural differences in Lebanon through laws and regulations or engagement within Lebanese family design businesses. For example, most of the participants noted that the absence of the government in terms of inspecting organisations appeared to play a significant role in making the implementation of diversity management impossible or unfocused in the Lebanese context.

Moreover, the findings revealed that the power in family-owned businesses can have a negative impact on employees when they produce an idea. This family power prevents individuals coming from minority group to produce ideas, which is necessary in the inclusion of minority groups so that they are allowed to share ideas among other employees within the four organisations. If the owners understood the meaning of diversity management as a discrete practice, and adopted diversity management approaches, then Lebanese family design businesses would improve their performance by increasing diversity and thereby contributing to creativity. For example, female participants noted that the owners do not introduce diversity management programmes to motivate female employees in order to encourage them to play an active role in the workplace, and thereby supporting female employees with high career aspirations. The literature review (in Chapter 2) suggests that cultural diversity would have a positive impact on employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds and would increase creativity in the workplace. The findings revealed that employees are not encouraged to express their opinions before making important organisational decisions. Therefore, Lebanese family design businesses should implement a diversity policy that deals directly with the cultural backgrounds of employees to create a higher level of awareness for both management and the workforce. This would provide a clear framework that could operate along with equity and justice to manage diversity in the Lebanese context. The results

showed that the four organisations reinforce homogeneity across their workforce in order to maintain stability and profitability. Although the four companies are part of the creative industry sector, they are not creative because the market is predominantly for traditional designs. There is no guarantee that the products that are valued by minority groups will be treated the same way by the family members or the owners. The results also revealed that homogeneous groups cannot manage diversity and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, it is important the Lebanese family design businesses focus on the definition of creativity that is based on novelty and work on the value of IP as it may change the role of creativity in Lebanon, and it allows employees to be more diverse and creative.

- **RQ (2): To what extent do the Lebanese family design business's structures provide equal opportunities to diverse workers?**

In terms of RQ (2), the findings revealed that diversity management perspectives are not employed in the four furniture companies in Lebanon. The evidence shows the lack of diversity between employees and employers in the Lebanese family design businesses. Within companies 1 and 3, most of the participants revealed that issues of tensions surrounding inequality, division among employees, and conflict among employees still exist in the workplace. Furthermore, the findings for companies 2 and 4 found that these tensions arise between family members and non-family members in general and more specifically between employees who hold higher positions than their colleagues do. The empirical evidence shows that inequality and conflict present to a very high degree in the four furniture companies. Most of the participants and in particular HR managers noted that diversity is ineffectively applied in the four organisations. The evidence showed that employees and HR managers have to deal with conflicts in the workplace. Most of the participants confirmed that formal (familial) organisational policies prevent them from working in a diverse environment, as their organisations are not aligned with diversity management values and principles. This in turn means that employees have to deal with conflicts in the workplace.



On the other hand, some respondents were comfortable aligning with their organisational system and policies (particularly family members). Moreover, the findings revealed that limitations to diversity management activities and approaches within the four organisations do exist. The empirical evidence shows that the four organisations rely on employees having the same culture, and this leads to conflict between family members and non-family members. Within the four organisations, the results showed that employee engagement is not aligned with equal employment opportunities that value diversity and drive changes to the organisational performance and principles. The findings further revealed that most of the respondents could not answer questions about or give accurate information about the role of diversity management, which demonstrates the lack of diversity management approaches within the Lebanese family design businesses.

Therefore, the second question reveals that diversity management is not evident within the four organisations. In addition, the findings found that non-family member do not have an opportunity to contribute to the diversity management of employees (family members and non-family members) and the expertise in the organisations (craftsmen, designers, and architects). Consequently, diversity management is not recognised by the four organisations, as the owner's objective is to give privileges to family members and incorporate religious values within the groups in the workplace. The findings found that the lack of diversity management is not practised among employees or employers in the workplace. The findings also revealed that religion has a negative impact on employees within the Lebanese family design businesses.

Furthermore, the cross-case analysis revealed that a diversity management strategy does not exist in any of the four organisations. Most of the HR managers further explained and confirmed that diversity management initiatives are not practised in their team as the owners focus on engaging family members as employees and thus improving their development in the workplace. The findings further found that the family's strategy, commitment, and structure affect the diversity of employees that work in groups within the Lebanese family design businesses. For example, the results in company 1 found that

the employers focus on religion, which exists in the internal environment of the company and also in the external environment. In addition, the same religion is practised by most of the employees in the external community environment (including of the relatives operating in Saudi Arabia) but some non-family members have different religions. Company 1 is involved with objects with religious forms of decoration, such as furniture and the main elements of their production are handled directly by the owner or the partner without the need for any contribution from craftsmen, interior designers, and architects, that is, no opportunity to engage in creative activity.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the role of HR managers is unclear as described by the HR manager from company 1 who was interviewed. Although the primary objective of the diversity management is to increase the engagement of different types of employees, Company 1 does not encourage diversity management perspectives among employees and, in particular among non-family members in its organisations. Thus, the objective of a diversity management strategy appears not to be playing an influential role in shaping HR's role in Lebanese family design businesses, making this emerging factor an essential dimension in this study. In Chapters 2, the second question suggests that diversity management is on the increase in the workplace and has to be managed following the implementation of work-related government policies to cope with the challenges offered by diverse workforces.

However, the findings revealed that diversity management addresses the challenges associated with increasing levels of ethnic and cultural diversity in the workplace. The four organisations whose employees were interviewed do not have a diversity policy because they do not provide adequate rule of law through enforcing formal employment contracts, reducing informality, and complying with international agreements (such as International Labour Organisations and WIPO) and apply the government policies such as integrating EEO, anti-discrimination policy, and anti-harassment policy. This in turn does not contribute to provide new employment opportunities and improve gender wage gap and income distributions among employees. Thus, the four organisations have some difficulties in managing a diverse workforce in terms of addressing diversity-related

challenges. It is important to note that there is no diversity policy in the workplace as stated by participants. The findings further found that anti-discrimination and Lebanese labour laws affect employees in Lebanese family design businesses. The results further indicated that there are real and perceived limitations on employment opportunities that are available to different levels of employees (e.g., craftsmen, architects, HR managers, and interior designers) in Lebanese family design businesses, and therefore their ability to be creative.

Therefore, the revised conceptual framework reveals the nature of gender relations in the dominant religion (Islam) in the Lebanese society. This revised conceptual framework further reveals organisational practices that cause unequal opportunities among family members and non-family members (see Figure 6.1). Due to the impact of patriarchal cultural traditions drawing upon individual subjective experiences of sex, age, and religious discrimination in the workplace, this revised conceptual framework highlights the non-existence of diversity management perspectives in the Lebanese context. The findings also revealed that most of the HR managers in company 2, company 3, and company 4 cannot select, recruit, and monitor employees in their organisations. Consequently, using HR managers fully does not constitute a strategic priority for the HR Department, which is defined by and aligned with the company's mission and core competencies as stated by HR managers. For example, HR's core competencies in the four companies and specifically in the area of training and development and communication, do not contribute to the owner's objectives and values, and thus a diversity management initiative does not have a role within the four organisations.

Therefore, diversity management is not effectively implemented in the Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the HR managers rely on the owner's values, and principles when they engage with the organisational processes and practices. Furthermore, the findings revealed that Lebanese culture (including religion) has been defined as affecting the role of HR managers and employees in Lebanese family design businesses, and this is likely to affect the recruitment and selection of employees. The findings also revealed that HR managers and employers are maintaining an irregular and a passive position,

focusing on short-term benefits to satisfy family members. For example, HR managers noted that they are not allowed to encourage employees to take days off, improve working style, eliminate overtime work, expand employment opportunities, which has contributed to inhibiting the creative activity among employees in the Lebanese family design businesses.

