



UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**Strategic leadership and organizational performance in small
and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe: Developing a strategic
leadership model**

by
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degree**

**Of
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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study is to develop a strategic leadership model that suites the operations of small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe. Small and medium enterprises, like other organisations, must perform. The study explores the awareness of strategic leadership by SMEs leaders in Zimbabwe, its acceptance, and effectiveness as factors impacting organisational performance. SMEs are engines of economic growth, and in Zimbabwe, they are crucial sources of employment. However, due to a lack of managerial skills, their owners/managers hardly have business plans. As a result, managers make strategic decisions haphazardly. The theory of strategic leadership highlights top organisational leaders as makers of strategic decisions to enhance organisational performance. This study followed the parallel convergent mixed methods approach, collecting separately quantitative and qualitative data using the survey and multiple case study methods. The researcher used the multistage cluster sampling method to recruit 768 respondents from five provinces in Zimbabwe. Data collection involved distributing a delivery and collection questionnaire in person to the respondents with the assistance of third parties. Qualitatively, 21 participants were selected from 7 cases using the purposeful sampling method. Data collection using semi-structured interviews was approximately 30-60 minutes per interview. Quantitative data analysis followed the EFA-SEM process, using the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to confirm exploratory factor analysis results (EFA) before employing the structural equation modeling (SEM) to test relations among factors. Themes development involved using Nvivo12 pro software to analyse qualitative data. Quantitative findings reveal that awareness of strategic leadership, its acceptance, role, and effectiveness are all factors that positively impact organisational performance. Qualitative results also show that SMEs owners/leaders have a good awareness of strategic leadership, its role, and effectiveness as crucial factors that impact organisational performance. A comparison of results shows a high degree of compatibility, giving room for the development of a model. The model will guide SMEs leaders in their strategy-making programmes and assist policymakers in designing programmes necessary to stimulate the performance and growth of SMEs in Zimbabwe.

Key words: - Strategic choices, Performance, Leadership, Organisations, Strategic leaders

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Activity Based Accounting
ACCA	Association of Certified Chartered Accountants
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
BSC	Balanced Score- Card
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
C.R	Critical ratio
DCM	Dynamic Capabilities Model
EFA	Exploratory factor analysis
EPS	Earnings per share
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Program
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FINGAZ	Financial Gazette
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNU	Government of National Unity
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HRD	Human Resources Development
ICM	Independent Commission on Multilateralism
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KMO	Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin measure
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MIC	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
MSMECD	Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

MTN	Mobile Telephone Networks
NSSA	National Social Security Authority
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PESTL	Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal
RBV	Resource Based View
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
ROA	Return on assets
ROI	Return on investment
ROS	Return on sales
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RS	Research Strategy
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SBA	Small Business Administration
SE	Standard Error
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SMEAZ	Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Zimbabwe
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMEDCO	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TMT	Top Management Team
TMTs	Top Management Teams
TQM	Total Quality Management
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

VAT	Value Added Tax
WHO	World health organisation
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union, Patriotic Front
ZIMCODD	Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Management

DEFINITION OF TERMS

TERM

DEFINITION

Developed economies	-	Economies with advanced industrial and technological infrastructure and are characterised by rapid and sustained economic growth and high per capita income.
Developing economies	-	Economies whose industrial infrastructure is less developed and the standard of living is generally low.
Economic growth	-	It is the increase in what a country manages to produce over a period of time taking into consideration the market value of goods and services and is measured by the GDP.
Employment creation	-	It is the creation of jobs through government policies with the intention of reducing unemployment in an economy
Entrepreneurial activity	-	It is a human action that is enterprising in nature, intended at generating value through expanding economic activity by coming up with new products and markets.
Micro, small and medium enterprises	-	Organizations employing up to 5 people (micro), 40 people (small), and 100 people (medium) according to Small Enterprises Development Corporation Amendment Act of 2011 (FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report, 2012).
Owner/Manager	-	Entrepreneur or founder of business venture who at times doubles as manager or Chief Executive Officer

Performance measurement	-	A management activity that is employed by managers to evaluate the performance of a business.
Poverty alleviation	-	It is a set of economic and humanitarian measures that a government can employ with the intention of lifting its citizens out of poverty permanently.
Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) –		Organizations whose employment levels are not more than one-hundred (100) employees according to Small Enterprises Development Corporation Amendment Act of 2011 (FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report, 2012).
Strategic choices	-	Strategies that top managers can identify, select and implement in order to enhance organizational performance.
Sub-Saharan Africa	-	A geographical area of the African continent that is south of the Sahara Desert and includes all countries located fully in this area.
Survival entrepreneurship	-	Entrepreneurship driven by necessity to survive instead of innovation and business opportunities.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0.Introduction

This chapter looks into the background to the study. It kicks off with an overview of the universal importance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). This is followed by an analysis of SMEs at regional and global level with particular interest on their challenges and contribution to economic development and employment creation. The chapter also makes an overview of the Zimbabwean SMEs sector, looking at its challenges, contributions to the gross domestic product (GDP) and employment creation, and Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) policies towards the sector. The chapter also makes an analysis of the Zimbabwean operating business environment to give readers a clear picture of the environment in which SMEs operate. This chapter further outlines the research problem, the purpose of the study and its expected contribution to literature. It further highlights the study limitations and its delimitations.

1.1 SMEs and their importance – an overview

It is estimated that ninety five percent (95%) of business enterprises across the globe are small and medium enterprises. In some highly industrialised economies like Japan for example, the figures are quite high as ninety-nine percent ((99%) of its enterprises are SMEs. India, a member of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South-Africa), with a SMEs population of 13 million as of 2008, represented about 80% of all Indian businesses (Edinburgh Group Report, 2012). As such, SMEs are largely dominant business institutions globally, accepted as engines of economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation forcing many governments across the globe to take strides in promoting their growth (Muriithi, 2017).

The SMEs sector has, over the years, become an important player in many economies as an employment provider. It is now a major source of income to the middle class especially in developing economies (Muriithi, 2017). Majoni et al (2016) highlight this importance, stating that SMEs are not only vital sources of employment creation and poverty alleviation but are also playing a crucial part in export sectors of many countries. Their importance is so crucial in every economy that today the focus of many governments across the globe is on these enterprises. OECD (2004) notes that SMEs are in every sector of an economy, manifesting in all forms, ranging from one-man band shops by a street corner to medium size operations playing a crucial role in the mainstream economy. The institutions are not only mere manufacturers or producers of goods and services but are also exporters, contributing significantly to a country's total export earnings. Countries such as Japan, Malaysia, China, South Korea and Taiwan had their economies boosted immensely by the sector over the years, hence their new collective name "new worlds". Abor and Quartey (2010) in apparent reference to their growing

importance, describe SMEs as “efficient and prolific job creators, the seeds of big businesses and the fuel of national economic engines” (Abor and Quartey, 2010:218). Abor and his colleague are simply driving a point that every big business we see today started as a SME hence they are, referred to as seedbeds of big businesses. Luetkenhorst (2005:09), in agreement with Abor and Quartey (2010) further emphasizes their importance describing them as follows:

SMEs are a seedbed for entrepreneurship development, innovation and risk-taking behaviour and provide the foundation for long-term growth dynamics and the transition towards larger enterprises (Luetkenhorst, 2005:09)

However, UNCTAD (2015) while acknowledging the importance of the sector laments lack of commitment on the part of many governments across the globe who apparently coin policies that are not supportive of the sector. It is argued that in some countries reliable statistics on SMEs is hardly available except in the European union (EU) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries (OECD) where statistics on how much the enterprises pour into these economies are readily available and can be verified (OECD, 2004).

1.2 SMEs - regional and global perspective

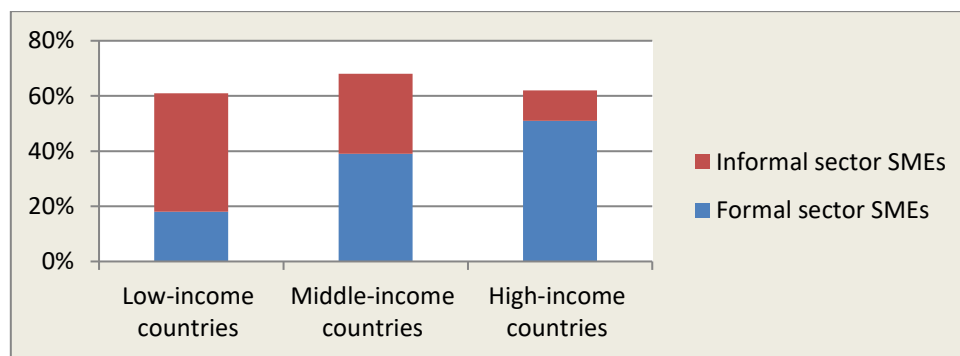
The role SMEs play, both regionally and globally, is very crucial despite their contribution to the GDP and employment varying widely between countries (Edinburgh Group Report, 2012). Their contribution is tremendous, as they play a significant part in poverty alleviation across the globe, driving employment and wealth creation, innovation and contributing significantly to the total economic output across nations. Katua (2014) points out that their contribution in both developed and developing nations arguably surpass the contribution by established large firms. On this background, many governments are today focusing on the SMEs sector with keen interest, drafting policies destined to accelerate growth of sector members into organisational maturity. The discourse on their role has also become a major issue in academic institutions, as researchers and scholars try to dig deeper into their operations and participation in the mainstream economy.

1.2.1 SMEs contribution to employment creation and GDP

The contribution of SMEs to employment creation and GDP in both developing and developed economies cannot be overemphasized. In the developed economies of the EU, notably United Kingdom, France, Germany and Italy their average contribution stands at 60% to employment and about 62% to the GDP (Edinburgh Group Report, 2012). In the BRICS economies of China and India their contribution to the GDP and employment is equally commendable. In China where 99.9% of all enterprises are SMEs, 84% of the country’s total workforce works in the SMEs sector, contributing about 71% to the GDP (ADB, 2013). In the sub-continent of India with a total SMEs population of about 30 million enterprises, employing about 60 million

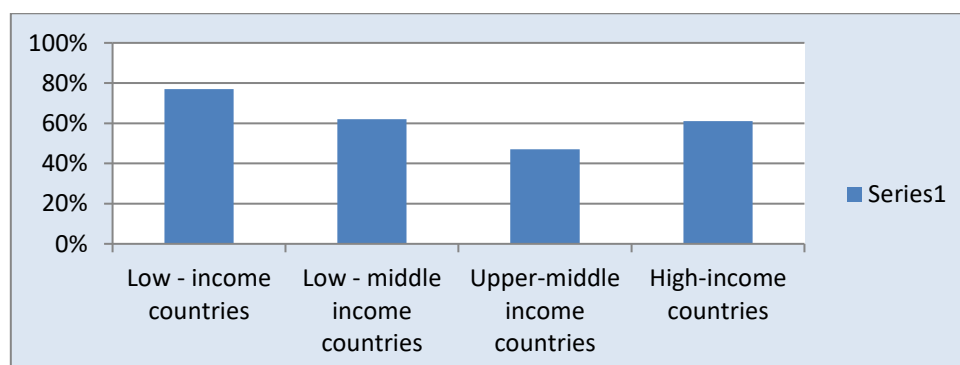
workers, the contribution of SMEs to the GDP stand at 45% and 22% to employment (Katua, 2014). In low-income countries, their contribution to the GDP is between 57% - 60% respectively while to employment it is more than 70% (Edinburg Group Report, 2012).

Fig1.1: -SMEs Contribution to the GDP (Median Values)



Source: - Edinburgh Group Report (2012:08)

Fig1.2: -SMEs Contribution to employment creation (Median Values)



Source: - Edinburgh Group Report (2012:08)

In the Sub-Saharan Africa, SMES equally play a crucial role as creators of employment and alleviators of hunger and poverty. It is estimated that 95% of African enterprises are SMEs. Despite several challenges like lack of professionalism, lack of knowledge in running a business, lack of managerial skills and finance and a host of other limitations, their contribution to the GDP is remarkable (Katua, 2014). In economies like Ghana where 92% of businesses are SMEs, their contribution to the GDP stands at 70% and 49% to employment creation. In the Republic of South Africa, their contribution is about 50% - 60% to the GDP and 60% to employment creation (Muriithi, 2017). In Zimbabwe SMEs equally play a crucial role as sources of employment; thus, becoming important eradicators of hunger and poverty (Majoni et al, 2016). On this background, their support both financially and technically becomes

paramount; hence the need to critically look into their challenges not only by government but by other stakeholders as well.

Table1.1: -Selected African SMEs contributions to employment and GDP

Countries	Contributions to GDP (%)	Contributions to employment (%)
Ethiopia	3.4%	20%
Ghana	70%	49%
Kenya	40-50%	80%
Nigeria	50%	70%
Rwanda	20.5%	60%
South Africa	50-60%	60%
Tanzania	60%	20%
Uganda	18%	90%
Zambia	8%	30%
Zimbabwe	40%	15%

Source: - Muriithi (2017:38)

1.3 SMEs: Zimbabwe perspective

SMEs in Zimbabwe like in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and the globe are important vehicles of economic growth and creators of jobs. The institutions have attracted the Government of Zimbabwe's (GoZ) eyes as crucial providers of employment at a time when many conglomerates are pulling out of Zimbabwe citing poor and unsustainable economic conditions. Majoni et al (2016) emphasize their importance, stating that in developing economies like Zimbabwe, SMEs are a major source of income to the middle class and their position as sources of employment is of paramount importance. Their contribution to the GDP stands at 40% and to employment, the contribution is at 15% (Katua, 2014).

The SMEs sector in Zimbabwe emerged after the dismal failure of the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP), an International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank policy prescription programme that was meant to alleviate the Zimbabwean economy from hardships. Alarmed by ESAP failure to deliver and stimulate the economy, the GoZ quickly put in place a policy framework in 2002 "Small and Medium Enterprise Framework", to promote development of SMEs, in a bid to boost the declining economy. However, Goriwondo (2012) argues that the ordinary Zimbabwean got the real drive to venture into SMEs sector seriously after feeling the heat of the 2007-2008 economic down turn that forced many to acquire overnight entrepreneurial skills they never thought they had. Sserwanga and Rooks (2013), refer to this as survival entrepreneurship largely pushed or driven by the necessity to survive in the absence of business opportunities from the environment. They argue that instead of being real, innovative and coming up with new ideas as opportunities prevail, such overnight entrepreneurs thrive on imitation, merely copying what others have already done. Such type of entrepreneurial

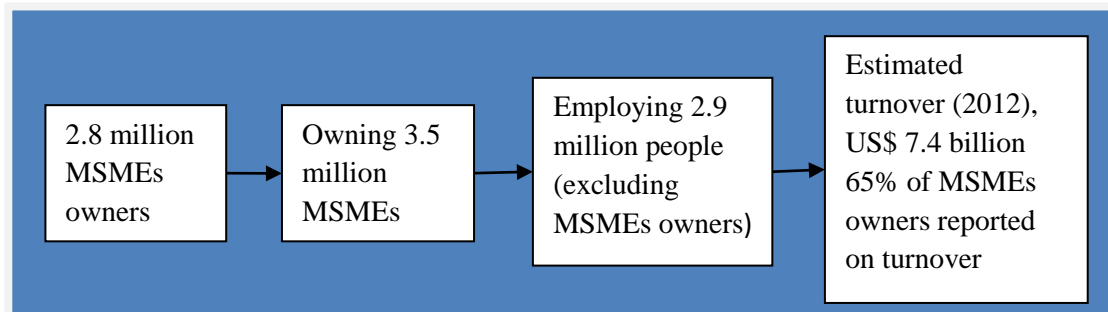
activity is a result of several factors usually associated with adverse, negative economic conditions. Yusuff (2013) points out that, usually negative economic conditions manifest in the form of a general lack of employment opportunities across the board; resulting in low income levels across households. The Zimbabwean economy therefore became victim to an entrepreneurial activity that was driven primarily by high unemployment rate and dwindling household incomes (Makate, 2014).

Acs and Varga (2005, as cited in Sserwanga and Rooks, 2013), are of the view that such an approach to entrepreneurship hardly impacts the development and growth of an economy as compared to entrepreneurship that is driven by motivation and the desire to turn environmental opportunities into business realities. Successful entrepreneurship should be driven by motivation on the part of the entrepreneur pulled by the need to be a master of one's destiny; identifying and turning opportunities into business strengths instead of the mere need to survive. Munoz (2012) acknowledges that starting a new business venture for the sake of making quick cash has been happening in the business world for a long time, but questions what happens after making quick money. He argues that failure to determine what happens afterwards can be disastrous; leading to a total business failure. To this end, the scramble to venture into the SMEs sector at that crucial moment in the Zimbabwean economic history was largely for survival purposes fuelled by a cocktail of factors. Factors such as lack of employment opportunities and many others drove many ordinary citizens to become entrepreneurs overnight. Unfortunately, for many Zimbabwean SMEs, it was a hand to mouth process at that time.