Moreover, the results showed that employees face challenges in delivering ideas. For example, craftsmen, interior designers, and architects noted that they work on furniture styles to recall and highlight tradition. Therefore, tradition is an essential factor that connects employees and employers to produce traditional objects (such as furniture) in relation to Lebanese market because there is little incentive to engage in creative activity and therefore performance is related to profit rather than creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. By contrast, if diversity management was implemented as a strategic priority for the four furniture companies in Lebanon, HR managers, craftsmen, and designers would play an active role, not only in implementing diversity management but also in encouraging creativity and managing diversity among employees and within the organisations as a whole. Thus, the evidence reveals that the relationship between family members and non-family members does not promote diversity or encourage creativity so does not increase the cultural diversity of employees within the four furniture companies.

The result also highlighted that the engagement between employees and employers relies on traditional activities, which create conflicts between family members and non-family members within the four furniture companies. In Lebanon, diversity management is not appreciated or valued in the organisation; instead, it is perceived as a threat, not as a benefit by people working in groups. Diversity management in an organisation can be identified by looking at its strategy, including internal factors such as organisational structure and governance. The findings revealed that Lebanese family design businesses focus on family power structures in their management, which leads to a number of problems, including the creation of discrimination and barriers among people coming from minority groups, as well as ignoring the creation of an idea, and therefore creating

conflicts and uncertainty among family members and non-family members within the four organisations (see Figure 6.1).

- **RQ (3): To what extent do the Lebanese family design businesses encourage creative performance?**

In terms of RQ (3), the findings revealed that creative performance has a negative effect on both employees and organisations. The finding also indicated that creativity does not play a key role in Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the participants (non-family members such as craftsmen, interior designers, and architects) revealed that they are not able to break the tension between family members as they cannot find the opportunities to share their artistic expressions in the same way that family members can. The result shows that differences between family members and non-family members are still visible during their activities together. Most of the non-family members noted that insufficient resources are spent to ensure successful projects since it is perceived that they should abide by the owner's decision, and they cannot develop their skills because more traditional determinants are present in the activities they are required to do. Furthermore, craftsmen, for example, revealed that some architects (particularly family members) have insufficient skills of analysis; inadequate objective setting; poor communication; and fail to define roles adequately, which is vital to creating ideas together as a group.

Furthermore, some female participants noted that they are not permitted to create appropriate new ideas because of some managers' lack of interpersonal skills, an overemphasis on individual creativity, and being involved in solving particular problems that do not support their roles in the organisations. The findings showed that creativity is not implemented in the Lebanese family design businesses. Most of the respondents confirmed that they are not permitted to improve their skills via continual professional development and that their organisation relies on an unsupportive atmosphere that is made up of poor judgement and decision-making; weak utilisation of ideas; poor communication; inadequate planning for change; and awkward relationships with other family members. Within the four organisations, participants noted that creativity is

limited and they have to follow the owner's beliefs and traditions, because he controls the ideas and make decisions about production techniques. The findings revealed that some participants are not allowed to create new ideas or make decisions during teamwork. The findings also showed that the owners rely on executing tradition and religious ideas within the four organisations.

The literature review suggests that employee's attitude enables people to scrutinise their values and beliefs about cultural differences and understand their origin. This is evident when employees of different cultural backgrounds bring with them into the workplace a variety of benefits, work ethics, and is specific to a particular ethnicity or culture. However, the results confirmed that scrutiny of organisational policies shows that the four organisations have not developed equity programmes and merely operate using Lebanese labour law. Furthermore, the results showed the evolution of creativity as it relates to the role of HR managers, employers, and employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. The findings revealed that creativity affects the relationship between employees and employers within these businesses. For example, participants (particularly non-family members) pointed out that family structure influences their creative activities because the owner depends on a leadership style that relies on the family within the workplace. Thus, the structure of the family (at work) affects employees' motivation, personality, behaviours, and performance in groups within the Lebanese family design businesses.

The findings further revealed that the founders of family-owned companies stifle creativity with rules, religion, and traditions and fail to encourage innovative personal workplaces. The results showed that creativity is limited in the four organisations. Most of the respondents revealed that they work with limited resources, which in turn limits their ability to share ideas and make creative progress in a group. Furthermore, the results showed that the owners control the resources by setting and guiding the processes without clearly communicating with employees. The results, therefore, demonstrated that creativity is misdirected and unguided in the four organisations. Furthermore, the results revealed that employers in the four organisations are unable to build creative teams to

encourage creativity and manage diversity in the workplace. Therefore, the results regarding the four organisations showed that Lebanese family design businesses follow a traditional management practice that has little to contribute to a process of creation and creativity. For example, the results revealed that companies 2 and 4 cannot foster creativity as they rely on inefficient resources, and this inhibits creativity and reduces management of diversity of family members and non-family members. The findings also revealed that creativity needs to have a practical role so that diversity can be managed and creativity can be promoted among employees and within the organisation itself. Furthermore, the findings showed that most of the respondents cannot express their views/opinions because they fear the owners, and this does not provide an open work environment built on trust that will ensure diversity, evaluate, and secure the viability of new ideas. The findings revealed that some participants whose work had not been positively evaluated are no longer creative because minority groups may be forced to work with traditional/religious objects or copy something from someone else to satisfy the owners. If the owners value the opinion of the person who created these new ideas, this will help the status of individuals, and therefore determining that a person is creative based on the criterion of novelty within the Lebanese family design businesses.

Moreover, most of the respondents believed that creativity comes from God. The empirical evidence shows that participants believe God is the creator of their inventions. If Lebanese family design businesses view creativity as an act of faith, then creativity is attached to a religious and traditional approach between employees and (religious) employers, and therefore creativity cannot be managed or implemented in Lebanon. However, the literature review argues that individuals of different cultural background can produce creativity based on original and novel ideas and transform them into a new form through using their artistic skill and engaging in effective communication with other employees (positive interactions between family members and non-family members). The findings, however, revealed that creative performance cannot increase diversity as employers and HR managers do not focus on a diverse workforce to manage cultural differences within a group. Furthermore, the findings revealed that employees face conflicts when working in groups and cannot benefit consistently from the main effects

of diversity. The evidence shows that Lebanese family design businesses do not harness the organisational context and organisational knowledge to change the corporate structure and encourage multicultural individuals with different attributes and perspectives. As a result, the findings revealed that employees are not encouraged to generate and apply clear ideas in the discussion with various individuals (e.g., family members versus non-family members) or interact within teams (because of antecedent conditions, group compositions, and processes) within the four organisations.

Additionally, the results of evaluating this question shows that the engagement between employees (including individual's ability, motivation, knowledge, and personality) reflects the fact that they are protecting the owner and preserving the traditions of his family members. Such support for the owner does not fit with diversity management practices and inhibits creativity in the workplace; it also runs contrary to the approach suggested in Mor-Barak's work (see Chapter 2). Thus, the results showed that Lebanese culture is based on tradition and religion. Most of the participants confirmed that they can generate religious forms of decoration or copy each idea during a creative activity. The evidence further showed that most of the craftsmen work with traditional tools which identifies their social capacity (status) in the context of Islamic Arabic (Lebanese) art. These conventional dimensions can create conflicts among employees because of the way employees copy ideas, which is in opposition to the WIPO's declaration (2009, 2013).