1.3.1 Characteristics of Zimbabwean SMEs

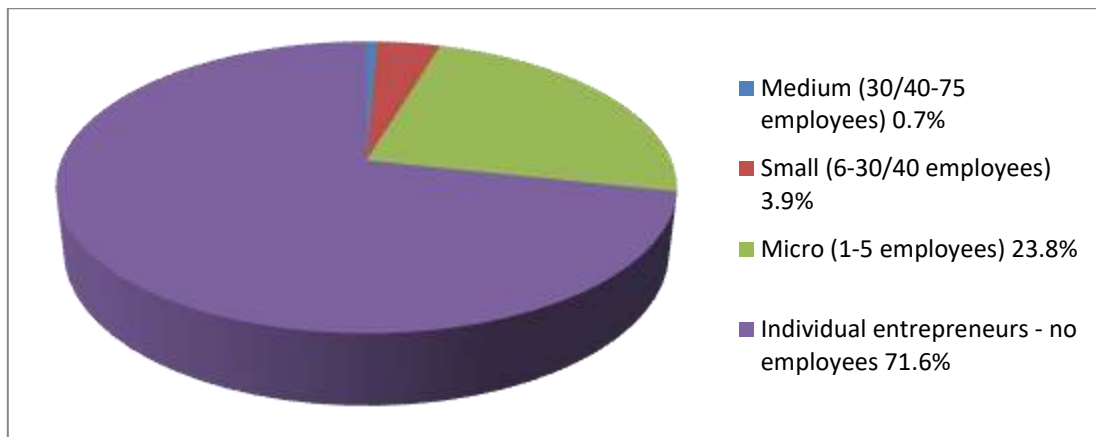
The FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report (2012) reports that the SME sector, which in 2012 employed about 2.9 million workers (owners excluded), with a total population of 3.5 million enterprises, owned by 2.8 million entrepreneurs is a crucial source of employment creation and an important contributor to poverty alleviation in Zimbabwe. The indication is that some SMEs owners own more than one business and that many individuals above 18 years are actively running businesses. Figure 1.3 shows an overview of the SMEs sector in Zimbabwe.

Fig1.3: -Overview of the SMEs Sector in Zimbabwe



Source: - FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report (2012:18)

Fig1.4: -Distributions of MSME owners in percentages



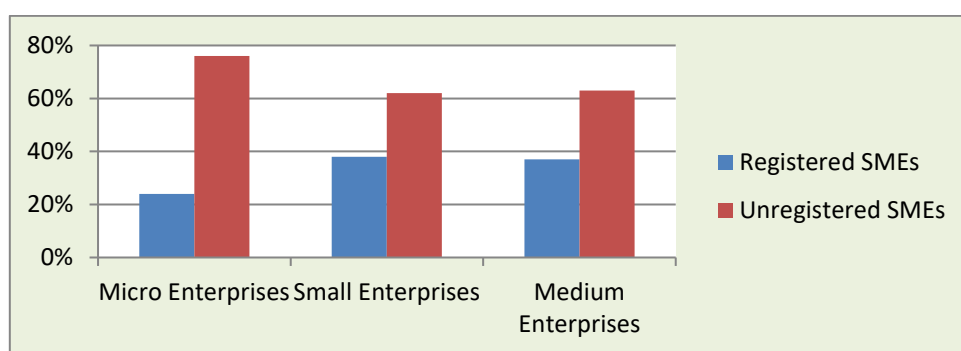
Source: - FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report (2012:19)

Figure1.4 shows that about 71.6% of SMEs in Zimbabwe are individually owned with no employees; 23.8% are micro businesses employing one to five people; 3.9% are small businesses employing six to forty people while the balance of 0.7% are medium enterprises employing 41 to 75 people. Their turnover in 2012 was around US \$ 7.4 billion (FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report, 2012). This study focused on strategic leadership in SMEs and, as such, individually owned businesses with no employees and micro enterprises were not part of the study. Zimbabwean SMEs are largely unregistered and unlicensed. Majoni et al (2016) blame this on the registration process that is long; cumbersome and discouraging for new entrants into the SMEs sector, as requirements are often difficult to fulfil and at times beyond the reach of some sector members. This literally means that starting a business in Zimbabwe is not easy but a cumbersome time consuming exercise that requires a lot of patience. This according to Majoni et al (2016), has driven many SMEs away from the corridors of law preferring instead to consign themselves to obscurity and discreet operations. Naturally, the plight of these institutions is worrisome, as many have found it tough to operate since financial assistance is illusive due to lack of recognition by financial institutions who legally deal with

registered institutions only. The World Bank (2013) paints a gloomy picture; ranking Zimbabwe on the “Ease of Doing Business, 2014” at 170 at a scale of 1-189 in comparison to other economies of Southern Africa and the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. The FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report (2012) puts the number of registered / licensed enterprises as of 2012 at 412000 being 15% of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Zimbabwe. Of these, 10% are small enterprises whilst medium enterprises are at 2%, the balance being micro-enterprises at 39% and individual owners at 49% respectively.

However, the FinScope MSME survey Zimbabwe Report (2012) states a number of reasons why many of these institutions are unregistered. The reasons vary, with the majority of them claiming that their businesses are too small to warrant any registration. Some claim that they are financially weak and others claim that they do not know how to go about it. Besides, they do not see the benefit of registering their enterprises at all. There are a few, who claim that they tried to register and were unsuccessful and that they never had time to commit to such an exercise fully.

Fig1.5: -Registered/ Unregistered SMEs



Source: - Adapted from FinScope Survey Zimbabwe Report (2012:25)

1.3.2 Zimbabwean SMEs: challenges

Like in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, the development and growth of SMEs in Zimbabwe has always faced challenges. Several studies and reports (Tinarwo, 2016; Fields et al, 2015; Majoni et al, 2016; Nyamwanza et al, 2015; FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report, 2012) reveal several bottlenecks to the growth and survival of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The challenges listed are inadequate funding, lack of managerial skills, lack of marketing skills, frustrating Government rules and regulations and lack of general appreciation of business planning among many others. To this end, the Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Zimbabwe (SMEAZ) engaged legislators in May 2014 with a presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development, Parliament of Zimbabwe, appealing to the concerned authorities to have a listening ear to the plight of SMEs (SMEAZ, 2014).

However, the Government has made calls for owners/managers/CEOs of SMEs to display effective strategic leadership by developing strategic frameworks in order to create a visible and vibrant sector. Through the then Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development (MSMECD), Government of Zimbabwe has complemented this move by taking a clear position with a vision to creating an enabling environment to promote the SMEs sector. Nyamwanza et al (2015) state that several measures to stimulate the sector, such as allowing regulated flea market and street vending in urban areas, favourable SMEs procurement policies and reviewing SMEs legislation have been put in place. In addition, the Industrial Development Policy (2012-2016), confirms the position of GoZ, which gives the SMEs sector recognition as strategic, requiring maximum support. The policy crafted by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MIC), emphasizes giving technological, structural, TQM and research and development support, including assistance in accessing key and relevant markets for the sector's products.

1.3.3 GoZ policies and SMEs growth

Government support in any economy should avail user-friendly policies that ably uplift, improve and regulate the operations of SMEs subject to the establishment of an enabling and favourable environment. Obaji and Olugu (2014) are of the view that SMEs, as crucial sources of employment creation require strong support from the Government of the day for them to be active participants in the mainstream economy. However, despite efforts by the responsible ministry to coordinate the operations of the SMEs sector, Zimbabwe government policies are inconsistent and conflicting. Majoni et al (2016) are sceptical, arguing that the Zimbabwean Government policies are not supportive of the SMEs sector. They cite training and monitoring of these institutions pointing out that these are inadequate and policies towards such are not convincing; a scenario that leaves them vulnerable to collapse. Fields et al (2015) view the policies as bankrupt, uncoordinated and often conflicting, bringing confusion to the intended sectors. In particular, the SMEs Policy and Strategic Framework of 2002-2007 is a weak document that leaves SMEs struggling instead of realizing growth (Nyamwanza et al, 2015).

Majoni et al (2016) contend that authorities can learn from the South Korean scenario, where effective and strong SME development programmes, which emphasize adequate training for their enterprises, are in place. The Korean Small and Medium Business Cooperation (SBC), an equivalent of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation (SMEDCO) in Zimbabwe has pioneered programmes that put SMEs under thorough training and supervision from infancy to maturity. Also, in India, training and development of entrepreneurs are a priority in view of the crucial role SMEs play in employment creation and contribution to the GDP. According to Jahanshani et al (2011), authorities in India established three top SMEs

training institutions geared at uplifting the SMEs sector through effective training. In Germany a Government support programme, known as “start-up subsidy” introduced in 2003, played a crucial role in subsidizing start-ups, successfully growing them from (37000) thirty-seven thousand in 1994 to (250000) two hundred and fifty thousand strong enterprises by 2005 (Caliendo and Kritikos, 2010).

1.4 The rationale

Despite the challenges and conflicting GoZ policies, SMEs play a crucial role in Zimbabwe as vehicles of economic development and growth, poverty alleviation and employment provision to the disadvantaged groups such as the youths and women. Their contribution to the GDP as already stated stands at 40%, employing about 50%-60% of the total able bodied Zimbabwean work-force (Chigwenya and Mudzengerere, 2013). It is also noted that when the Zimbabwean economy went on a downward spiral from 1998 onwards, an exodus by key corporations relocating to other Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries soon followed, paralyzing many industries. The Government turned to SMEs viewing them as crucial vehicles to carry the economy forward, hence the critical role these institutions play in the Zimbabwean economy to this day.

With such a crucial role in a struggling economy, strategic leadership becomes paramount, notwithstanding the strategic fact as Oladele et al (2013) argue, that the leadership of an enterprise squarely rests on the hands of the owner/manager/CEO who should display acceptable skills and knowledge guided by a strategic vision when coming up with new products and clearly identifying new or existing markets. Admittedly as the world is fast changing into a global economy bringing a new competitive arena for all organisations big or small (Abdow, 2015), strategic leadership cannot be disputed as the cornerstone for organisational superior performance despite all the challenges associated with this global facelift. Therefore, such managerial skills and knowledge require an in-depth awareness and appreciation of strategic leadership and its development practices in order to enhance growth and performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The focus in this study was therefore in this context.

1.5 Zimbabwe business environment -overview

Every organisation small, medium or big is subject to variables that emanate from developments in the business environment. Developments from the two components of the business environment, internal and external, affect any organisation of any size. The external environment comprising of the micro and macro environments has attracted the interests of many authors, researchers and academics. Babatunde and Adebisi (2012) point out that because developments from this environment are usually beyond organisational control and influence, their impact on organisational performance can either be attractive or fatal. The Zimbabwean

economy, like all other economies globally is subject to the dictates of this environment. Senior SMEs leaders have to bear in mind that the macro-environment will always be an unstable and ever-changing phenomenon. All they can do is to keep pace with the changes it brings, monitoring and suppressing threats and identifying opportunities to turn them into organisational strengths; thus, boosting organizational performance.

To assess the business environment in Zimbabwe, it is prudent to employ the “PESTL” analysis framework. PESTL, an acronym for political, economic, social and cultural, technological and legal factors, is a strategic tool that managers can employ to diagnose the environment, searching for threats and opportunities using the SWOT analysis. Porter (1980) in his seminal book, “Competitive Strategy”, advises organisations regardless of their sizes to equip themselves with capabilities to deal with such variables head on as the only way to guarantee organisational survival.

1.5.1 PESTL analysis

The Republic of Zimbabwe came into being in April 1980 after a long and bitter war. At independence, the business environment was healthy and encouraging until in 2000 when the country embarked on a land reform programme, which, from the onset was noble, but turned chaotic and uncoordinated; thus grinding the economy to a halt. Signs of recovery emerged in 2009 when the Government of National Unity (GNU) brought some economic normalcy and stability from 2009-2013 (UNDP, 2014; Beirinckx et al, 2015). However, with the demise of the GNU after the 2013 national elections, the economy has since slipped back into yet another state of despair as liquidity crunch bites amid piecemeal economic and political policies. This background therefore formed the basis for conducting the PESTL analysis for Zimbabwe.

1.5.1.1 Political environment

Zimbabwe had never known any other political entity since independence in 1980 other than the Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu-Pf), a liberation outfit whose rule temporarily and partially came to a halt in 2013. This was after the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC); a formidable opposition party, shook the ruling party culminating in the formation of Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2009. Mukhlani (2014) equates this GNU to a marriage that was solemnised purely out of convenience. Although political stability prevailed during the GNU era, the entry of opposition politics into the Zimbabwean political arena set a differing tone to the political environment as the ruling party felt threatened and politically disturbed.

Since then Bertelsmann Stiftung (2016) and Gondo (2015), point out that Zimbabwe has witnessed instability gripping its political landscape as strikes, violence, intimidation and politically repression and related fatalities engulfed the nation, much to the destruction of the

industry across the board. Multi-nationals closed shops, heading to other lucrative economies within the SADC region. Gondo (2015) views the current Zimbabwean political environment as a major drawback to the country's economic development initiatives due to lack of a political will from the leadership whose doubtful policies over the years have crippled and driven out direct foreign investment. To this end, regionally and globally the political environment in Zimbabwe is worrisome and unstable. Ward (2015) blames this on the lack of clarity on leadership succession policy, continued internal strife in ZANU-PF, the ruling party and suppression of the opposition voice. However, the removal of Mugabe dictatorship in November 2017 ushered in a new era, leaving the ordinary citizen with hope for political stability and development.

1.5.1.2 Economic environment

At independence in 1980, the new GoZ inherited a vibrant and strong economy with a well performing manufacturing sector built on the basis of self-dependence in view of economic sanctions imposed on the then Rhodesian Government. However, signs of economic downturn in the new Zimbabwe started showing in 1998, after the collapse of ESAP. It is, argued that the land reform programme of 2000 worsened the situation as the economy plunged to unacceptable levels, highlighted by a deep hyperactive inflationary trend that destroyed the whole fabric of the economy (Mukuhlan, 2014; Saungweme, 2013; Dubai Exports, 2016). The ordinary citizenry resorted to all available means for survival, as shops ran out of food evidenced by winding queues everywhere; health services deteriorated and unemployment skyrocketed. Inflation, interest rates, and taxes all went up. Inflation, for example, was pegged at 231 million percent by July 2018 (Mukuhlan, 2014). By March 2009, it was now at 500 million percent, and external debt was US\$6 million (Biti, 2015). Multi-national corporations abandoned the scene relocating to neighbouring Southern African Development Community (SADC) economies and the Bretton Woods institutions pulled the plug, shutting all doors to any possible external borrowing. Bratton and Masunungure (2011, as cited in Mukuhlan, 2014:171) describe the era (2000-2008) as the "Crisis decade".

The coming in of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2009 eased the situation; bringing relief to the sunken economy. The multi-currency regime dominated by the United States dollar replaced the abandoned, valueless Zimbabwean dollar (Dubai Exports, 2016). Improvement in the economy became evident as the GDP, which in 2009 set at 5.4% showed a positive increase by 4.2% to 9.6% in 2010. Consumers, the business community and investors, who all had lost confidence in the economy, embraced the new economic dispensation. However, according to UNDP (2014) and Zimcodd (2016), the end of the GNU after the 2013 national elections marked an end to the positive economic developments that consumers and

investors had started to witness. Much to the disappointment of the business world and consumers, the economy once again slowly began to slide into a recession evidenced by a sudden increase in company closures, unemployment, corruption and the reduction in imports and exports. Table 1.2 shows a decline in employment levels after the end of the Government of National Unity in Zimbabwe. Employment levels and earnings per industrial sector declined after the GNU era, an indication that the economy is once again on a downward spiral.