Therefore, the findings showed that the owners control the behaviour of employees so that they produce ideas with a religious character. If the owners focused on people with different skills, knowledge, and motivation to develop new ideas and support employees freely, then the family design businesses would improve their creative performance rather than focusing on their own profits. The literature review suggests that creativity can enhance a business's performance and encourage changes in the administration and management of existing firms (Edquist, 1997, 2005; Amin and Roberts, 2008). The findings, however, showed that craftsmen work with traditional tools and rely on an old electronic communication system because the four organisations do not make use of advanced technology and assist them in the workplace. The results confirmed that



creativity is not well developed in the four organisations. The literature review suggests that creativity requires an open style of innovation rather than focusing on closed innovation (traditional innovation), which is what is done in the four organisations. The findings revealed that creativity within the Lebanese family design businesses is controlled by the owners and family members. Most of the participants confirmed that their lack of involvement is a substantial barrier to the generation of new ideas and to their being able to compete with other employees in the Lebanese family design businesses. For example, most of the participants (particularly craftsmen and architects) noted that the owners of the Lebanese family design businesses do not encourage, control, or protect the intellectual property of external ideas coming from outside circle of family members.

Furthermore, some of the craftsmen stated that employers (particularly the owners) tend to keep traditional innovation or production internal, within the family structure, from manufacturing tools to sales services, until a new product is released onto the Lebanese market. The four organisations are not able to prevent intellectual property challenges (e.g., buying others' intellectual property) and foster mutual trust between employees so that they provide ideas and services to expand the Lebanese market for the use of external sources of innovation. The findings also revealed that religion plays a critical role in affecting the employees' creativity and performance within the Lebanese family design businesses. For example, most of the participants explained that the owners expect them to create ideas in the form of Islamic signs because they are forced to work on producing ideas based on tradition and symbol to satisfy the owner's religious beliefs as the owner's desires a more traditional design. However, some participants further confirmed that creativity does not present or protect the vision of designers, craftsmen, and architects within the Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, the findings showed that religion underpinned the working environment in the four furniture companies. The results revealed that creativity reflects Lebanese culture, tradition, and values within the Lebanese family design businesses.

Consequently, the findings revealed that Lebanese family design businesses do not embed learning, creativity, and flexibility by increasing diversity among family members and non-family members in the workplace. Therefore, it is essential to provide a framework, along with creativity and performance, to unleash the compelling benefits of a diverse workforce. This will also bring changes to the organisation's functions, strategies, operations, practices, and procedures, and thus will increase the number of different identity groups within the furniture companies in Lebanon. Furthermore, Lebanese family design businesses also need to make a fundamental change in the attitudes and behaviours of their leadership, such as distributing positions (for example, having power, having knowledge, and engaging teamwork) and rewards equally. This would help the Lebanese family design businesses to recruit and select employees coming from minority groups to increase diversity and focus on discrimination and fairness paradigm that comply with international labour organisations. Equality of opportunity could be applied to family members and non-family members, which would generate the beginning of diversity management in the furniture companies in Lebanon. These Lebanese family design businesses can then explore how people's differences can increase diversity and improve performance management and creativity in the workplace.

The conceptual framework in Chapter 2 suggests that diversity management is essential to the organisational performance as well. However, the revised conceptual framework shows that the Lebanese family design businesses are not able to change their leadership or their positions generally to ensure diversity among family members and non-family members. Moreover, the revised conceptual framework has been used to test and revisit the three research questions of this research study to show the evidence arising from this research study and confirm its validity. The revised conceptual framework also points out that the traditional leadership and tensions among employees and employers are associated with management's role, which prevents creativity and impedes the fostering of creativity and the management of diversity within the four organisations. Therefore, it is essential to explore the relationships between culture, diversity and creativity and to allow employers/managers to value diversity and provide incentives to facilitate

creativity that can mediate the use of diversity management practices between employees and employers within the four organisations.

Therefore, the researcher believes that the research questions used in the revised conceptual framework contribute to the explanations of and the findings about diversity management and creative performance within the Lebanese context. Exploring these three research questions provides useful findings and explains the lack of diversity management in Lebanon, and particularly in the furniture companies. The revised conceptual framework stresses that the four organisations do not practise diversity management, but it is essential to accumulate the empirical evidence to verify if the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 can apply to all possible aspects of diversity within the Lebanese context and, in particular in, the Lebanese family design businesses. Thus, it is important to note that the researcher made the necessary modifications to the model to conduct this research study and to provide a framework for the Lebanese context, as well as to offer suggestions for future research avenues in Chapter 7. The literature review suggests that diversity management can have a positive impact on organisational outcomes (e.g., Kochan *et al.*, 2003; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012; Singal and Gerde, 2015). The revised conceptual framework illustrates that the lack of diversity management practices has a negative impact on the cultural diversity of employees in Lebanon. Thus, the lack of diversity management practices is also undermining the diversity of individuals/groups and their creative performance within the Lebanese family design businesses (see Figure 6.1).

This research explores the diversity of workgroups, in particular, which have been shown to benefit from diverse membership (e.g., women, racial minorities, people with disabilities) in that they can then make more creative and cooperative choices and better quality decisions. The findings revealed that tension between employees and employers reflects the reality of family members and group experiences within the Lebanese context. That is, tensions exist because power is wielded by both driving or supportive forces (power) and resisting creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. Thus, the integrated framework displays how individual differences interact with cultural values

and norms. For example, the findings illustrated that Lebanese culture shares strong norms and rules. These cultural norms and rules have a direct effect on individuals in the workplace, particularly non-family members, because of the way power is shared among employees. The theoretical framework prompted the overarching research aims to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity, and the results revealed the lack of cultural diversity on creative performance within the Lebanese context.

In summary, there are some critical differences between local and international furniture companies in Lebanon. The findings revealed that the four companies do not adequately encourage creativity or manage the diversity of family members and non-family members. The results found that most of the franchised companies in Lebanon do not fully comply with international agreements in their performance and management. The finding revealed that companies 1 and 4 still focus on Arabic influences, traditions, and beliefs because they are owned by independent third-party operators and the owners receive indirect benefits such as foreign funds to operate and manage their businesses in Lebanon. Although companies 2 and 3 seek to provide training programmes and give rewards to employees in their organisations, they are more likely to give rewards to family members. In addition, the owners of companies 2 and 3 still use Lebanese law for legal protection because they are Lebanese citizens. The findings revealed that most of the international companies had signed an international franchise agreement in which the owner is required to follow practices such as offering training and development programmes to protect individual employees, mainly family members and friends. Thus, the findings revealed that international franchised companies (e.g., companies 2 and 3) follow local attitudes and culture, which affects the international agreement they entered into Lebanon.

## **6.5. Summary**

This chapter presented the revised conceptual framework. This chapter drew upon the findings from the within- and cross-case analysis presented in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis, indicating the lack of diversity management and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses. This chapter attempted to explain the case findings as the relationship between diversity management perspectives, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance in design companies. Many emerging factors and findings were defined as influential in shaping diversity and creativity in Lebanon. Questions such as why the role of creativity in design companies is not strategic in the four organisations required answers through conducting an in-depth exploration of the role of creative performance in design companies. The researcher accordingly defined many factors that affect how diversity management is understood and practised in the Lebanese context. The chapter then presented a revised conceptual framework within the Lebanese context. Finally, the chapter discussed the results of evaluating the research questions in the Lebanese family design businesses. The following chapter presents a summary of the major findings, recommendations for practice and future research, and some limitations to integrate the results of the study and discusses further the conclusion and the findings of the research.

## **7.0. CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings, recommendations for practice and future research; and, some limitations of the research to integrate and discuss the results of the study. The chapter is divided into five main sections. The first section discusses and re-evaluates the development of the research questions that are included in the conceptual framework (Chapter 2). The second section discusses the implications of this research and states the research limitations. The third section presents the contribution of this research study. Section four presents recommendations for future research. Section five presents the researcher's positionality within the qualitative study. Finally, this chapter aims to present the last discussion of the research findings and formulate a better understanding of the role of diversity management within the furniture companies in Lebanon.