Table1.2: - Employees and earnings by Industrial Sector

	Agric ultur e, Fores try and Fishi ng	Mini ng and Quar rying	Man ufact uring	Electric ity and Water	Constru ction	Finance , Insuran ce and Real Estate	Distrib ution, Restaur ants and Hotels	Tran sport and Com muni cations	Services , Public Admini stration	Educati on	Healt h	Private Domesti c	Othe r	To tal
Employees in thousands and annual average														
2013	-	39.8	97.2	16.7	19.3	49.8	81.0	36.0	103.2	143.2	45.3	83.6	53.5	-
2014	-	39.2	93.1	18.3	23.8	49.7	78.9	35.4	108.5	150.45	45.7	141.2	53.3	-
2015	-	36.8	88.2	18.9	20.3	48.9	71.9	35.2	108.5	155.4	43.1	160.4	50.8	-
	-													
2014 March		40.4	95.2	16.8	27.6	49.3	77.2	35.4	106.8	154.4	46.0	83.6	53.3	-
June	-	39.5	93.1	18.8	27.0	48.9	76.7	35.5	106.8	152.4	46.0	160.4	53.6	-
September	-	38.4	93.0	18.8	20.0	50.3	80.8	80.8	110.0	146.6	45.5	160.4	54.1	-
December	-	36.5	85.3	18.9	19.3	47.8	68.8	34.3	109.85	149.5	45.3	160.4	52.1	-
Earnings in US\$ million														
2013	-	354.6	746.0	292.3	192.7	597.1	553.0	338.4	858.0	962.7	402.0	109.2	756.1	-
2014	-	381.5	782.4	320.6	148.4	512.2	513.3	347.3	879.1	1 029.5	304.3	193.2	579.9	-
2015	-	370.4	756.3	312.8	148.5	554.9	527.3	352.1	914.2	1 121.4	345.2	201.3	592.9	-
2014 March		94.8	203.4	76.2	41.9	129.2	129.7	87.2	201.5	241.2	71.6	28.4	146.2	-
June	-	91.9	194.3	81.4	38.4	124.2	121.2	86.0	219.6	254.1	77.4	54.6	144.4	-
September	-	98.3	189.0	81.4	33.4	127.7	128.7	86.7	224.5	261.0	78.2	54.9	146.3	-
December	-	96.5	195.7	81.6	34.7	131.1	133.7	87.4	233.5	273.2	77.1	55.3	143.0	-
2015 March		92.9	195.0	78.1	40.5	142.7	137.8	89.1	232.0	274.6	87.7	51.2	148.8	-
June	-	89.7	184.5	78.3	38.0	135.7	131.3	87.3	224.0	273.4	88.0	49.8	149.2	-
September	-	95.7	188.5	78.2	35.5	137.6	128.6	89.0	225.2	283.9	85.2	49.5	147.1	-
December	-	92.1	188.3	78.2	35.5	138.9	129.6	86.7	233.0	289.5	84.3	50.8	147.8	-

Note: (i) ^ Because of collection difficulties these figures exclude the employee of small agricultural units and small businesses in rural areas.

(ii) The figures for the most recent quarters are provisional and are amended as necessary in the following quarter.

(iii) Data not available

(iv) Data for formal employment in the agriculture sector used to include persons only employed in the LSCF farms. For consistency and comparability purposes the data now includes employees and earnings for A1, A2 farms as these previously constituted the LSCF.

Source: - Zimstat (2018:12)

Indeed, the Zimbabwean economy is now under stress, subdued by a liquidity crisis, which according to Mlambo (2016) began in 2015. Once again, long winding queues in and outside banks are a common sight as it is increasingly difficult for anybody to access funds from banks be it as an individual or an organisation. The country does not have legal tender to date and the introduction of bond notes regime by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) as a policy intervention measure to address the liquidity crisis, although welcomed by the business community was treated with caution and suspicion by the ordinary consumer. Zimcodd (2016) reports that in view of the experiences consumers went through during the 2007-2009 era, the introduction of bond notes was never accepted as a genuine measure to stabilize the economy.

Instead, the populace viewed it as a clandestine way of reintroducing the Zimbabwean dollar; thus driving the economy back to the crisis decade of 2000-2009. Unemployment is increasing at an alarming rate, forcing the economy into a hive of unregistered informal traders at every street corner trying to make a living. According to the World Bank (2017) Ease of Doing Business, Zimbabwe is ranked at number 161 on a scale of 1-190, a downgrade by 4 points from 157 in 2016 World Bank ranking. The World Bank ease of doing business looks at indicators like how long it takes to start a business from company registration and going through all procedures including permits, electricity, getting credit and all other necessary requirements. In summary, the economic environment in Zimbabwe is not investor friendly, as businesses cannot survive in an economy hard pressed by liquidity crunch; with no indication as to when such economic woes are likely to end.

1.5.1.3 Socio-cultural environment

The socio-cultural environment consists of those variables that reside in the social and cultural aspects of human life; built around the social system of a country and its cultural dictates (Abdullai and Zainol, 2016). These variables include societal values and beliefs, religious practices, cultural norms, human behaviours and attitudes including general life styles and are usually deep seated in members of a defined social set up. The variables according to Akher and Sumi (2014) are transmitted from one generation to the other and in the process shape human behaviours, societal attitudes towards certain aspects of life and decision-making.

Beirinckx et al (2015) argue that the total collapse of the Zimbabwean economy has affected negatively the socio-cultural environment evidenced by a continued deterioration of the education system, cultural norms and healthcare system. They cite lack of arts education, unclear national cultural policy, and poor health care due to the unavailability of medicines and qualified personnel as some of the factors that negatively affect this environment.

1.5.1.4 Technological environment

Technological environment refers to the adoption of technology and its pace in relation to the various production techniques and methods organizations employ in the production of goods and services (Gupta, 2013). The fundamental or key aspect of this environment is that technology is never static; instead, it is dynamic and compels organisations to keep pace with its dictates from time to time.

Despite not benefiting from global technological transfers in view of a remarkable decline in foreign direct investment (FDI), Zimbabwe's technological enhancement is commendable. To this end, the GoZ has taken a key interest in the development of technology as a key driver of economic development and growth. In particular, the ICT sector has emerged as unique and fast

developing; with a remarkable growth of 0.9% noted in 2013 and is vital in stimulating innovation and research in several sectors of the economy. The UNDP (2014) reports that in 2013 the annual growth rate of the internet was recorded at 23% while in 2014 voice subscribers on the mobile devices platform reached a peak 106% up from 97% in 2013. It is argued that despite a total collapse on its political and economic fronts, Zimbabwe has maintained its technological capabilities at par with its regional neighbours notably the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and Zambia (USAID, 2007). It is therefore evident that despite problems on many fronts, Zimbabwe thrives to keep pace with global technological advances.

1.5.1.5 Legal environment

The legal environment manifests in form of laws, regulatory and legal frameworks that affect various aspects of the economy and in the process, dictates organisational operations in various industries across the board. The continued deterioration of the Zimbabwean economy has had a considerable effect on the country's legal environment. Struggling organisations find it difficult to embark on some strategic initiatives like acquisitions, mergers and joint ventures with foreign enterprises as this comes with a price in form of huge legal and regulatory implications (Fingaz, 2013). In this regard, the use of qualified and competent legal minds to embark on a due diligence legal exercise becomes a pre-requisite for any organisation before getting involved in a business transaction in Zimbabwe. Moyo (2011) singles out the Indigenisation and Empowerment Act, which compelled foreign investors to cede 51% of their investments to indigenous Zimbabweans as one of the biggest hindrances to foreign investment in Zimbabwe.

The World Bank (2017) reveals that in view of strict and cumbersome laws and regulatory frameworks, merely starting a business in Zimbabwe takes about 91 days. As such, the bulk of SMEs find it difficult, cumbersome and too demanding to comply with various legal statutes applicable to business enterprises; i.e. Vat, Income tax, NSSA, Health and Environmental Acts among others. As a result, many SMEs find themselves playing a cat and mouse game with authorities due to their failure to comply with various legal demands (FinScope MSME Zimbabwe Survey Report, 2012).

1.6 Research problem

Strategic leadership is a concept accepted as necessary for organisational performance and growth. Zimbabwean SMEs are not an exception. However, the entrepreneurial activity of the 2007 to 2009 period in Zimbabwe was for survival purposes. Many SMEs started because of the need to make ends meet in the face of severe economic hardships. In essence, many enterprises operate without strategic direction. Besides, they do not have the vision and do not know what they want to accomplish. As such, owners/senior managers overlook the need to make strategic choices capable of stimulating the performance of their enterprises, or perhaps they do not

consider it that important. Besides, owners/managers lack managerial and business development skills, among many other challenges. As a result, the delivery of less sophisticated strategic choices is prevalent among SMEs leaders. It points to a lack of strategic leadership awareness among owners/managers of SMEs. As a result, strategic decision-making is haphazard. Besides, the leaders are not driven by opportunities but by necessity to run their businesses.

On the other hand, bankrupt GoZ policies are not supportive of the sector in areas of training and monitoring. In their study, Majoni et al (2016) discovered that poor training and monitoring were hindrances to the Zimbabwean SMEs sector, which requires training in areas notably strategic leadership and the responsibilities of senior managers. In this regard, the researcher identifies a lack of general awareness of the concept of strategic leadership, its acceptance, and its role in organisational performance. There is, therefore, a need to fill this knowledge and skills gap.

1.7 Research objectives

1.7.1 Primary research objective

- The study seeks to develop a strategic leadership model for small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe.

1.7.2 Secondary research objectives

- To determine if acceptance of strategic leadership by SMEs leaders impacts organisational performance
- To determine if awareness of strategic leadership by SMEs leaders impacts organisational performance
- To determine if the role of strategic leadership in SMEs impacts organisational performance
- To determine if the effectiveness of strategic leadership impacts organisational performance
- To determine the existence of variables likely to derail strategic leadership in SMEs

1.8 Research questions

Quantitative research questions

- What is the relationship between SMEs leaders' acceptance of strategic leadership and organisational performance?
- What is the relationship between SMEs leaders' awareness of strategic leadership and organisational performance?
- What is the relationship between the role of strategic leadership and organisational performance?
- What is the relationship between strategic leadership effectiveness and organisational performance?

- Are there any variables likely to derail strategic leadership programmes in SMEs?

Qualitative research questions

- How did the performance of your organisation change in response to your acceptance of strategic leadership?
- How did the performance of your organisation change in response to your awareness of strategic leadership?
- How did the performance of your organisation change in response to the role of strategic leadership in SMEs?
- How did the performance of your organisation change in response to the effectiveness of strategic leadership?
- Which variables do you think can derail strategic leadership programmes in your organisation?

1.8.1 Mixed methods research question

- Do the study findings of the two phases converge?

1.9 Scope of research

The focus of this study was on the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector, drawing respondents and participants from major cities and towns as shown on table 1.3, SMEs distribution by provinces. The unit of analysis was the small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe; located in the major cities and towns within the respective provinces. Small enterprises employ six to forty (6-40) workers and medium enterprises employ (41-100) forty-one to hundred workers. However, as the research population was large leading to financial constraints due to high research costs, the researcher employed the mixed methods sampling technique in order to come up with a manageable sample size.

Table 1.3: -SMEs distribution by provinces

Province	Small Enterprises	Medium Enterprises
Bulawayo	4508	5326
Harare	16051	1198
Mashonaland Central	6655	953
Mashonaland East	10849	2514
Mashonaland West	18534	377
Masvingo	15116	3569
Midlands	20672	5341
Matabeleland North	2332	0
Matabeleland South	4206	0

Source: - Adapted from: - FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report (2012)

1.10 Justification of the study

The researcher is confident that the study findings will nourish strategic leadership literature with insightful contributions in several ways.

- The study will result in the development of a strategic leadership model that suits the operations of SMEs in Zimbabwe. This will allow academics and researchers to further examine this area in future as further research might be necessary.
- The study will also enable top SMEs leaders/owners to identify and understand key factors that can stimulate the performance of their organisations. This, will allow SMEs to create their competitive advantages and profitably compete against established organisations.
- The study will further enable top SMEs leaders/owners to develop a deep awareness and understanding of the role of strategic leadership in the performance of their organisations.
- Finally, the study will equip SMEs leaders/owners and entrepreneurs wishing to start their own business ventures, with strategic leadership skills and capabilities necessary to drive their enterprises forward. The leaders will also be equipped with skills to overcome challenges bedevilling the strategic leadership of SMEs.

1.11 Limitations of the study

About 75% of MSME are unregistered making it difficult for the researcher to get a comprehensive and informative picture on their day-to-day operations. However, as the researcher collected data using the mixed methods approach, the use of semi-structured interviews addressed this limitation. On the same note, the researcher distributed to respondents and participants a support letter accompanying the questionnaire informing them of the purpose of the research and its positive benefits to sector members; both registered and unregistered.

1.12 Delimitations of the study

The study was delimited to the metropolitan provinces of Harare and Bulawayo and the provinces of Midlands, Masvingo and Mashonaland East. The population of SMEs in these provinces is appropriate for a researcher to conduct a study that can satisfactorily deliver convincing results. These provinces were a source of cases that provided rich qualitative information for the study.

1.13 Thesis layout

The study layout will be as follows: -

- Chapter1: - Background to the study
- Chapter2: - Literature review
- Chapter3: - Research methodology
- Chapter4: - Data collection; reliability and validity
- Chapter 5: - Data analysis and interpretation–quantitative results
- Chapter 6: - Data analysis and interpretation – qualitative results
- Chapter 7: - Convergence of results
- Chapter 8: - Discussion
- Chapter 9: - Conclusions and recommendations

1.14 Chapter summary

This chapter opened by looking into the importance of SMEs and their contribution to employment creation and economic growth from the global, regional and Zimbabwean perspectives. It then outlined the Zimbabwean business environment using the PESTL analysis. It further, outlined the research problem, study objectives, research questions, study contributions to literature and the unit of analysis. It finally, outlined the study limitations and delimitations including the thesis layout.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

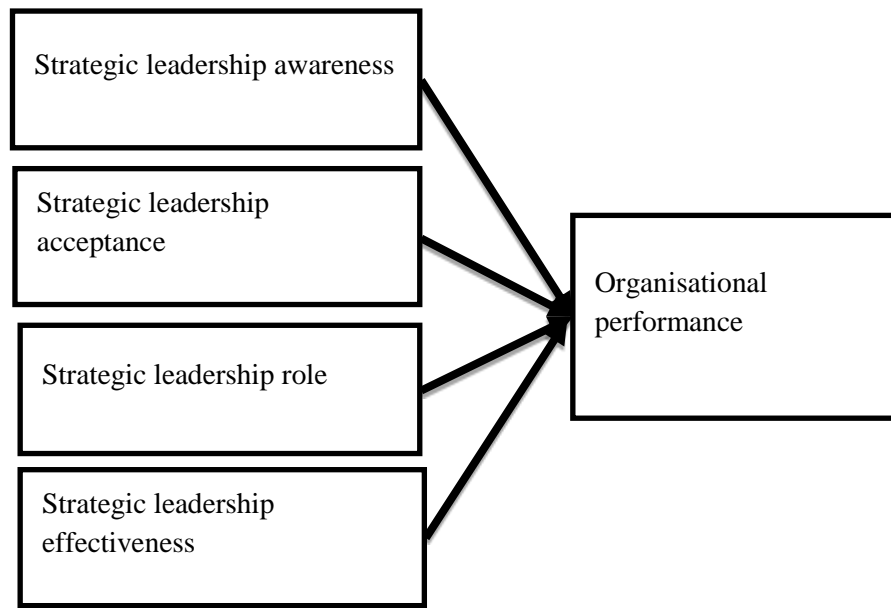
This chapter explores relevant literature in the area of strategic leadership concept. However before exploring its meaning and definition, the chapter outlines the definition of SMEs quantitatively and qualitatively. It also outlines the theory of strategic leadership; its various views and how it is viewed in the 21st century. The chapter ends by exploring the concept of organisational performance and how it is measured.

2.1 Conceptual framework

A CEO and his/her top management team (TMT) are senior organisational members responsible for making strategic choices that ultimately affect organisational performance. At the disposal of the CEO is a host of strategic options, which include corporate, business and functional strategies, acquisitions and mergers, diversification strategies, integration strategies, offensive and defensive strategies among many others. The CEO and his/her top management craft and shape strategy; and should see to it that selected strategic options translate into action leading to organisational performance and growth. They have to be aware of the concept of strategic leadership and accept it as the best tool for driving the performance of their organisations.

The theory of strategic leadership, depicted in the upper echelons model by Hambrick and Mason (1984), requires top executives to make strategic choices that positively affect organisational performance. Executives in SMEs have to make strategic choices to guide their organisations in the 21st-century global economy. They have to be aware of strategic leadership, accept it, and appreciate its role in organisational performance. Guided by the Hambrick and Mason (1984) upper echelons model, the researcher seeks to develop a strategic leadership model that suits the operations of SMEs in Zimbabwe. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the conceptual framework in this thesis.

Figure: -2.1 Conceptual framework



Source: - Author

2.2 Definition of SMEs

Questions researchers are asking are, “what is a SME or what is the definition of a small and medium enterprise (SME)? Ironically, despite the promising, crucial and positive roles SMEs play as drivers of employment creation and poverty eradication, to date there is no clear common global definition of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as it differs from country to country.

2.2.1 SMEs -Quantitative definition

Quantitatively the definition of SMEs is, based on three common variables; the number of employees, sales turnover and value of assets (ADB, 2013; Fields et al, 2015; Muriithi, 2017; Akugri et al, 2016; Katua, 2014). In other words, there is simply no common agreed definition globally except for the number of employees in which most countries put emphasis on as a key variable when defining SMEs despite the numbers differing from country to country. However, in some countries like New Zealand, there is no common agreed definition as some sectors of the economy use turnover whilst others use wages to define SMEs. Katua (2014) points out that lack of an agreed global position allows an individual to come up with a definition as he/she sees it fit depending on where the individual is making that definition. It is from this background that the definition is bound to differ from country to country.

In the USA for example the number of employees for a small enterprise is (100) one-hundred maximum whilst for a medium enterprise the maximum number is (200) two hundred employees. In Canada, the maximum number is (499) four-hundred and ninety-nine employees rounded to (500) five-hundred for a medium enterprise and (100) one hundred for a small enterprise (Katua,

2014). In Australia, a small enterprise is an organisation that employs a maximum of (99) ninety-nine people whilst a medium enterprise employs not more than (199) one-hundred and ninety-nine people. Any enterprise going beyond this threshold according to Jahanshani et al (2011) becomes a large business organisation. Similarly, in the EU economies, the maximum number of employees for a small enterprise is (50) fifty whilst a medium enterprise employs a maximum of (250) two-hundred and fifty workers respectively. In the BRICS member country of China, the figures are higher with a maximum of (300) three hundred employees for a small enterprise and (2000) two thousand maximum number for a medium enterprise. In the Republic of South Africa, another BRICS member, the figures stand at (50) fifty employees for a small enterprise and (200) two-hundred for a medium enterprise (Edinburgh Group Report, 2012). What this literally means is that, a medium enterprise in one country is in fact a small enterprise in another country and vice-versa. However, in some countries like the EU and Malaysia common definitions exist. Katua (2014) is of the view that coming up with an agreed position, allows authorities to include all enterprises in all sectors of the economy when rolling out support programmes.

In Zimbabwe the then MSMECD, parent ministry to SMEDCO a financing body to the SMEs sector generally classifies SMEs as organisations that employ anywhere from six (6) to one hundred (100) workers. The Small Enterprises Development Corporation Amendment Act of 2011 reduces the number, putting the maximum number of employees in a medium enterprise to (75) seventy-five. In this light, the Amendment Act views a small enterprise as an organisation that employs 6-40 workers while a medium enterprise employs 41-75 workers (FinScope MSME Survey Zimbabwe Report, 2012). The above positions of the Ministry and SMEDCO show that in some countries, divergent views on the definition of SMEs exist. However, Muriithi (2017) notes that in Africa, an organisation is recognized as a small or medium enterprise when its employment levels are below (100) one-hundred employees. To this end, in this study the definition found suitable for a medium enterprise, registered or unregistered was an enterprise whose employment levels were (100) one hundred employees maximum.

Table 2.1: - Quantitative definitions of SME (employees)

Name	USA	EU	China	RSA	Zimbabwe	Ghana
Number of employees						
Small enterprises	<100	<50	<300	<49	<40	<29
Medium enterprises	<250	<250	<2000	<200	<75/100	<39

Source: - Adapted from Edinburgh Group Report (2012:9)

Table 2.1 above shows the definition of SME as it varies from one country to another on the basis of the number of employees used as the most common variable. What it means is that a small

enterprise in the USA for example is in fact a medium enterprise in Zimbabwe. Equally, a small enterprise in China is to the USA standards a medium enterprise.

2.2.2 SMEs - Qualitative definition

Qualitative organisational characteristics do not get much consideration when defining SMEs in most countries except when their dimensional classification becomes necessary (Berisha and Pula, 2015, Pargaru and Dragan, 2016). Instead, consideration always goes to quantitative characteristics based on mainly three indicators being the number of employees, turnover and value of assets.

However, researchers note that relying purely on quantitative measures to define SMEs has some drawbacks. Relying on the number of employees only, for example, can be problematic. Berisha and Pula (2015) note that in some cases, some employees might be part-time employees or mere casuals; making the quantitative definition irrelevant. Moreover, labour regulations and laws governing social security in developing countries prohibit hiring of employees on a full-time basis, leaving many enterprises largely operating with part-timers whose numbers never go into Governments' labour statistics (Gibson and Van der Vaart, 2008). Besides, using employees as one of the definition criteria leaves researchers with more questions than answers. One might ask, "Does it mean that growth means employing more people?" If not, then number of employees as criteria for defining SMEs does not hold water. Gibson and Van der Vaart (2008) have a negative answer to this question simply because economic fundamentals do not support such a notion. On the same footing, using a financial quantitative like annual turnover might be irrelevant to those owner/ managers who consider cash flow as more relevant to their business operations than turnover (Berisha and Pula, 2015). Moreover, SMEs in most instances do not keep any precise records of the value of their assets whose true value drop in a country engulfed by hyper-inflationary trends. Gibson and Van der Vaart (2008) note that in some countries, inconsistencies prevail on what Governments count as assets.

In view of such drawbacks, a qualitative definition becomes appropriate taking into consideration the qualitative characteristics of SMEs, the way they operate and their business practices and structures. It is widely accepted that SMEs exhibit characteristics that make them easy to distinguish from large established organisations. Berisha and Pula (2015) note that the qualitative definition of SMEs generally considers the role of owner/manager, enterprise legal form and its position on the market, together with its structure. However, they argue that the two dimensions; being the role of owner/manager as a key decision maker and sole business proprietor responsible for all leadership duties including taking all risks associated with the business, are on their own outstanding qualitative indicators used to define and distinguish SMEs from large businesses.

This view is in line with that of the Bolton Committee Report of 1971, which qualitatively defines SME from three perspectives: - personalised management of enterprise by owner; its small market share and its independence since SMEs are never part of established corporations (Berisha and Pula, 2015 citing Bolton, 1971). Conclusively, no doubt quantitative definitions remain popular globally, but arguably, the qualitative approach has its advantages in that SMEs characteristics are largely uniform across industries in a country or countries. **Table 2.2** shows qualitative indicators used globally to define SMEs and distinguishing them from established large companies.

Table 2.2: - Qualitative indicators separating SMEs from large companies

Categories	SMEs	Large companies
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proprietor entrepreneurship • Functions linked to personalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager entrepreneurship • Division of labour by subject matters
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of university graduates • All round knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dominance of University graduates • Specialization
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly personalized contacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly formalized contacts
Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive position not defined and uncertain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong competitive position
Buyer relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on long term contracts
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour intensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital intensive
Research and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the market and intuitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalized
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of family funds; self-financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversified ownership structure; access to anonymous capital markets

Source: -Berisha and Pula (2015:22)

2.3 Strategy and its importance

2.3.1 What is strategy?

The word “strategy” has its origins from the Greek word “strategia” (Kiziloglu and Serinkan, 2015:307), which in the Greek language means the art and science of war (Tankovic, 2013; Durmaz and Dusun, 2016; Kiziloglu and Serinkan, 2015). The military consider strategy as the easiest way of achieving victory on the battlefield with little resources and minimum losses. The definition of strategy in the business world focuses on how businesses make plans to achieve competitiveness on the market place (Kiziloglu and Serinkan, 2015). The works of Hambrick and Mason in 1984 reveal that top managerial leaders have a prerogative to make strategic choices. The conclusion is that strategy is largely concerned with decisions and actions taken by senior executives to achieve organisational goals within a competitive environment.

Strategy in business therefore refers to a unique portfolio of actions meant to grow a business. The business has to attract customers and compete successfully to enhance overall organisational performance. According to Wheelen and Hunger (2012) and Thompson et al (2015) strategy is a master plan to guide an organisation to fulfil its set of objectives and accomplish its mission as well. The action plan should be a combination of approaches, comprehensive and operational ideal to move an organisation from its current position to where it intends to be. In essence, a strategy is therefore a consolidation of business approaches and chosen competitive actions managers employ to drive and stimulate their businesses. Their focus should be attracting and delighting customers as the only feasible ways of enhancing organisational performance (Thompson et al, 2015; Tankovic, 2013). In this light, attaining a competitive position and organisational performance are therefore the heart and soul of strategy which every organisation must thrive to achieve.

2.3.2 Definition of strategy

Researchers have to date not found a unique and common definition for strategy. However, most definitions contain similar or key words like mission, vision, objectives, competences and several others that emphasize the importance of attaining a competitive advantage by organisations operating in highly competitive environments. Indeed, several authors define strategy in many different ways, but all focus on the need for an organisation to attain competitive advantage as the cornerstone for overall performance and growth. This prompted Mintzberg (1987:11) one of the known strategy gurus to make a remarkable comment as follows:

Human nature insists on a definition for every concept. The field of strategic management cannot afford to rely on a single definition of strategy, indeed the word has long been used implicitly in different ways even if it has traditionally been defined formally in only one. Explicit recognition of multiple definitions can help practitioners and researchers alike to maneuver through this difficult field (Mintzberg, 1987:11)

In this view, Mintzberg (1987) views strategy from five perspectives: - as a plan, a ploy, a pattern, a position and as a perspective. As a plan, it enables an organisation to move from its current position to the intended destination. As a ploy, managers use it to manoeuvre around competitors, thus outpacing them on the market place. As a pattern, Mintzberg (1987) views strategy as pattern of actions whilst as a position, an organisation takes a particular position on the market place, feeding that particular market with desired products and services. Lastly, Mintzberg (1987) defines strategy as a perspective, arguing that it gives an organisation direction and guides it into the future, thus allowing it to fulfil its vision and mission. Another strategy theorist Porter (1996) asked a question “What is strategy?” In his answer, he states that strategy is the ability by an organisation to build a unique and important position on the market place. He highlights the link

between strategy and leadership, arguing that employees need leadership guidance to uphold attained position, which is the heart of strategy.

As Mintzberg (1987) points out, there are many definitions for strategy; indeed, other authors have come up with their own definitions that somehow all follow the above views. Johnson et al (2014) define strategy as the direction an organisation takes in the long-run while Ajagbe et al (2016) view it as a pattern that an organisation follows in its allocation of resources. Robins and Coulter (2012) define it as plans that an organisation adopts in a bid to outcompete others, enabling it to build a pool of satisfied customers. Concurring, Hitt et al (2013) define strategy as a set of actions and commitments that should be thoroughly co-ordinated and integrated, as the most valuable way to gain competitive advantage. These definitions all agree on a common perspective that a strategy guides an organisation into the future as it seeks to attain its competitive advantage. However, old school definitions, although not being explicit on strategy as the cornerstone for competitive advantage, highlight it as the basis for allocation of resources for long-term organisational survival. To this end, Chandler (1962 in Kiziloglu and Serinkan, 2015) defines strategy as the process of identifying organisational targets or objectives in the long-run that must be followed by a diligent allocation of the necessary resources.

2.3.3 Importance of strategy

Strategy is therefore the heart and soul of every organisation as it clarifies direction into the future while instilling a spirit of pro-activeness among organisational members. It is, according to Tapera (2014), a roadmap to the future. It is the basis for achieving an organization's competitive advantage, resulting in accomplishing set objectives. As strategy is much to do with the ability by top managers to make choices, it encourages the opening of fluid communication lines between managers and their subordinates; thus, enabling managers to cascade the chosen strategies down the various structures of the organisation (Ajagbe et al, 2016).

The importance of a strategy therefore hinges on how an organisation creates and delivers value as the only way to attain its competitive advantage, thus making it distinct from rivals. Hitt et al (2013) argue that the focus when making strategic choices is for an organisation to achieve competitiveness through delivery of value leading to overall performance and growth. To this end, it is therefore important for an organisation to craft differentiated strategies that makes it unique from rivals. A unique position allows an organisation to be well above its rivals, due to its ability to offer products and services that deliver value to its customers. As such, strategy keeps an organisation focused on its future aspirations and outlines how organisations should do business. Essentially, the performance of a strategy-driven organisation is, according to Tapera (2014), much better than an organisation that overlooks the importance of making good strategies.

Abdulwase et al (2020) point out that implementing a good strategy depends on the availability of resources. The strategy must be consistent with the organisation's value statements. An organization with clear strategic options encourages employees to commit themselves to its performance. Organizational commitment (OC) emerges when an organization and its employees develop a mutual relationship that results in employees exhibiting a high degree of loyalty towards their employer. Employees feel emotionally bonded to the organization and will do whatever they can to demonstrate their unwavering support and commitment. In the absence of fully committed employees, an organization might find itself having difficulties attaining the desired level of performance (Radosavljevic, et al., 2017). Ajagbe et al (2016) argue that commitment of employees, work religiously towards accomplishing organisational goals. Employees start exhibiting unique behaviours not subject to their contractual terms of employment. They freely commit themselves to organizational activities with no expectations of receiving payment in return. This behaviour is known as organizational citizenship behaviour. Employees see themselves as citizens of the organizations by working as a team to take their organization to high-performance levels.

2.4 Leadership

Before getting into detail as to the concept and definition of strategic leadership, it is prudent to look into the definition of leadership in a general context. In general, the concept of leadership seems difficult to define; hence, to date there is no common ground among researchers on its definition. On this background, Silva (2016) and Ali (2012) state that the search for an appropriate definition is still on and many people have difficulties in mastering the concept of leadership.

Despite this difficulty, some researchers in their attempts to define leadership have come up with some similarities in their definitions. Sharma and Jain (2013), define leadership as a process by which leaders influence their subordinates to fulfil defined objectives. Abdow (2015) and Robins and Coulter (2012) concur, pointing out that leadership is concerned with how an individual influence other people to achieve common organisational goals. The general view here is that leadership to some degree depends on the ability of the leader to influence his/her subordinates to achieve common organisational goals. In other words, a leader is a person who should be above others, making decisions that influence and uplift those below to work towards achieving defined organisational goals for the good of the organisation or the status quo.

2.4.1 Strategic leadership concept

The concept of strategic leadership dates back to the works of Hambrick and Mason in 1984, when they developed their popular upper echelons theory arguing that organisations were simply reflections of their top managerial leaders. In other words, the ways organisations conduct their businesses simply show how those managerial leaders occupying positions at the top echelons

behave and conduct themselves on a daily basis. John Child first muted the concept of strategic leadership in 1972, when he argued that top-level managers had a mandate to make strategic choices that ultimately influence organisational performance (Ireland and Hitt, 2005). Guided by this argument, strategic leadership concept therefore focuses on actions of top managerial leaders towards their subordinates. The concept requires top managerial leaders to be clear as to the direction their organisations take into the future. However, the primary focus of this concept is on how these top leaders make strategic choices in order to enhance organisational performance (Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016; Mahdi and Almsafir, 2014). Samimi et al (2019) point out that the strategic decision-making process in an organisation rests entirely on the hands of top executives, including board members. The decisions they make must be clear and convincing to drive organisational performance. Decisions to allocate resources and how an organisation should compete against rivals are strategic choices senior executives must make. Besides, they must have the capabilities to put an organisation in a unique position above competitors. O'Shannassy (2021) notes that occupying a unique position above other industry members enables an organisation to implement valuable strategies. However, top executives and their managers fail to avail resources to implement strategic choices and compete in the market. In many cases, the problem is usually top executives' failure to read the external environment, which is a source of opportunities and threats. Palladan et al (2016) blame this problem on their lack of capabilities making it difficult to identify positive and negative developments from the environment.

However, a closer analysis on the works of Hambrick and Mason (1984), seem to idolize the top managerial leader or chief executive officer (CEO) and his/her top managers as key and crucial strategic executives mandated to make strategy as a dominant group in complete isolation from those at lower organisational levels. To this end, some researchers coming after the Hambrick and Mason era (Ireland and Hitt, 2005; Arendt et al, 2005; Hitt et al, 2010; Hitt et al, 2013; Mahdi and Almsafir, 2014; Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016) argue that the dictates of the highly competitive landscape of the 21st century global economy calls for a new approach to strategic leadership. They argue that the Hambrick and Mason strategic leadership concept was relevant at that time when it contributed to organisational performance and success. They further argue that the current developments from the global economic environment as organisations move into the 21st century render the concept by Hambrick and Mason irrelevant, calling for a different approach to strategic leadership. In particular Ireland and Hitt (2005); Hitt et al (2013) and Arendt et al (2005) argue that the days of having strategic leadership centred on one individual at the top or a few individuals are over. In their view, the upper echelons theory, although being credited for its contribution to organisational performance, it's now practically irrelevant as a few individuals at the top of an organisation might not cope with the dictates of the competitive landscape in their

routine discharge of strategic leadership mandate. Strategic leadership now calls for the strategic leader to lead with others and not as a loner. This new strategic leadership approach geared for the 21st century advocates for those at the upper echelons of their organisations to consider sharing strategic leadership responsibilities with other organisational members (Hitt et al, 2013; Hitt et al, 2010; Arendt et al, 2005). Arendt et al (2005) refers to this approach as the CEO-Adviser model. Organisations are now communities where top executives together with their subordinates work together as a team; with top executives taking a centre stage in making strategic choices. Ireland and Hitt (2005:65) put it as follows:

Insightful top managers recognise that it is impossible for them to have all of the answers, are willing to learn along with others, and understand that the uncertainty created by the global economy affects people at the top as well as those lower down in the organisation (Ireland and Hitt, 2005:65)

Strategic leadership is thus a concept embedded in an organisation's future and how those at the top, strategically spearhead an organisation successfully into the future (Abdow, 2015; Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016). Abdow (2015) views it as bedrock for organisational success in that it is a pre-requisite for bringing organisational change regardless of size in the face of the ever-changing global economy.