### **7.2. Conclusion of this Thesis**

The conclusion is that there is an apparent need for diversity management in Lebanon. This research study suggests that diversity management increases creativity, improves productivity and integrates employees. Furthermore, this research study aims to raise awareness among groups, organisations, and government of the importance of collaborating and encouraging creativity by increasing diversity, which is a critical factor of growth and success. This research study also analyses the benefits and challenges of diversity management practices. On the other hand, diversity management challenges include cultural conflicts with minority group employees.

Furthermore, this research study suggests that a particular level of knowledge, skills, and qualifications are essential for employees as well as the organisational goals. Employers' commitment to age diversity and inclusion, as part of the strategies they employ to enhance staff utilisation and retention, is essential to foster supportive working environments and career opportunities. It is evident that diversity management impacts positively on individuals who sometimes feel excluded from certain aspects of the

workplace (equality and diversity). Diversity management practices enhance understanding among employees and promote how individuals interact, communicate and adapt with others in an organisation as well as in society. They also allow a diverse workforce to perform to its full potential. Although organisations are driven by human behaviours and characteristics, the values and practices of individuals deserve extra scrutiny in understating why and how Lebanese organisations resist having an inclusive workforce. Moreover, this research study aims to reveal that workforce demographics are changing by every demographic measure used here: race, gender, nationality, religious mix, and age.

Therefore, attracting and retaining new or current talent from all cultural backgrounds is an urgent issue in the design companies located in Lebanon. Managing employees of different cultural backgrounds could contribute to the success of a business regardless of the cultural differences such as ethnicity, race, colour, and gender. It is also expedient that managers encourage and create a mutual learning environment, foster open dialogues, and build trust within diverse teams in Lebanese family design businesses. This would enable Lebanese family design businesses to take a more proactive approach to introducing a workplace diversity policy in order to manage cultural differences effectively before problematic events such as conflicts and lack of communication with employees of culturally diverse backgrounds occur in the workplace.

In this sense, diversity management studies that have an explicit societal and contextual element may prove particularly fruitful for businesses in Lebanon. Finally, this study invites further theoretical work in diversity management, equality, employment, and inclusion scholarship that is not only nuanced and tailored but also committed to advancing a dedicated framework for an individual or a group or for diversity management practices. This research not only reveals the need for organisations to look at diversity issues but also serves as a call for future research that will provide specific conceptual models and practical roadmaps for the full inclusion of group minorities within the family business structure and a call for future research in different creative sectors.

### **7.3. Re-Evaluating the Development of the Research Questions**

The main objective of conducting cross-case analysis for the empirical findings of this research was to explore the relationship between diversity management practices, cultural diversity influences, and creative performance within the Lebanese context. This research study also reflects how each case fits within the conceptual framework (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.2). The findings revealed that diversity management within the four organisations is not practised within the four organisations. Hence, the results showed that a strategic diversity management approach within the Lebanese context are unfocused and scattered and were not linked to the organisational performance. Furthermore, the findings revealed a limited role in taking some diversity management initiatives and creating expert administrative employee roles within the four organisations. Finally, the results found that the role of HR is not evaluated in the four case study organisations.

The conceptual framework succeeded in capturing the role of diversity management in a design company as it is practised across the four organisations, although the research questions applied regarding the role of diversity management in organisations was not plausible. The researcher even found an explanation for the emerging findings within the initially predetermined constructs examined in the literature review. Diversity management is a well-known and well-researched concept in the United States as well as in Europe. There are case studies on diversity paradigms (e.g., Thomas and Ely, 1996), the findings from this study revealed a comprehensive tool that could be used to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity within the Lebanese context. Further, little research has been done linking personal and organisational contextual factors to an organisation's approach to diversity regarding workforce composition, diversity perspectives, and management.

The aim of this research study, therefore, was to identify the different ways organisations approach diversity and how those approaches can be measured in a diversity-sensitive and reliable way. The researcher developed a framework for understanding the management of diversity and extending and differentiating the various definitions that



show diversity management is essential in the workplace context (e.g., Ely and Thomas, 2001). The conceptual framework in Chapter 2 suggests that the effects of diversity management can be positive and can lead to equal employment opportunities, the fostering of creativity, and better problem-solving outcomes. However, the findings revealed that diversity management can also be negative and can lead to discrimination, disparities in employment opportunities, stereotyping, and conflicts, and inhibiting creativity in a group and in terms of organisational performance.

First, in terms of the RQ (1) which looked at “the influence of the Lebanese culture”, the findings revealed that the fear and threat of isolation are particularly powerful for members of invisible minorities such as non-family members (based on age, gender, and religion). Second, in terms of the RQ (2) which looked at the issue of “organisational structure”, the findings indicated that non-family members do not fully express their personal identity within the workgroup because of a negative climate of opinion towards particular aspects of employees’ identity. The findings further showed that family members believe that others support their positions (e.g., owners), which explains how majority opinions become dominant over time and minority views (particularly those of non-family members) remain silent and weaken the identity, performance, and skills of the silenced person. This is because the latter are unsure whether they will receive support from others, particularly when tasks require creativity and judgement. The literature review, however, acknowledges the importance of diversity in the field of HRM and suggests that “visible” sources of diversity can increase creativity and communication among employees, leading to the strengthening of their performance in aspects such as their position and their gender orientation in the workplace. The literature review proposes that diversity management facilitates understanding among employees, influences group activities that require knowledge, skills, and creativity, and provides access to individual resources. In addition, diversity management promotes HR policies, which have an important role to play in managing the trust, communication, and shared experiences of the employees to improve group performance so that they can perform better in creative tasks.

In term of the RQ (3) which looked at “creative performance”, the findings further revealed that non-family members may choose to conceal their opinions and differences or avoid speaking about them within the workplace, which can inhibit creativity and communication, thereby leading to conflicts between employees (family members and non-family members) and contributing to ineffective organisational decision-making and performance. Hence, the results showed that the four design companies are homogeneous rather than diverse in Lebanon. This research study offers interesting suggestions about how to manage diversity in Lebanese family design businesses. The researcher also identified two major diversity perspectives that explain the underlying motivations for and consequences of organisations’ approaches to diversity. First, the researcher analysed these different diversity perspectives and looked at why organisations would be for or against diversity. In addition, the researcher developed and implemented a standardised questionnaire to explore the diverse perspectives in the four organisations. Second, the researcher examined how an organisation’s diverse perspectives are linked to perceived benefits and threats of diversity at a group and an organisational level and how diversity management is implemented.

This research study employs a qualitative inquiry with an inductive, flexible, and open approach to the role of diversity management in the design companies. First, since there is not yet an agreement on the definition of diversity management in Lebanon, the adopted methodological approach plays an essential role in this research study. The results showed that diversity management is not practised in Lebanese family design businesses and the more open and flexible the methodological approach to academic research in the area of diversity management can be, the better the study can capture the dynamics of diversity management. Lebanese academics have not offered a study on diversity management in family businesses or design companies. However, this thesis offers a study on diversity management and formulates, for example, the research questions concerning the roles of HR, creativity, and diversity management within the Lebanese family design businesses. Therefore, the conceptual framework provides an understanding of the role of diversity management and creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. Although the findings revealed a general trend in opinions about the

definition and implementation of diversity management, some differences exist from one organisation to another. In addition, the factors that affect the role of HR managers in organisations vary from one organisation to another.