Strategic leadership is defined as the process by which top organisational leaders make strategic choices or decisions on a regular basis (Ozer and Tinaztepe, 2014). This definition goes along with the concept of strategic leadership outlined in the upper echelons theory which glorifies top managerial leaders as the only ones mandated to make strategic choices. However, most definitions of strategic leadership point to shared strategic leadership responsibilities whilst highlighting the position of the top managerial leader as that of making strategic choices. As such, researchers like Robins and Coulter (2012), du Plessis et al (2016), Arikan and Enginoglu (2016), Hitt et al (2013) and Aslan et al (2011) all agree that strategic leadership refers to the ability of those at the upper echelons of organisations to anticipate, think strategically, and be proactive enough to come up with acceptable plans capable of driving an organisation forward. However, du Plessis et al (2016:59) view strategic leadership from a different dimension, arguing that:

It is an ability to influence people to be voluntary in making day-to-day decisions that can support the long-term viability of companies while at the same time maintaining their short-term financial stability (du Plessis et al, 2016:59)

This definition makes a slight departure from other definitions quoted above on the issue of the strategic leader influencing decision-making that subordinates have to make voluntarily.

Conclusively, Arikan and Enginoglu (2016:03) gives a short but comprehensive definition of strategic leadership as “the integration of three dimensions: - leadership of self; leadership of others and leadership of organisation”. Arikan and Enginoglu (2016) are highlighting a crucial point that for effective strategic leadership of an organisation, the strategic leader should begin the process by displaying strategic skills and capabilities; embracing and stimulating subordinates to work and operate as a solid team and in this way strategic leadership emerges. Strategic leadership is therefore all about a strategic leader who should be guided by vision, creativity and innovation in order to successfully propel an organisation into the future. Figure 2.2 on the next page highlights the main attributes of the definition by Arikan and Enginoglu (2016).

Fig. 2.2: - Strategic leadership within and amongst three levels



Source: - Arikan and Enginoglu (2016:03)

2.4.2 Strategic leader’s skills

Schoemaker et al (2013) are of the view that in order not to become a victim of strategy making failure, a strategic leader should possess an array of skills. They include the leader’s ability to anticipate the future, make informed decisions, embrace the views of other leaders, challenge the status quo, interpret information as it flows into the organisation and learn from the failures and successes of others.

In anticipating future developments, a strategic leader requires analytical skills that enable him/her to pick out developments from the external environment that manifest in form of threats and organisational opportunities. Several researchers, scholars and academics (Porter, 1985; Thompson et al, 2015; Johnson et al, 2014; Wambua and Omondi, 2016; Schoemaker et al, 2013) and many others insist on the importance of reading the business environment as a way of

anticipating the future despite this being a challenge to many. A thorough understanding of the developments within and outside the organisation is a pre-requisite for a strategic leader. Wambua and Omondi (2016) insist on the importance of understanding developments from the environment, arguing that it enables top executives to ascertain the true position of an organisation before making any strategic choices. As a strategic leader battles to pick developments from the environment, he/she should equally be capable of challenging the status quo. In other words, a strategic leader should not succumb to groupthink, instead he/she should conduct due diligence before making decisions and challenging the status quo if necessary (Schoemaker et al, 2013).

While, anticipating the future and challenging the status quo are essential skills of a strategic leader, interpretation of information as it flows in and out of the organisation is also important. Flow of information forms a crucial component in a decision-making process, bearing in mind that some information may be complex, conflicting and difficult to decipher (Robins and Coulter, 2012). Ideally a robust, incisive decision-making process should enable managerial leaders to take into cognisance both short and long-term organisational goals. Such a process enables managerial leaders to make informed decisions during their strategy making processes (Schoemaker et al, 2013; Thompson et al, 2015). Moreover, the challenges associated with picking up signals from the ever-uncertain environment laden with trends that no organisation can ignore, makes interpretation of information a major priority. Wambua and Omondi (2016) point out that the success of any sober minded strategic business leader hinges on his/her ability to interpret information in order to make incisive decisions. Besides, being superb in information interpretation and decision-making, Schoemaker et al (2013) encourage strategic leaders to learn from other successful leaders and from their own mistakes too. To this end, strategic leaders should always be on top of the situation while at the same time benchmarking best practices from other industry leaders. Benchmarking is one of the key turnaround strategies that an organisation can embark on if desired performance proves difficult to achieve. Finally, Schoemaker et al (2013) advise a strategic leader to always network with other business leaders so as to align his/her plans and expectations with those of others; thus, allowing for gathering of information necessary in the decision-making process.

2.4.3 Strategic leadership in SMEs

There is little research done to date on strategic leadership development in SMEs. The existing body of literature focuses more on challenges SMEs face and their failure rates. There is less emphasis on how top executives in these institutions or owners make strategic choices that enhance organisational performance. Mwangi et al (2013) blame this neglect on scholars and researchers who probably do not see any reason for SMEs' leadership to warrant attention. Garavan et al (2015) postulates that the problem is on the management of these enterprises, where

owner/managers load themselves with both the operational role and the demanding role of a strategic leader, a situation that is not attainable. In line with the upper echelons perspective, the responsibility of making strategic choices even in SMEs remains with top managerial leaders. However, Garavan et al (2015) hold a view that in general, leadership development practices are non-existent in SMEs. They argue that owners/managers are always time constrained; thus, ignoring the concept of strategic leadership. Moreover, SMEs with limited resources at their disposal prefer to concentrate on operational and sales issues at the expense of strategy making and development (Ahmed et al, 2014).

However, effective strategic leadership is bedrock for SMEs success and growth. SMEs, despite their sizes, contribute immensely to the growth of developed and developing economies. Their top executives have to demonstrate some commitment to their growth and survival. Yeok Mui et al (2018) state that SMEs play a crucial role in the economic development of many countries. Their leaders must, therefore, demonstrate good strategic leadership to grow their organisations. They, however, require strategic leadership capabilities to make valuable strategies to grow their businesses from small and medium operations to global giants. Besides, they also must have the skills to implement strategies. Kocherbaeva et al (2019) opine that SMEs can become market leaders by not only making profits but by relying on the good strategic leadership of their executives. Yeok Mui et al (2018) conducted a study on the impact of strategic leadership on the organisational performance of small and medium enterprises in Malaysia. The study adopted a leader's vision, strategic direction, core competencies, developing core competencies, and innovation as independent variables. The results show that four variables except the innovation variable had a negative impact on the performance of SMEs in Malaysia. The findings agree with the views of Ahmed et al (2014) and Garavan et al (2015), who concur that SMEs leaders have no time to plan and that their organizations suffer from resource shortages. However, studies conducted in Turkey, Uganda, and Kenya reveal a different picture. In Turkey, for example, a study by Ozer and Tinaztepe (2014) reveal that leadership styles relevant to strategic leadership have a positive effect on SMEs performance. In the SSA, studies by Mwangi et al (2013) highlight the success story of SMEs in the East African countries of Uganda and Kenya. SMEs leadership in these countries managed to strategically direct and grow their enterprises into vibrant organisations through effective strategic leadership.

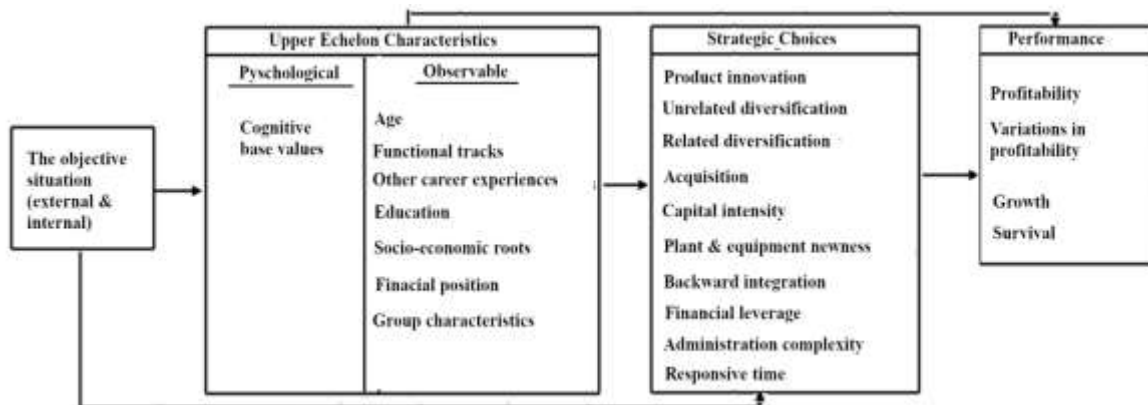
2.4.4 The upper echelons theory

Top executives and the way they operate in organisations have long attracted the interests of academics and researchers. The works of Hambrick and Mason in 1984 are central in trying to establish the crucial role top executives play in making strategic choices that ultimately influence organisational performance (Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016; Oppong, 2014). The study

by Hambrick and his colleague has had a tremendous influence on strategic leadership research, evidenced by its citation in more than 500 referred journal articles (Carpenter et al, 2004). The work of Hambrick and Mason and their upper echelons perspective therefore form the basis for the theory of strategic leadership. The upper echelons theory states that organisations are true reflections of their top managerial leaders (Oppong, 2014, Oladele et al, 2013, Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016). Hambrick and Mason were battling to address and respond to the question, “Why organisations do act as they do?” They concluded that organisations were actual representations of what their managers actually do and how they conduct their day-to-day business (Oppong, 2014). To this end, the theory focuses on top managerial leaders (senior executives), stating that organisational outcomes manifesting in form of strategies and their effectiveness, are reflections of top managerial values and their cognitive bases (Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016; Oppong, 2014). The theory further clarifies this view, stating that the perception of the environment by senior executive leaders in essence determines the strategic choices they make which ultimately affect organisational performance. Central to this perspective is the top management team (TMT), a group of top and influential managers whose responsibility is to make strategic decisions in conjunction with the CEO. TMT members bring to the group the much-needed key and rich information and together they seek for and evaluate alternatives. They then come up with an agreed common position before implementing strategy as a team (Oppong, 2014). According to the upper echelons theory, strategic decision-making is a collective prerogative of the chief executive officer (CEO) and top management teams (TMTs) and not that of the CEO alone. However, Hambrick and Mason (1984) are quick to point out that TMT members cannot pick out every bit and piece of information from the environment because their cognitive bases and values restrict their field of vision. This eventually curtails their perception of the environment.

The upper echelons model therefore assumes that TMTs rely on their demographic characteristics as proxies to cognitive bases and values that are difficult to measure. The demographic characteristics allow managers to make strategic choices that eventually affect organisational performance (Oppong, 2014). In essence, the upper echelons theory therefore highlights a linkage between top executives’ demographic characteristics, the strategic choices they make and the performance of an organisation. Hambrick and Mason tested their theory by measuring top managerial leaders’ demographics or their demographic characteristics in relation to organisational performance (Oppong, 2014).

Fig 2.3: - The upper echelons model



Source: - Hambrick and Mason (1984:198)

Demographic characteristics as per this model are -

- The age of the top manager
- The period the manager has been with the organisation, which is tenure
- The top manager's educational level
- The top manager's functional background – experience in finance; marketing; production etc
- The top manager's socio – economic roots
- His/her financial background

No doubt, the upper echelons model still commands respect among researchers and scholars. According to Neely et al (2020), the interest in the upper echelons literature is growing among researchers and scholars despite its shortcomings. While the upper echelons' contributions to organisational performance is highly commendable, many researchers (Carpenter et al, 2004; Oppong, 2014; Peterson et al, 2003; Hogan and Kaiser, 2005; Arendt et al, 2005) and many others have reservations on the applicability of the theory.

Several researchers and scholars (Carpenter et al, 2004; Peterson et al, 2003, Hogan and Kaiser, 2005; Oppong, 2014; Arendt et al, 2005) identified some loopholes in the upper echelons model. They have since revisited the model with a view not to discard it but to make some improvements and adjustments and as such, other models built on it have since emerged. The most noticeable loophole in this perspective is lack of causal explanations to the linkages connecting demographic characteristics to strategic options and eventually organisational performance. Carpenter et al (2004) note that the linear upper echelons framework lack explicit explanation and as such, a gap exists between what researchers know and what they need to know. Oppong (2014) on the other hand, argues that the upper echelons perspective only gives researchers causal description of the linkages; hence, a shift to causal explanation is paramount.

He further argues that the model is silent on how TMT demographics affect organisational performance leaving researchers with a view that the linkages are assumption based. Moreover, in some countries selecting executives based on demographics like age and level of education might be problematic as it might be in violation of the laws of the land (Oppong, 2014).

Other scholars (Ireland and Hitt, 2005; Hitt et al, 2013; Arendt et al, 2005) argue that making of strategic choices solely by top executives in the absence of other organisational members might be a recipe for disaster in the face of intense competitive rivalry on the global competitive landscape. They advocate for involvement of other organisational members in the strategic decision-making process. Besides, the world is fast changing politically, economically, technologically, and socially. Such developments have implications in how executives make strategic choices in light of the shareholders' value creation demands. The shareholders' expectations from an executive managing an organisation in the 21st-century global economy are now different. Executives now need to make strategic choices involving all employees of the organisation and not only the top management teams. In this light, the TMT model seems like an “over socialized model” (Arendt et al, 2005:681), that ignores a collective approach by all organisational members in strategic decision-making. The economic-based measures of organisational performance require organisations to create value for their shareholders. This forces executives to make valuable strategic choices. Shareholders now demand executives to play a leading role in the shareholders' value creation process. Executives can only handle the demands of shareholders through team-based efforts. The TMT model according to Arendt et al (2005) does not reveal any evidence that involvement and participation by team members in strategic decision-making are equal. As a result, researchers question if TMTs are in the first instance teams. An executive of a large organisation according to Arendt et al, (2005:685 citing Hambrick, 1994) had this to say when asked about the relevance of TMTs:

When I think of a team, I think of interaction, a lot of give and take, and shared purpose. In our company, we are a collection of strong players, but hardly a team. We rarely meet as a team; rarely see each other, in fact. We don't particularly share the same views. I wouldn't say we actually work at cross-purposes, but a lot of self-centred behaviour occurs. Where is the “team” in all this? (Arendt et al, 2005:685 citing Hambrick, 1994)

Despite the short-comings, the role of CEOs as central figures supported by TMTs in strategic decision making remains crucial in many organisations to date.

To this end, researchers have appraised the demographic based research as successful in as far as describing the assumed relationship between the characteristics of top executive team

members and the performance of the organisation are concerned. However, they view it as unsuccessful in coming up with causal explanation as to how such characteristics affect organisational performance. Riding on this “black box of organisational demography”, other researchers have built on the TMT model in a bid to unearth causal explanation linking top managerial characteristics and organisational performance. Peterson et al (2003) came up with a process model linking traits of top managerial leaders to organisational performance while Hogan and Kaiser (2005) developed a framework that links leader’s personality to leadership style, which in turn predicts attitudes and teamwork, and in turn affect organisational performance. Perhaps the most interesting challenge to this model is by Arendt et al (2005) who came up with the CEO-Adviser Model. They argue that strategic decision making or making strategic choices is not only the responsibility of the CEO or TMTs, but a collective approach that must involve other members from various departments of the organisation.

2.4.5 The CEO-adviser model

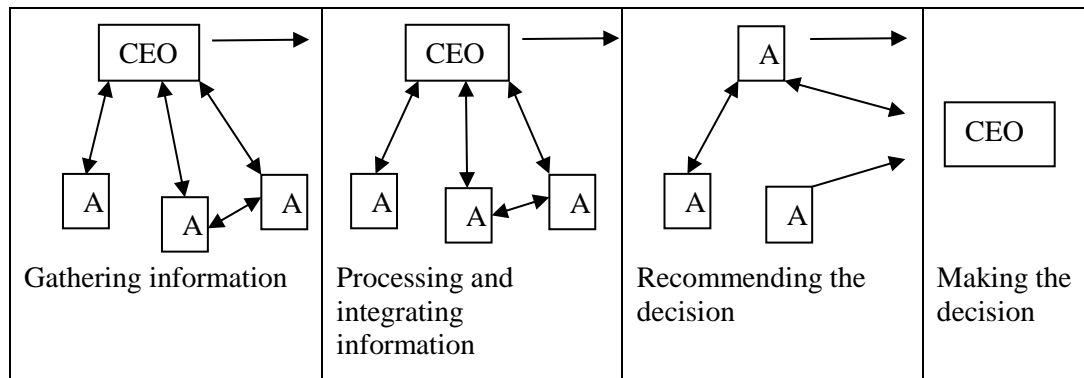
The CEO-adviser model pays attention to the CEO who, as a central figure, makes and shapes all pieces of strategy as a loner (Arendt et al, 2005). The model also pays attention to the TMT model, which according to Hambrick and Mason (1984) and Hambrick (2007) glorify the TMT as a dominant group with all the responsibilities of making strategic decisions capable of driving an organisation profitably into the future. Strategic decisions are organisational choices that involve a heavy outlay of resources. As such, top leaders must make them with due diligence as they strategically position their organisations for the future (Arendt et al, 2005). In essence, TMTs as dominant groups of executives must collectively share the strategic decision-making responsibilities. Researchers and academics have carefully examined the two models and are questioning their representativeness. The CEO for example is a top executive whose responsibility is to address many conflicting issues and evaluate the process with several options at his/her disposal. According to Arendt et al (2005), making strategic decisions is a complex and demanding task, requiring precision and due diligence; hence a CEO operating as a lone ranger might find the task mounting and challenging. The TMT model is therefore a decision-making body that is hierarchical in nature and only applies to a few companies.

In view of the above, researchers felt it was necessary to have an approach, which is more flexible than the TMT model, taking into cognisance contributions of other stakeholders in strategic decision making other than the dominant group at the top. The CEO-Adviser model advocated by Arendt et al (2005) comes in handy and does not seek to dismiss the TMT model, but to address the issue of other organisational stakeholders who also must have an input in making strategic decisions. The CEO-Adviser model therefore, comes in as an additional structural model emphasizing strategic decision making as a collective approach that

encompasses all organisational members instead of only the CEO or TMTs (Arendt et al, 2005). According to this model, the CEO relies on advisers who can be members of the TMT or any organisational members from various departments or even board members. This agrees with the views of Carpenter et al (2004) that one of the major pitfalls of the TMT model is that it ignores the contributions of non-TMT individuals in making strategic choices. They cite the board of directors as a key institution whose non-executive members especially, can be pivotal in influencing strategic decision-making.

Fig 2.4: The CEO-Adviser model

(A = Adviser)



Source: - Arendt et al (2005:683)

The CEO-Adviser model shown in **Fig 2.4** above shows that although the CEO is the principal and key strategic decision maker, he/she relies on advice not only from TMTs as close associates but other stakeholders within and outside the organisation. Arendt et al (2005) argue that the strategic making process thrives on consultation between the CEO and advisers. However, a noticeable feature with this model is that despite listening and getting all sorts of advice from all facets of the organisation, the CEO ultimately makes the final strategic decision.

2.5 Strategic leadership and leadership styles – the link

The dictates of the 21st Century global competitive landscape require top managerial leaders who are able to embrace and manage change. Top executives are therefore mandated to drive strategy implementation; giving the direction an organisation is headed and setting the tone for innovation and staff motivation as crucial for successful performance of an organisation. As such, strategic decisions they make must therefore be fluid, capable of directing and shaping the future of their businesses. In view of numerous risks associated with strategic decision making in this tumultuous global business environment, Celik et al (2016) advise business organisations to always be ahead of competition. As such, managers at the upper echelons should rely on clear and inspiring visions to make strategic decisions. In this context, there is need for strategic leadership styles that advocate for visionary and motivational approaches in decision-making, allowing top executives to manage change in a highly competitive global environment. Kihara et al (2016) point out that in this regard, a strategic leader wears many hats in the strategy

implementation process. Firstly, the leader is a commander responsible for strategy formulation and secondly, is an architect who identifies the optimum way of implementing the chosen strategy. Thirdly, the leader is a coordinator overseeing commitment of functional managers to their jobs and involving them in the strategy making process. Fourthly, the leader is a coach who invites other organisational members to take part in the strategy implementation process. Lastly, the leader is a premise-setter, encouraging functional managers to spearhead the process of making sound strategic choices.

Transformational and visionary leadership are the two main leadership styles that reveal some characteristics of strategic leadership. Arikan and Enginoglu (2016) highlight that strategic leadership originated during the Bass era after conceiving transformational leadership ideas in 1985. They argue that a close link exists between strategic leadership and transformational approaches. As such, similarities in concepts exist like the need to envision the future and development of a clear direction or paths as an organisation ventures into the future. A study by Oladele et al (2013) reveals that strategic, visionary and transformational leadership have the same characteristics. As such, the elements of strategic leadership framework are visionary, transformational and charismatic in nature, hence the link. The origins of transformational leadership date back to 1978 when Burns established the idea. As a follow-up, Bass made a deep interrogation of the idea in 1985 (Sultana et al, 2015). Sultana et al (2015 citing Burns, 1978) defines transformational leadership as a process that requires a leader and his/her followers to work as a team as a basis for moral boosting. Nikezic et al (2012) define it as a process that brings a positive change to both the leader and his/her followers. To this end, Odumeru and Ifeanyi (2013) view a transformational leader as an individual who should inspire his/her followers to do more than their normal call of duty. Sultana et al (2015) however, strongly feels that there is a close link between strategic and transformational leadership although there is a slight difference between them. Strategic leadership focuses on what a leader does to stimulate and drive an organisation into the future, driving all organisational processes and procedures whilst transformational leadership focuses more on the leader's direct influence on subordinates as a linear process. Transformational leadership theory therefore focuses on the capabilities of a leader to develop a vision and inspire subordinates to do whatever they can to drive that vision into the future. The theory advocates for a visionary and motivational approach that drives a leader to transform his/her followers; stimulating them to collectively operate as a team. McCleskey (2014) points out that as subordinates operate as a team; they need to boost not only their individual performance but also that of the organisation as a whole. Odumeru and Ifeanyi (2013) concur, stating that the theory looks at new ways of bringing a positive change to followers empowering them to look at the new perspective differently. It therefore, follows that

a leader should deliver a concrete and convincing picture about the future, stimulating followers in the process and encouraging them to be independent thinkers awash with confidence. This agrees with the views of Nikezic et al (2012) that a vision should empower a leader to equip his/her followers with new patterns, beliefs, and values on how to view the future with the ultimate aim of promoting greater commitment to the organisation. In doing so, transformational leadership does not recognise the old approach where the relationship between the boss and subordinate is distant; instead it thrives on teamwork viewing every organisational member as a team player, the boss included. McCleskey (2014) and Sultana et al (2015) argue that when followers or subordinates commit themselves to the cause of an organisation, sacrificing their personal interests and going an extra mile over and above their normal call of duty, they easily drive and transform an organisation to new greater heights. This result in enhanced organisational performance and success, as organisational citizenship behaviour mushrooms.

While researchers (McCleskey, 2014; Nikezic et al, 2012; Odumeru and Ifeanyi, 2013) all agree that indeed transformational leadership has its disadvantages, it has on the other hand a positive effect on development of followers and their performance especially when trust prevails between the leader and followers. This effect prevailed in some corporates like General Motors and Ford who are pioneers of transformational leadership. Nikezic et al (2012) state that when the two global giants realized the likely effects of the volatile global environment, they quickly transformed their approach to business, stimulating their workers to meet the new challenges, hence their growth and survival to this day. McCleskey (2014) and Odumeru and Ifeanyi (2013) are of the view that the following factors can guide a transformational leader in stimulating and elevating his/her followers to acceptable levels of performance and behaviour: -

- a) Idealised influence: - leader has novel ideas to influence followers and behave in a way they admire.
- b) Inspirational motivation: - leader must develop an inspiring, motivational and shared vision capable of stimulating followers to greater heights.
- c) Intellectual stimulation: - leader must display intellect admired by followers that stimulates creativity and innovation.
- d) Individual consideration: - leader must view individuals with consideration, assuming the role of a mentor or coach

Visionary leadership theory assumes that a visionary leader gets guidance from a clear and inspiring pictorial view of the future. Abdow (2015) argues that there is a link between visionary leadership and strategic leadership premised on a view that a visionary and innovative leader is highly recommended when an organisation desires to move to a new state of affairs. It is an

approach far different from day to day general management of an organization. Archbald (2013) confirms this point, arguing that general management is all about looking at an organisation, focusing on daily routines like budgets, personnel issues, reports and general keeping of records. Visionary leadership goes beyond routine management issues. As such, this leadership style requires top managerial leaders to look beyond their day-to-day management issues especially when change is desirable and managers cannot avoid or ignore it. When change becomes eminent, a visionary leader looks ahead to build a picture of the future and propels the organisation to the desired new position (Archbald, 2013).

Visionary leadership therefore advocates for integrity and consistency on the part of the leader to inspire those below to accept the defined picture of the future showing a clear direction the organisation is going. Martin et al (2014) points out that effective visionary leadership arises from shared vision that marshals all organisational members to pull in the same direction as a team. This view goes along with Dhammika (2014) who, in agreement clearly points out that an inspiring vision requires communication to all organisational members. He argues that a well communicated and shared vision clarifies the desired picture of the future, inspiring subordinates to thrive for a better future. Oladele et al (2013) in concurrence state that communicating a vision is very important for a visionary leader. This is so, because the leader requires the total collective participation of all organisational members in the implementation of a vision making sure that everybody gets aligned to the desired state of the future. Visionary leadership therefore depends on two crucial aspects, sharing a vision and communicating it to other organisational members. The outcome is trust, commitment and increased individual and organisational performance.

In view of the above, a visionary leader is a beacon that gives illumination and direction to the whole organisation and its members. Members in turn get the inspiration to commit themselves to greater heights of success (Nwokedi, 2015). To this end, a visionary leader is to his/her subordinates, an admired and astute communicator, a change agent and an innovator, capable of inspiring those below to pull an organisation to greater heights. There are examples of visionary leadership in both business and good governance cited in literature. The likes of Bill Gates, the visionary brains behind Micro-soft, a global leader in computer software and Mark Zuckerberg, the brains behind Face book and Twitter, are all undisputed examples of visionary leadership. Equally, the likes of Aliko Dangote, a Nigerian visionary business leader, who took the African business landscape by storm spreading his business interest across many sectors of industry, stretching from Nigeria across many African countries, require acknowledgement. Nwokedi (2015) points out that this business leader is one of Nigeria's and Africa's most leading visionary

business icons, the first in the history of Africa, whose estimated net worth as of January 2015 was around US\$18.6 billion. In politics and governance, visionary leadership is noted in the former USA president Barack Obama, whose vision “Yes We Can” turned around an otherwise depressed USA economy (Nwokedi, 2015). All the leaders stated above have visionary leadership characteristics worth remembering in history.

The origins of charismatic leadership date back to the time of Max Weber in 1947, when he founded a charismatic leadership model based on two perspectives. The first perspective is that there is always a need or goal that followers view as unfulfilled by the present status quo. The second perspective looks at followers submitting themselves to a leader on a conviction that his/her charisma will be instrumental in the fulfilment of their goals (Sparks, 2014). Charismatic leadership depends on the charisma of the leader, making him/her stand out as an exceptionally unique individual. In this view, persuasiveness and charm are the main drivers of charismatic leadership (Spahr, 2016). Various definitions of charismatic leadership listed below support these arguments. According to Yukl (1994 cited in Nikohoski, 2015), charismatic leadership is a process of changing subordinates’ attitudes towards accomplishment of organisational set objectives. In essence, charismatic leadership drives commitment among organisational members. Weber (1947 cited in Nikohoski, 2015) defines a charismatic leader as an individual endowed with unique qualities and regarded as superhuman, awash with supernatural powers. Weber (1968 cited in Nikohoski, 2015), further defines a charismatic leader as an individual with a unique and exceptional character, whose followers ordain him/her as a hero. It is for this reason that Bass (1998 cited in Nikohoski, 2015), points out that followers admire such leaders as individuals driven by divine grace. The definitions highlight a charismatic leader as an exceptionally unique, confident and inspiring individual, displaying a unique behaviour, ready to effect change when required and worshipped as a hero.

In view of the above, it is clear that a link exists between charismatic leadership and transformational leadership since both styles require a leader to recognize the needs of his/her followers. Spahr (2016) asserts that at times charismatic leadership appears similar to transformational leadership despite the two being different. She argues that the major difference is that charismatic leadership unlike transformational leadership does not depend on transforming an organisation to be in-line with the leader’s vision of doing business; instead, it dwells on getting the status quo better by persuading followers to rally behind it. However, a thin line divides the two, as there is a lot in common between them. They both point to the fact that a leader has to influence and stimulate followers; that followers require motivation to commit themselves to the betterment of the organisation; that the leader and followers should

thrive to achieve a common goal; and that the leader should be bold and highly initiative (Spahr, 2016). Mittal (2015) views charismatic leadership as one of the modern leadership styles, that thrives on the ability of a leader to influence followers to commit themselves to their work over and above their routine call of duty. As such, the approach calls for a leader to be a visionary transformer, who because of his/her charisma and a clearly defined mission quickly gains trust from followers, thus committing themselves to the organisation fully. Charismatic leadership therefore involves some form of heroism (Nikezic et al, 2012; 2013) when the leader is accepted as a divine gift from god, endowed with unique qualities beyond the imagination of followers (Mittal, 2015). To this end, a charismatic leader is therefore someone who displays a compelling vision that ably harnesses commitment from followers to do whatever they can to drive it forward

According to Spahr (2016), charismatic leaders have a gift that harnesses follower commitment with ease. They are eloquent verbal orators who in times of crisis can emotionally wake followers from slumber to commit themselves religiously to a particular situation. They do so by displaying a compelling vision and confidence guided by competences and total commitment to their goals and self-accomplishment. In essence, charismatic leadership embeds itself in three elements: - vision and mission that the leader must develop and sell to followers, extra-ordinary qualities in form of confidence and values and enough power to emotionally influence and stimulate followers (Nikohoski, 2015).

To this end, several attributes or characteristics of a charismatic leader summarised by Nikezic et al (2013) emerge as follows: -

- a) Confidence: - charismatic leaders should be confident of their capabilities and in what whatever they do.
- b) Vision: - charismatic leaders should be visionary and ably equipped to have a picture of the future.
- c) Ability to express vision: - the leader communicates vision to followers, allowing them to see him/her as their saviour.
- d) Strong belief in the vision: - charismatic leaders should strongly believe in their vision, sacrificing their lives and committing themselves to the vision.
- e) Unique behaviour: - charismatic leaders should display a behaviour that is unusual and outside the norm.
- f) Change agents: - charismatic leaders should be active agents of change, ready to effect desired change when needed.
- g) Environmentally sensitive: - they should keep pace with developments from the environment.

The emergence of charismatic leaders with above characteristics is evident in several economic, business, and religious sectors and also in politics and governance. The approach is desirable in business especially when management need to get things done. Studies show that charismatic chief executives who exercise self-control and uphold strong ethical values are popular and motivate employees to commit themselves to the organisation. Jack Welch the former CEO for General Electric, a charismatic and transformational leader best remembered for his charisma, cultivated positive working relationships with key stakeholders, customers and employees, resulting in the organisation attaining greater heights profit wise (Nikezic et al, 2013). Similarly, the late Steve Jobs, former CEO for Apple was one of America's most successful visionary and charismatic leaders renowned for taking Apple to greater heights in the mobile devices industry well ahead of competition (Mittal, 2015). In the politics and governance sector, leading figures like George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, although late, are still to date viewed as charismatic figures honoured and remembered by the American people as revolutionary icons. They are remembered as being responsible for the birth of the modern-day United States of America (USA) who through their charisma highlighted the need to fight for independence (Nikezic et al, 2013). The American history also puts in the limelight political figures like Ronald Wilson Reagan, the late former USA president whose; political vision won the hearts of many followers, earning him respect as one of America's most gifted presidents (Spahr, 2016; Bell, 2013). He was a gifted orator and highly skilled in communicating novel ideas evidenced by his political narratives that were instrumental in ending the cold war. It therefore follows, that charismatic leadership is a desirable approach in organisations, especially in turbulent environments that require persuasive leaders who can reassure followers of the status quo, thus guaranteeing organisational continuity. Accordingly, organisations like small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which are still battling to attain their competitiveness, ideally need charismatic leadership to spearhead them into the future in view of global challenges of the 21st century.