Second, the knowledge gap that exists concerning the role of diversity management and HRM in the furniture companies in the literature on HRM prevents the researcher from conducting a quantitative inquiry. The conceptual framework that integrates HRM, culture, and creativity in one theoretical context is novel and has not yet been offered as a concept within the HRM and creativity literature on Lebanon. Therefore, the methodological approach that was considered the best for dealing with interrelations between diversity management and HR and creativity was used to shape and influence these interrelations in the qualitative approach. Consequently, it is necessary to recall in this concluding chapter those theoretical constructs and evaluate their value to the role of HRM in Lebanese family design businesses and within the context of the four cases from Lebanon. The main objective of synthesising this model and adapting those theoretical constructs was to explain the role of diversity management, cultural diversity, and creative performance within the context of the four cases. The following sections are designed to further probe and explore the usefulness of those theoretical constructs in explaining the research findings before presenting the conclusions and limitations of the research and recommendations for future research.

## **7.4. Research Limitations**

The findings from this research revealed the lack of diversity in Lebanese family design businesses, which affects the roles of their employees. However, it is important to state some of the research limitations. First, the findings from this research are from only four cases, which does not allow generalisability to general population. According to Yin (2011), the generalisability to the general population from the sample of the research is not an objective of a case study research. However, the sample of the four cases verifies the findings and increases their plausibility over the general population. The sample was carried out in Lebanon to enrich the research and allow the researcher to propose recommendations and contributions valid for Lebanese family design businesses.

Second, the qualitative data analysis method was used to examine and present the research questions and findings, which was subjective. Although the research paradigm has close links to both reality and subjectivity, supporting the findings with existing human resource, creativity and diversity management literature provide a relevant approach for the Lebanese context. Using qualitative data is important because it ensures the accuracy and integrity of data collected and is a descriptive measure rather than a statistic measure. It is recommended that if this study is expanded using quantitative data, the data should be measured via statistical or computational techniques (e.g., statistics software, SPSS). However, the researcher also relies on narrative results to makes use of adjectives and other descriptive words and to refer to data on appearance, colour, texture, and other qualities. The data-collection methods have helped the researcher to present the findings free from errors and bias arising from subjectivity, thereby increasing the reliability of this research study.

This research study has several limitations. First, diversity management is a sensitive topic in organisations and specifically in Lebanese family design businesses. Thus, the selection of participants was challenging. The sample was chosen carefully according to criteria presented in Chapter 3 (section 3.3.3). Therefore, qualitative approaches involve a degree of subjectivity, which the researcher reduced by carrying out cross-checks and having intensive discussion among the research team (the supervisors). Another

challenge was that the sample size was quite small, and case studies were cross-sectional, which prevented the researcher from assessing the predictive validity or establishing causal relationships. Furthermore, it was difficult access information regarding employment and the number of furniture companies due to the lack of a regulatory, governmental role. However, the researcher relied on non-governmental websites (e.g., ArchiLeb, 2016; DEIF, 2016; Kompass, 2016; PSD, 2017) to access details about the four furniture companies and present the number of employees and the number of firms in a table in Chapter 3, which is considered novel in this type of research study.

The researcher is aware that within an organisation different diversity perspectives may be held by different individuals and different diversity perspectives might coexist. The results of the case studies represent an important step in establishing and measuring diversity perspectives in organisations. However, although the researcher draws firm conclusions, additional conceptual and empirical research is needed to validate the findings and to test the effects of diverse perspectives in different contexts (e.g., national, branch, regional). Future research requires interviewing a large number of employees, including one or two experts from each organisation, to shape the perception of diversity management within the Lebanese family design businesses. Future research could also compare non-family firms in Lebanon to explore the role of diversity management perspectives and creative performance within a non-family firm's structure.

## 7.5. Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should consider two main recommendations related to examining the role of diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses. First, it is essential to expand the sample of any future research to include diverse design companies. Four cases were involved in this research, and the industry within which the organisations operate was not chosen purposely. The researcher contacted fifteen organisations; however, only four organisations agreed to participate and allow their employees to be interviewed. Thus, it is recommended that the sample for the study is carefully selected and that there is reflection on the number of employees and the organisation's profile. Second, the validity of the findings should be tested using quantitative evidence that enhances the population studied in the Lebanese context and looks beyond Lebanon to the Middle East context. The researcher suggests that it is beneficial to use a survey in the quantitative data analysis to measure the assessment of creativity, for example, and to obtain more information from employees, HR departments, and employers within the Lebanese family design businesses. The findings from this research revealed that diversity management and initiatives are not practised by employees and employers within the four organisations. Therefore, the researcher refers to the academic literature of Al-Arris (2010), Özbilgin and Tatli (2011), Fahed-Sreih and Pistrui (2012), Azoury *et al.* (2013), and Mor-Barak (2014, 2015), which shows the importance of employees' engagement in organisations to increase their productivity, loyalty, and performance.

Thus, this research expands theory on the relationship between culture and creativity and aims to contribute to knowledge and practice within the Lebanese context. Another recommendation is to study cases across the different types of creative sectors in Lebanon and to examine the role of diversity management practices in nonfamily firms' structures to provide in-depth information about how diversity management is applied in these organisations. It is also important to compare the role of diversity management in and across the creative sectors in neighbouring Arabic countries such as the UAE, as a large number of foreign and international firms are interested in operating and investing in the Dubai creative industry market (Gulf news, official website, 2017). The researcher believes that this comparison would lead other investigators and academics to understand

the role of diversity management and to explore the local creative talent, business development, and other social issues and influences in Dubai.

According to a 2015 report by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, creative industries in MENA contributed \$100 billion in the market value to the global economy in 2014 (Schwab, 2015). The growth of creative industries in MENA regions has been equally significant, with the design companies employing around 15,000 creative workers in 2014 (Schwab, 2015). Future research studies on the creative sectors in MENA would help the reader to understand the role of diversity management in creative industries in Middle Eastern countries. Future research studies would make a strategic contribution to social and economic benefit comparison between two different countries and would provide rich data about how culture and maybe how Islam operates in the creative sectors in the Arabic regions. It is important to establish links between designers, architects, craftsmen, HR managers, and other industry professionals and to provide relevant data to explore the development of creative sectors in Lebanon and other Arabic countries.

The thesis recommends that Lebanese family design businesses should implement adequate protection from copyright infringement. For policy direction, this thesis suggests that managing IP in Lebanese family design businesses is vital to increase the development of skills among employees and encourage new ideas and innovative techniques in the workplace. For instance, the Lebanese government should include legal and policy plans such as trademark system to promote IP certifications, design rights, patents, and copyrights in order to mobilise all forms of IP as assets, protect the artistic production (creativity), and improve access to resources and market within the Lebanese community. Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge the social value of craftspeople to provide resources and share common practices (e.g., creating a range of crafts among other crafts markers, promote programmes to improve skills and share knowledge) through their community engagement. This could be sustained over time within the creative industry and particularly in the Lebanese family design businesses.

This research study provides relevant data about the development of design companies in Lebanon, and such data would be essential for future research on the development of creative industries in Arabic countries as well. This research study further contributes to building a growing research and knowledge exchange culture in Lebanon as it helps the Lebanese government and other academics to examine and increase the development of design companies and other creative sectors in Lebanon and the Middle East. This research study also draws on a comprehensive understanding of diversity management approaches with the aim of increasing diverse skills in Lebanese family design businesses. This thesis undertook qualitative data analysis to find relevant data on the impact of these employees and employers as they share social struggles in the Lebanese family design businesses. It is important that future research assesses and integrates questions about organisational cultures, and it will also shape the perception of diversity.

## **7.6. Contributions**

- This research study contributes to the growing body of knowledge in the fields of diversity management, HR, creativity, and cultural diversity and to the identification of enabling factors that assist employees' creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses.
- The main contribution of this research study is the finding that diversity management is not practised in the Lebanese family design businesses. In addition, the study is a contribution to adapting tools to identify the role of diversity management in Lebanon. These two findings are breakthroughs that can be used in further research in the area.
- The unique contribution that is made by the research shows that in order for diversity policy reform to be positively received by the employers and employees concerned, they have to build on prior knowledge systems. They also have to pay attention to the local context within the employment field. Such a development is particularly crucial in the Lebanese context because of its history of disparity and discrimination in the society.
- The findings of this study have a theoretical and applicative value. Its first theoretical contribution is in understanding the link between diversity



management, cultural diversity, and creative performance at the same time as focusing on the importance of diversity management in the workplace. With regard to the applicative aspect, the findings indicate that managing diversity is essential in order to increase diversity and improve creativity in Lebanese family design businesses.

- On the basis of the findings derived from empirical inquiry, the thesis offers a more dynamic and generative understanding of diversity management that has been presented in the literature.
- The findings from this current research confirmed that it is essential for Lebanese academics to offer a definition of and compile documentation on diversity management, because a lack of these limits the generalisability of this study; this would extend knowledge for others using the diversity management literature on Lebanon.
- The findings from this current research confirmed that Lebanese family design businesses must address the need to include diversity management in their organisations. Hence, there is a need for additional and more extensive studies that will determine these issues and factors that may contribute to barriers to diversity management in the creative sectors in Lebanon.
- The research has generated a greater understanding and clarification of the diversity management approach and creativity for the first time in the Lebanese context, (the last major study of the creative industries was published eleven years ago by Najjar (2007)). This research has generated scientific knowledge about diversity management in the Middle Eastern countries as well.
- The insights provided by this research will be invaluable in development programmes aimed at addressing the attributes of employees and contextual factors revealed by the study; (1) improving the diversity of employees will shape the creativity and experience of employees (family members and non-family members) in the workplace; and (2) the implementation of diversity management is essential to manage the diversity of employees and foster creativity within the workplace.

- The research findings revealed that employees (particularly non-family members) are not permitted to create or share their own ideas in a team, and this leads to inhibit creativity in the organisation. The differences among employees affect creativity and performance, so it is important to encourage creativity in diverse groups and organisations, particularly in the Lebanese family design businesses.
- This study contributes to the current debate on diversity management and creativity. This research also explores the community engagement in Lebanon as it provides an integrated framework for employee engagement and diversity management. This diversity management framework can also be duplicated in other creative sectors or organisations and adapted to suit different contexts in Lebanon. The researcher demonstrates her personal competencies such as having a profound understanding, initiative, creativity, and resilience by having evaluated an approved topic resulting in an original and independent contribution to knowledge.
- This thesis extends knowledge about the subjective experiences of family members and non-family members in Lebanese family design businesses. Specifically, it expands knowledge concerning the diversity management perspectives in Lebanon and the world. It uncovers the lack of diversity management in the weak institutional structure in Lebanon and particularly in Lebanese family design businesses. The uniqueness of this research stems from a phenomenological method that enabled the voices calling for diversity management to be explored. Finally, the study expands our understanding regarding diversity and creativity as a process by providing a conceptual framework developed from a Western perspective and transforming it to fit the Lebanese context.
- Existing theories of creativity have focused on individual or group models. There appears to be little informing theory that bridges the relationship between diversity and creativity in the Lebanese context.
- This thesis explains the essence of creativity, where creative talents are better organised and supported by Lebanese family design businesses, and where government or foreign institutions should facilitate competition, enhance

investment agreements (global partnerships), and encourage employment in the furniture sectors. From the perspective of public policy, young employees including non-family members and women should be prepared to take a leadership role to share and develop their ideas freely in the creative industries in Lebanon. The collaboration between government and industry will help the design sector to achieve progress and provide new opportunities for upgrading human resources or capabilities through education or training and internships, expanding the network, and reorienting the Lebanese economy toward new skills needed to fuel openness and diversity among employees and employers within the workplace.

- The contribution to new knowledge that this thesis makes is the identification of the enabling factors (the primary drivers of success) and the new sub-themes, which create a more complete picture of factors that could influence diversity management and creativity in the Lebanese family design businesses.

## **7.7. Personal Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is commonly used in qualitative research as a methodological tool to represent the researcher's ability and subjectivity in the research process (Pillow, 2003). The researcher focuses on the data collection and analysis to interpret and organise the interview questions and to discuss these questions with participants. The researcher reflects on the challenges of the interview process and participant observation in the Lebanese family design businesses.

First, the researcher faced some challenges in the dialogue process with participants when asking questions about diversity management, culture, and creativity. For example, participants did not understand the definitions of creativity, culture, and diversity management. The researcher, therefore, tried to refine some of the semi-structured interview questions to enhance the level of understanding of the participants and understand the definition expressed by each participant. Consequently, the researcher was able to conduct forty interviews, which were supplemented by field notes, written soon after each meeting. During the analysis process, the researcher found writing both "I,"

“they” and “them” into the research. When the researcher was conducting the data analysis, she had to translate words from Arabic to English. The researcher sometimes transcribed words that were not accurate. However, the supervision team in this project assisted the researcher to describe the quotes precisely and explored the meaning and relevance of the field note materials, allowing the researcher to be subjective when translating, transcribing, and analysing the data.

Second, the researcher encountered some challenges in the fieldwork site. For example, the researcher was unable to fully observe some participants (particularly craftsmen). However, the researcher was able to make audio recordings and take pictures rather than video recordings. Furthermore, the researcher found that some participants were sharing the same beliefs, knowledge, and artistic skills. However, the researcher did not always have the same opinion as the participants, in particular, when she found that employers and employees were homogenous, the researcher saw herself as an outsider instead of an insider. This situation provides the researcher with a unique perspective on her role as a researcher to respect how hard each participant works. The researcher tried, therefore, to take additional notes with the aim of sharing each participant’s experiences, opinions, and perspectives about their work.

Finally, the research process has also encouraged the researcher to learn about the Lebanese culture within the field and has provided her with a wealth of resources from which other researchers can learn about the Lebanese society, communities, and organisations. This investigation of the concepts of diversity management and creativity increased the originality in this thesis. Therefore, the researcher hopes that these findings of this research study will attract other Lebanese academics’ attention to this concept.

## **7.8. Summary**

This chapter presented the conclusion of the thesis. The researcher has argued that diversity management is not practised in the Lebanese family design businesses. It is therefore important to implement diversity management in Lebanese family design businesses. The role of HR managers and employers reflects a level of complexity and interrelated factors, and the contributions made by this thesis showed that the role of HR in Lebanese family design businesses remains grounded within managerial as well as institutional considerations. The findings further revealed that diversity management is not implemented in the four organisations. This chapter presents theoretical knowledge and managerial practices that indicate how this could be achieved. Thus, the contribution of this research came at a critical stage and time to contribute to knowledge and practice. In terms of knowledge, this thesis offers a conceptual framework to explore the relationship between culture, diversity, and creativity. In practice, this thesis is a substantial contribution to understanding how diversity management can play a strategic role in Lebanese family design businesses. However, this requires future research, as suggested earlier. The findings of this thesis could be also beneficial for the government so that it can assume an active role in organising training courses through legislation and facilitating the dialogue between employees and employers about the importance of diversity management and creativity in organisations, particularly in Lebanese family design businesses.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Letter permission to case study companies

#### *Part 1: Case study interview protocol*

**Research Project:** Creativity in Lebanese family design businesses: The role of cultural diversity in the design sector.

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee's name (if disclose): \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction.** Thank you for your time to contribute to this research. Let me briefly outline my role and how this interview is designed to fit in this research.

**Purpose of this research.** To explore the impact of diversity of employees on creativity in Lebanese family design businesses and whether these practices are being adapted to the local context.