Researchers argue that literature on leadership is not paying much attention to paternalism as a leadership style. Pellegrini and Scandura (2012) state that researchers and scholars still find it problematic to define and comprehend paternalism as a leadership theory. Early scientific management theorists like Max Weber raised a red flag, arguing that paternalistic leadership theory was an approach likely to be subdued by the bureaucratic leadership theory that seemed dominant (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2012). As such, paternalistic leadership is in the western world viewed as a form of discrimination and hidden from inside. Goncu et al (2014) confirm the acceptance of the approach in the eastern world where it has a positive effect on organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

However, despite negative western views, there is clear acceptance of paternalistic leadership in some Eastern and Mediterranean countries such as India, Pakistan, China, Korea and Turkey. Researchers discovered that the approach in these countries promoted strong and positive relationships between organisational leaders as paternal gurus (fathers) and their subordinates (children) who feel protected and cared for, hence the need to deliver loyalty in return (Jackson, 2016; Afsar and Rehman, 2012). In fact, in these countries, paternalistic leadership prevails not only as a mere leadership style, but also as a cultural trait that has evolved over time. Afsar and Rehman (2012) identify three elements that collectively define and determine paternalistic leadership as authority, benevolence and leadership that should be moral. They argue that the three are crucial for organisational success. Authority is desirable for the smooth flow of business as there is need to develop and uphold organisational controls; while benevolence shows that the leader has to show some concern over the welfare of employees and must at all times uphold good ethical values.

Paternalistic leadership to some extent bears some similarity to transformational leadership as both styles view a leader as someone who should care and show some concern for his/her followers (Afsar and Rehman, 2012). It is “a style that combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence” (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2012:567). It is therefore, a system of controlling employees in an organisation that reflects a father/child relationship (Jackson, 2016). In light of the above, paternalistic leadership therefore depends on a father-children relationship that calls for the father to render support and protection to his children who in return must shower him with loyalty. The fatherly benevolence that Pellegrini and Scandura (2012) refer to in their definition is the protection and care that employees reciprocate in form of unwavering loyalty. Paternalistic leadership depends on a relationship that develops overtime between the leader acting as a father and his family members, exercising authority over them with much support and care. In return, family members have to pay back their father for the support and care. Organisational leaders such as CEOs and General Managers are therefore paternalistic heads, operating in a family atmosphere, providing subordinates with individual protection and care. Goncu et al (2014) point out that paternalistic leadership style is quite prevalent in Turkish companies where a CEO/Senior manager is like an elder in a family with the responsibility of directing, guiding and protecting employees or family members. The payback component prompts the western world to view the approach as a form of discrimination with dictatorial tendencies.

However, researchers are today talking of new paternalism, which they claim is highly instrumental in cultivating organisational commitment in employees. The new approach puts

more emphasis on the well-being of employees, giving them the much-needed support resulting in increased loyalty and commitment to the organisation. According to Afsar and Rehman (2012 citing Gordon, 1998 and Warren, 1999), new paternalism is a fertile ground for breeding teamwork and total loyalty to the organisation which in-turn leads to organizational commitment. Organisational commitment comes in three forms, firstly as effective commitment, which is concerned with the emotional involvement and attachment an employee has with the organisation. Secondly as normative commitment, which is to do with the sense or amount of responsibility an employee, has about his/her employment. Thirdly as continuance commitment, which refers to the costs an employee incurs when leaving the organisation in relation to the contribution made towards the relationship with that organisation. Afsar and Rehman (2012) argue that organisational commitment results in (OCB) organisational citizenship behaviour, when employees voluntarily give to the organisation much more than what they would give during their normal call of duty. They further argue that employees demonstrate their OCB through normative commitment when organisational values are deeply absorbed, fostering a deep-seated attachment to the organisation and boosting its growth and continuity.

2.5.1 Views of strategic leadership

The basis of the great man or leader theory is the argument that leaders are not made, instead, they are born with leadership traits. Outstanding leaders like Hitler, Napoleon and many others mentioned in history, had great influence over their subjects and believed that they were born to lead. Dozier (2014) points out that a great leader is born and not made. Such a leader acquires basic leadership skills from birth. He gives an example of school kids, when some suddenly rise among others, assuming positions of authority and responsibility as prefects with little effort. This example confirms that indeed leaders come loaded from birth with leadership traits that easily propel them to positions of authority. Giulio (2014) points out that in this world, there are a number of great leaders who were born with leadership traits and skills. Such leaders were born gifted naturally, with several characteristics like intelligence, confidence, diligence and charisma allowing them to assume positions of authority and influence. The late Mrs Margaret Thatcher and Sir Winston Churchill are some of the great leaders who exhibited leadership traits that came naturally from birth. The two are the most colourful British premiers whose leadership skills came naturally and not from a leadership lecture (Dozier, 2014). As a result, Mrs Margaret Thatcher earned her nickname “the iron lady” of Great Britain. Equally, the likes of the late Nelson Mandela, Dr Martin Luther King, and Mahatma Gandhi are some of the great leaders whose leadership skills were from birth, and their destiny was to politically change the world (Giulio, 2014). Equally, Benito Mussolini an Italian politician, successfully started fascism and later turned it into a political party. Although he failed later in politics during the 1919 elections,

he left a mark in history books as one of the most courageous great leaders who demonstrated leadership skills not earned from a leadership school but built in him from birth (Dozier, 2014).

Ireland and Hitt (2005) are of the view that many CEOs are today guided by the great leader view, convinced that the responsibilities of strategic leadership squarely rests on their shoulders in total exclusion of other organisational members. They view themselves as great leaders who do not believe in seeking assistance from subordinates as they spearhead their organisations forward. As such, Ireland and Hitt (2005) idolise them as strategic leaders with the sole responsibility of marshalling strategic leadership. The leader makes decisions as a loner, thus shaping the organisation's direction on his/her own. However, this is no longer the case as the modern views on strategic leadership discourage loner-exercised leadership preferring shared leadership instead (Sunaguchi, 2015). Perhaps most of these CEOs take guidance from the works of Hambrick and Mason (1984), who were the first to investigate the role of top managerial leaders as makers of strategic choices. Hambrick and Mason (1984) argue that leaders at the top echelons of organisations rely on their demographic characteristics to make strategic choices that ultimately affect organisational performance. These views put strategic leaders at top organisational levels on the limelight, making key decisions that influence directions taken by their organisations into the future.

The Great Groups view advocate for shared strategic leadership responsibilities instead of having one executive or a few executives at the organisation's upper echelons shouldering the burden. The view advocates for a different approach to strategic leadership in the 21st century, calling for top executives to embrace efforts and contributions of those members at lower levels of the organisation. As such, an organisation is like a community to which all organisational members belong; bringing along their skills and talents, treating and respecting each other as community citizens (Ireland and Hitt, 2005; Hitt et al, 2010). Accordingly, community members become members of great groups where there is dependence on each other, committed to organisational performance as a team. In essence, the great groups view point to the fact that strategic leadership occurs among a group of people who operate as a community pulling in the same direction with a sense of belongingness to the organisation or community they serve (Schoemaker et al, 2013; Lopez, 2014; Ersozlu and Duzgun, 2015; Meeks, 2015). The growth and success of such a community depends on an open two-way communication process between top managers and subordinates. Such a process allows for a dynamic flow of information from leaders to subordinates and vice-versa (Groysberg and Slind, 2012).

However, the great groups view agrees with the dictates of strategic leadership theory, which gives the responsibilities of making strategic choices to those executives at the upper echelons of an organisation but differ on the fact that sharing of responsibilities is necessary in the 21st century. To this end, top-level managers should seek close association with other organisational members whose views and decisions are vital in driving an organisation to top performance (Hitt et al 2013; Cloud, 2013; Groysberg and Slind, 2012). When organisational members work and operate as a community, organisational citizenship behaviour quickly emerges when employees or community members develop a culture of belongingness. Ahmet (2015) argues that when community members come together, a spirit of togetherness emerges. Such a spirit depends on well-articulated written down values in form of vision, mission and organisational goals for guidance.

2.6 Strategic leadership for the 21st century

The discourse on strategic leadership calls for strategic leaders to journey into the 21st century from a different perspective. Many authors (Ireland and Hitt, 2005; Hitt et al, 2013; Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016; Abdow, 2015; Moon, 2014; Korbi, 2015) argue that strategic leadership for the 21st century will require top organisational leaders to make their strategic choices guided by innovation and creativity. The leaders should inspire community or organisational members to work as a team for the good of the organisation. The current global business environment is uncertain, complex, highly competitive and demanding; requiring organisations to have a re-look into their strategies, visions and mission statements in order to effect some strategic changes. Moon (2014) posits that it is a question of choice for an organisation, to either take an innovative route to growth and success or face death under the current environment as organisations face the dictates of the 21st century global economy. He further argues that an organisation cannot at this juncture subscribe to the old school of thought; that things have always been done in a particular way where top managerial leaders have always been the sole decision makers; giving no room for change. In essence, the need for change as Korbi (2015) argues needs highly creative and innovative business leaders. Cloud (2013:45) gives a strategic advice to the CEO as follows:

You must not just give advice and tell people what to do. You must create the environment, experiences, and opportunities where your best people can attend in order to innovate and think for themselves (Cloud, 2013:45)

While agreeing with Moon (2014) and Korbi (2015), Hoyes (2014) brings an interesting dimension on the issue of innovation and creativity. He argues that for creativity and innovation to occur, a strategic leader needs to be awake first; leading the organisation with eyes wide open and building a clear picture as to the direction the organisation is heading. Hoyes (2014) calls this “seeing clearly”, advising leaders to remove planks from their eyes; thus, giving them a helicopter view of their organisations. Guided by strategic planning, the helicopter view gives a strategic leader holistic a picture of the organisation he/she leads. This enables the strategic leader to

prepare an organisation to face the dictates of the business environment such as opportunities and threats. In this light, Haycock et al (2012) encourages strategic leaders to stand up as strategic thinkers, guided by innovation and creativity for this to happen. They have to think out of the box, guided by an exchange of information in order to face the dictates of the turbulent global economy. Hoyes (2014) outlines some measures a strategic leader can take in order to stimulate and allow him/her to “see clearly”.

- The leader must empower other organisational members to see clearly as well by firstly giving them a clear picture of the developments in the organisation as a whole.
- Empowering organisational members to feel wanted and inviting them to contribute in decision-making; thus, building a base for teamwork
- Observing developments clearly in the organisation before embarking on any decision making
- Encouraging regular training for team members
- Encouraging pro-activeness instead of reactiveness

However, for a leader to embark on a strategic change journey, he/she should first identify and understand the need for change and the benefits it is likely to bring to the organisation. This according to Korbi (2015) calls for a strategic leader to be creative and incisive in decision-making, backed by acceptable and convincing skills in strategic leadership. Such a strategic leader should not only map the direction into the future but also know how the organisation will get to its chosen destination (Hoyes, 2014). The body of literature in strategic planning tells us that a strategic business leader’s prime task is to know the current position of the company before coming up with strategic choices. He/she needs to know the future business position of the organisation, how it will get to the intended destination and know convincingly that it has reached that destination. This calls for the strategic leader to have a big picture guided by wisdom, hence he/she can easily “see clearly”. Hoyes (2014) equates this to someone trying to describe and define a snowstorm; insisting that for one to be able to do it properly, one has to see it in its entirety. To this end, it follows that creativity; innovation and strategic thinking are crucial aspects that strategic leaders require in order to effect necessary organisational changes.

Innovation is largely concerned with the introduction of new products or a product to the market or merely converting or implementing an idea into a product or service. This puts an organisation at an enhanced position well above its competitors, allowing it to create and attain a competitive advantage (Price et al, 2013). Prifti and Alimehmeti (2017) are of the view that opening up to new ideas and implementing them effectively, easily builds and fortifies an organisation against competition allowing it to attain its competitive advantage. As such, innovation is a way of

organisational survival in turbulent and highly competitive environments. An organisation attains a competitive advantage when it occupies a unique position of superiority over its competitors, well beyond their reach. Porter (1985) passes a strong message to firms, highlighting that it is important for them to attain competitive advantage for successful performance and survival in highly competitive global markets. Innovation therefore has much to do with how organisations successfully implement new ideas including organisational products and processes. According to Price (2013), innovation starts as an invention, followed by the development of that invention into a new product or service. Innovation is therefore concerned with the introduction and implementation of new ideas. Okpara (2007) points out that innovation is all about introducing something new previously not available in the market place. However, several studies (Price et al, 2013; Hoyes, 2014; Unay and Zehr, 2012; Okpara, 2007; Kabukcu, 2015) all agree that innovation is closely linked to creativity since creativity generates ideas for implementation as an innovation or invention later.

Hoyes (2014) observed that creativity is the cornerstone for innovation and undoubtedly, a crucial requirement for an organisation destined for greater heights well above its competitors. It is all about a strategic leader coming up with ideas to introduce something new. As such, it is a process of coming up with new, well-distilled, novel and convincing ideas. Moulding such ideas into an invention can easily uplifts an organisation to a well-deserved competitive advantage position (Hoyes, 2014). Creativity therefore breeds innovation and without creative minds at play, innovation is doomed. In reality, creativity lays the ground for innovation to take over at the implementation stage (Kabukcu, 2015). Haycock et al (2012) observed that for creativity to emerge in organisations, strategic leaders should equally emerge as strategic thinkers. They argue that strategic leaders should always think in a creative and innovative manner as the basis for a firm to attain its competitive advantage. It is a different and unique way of thinking ideally driven by creativity and intuition and best suited to drive an organisation into the future.

The discourse on strategic thinking shows that trying to understand and appreciate what it is seems problematic to many researchers; hence, a common ground or general position on what it is remains a problem to date. As such, Kamangar et al (2013) observed that researchers confusingly use the term in place of strategic planning/ strategic management and vice-versa. Others insist that the real difference with strategic planning is not clear; arguing that it is perhaps a glorified form of thinking or an advanced form of strategic planning. However, Haycock et al (2012) argue that there is a clear difference between the two, stating that strategic thinking encourages open-ended and unstructured viewing of a situation guided by intuition as compared

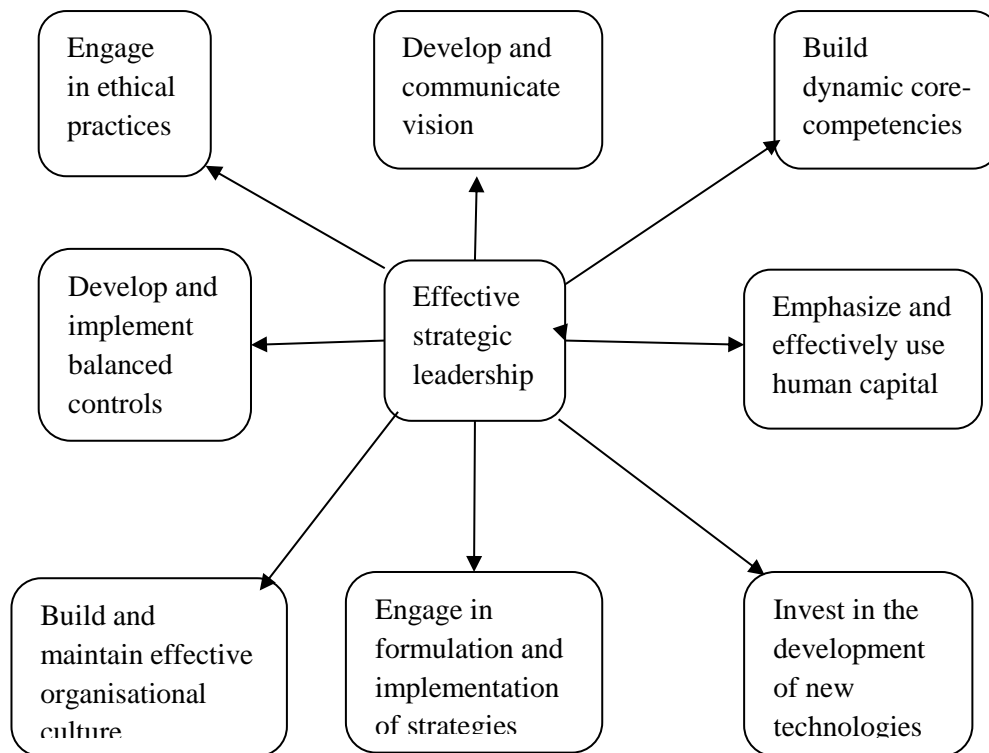
to strategic planning which is a linear process of preparing strategic plans. Despite these observations, the body of literature in strategic thinking encourages strategic leaders and all organisational members to embrace it as it allows them to think creatively and innovatively at all times.