**Relevance of this research.** This research seeks to close the gap in existing knowledge about diversity management practices of family firms towards the Middle East especially Lebanon.

**Personal relevance.** My role is that of the researcher as a PhD candidate. This research is an essential part of the requirements for the PhD degree at the University of Southampton, United Kingdom

**Ethical considerations.** The information obtained from this interview is strictly confidential. Your company's name, your name, and any other information to identify you or your organisation will be changed to keep it confidential. The data obtained in this study will exclusively be used for this study and not passed on to third parties.

I, the undersigned, have read and understood the above and agree that the data obtained from this interview be integrated into a doctoral thesis and published following the ethical considerations listed above.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you so wish I will share the final analysis, expected in 2017, with you. Meanwhile, you can reach me on my e- mail: [roula\\_kadamani@hotmail.com](mailto:roula_kadamani@hotmail.com).

**Abstract attached with Letter cover:**

Diversity management plays a key role in improving human creativity and increasing business performance within the local or global context. Recent studies have gathered evidence on how managers use their positional power to create “inclusive or assimilative” cultural norms through diversity management practices. In the Lebanese context, diversity management is not yet implemented in organisations. Therefore, this research study will focus on the Lebanese family design businesses. It will analyse the cultural diversity in the Lebanese design sectors. The research will identify some important keys for local and international companies to implement diversity management in their practices. This research study aims to explore the impact of diversity of employees on creativity in Lebanese family design businesses. This will help the design sectors, Lebanese government and other academic institutions to invest more on culture, creativity and diversity.

Qualitative methodology will be predominantly chosen for the purpose of this research, taking into consideration the research questions. A number of employers and employees will be chosen to participate due to their specialist knowledge and experiences, which are required in order to produce the findings of this paper.

Finally, the research study discusses three main factors: creativity, culture and diversity that occur with employees (family and non-family members) engaging in the design sectors. It will emphasize the importance of the role of increasing creative performance arising from diversity and maximizing the access of talented employees. This research study also suggests new strategies to enhance the role of employees who have different experiences, skills and perspectives in the workplace.

**Key words:** *diversity management, cultural diversity, diversity, creativity, performance, design sector, talented employees, engagement, Lebanese family design businesses.*

**Part 2:**

Table A.1: Semi-structured interview schedule for employers:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diversity management practices:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Tell me more about the organisation's background?</li><li>2. Do you have any diversity goals? Can you describe any activities/initiatives/programs that are implemented in order to reach diversity goals? How do you create or protect a cultural/social trait in your organisation? How do you support a positive action in your organisation?</li><li>3. Tell me how do you facilitate diversity/equality in your organisation?</li><li>4. Tell me how do you evaluate/assess the potential benefits or costs of diversity in the workplace?</li><li>5. Tell me how would you describe the impact of diversity management practices on your organisation? How do you judge the way you treat your employees? Do you have specific diversity management policies in your organisation?</li><li>6. Tell me how are you involved in implementing diversity with your design team?</li><li>7. How do you handle/report problems arising from diversity in your organisation?</li><li>8. What does the word "diversity" mean to you? Can you describe or give me an example of diversity.</li><li>9. What does the word "equality" mean to you? Can you describe or give me an example of equality.</li></ol></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employee engagement, training, development and management:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>10. How do you hire and promote employees with regard to embracing diversity (nationality, age, gender, skills, education, and psychological attributes)? Do you support equality and disable person?</li><li>11. How does your organisation offer diversity awareness trainings? What role do you play in the process of attracting, developing and retaining talent? What is your role in creating a diverse environment? Can you provide specific examples?</li><li>12. Do you see Talent management as part of Human Resource Management (HRM) and what are the key challenges that face your organisations in attracting talent in your business?</li><li>13. Please explain what performance means to you? How do you keep track of your best performers? How do you rewards performance?</li><li>14. How do you handle talented employees? Do you recruit employees coming from the young generation?</li></ol></li></ul>



<p>15. What does the word ‘‘talent’’ mean to you? Can you describe or give an example of talent.</p> <p>16. What does the word ‘‘skill’’ mean to you? Can you describe or give an example of skill.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance and Creativity:</li> </ul> <p>17. Talk about any solutions and processes you have been involved in at the workplace? What happened when you face conflict? How do you plan and prototype an idea/ product as individual or team?</p> <p>18. Tell me how do you plan/generate/improve new and effective ideas? And how do you suggest ideas within a team? How do you facilitate talents working together?</p> <p>19. How do your employees contribute to new ideas within your organisation? How do you collaborate well with others? Give me an example please.</p> <p>20. How do your employees/ team perceive creative performance in the workplace? How are you going to select your choice of best ideas (e.g. idea originality)?</p> <p>21. How do you access/ use tools or techniques? How do you give your employees rules or tools in generating original/ new ideas? How do you ensure openness and trust between the employees? How do you provide/share/ protect new and original ideas in the workplace? And in the market?</p> <p>22. What does the term ‘‘creative performance’’ mean to you? Can you describe or give an example of creative performance.</p>

Source: Author’s interpretation for the purpose of the research (adapted from Jacob and Furgeson, 2012)

Table A.2: Semi-structured interview schedule for employees:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity management practices:</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you have any diversity goals? Describe any activities/initiatives/programs that are implemented in order to reach diversity goals?</li> <li>2. Tell me how have you been educated of implementing diversity?</li> <li>3. Tell me how would you describe the impact of diversity management practices?</li> <li>4. Tell me how does your organisation facilitate diversity/equality individually or within a design team?</li> <li>5. Tell me how are you involved in implementing diversity in the workplace? And within a design team?</li> <li>6. How do you handle/report problems arising from diversity between you, your manager and other employees?</li> <li>7. Do you have any examples of best practice in your experience relating to diversity and equality?</li> <li>8. What does the word “diversity” mean to you? Can you describe or give me an example of diversity.</li> <li>9. What does the word “equality” mean to you? Can you describe or give me an example of equality.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee engagement, training, development and management:</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. How did you find your job? How have you been interviewed? How have you been selected and hired? Have you been promoted recently? Can you provide specific examples?</li> <li>11. How does your organisation offer diversity awareness trainings? Can you provide specific examples?</li> <li>12. Please explain what performance means to you? How do you keep track of your performance? How do you rewards performance?</li> <li>13. How do you work/communicate with talented employees? Have you been recruited based on your age, education, and religion?</li> <li>14. How do you engage with employees coming from the young/old generation? Give me specific examples?</li> <li>15. What does the word “talent” mean to you? Can you describe or give an example of talent.</li> <li>16. What does the word “skill” mean to you? Can you describe or give an example of skill.</li> </ol>

- Performance and Creativity:
  17. Talk about any new solutions and processes you have been involved in at the workplace?  
What happened when you face conflict as individual and within a design team? How do you create and prototype an idea/ product as individual or team?
  18. Tell me how do you plan/generate/ improve new and effective ideas? And how do you suggest ideas within a team, your manager or new or current employees?
  19. How do you sell or communicate ideas to others? Are you allowed to share freely your own idea? Give me an example please.
  20. How do you perceive creative performance in the workplace? How does your manager accept your ideas? Give me specific examples?
  21. How do you access/ use tools or techniques? Are you giving rules in generating original/ new ideas? Do you share ideas with clients? How do you provide/protect new and original ideas in the workplace?
  22. What does the term “creative performance” mean to you? Can you describe or give an example of creative performance?

Source: Author’s interpretation for the purpose of the research (adapted from Jacob and Furgeson, 2012)

***Part 3:***

***Email sent to the design sector in Lebanon:***

Dear,

I hope this mail finds you well. I am a PhD student at the University of Southampton expecting to defend my thesis in April 2017. My thesis deals with diversity management practices, culture and creative performance in design sectors in Lebanon. For research purposes and to triangulate perspectives, I would like to meet with you, a human resource executive, and some designers/architects in charge.

For this reason, I am asking you for an appointment to meet you and ask you some questions about culture, diversity, and creativity in the Middle East. I will call you by phone to follow-up on the possibility of setting an interview. I am asking for an appointment to meet you for a short time and ask you some questions about 30 minute time. The name of the company and collected information will remain strictly confidential and anonymous.

I am looking forward to hearing from you soon. Your help would be a major contribution to the success of my study. If you have any questions or concerns about the interview or about being in this study, you may contact me at [roula\\_kadamani@hotmail.com](mailto:roula_kadamani@hotmail.com). I can also assist you with my supervisor(s).

Sincerely,

PhD. Candidate. Roula Al Kadamani

Faculty of Business, Law and Art

University of Southampton

MPhil/PhD Design

## Appendix B: Key findings from pilot interviews

### *Part 1:*

Table B.1: Data coding for the role of diversity management practices in Lebanese family design businesses.

Open coding		
Ideas (concepts from interview data)	Codes	
Diversity management is about religion and values inside the organisation.	Employers and HR managers lack of opportunities to use diversity management.	Role of diversity management practices (short-term strategy).
Diversity management does not go beyond the ethical and legal responsibility of the organisations.		
Employers do not communicate effectively with employees.		
Diversity management is linked with social activities through selecting and bringing employees in family surroundings.		
Diversity management contributes to the well-being of Lebanese culture and traditions.		
Diversity management is not an investment in society to attract more customers.		
Diversity management is not embedded within the family power and culture.	Underdeveloped diversity management.	
Diversity management does not meet the moral obligations of employees (it does not form talent communities).		
Diversity management is not embedded among employees and employers.		
Employers do not introduce diversity management to employees, and HR does not collect feedback from employees about their progress, participation.		
Employers do not educate employees about diversity management activities and values.		
		Inadequate diversity management.
	Inadequate diversity policies.	

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.

## Part 2:

Table B.2: Data coding for the role of creative performance in Lebanese family design businesses.

Open coding		
Ideas (concepts from interview data)	Codes	
Creative performance is about lack of employees with knowledge, expertise, and skills to these roles.	<p>Employees lack of opportunities to use creative performance.</p> <p>Socio-cultural norms and values inhibit innovation.</p> <p>Employers lack of opportunities to promote policies, law, and resources.</p> <p>Inadequate family strategy.</p> <p>An inadequate relationship between employees and employers (age, gender, and religious differences), resulting lack of commitment and trust.</p>	Role of creative performance.
Creative performance is about the absence of consistent ideas does not attract employer's interest.		
Employers do not communicate with employees		
Creative performance is about ignoring employee's opinions and experiences.		
Creative performance contributes to the inequality of Lebanese culture, law, and tradition.		
Creative performance is not an investment in society and organisation to attract more customers.		
Creative performance is not embedded within the organisational culture to restructure or implement ideas.		
Creative performance does not meet the moral and legal obligations of employees.		
Creative performance is not embedded among employees and employers.		
Employees cannot suggest the best idea and dishonesty is linked to the behaviour and values of a design team.		
Employers control creativity, and they do not educate employees about creative performance and values inside the organisations.		

Source: Author's interpretation for the purpose of the research.

### Part 3:

Table B.3: Data coding for the role of social – cultural diversity in Lebanese family design businesses.

Open coding		
Ideas (concepts from interview data)	Codes	
Religion, tradition, and values are essential inside the organisation.	Employers share the Islamic norms.  Employers share values and traditions.  Inadequate diversity strategies  Decision-making is limited among other organisational members.	Role of social – cultural diversity.
Religion reflects on the owner’s beliefs, values, and attitude within the organisation.		
Employers share common religious beliefs with employees.		
Gender is linked with family relationships offering a position and bringing more male employees inside the organisation.		
Religion contributes to the well-being of Lebanese culture and traditions.		
Diversity management is not an investment in society to attract more customers.		
Religion and gender do not meet the moral obligations of employees (it does not form talent communities).		
Religion gives power to employers.	Employers lack of opportunities to promote equality among employees.  Inadequate talent management (lack of competition, communication, and employee’s development).	
Gender is embedded within the family power and culture.		
Gender is not embedded among employees and employers.		
Employers do not introduce equality to employees.		

Source: Author’s interpretation for the purpose of the research.

## **Appendix C: The Lebanese constitution of 1926**

This section presents Lebanese constitution of 1926 with its amendments (Presidency.gov, 1990). The Lebanese governments have amended these articles in 2004:

### **Article 1**

‘Lebanon is an independent state, with indivisible unity, and complete sovereignty. Its boundaries are the same defining it currently. North: From the mouth of Al-Nahr Al-Kabir along a line following the course of the River to the point of its confluence with Wadi Khalid, its tributary, at the height of Jisr Al-Kamar. East: The summit line separating Wadi Khalid from Wadi Al-Assi River (Oronte), crossing the villages of Muaissara, Harbata, Heit, Abish, Fissan at the height of the two villages of Brina and Matriba. This line follows the boundaries of Northern Baalbeck from the northeasterly side and the southeasterly side, then the boundaries of Baalbeck, Al-Bikaa, Hassbiya, and Eastern Rashiya. South. The current southern boundaries of Sour and Marjayoun. West: The Mediterranean Sea.’

### **Article 2**

‘No part of the Lebanese territory may be alienated or ceded.’

### **Article 3**

‘The boundaries of administrative areas may not be altered except according to a law.’

### **Article 4**

‘The Grand Lebanon is a Republic, whose capital is Beirut.’

### **Article 5**

‘The Lebanese flag is comprised of red, white, and red horizontal stripes. The cedar in green occupies the center of the white stripe. The size of the white stripe is equivalent to the size of both the red stripes. The cedar is in the center, with its apex touching the red upper stripe, and its base touching the red lower stripe. The size of the cedar is equivalent to a third of the size of the white stripe.’

### **Article 6**

‘The Lebanese nationality and the manner in which it is acquired, retained and lost, shall be determined according to the law.’

### **Article 7**

‘All Lebanese are equal before the law. They equally enjoy civil and political rights, and assume obligations and public duties without any distinction among them.’



**Article 8**

‘Personal freedom is guaranteed and protected by the law. No one can be arrested, jailed or suspended except according to the rules of the law. No offense can be determined and no penalty can be imposed except according to the law.’

**Article 9**

‘Freedom of conscience is absolute. In assuming the obligations of glorifying God, the Most High, the State respects all religions and creeds and safeguards the freedom of exercising the religious rites under its protection, without disturbing the public order. It also guarantees the respect of the system of personal status and religious interests of the people, regardless of their different creeds.’

**Article 10**

‘Education is free so long as it does not disturb the public order, does not violate the morals, and does not touch the dignity of any religion or creed. The rights of communities to establish their own private schools cannot be violated, provided that they comply with the general requirements laid down by the State with respect to public education.’

**Article 11**

‘The Arabic language is the official national language. The conditions under which the French language is to be used are determined by law.’

**Article 12**

‘Every Lebanese has the right to public employment, without any distinction, except on qualification and merit according to the conditions laid down by the law. A special code shall be established to safeguard the rights of employees in the areas to which they belong.’

**Article 13**

‘The freedom of opinion, expression through speech and writing, the freedom of the press, the freedom of assembly, and the freedom of association, are all guaranteed within the scope of the law.’

**Article 95**

‘The sectarian groups shall be represented in a just and equitable manner in the formation of the cabinet.’

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