Strategic thinking is therefore a divergent, unstructured and unique form of thinking that is driven by intuition and creativity (Haycock et al, 2012; Kazmi and Naaranoja, 2015). It encourages open-ended viewing of a situation and ideally prepares an organisation for the future, encouraging implementation of creative ideas in an innovative way. Strategic thinking is one of the most crucial approaches top managerial leaders can employ in making their strategic choices (Kazmi et al, 2016) and lately, it has gained recognition from researchers and scholars as a pre-requisite in the strategy making process (Hashim, 2016). It therefore enables top executives to have a clear analysis and understanding of a complex situation, allowing them to make informed-decisions that impact positively on organisational performance. Kamangar et al (2013) define strategic thinking as a process of identifying different approaches of delivering value to customers. It is a process that requires managers to adopt holistic approaches to address organisational crises. In other words, managers are expected to employ different approaches depending on the problem at hand. Strategic thinking therefore, enhances an organisation's competitive position in future. Kamangar et al (2013), note that strategic thinking is embedded in some pre-requisites such as creativity, intuition and lateral thinking. Although strategic thinking enhances top managerial leaders' capabilities in the strategy making process, it appears failure by top executives to apply it in their organisations is becoming an impediment to performance (Kazmi and Naaranoja, 2015).

2.7 Strategic leadership capabilities

In view of the anticipated turbulent and highly competitive global economic environment, organisations have to prepare and arm themselves with capabilities needed to navigate the new competitive landscape of the 21st century. Hitt et al (2013) argue that survival in this new competitive landscape will be for those businesses that are prepared and well geared organisations that view the global economy as one market for all; small, medium and large enterprises. Small and medium enterprises in particular are more vulnerable in view of many challenges associated with their growth. As such, effective strategic leadership can only become a reality if strategic leaders equip themselves with a host of strategic leadership capabilities as shown in **Fig: - 2.5**.

Fig 2.5: - Key capabilities of effective strategic leadership model



Source: - du Plessis et al (2016:61)

In view of the above, Hitt et al (2013) and Hitt et al (2010) argue that strategic leaders can equip themselves with the following capabilities: -

- a) Develop and communicate strategic vision
- b) Build core-competencies
- c) Develop and retain effective human capital
- d) Building and sustaining healthy organisational culture
- e) Making strategic choices capable of moving an organisation from its current position to where it intends to be
- f) Investing in new technologies in line with demands of the global economic environment
- g) Developing efficient organisational controls that are easy to implement
- h) Always engaging in acceptable ethical practices

2.7.1 Developing a strategic vision

The strategy making process requires effective leaders who can make decisions as to the direction an organisation is taking and the path it should follow (Thompson et al, 2015). Equally, they have to make decisions as to what changes an organisation should make in order to improve its market position, taking a holistic view of the developments from the internal and external environments. Given this scenario, development of a strategic vision, which gives an organisation direction into

the future including all changes, required in marketing, products and technology employed becomes a necessity.

A strategic vision refers to an organisation's future business aspirations that provide a clear picture as to how the organisation should look like in future (Thompson et al, 2015; Wheelen and Hunger, 2012; Agwu et al, 2016). As such, definitions of strategic vision by various authors all point to the future make-up of a business. Agwu et al (2016:128) define strategic vision as "long-term goals of the firm". According to Auka and Langat (2016), a strategic vision is an organisation's future projections that have to be idealistic in nature. Joachim (2010) defines it as future organisational aspirations that should reveal its desired state in the future. These definitions reveal that strategic vision is largely concerned with the desired future state of an organisation, with emphasis on what it aspires to be in future. Core ideology and envisioned future form the two components of a strategic vision. Core ideology refers to the glue that holds an organisation together including the key features that gives it a distinct identity. An envisioned future refers to organisational future aspirations ranging from ten (10) to thirty (30) years (Tankovic, 2013; Thompson et al, 2015). Recognition of a good vision statement is through certain features. Papulova (2014) points out that all concerned stakeholders must remember and understand a good vision statement. It is therefore important for a vision statement to be inspirational and motivational, positive about the future appearance of the organisation and vivid enough to attract attention of all stakeholders. Sadly, many organisations according to Agwu et al (2016) do not have any vision statements at all and some managers cannot distinguish a vision statement from a mission statement. As a result, some organisations simply combine the two statements; coming up with one statement preferring to call it mission statement. A mission statement clarifies an organisation's reason for existence, expressed in form of business make up, its products, services, markets and customer base (Thompson et al, 2015).

A strategic vision gives an organisation a sense of direction, enabling it to determine its future and prepare for the future to meet the demands of its customers (Agwu et al, 2016; Papulova, 2014). In concurrence, Auka and Langat (2016) state, that a strategic vision provides a view for the future that is panoramic enough to paint a vivid picture in the minds of stakeholders. As a long-term dream, strategic vision should therefore depict a picture for the future that is so compelling and capable of stimulating excitement and enthusiasm among managers and their subordinates. In essence, organisational members should see the future vividly; admire it and have a solid picture of the future business make-up. However, managers need to share and communicate a vision among all relevant stakeholders for it to be effective and compelling (Martin et al, 2014; Thompson et al, 2015) and make sure that it focuses on the future taking

cognisance of developments in the internal and external business environments (Agwu et al, 2016). Literature on the strategic management process highlights strategic vision as a critical component, as it clarifies the direction an organisation is following. According to Archbald (2013), vision becomes a significant strategic management process component when change becomes imminent. Organisations guided by compelling vision statements are good candidates for organisational progress and performance and will always stand ready to embrace and effect the much-needed change (Auka and Langat, 2016). However, Agwu et al (2016) and Archbald (2013) note that many managers operate under a notion that strategic vision is for established organisations only, yet it is a strategic tool for all organisations small and big; profit making and non-profit making. Emphasizing on the significance of strategic vision, Papulova (2014:13) writes:

Vision is an essential ingredient in the success of any company. It provides the driving force that can get a company through the growing pains it will inevitably encounter

Researchers (Papulova, 2014; Martin et al, 2014; Tankovic, 2013) and many others have investigated the significance of vision statements in organisations of all sizes. Papulova (2014) conducted a study involving companies of different sizes in the Slovak Republic and results showed that about seventy (70%) percent of enterprises acknowledged the significance of vision statements for the development of their businesses. Respondents felt vision was an important component in their strategic planning processes. Martin et al (2014) investigated the importance and significance of shared vision, targeting a nursing college in Switzerland. Results showed that having a vision was an important step in the right direction and respondents confirmed that having a shared vision gets them committed to organisational goals. In Croatia, Tankovic (2013) analysed the link between strategy, vision and mission statements. Results revealed that indeed vision and mission statements were the starting point before making any strategic choices; hence their significance in the strategic planning process. Conclusively, competing in the 21st century global economic market according to Hitt et al (2013) is not for the novice; thus, the need for solid strategic visions to guide organisations in making sound strategic choices is more than a pre-requisite.

2.7.2 Building organisational core-competences

The concept of core-competence originated in the 1970s according to Ozbag (2013) through the works of early researchers like Andrews in 1971 and later popularised by other researchers like Barney in 1986 and Hamel and Prahalad in 1990. However, the works of Hamel and Prahalad in 1990 opened flood gates as researchers gave the concept some extra attention; developing further interests on its links with organisational resources and competitive advantage (Ozbag, 2013). Although researchers have no common ground on the definition of core-competence to date,

Ozbag (2013) points out that most definitions reveal some common themes. He defines core-competencies as distinctive skills or assets that competitors find difficult to copy. Nimsith et al (2016) define them as organisational capabilities that are unique; whose valuable contribution to the success of a business cannot be over-emphasized. On the other hand, Wheelen and Hunger (2012) define a core-competence as a unique activity that an organisation performs outstandingly well as it cuts across the whole organisation and its divisions. A core-competence is an internal activity that an organisation performs exceedingly well with so much precision and proficiency enabling it to attain its competitive advantage. According to Wheelen and Hunger (2012), a core-competence is born out of capabilities from all functional departments combined together; hence, it is not resident in any one department. It is a valuable organisational resource; which when fully exploited becomes a source of competitive advantage. Nimsith et al (2016) point out that core-competencies are organisational resources that are unique and ideally at the centre of organisational strategic strength and profitability. In other words, it is a resource that elevates a company to an enhanced competitive position and if fully exploited enables it to stay ahead of competition. It is therefore up to an organisation to cultivate and attain its competitive advantage by simply concentrating on those activities it does best at the expense of other industry players (Ozbag, 2013).

An organisation's resource base is made up of its assets, capabilities, knowledge, and all attributes that a firm effectively owns, controls and eventually employ in the strategy implementation process, leading to organisational effectiveness and efficiency (Ismail et al, 2012; Thompson et al, 2015). Resources are in three distinct groups: -

- Physical resources: - being plant and equipment, machinery and financial resources in form of cash account and cash equivalents
- Human resources: - being employee skills, training, experiences, and intelligence
- Organisational resources - being organisational structure, planning and control systems

Resources are tangible and intangible. Tangible resources include physical, organisational and financial resources whilst intangible resources include human resources, innovation and reputational resources. However, from the above list, human capital and all intangible resources are by far the most crucial and important in the delivery of sustainable competitive advantage, as they are not only valuable but also hard and difficult to copy and imitate (Ismail et al, 2012; Othman et al, 2015). Core-competencies are therefore resident in these resources; hence their importance as a source of competitive advantage. However, not all resources are a source of competitive advantage as this happens under certain conditions. The Resource Based View (RBV), states that a resource on its own does not necessarily become a basis for competitive advantage, unless backed by four attributes. Othman et al (2015) and Thompson et al (2015) state

that according to the RBV model a resource: - should be valuable, should be rare and should not be subject to imitation and substitution by other competing resources. It is on this basis that a resource breeds effectiveness and efficiency in an organisation, even in SMEs.

A core-competence is a source of competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is when a firm implements strategies, which competitors find difficult to copy and implement (Ismail et al, 2012; Thompson et al, 2015). Porter (1985) shares similar views stating that a firm attains competitive advantage when it creates strategies that are capable of delivering value to its customers and, when implemented, puts it at a position of superior performance. He developed his popular three generic strategies; arguing that the attaining of competitive advantage is through implementation of strategies backed by organisational resources that should be valuable, rare and inimitable. Therefore, core-competencies resident in human capabilities and skills are the most crucial and valuable organisational resources that top managers require in their strategy making and implementation programmes. Svorova and Vrchota (2014 citing Smith and Flanagan, 2006) define competitive advantage as a position of uniqueness that drives growth as an organisation out-paces its competitors.

However, a firm is said to have a sustained competitive advantage when competitors not only fail to implement the same strategy but find it extremely difficult to duplicate or copy (Thompson et al, 2015; Johnson et al, 2014). Barney (1991) makes it clear that sustained competitive advantage does not refer to the continued existence of an advantage measured per calendar time but by its ability to stand the test of possible duplication by competitors. Mahdi and Almsafir (2014) concur; stating that a sustained competitive advantage might actually be short lived because at times changes from the turbulent global business environment might render what was yesterday a sustained competitive advantage valueless for a firm today. Moreover, Mahdi and Almsafir (2014) further state that competitive advantage never lasts long due to increased competition on the global business landscape and as such, it is only temporary. Svorova and Vrchota (2014) also in agreement, point out that in today's highly competitive global markets; firms struggle to maintain their competitive advantages due to intense competition and demands for high quality goods and services by customers. The biggest problem as Svorova and Vrchota (2014) observed, is that some firms have competitive advantages that they are unable to utilize due to ignorance while others claim to have, when in reality they do not.

In view of the above, researchers looked at possible ways of complementing the RBV model as a measure to keep organisations on track enabling them to maintain their positions of superior performance. They focused on the Dynamic Capabilities Model (DCM), developed to explain and

elaborate on how to achieve competitive advantage under hostile and turbulent environments (Rugami and Aosa, 2013). The model attempts to build on the weaknesses of the RBV as a complementary approach, calling on firms to re-direct and re-deploy their resources in view of rapid environmental changes. The RBV model is applicable when the environment is stable but loses its ground when changes from the business environment pose a challenge. The proponents of this view agree with the RBV on the importance of exploiting resources but strongly feel that changes in the global business environment might render some sustained competitive advantages valueless.

2.7.3 Developing human capital

The 21st century global competitive landscape will be volatile and turbulent, requiring organisations to take on board highly trained and skilled employees (Memon, 2014). Employees constitute human capital that requires development regularly in any organisation. As such, human capital is admittedly a crucial organisational resource that occupies the heart and soul of every organisation (Richman, 2015). It is a combination of skills and knowledge acquired over time together with employees' abilities to do their routine work in their quest to fulfil organisational objectives. According to Lelek (2014:72 citing Subramaniam and Youndt, 2005) it is "the sum of all knowledge firms utilize for competitive advantage". It is therefore a component of intellectual capital whose creation and development are all resident in skills and capabilities of employees. Upon joining an organisation, employees usually lack the required skills for the job. Khan et al (2016) are of the view that old employees, who struggle to keep pace with the fast turning wheel of technology, usually require some skills upgrading to align them with the status quo. This view collaborates with the views of Ireland and Hitt (2005); Hitt et al (2010); and Hitt et al (2013) who all concur that developments on the global economy, especially rapid changes in technology require organisations to fully develop their human capital resource in order to shape employees' skills; enabling them to brace for change. In this light, training and development become necessary, as managers equip new employees with required skills for the job whilst subjecting old ones to skills upgrading. Oni-Ojo et al (2014) are of the view that in today's competitive global economy, there is no substitution for employee training and development if an organisation is to survive the dictates of the global competitive landscape. They argue that training and development are central to employee acquisition and improvement of skills; pointing out that efficiency and effectiveness of employees are resident in skills and knowledge gained over years through effective training and development. Human capital conclusively is a valuable resource and it can never be an expense or cost. Instead, it delivers value in the end if competitively exploited; hence investing in it guarantees some rewards in form of efficiency, effectiveness and total commitment from employees. The popular (RBV) Resource Based View by Barney (1991) explicitly confirms that organisational core-competencies are resident in human skills; hence it is logically rewarding

for an organisation to develop its human capital skills that drive employee performance leading to organisational superior performance. Oni-Ojo et al (2014) point out that the idea behind human capital development is to equip employees with an array of skills that include conceptual, human, managerial and technical skills.

In today's dynamic global economy, the wheels of technology are fast turning, bringing along new developments and processes. Such developments and processes require highly skilled employees who can ably challenge the status quo and cope with new challenges from the global economy. Cania (2014) point out that today organisations employ human resources development strategies whose primary focus is to build and equip employees with capabilities and skills required to enhance an organisation's capabilities to meet the dictates of the highly competitive global economy. In this regard, it is important for an organisation to align its human resources development initiatives with its mission and vision. Literature on strategic human resource management reveals that development of employee skills must be in such a way that an organisation remains empowered to meet challenges associated with the turbulent global economy. As such, organisations must come up with HRD strategies that link and align organisational training plan with overall corporate and competitive strategies. According to Memon (2014) capital invested in organisational employees is the most valuable one and guarantees productivity. Organisations can therefore rely on their human capital base to achieve set goals and objectives. Sadly, Okoye and Ezejiofor (2013) opine that in many organisations, managers neglect the development and nourishment of human resources as a key asset. However, on the job training and employee mentoring are the most rewarding strategies organisations can employ especially in management development. Equally, modern training approaches such as games, seminars, workshops, simulating, case studies, lectures, coaching and job rotations are also effective strategies that can deliver meaningful results in the face of mounting global challenges in the 21st century (Raheja, 2015; Memon, 2014).

The role and importance of HRD in employee performance is an area that is receiving its fair share of attention from researchers; hence its importance in research. Sowunmi et al (2015) posit that no nation can realize growth and prosperity if development of its human capital is neglected. Khan et al (2016) also emphasizes the role of HRD, arguing that no organisation can survive without employee training and development programmes in place. They further argue that the route to effective employee performance, leading to overall organisational performance depends on adequate and regular training and development programmes. Sowunmi et al (2015) view HRD as one of the key determinants of organisational performance. They advise managerial leaders to acknowledge the role of HRD, arguing that trained and developed employees are in this age of

global economic development engines for organisational growth, tasked with turning inputs into outputs. Several studies (Memon, 2014; Khan et al, 2016; Sowunmi et al, 2015; Gberevbie, 2012; Falola et al, 2014; Asfaw et al, 2015) looked into the role of HRD in employee performance. Results from these studies were identical, revealing that training and development of human capital have positive effects on the performance of employees. The results further show that training and development encourage commitment from employees who then respond by directing their efforts towards accomplishment of organisational goals. Falola et al (2014) point out that total employee commitment results in an organisation attaining its competitive advantage.

2.7.4 Build and sustain a healthy organisational culture

Hitt et al (2010) argue that top managerial leaders need to make strategic choices that deliver value and propel their organisations to positions of competitive dominance in global markets. However, this can be possible if organisations build strong and healthy cultures that are highly innovative in line with national cultures of chosen markets. Organisations will need to accept that the 21st century global economy will be largely technology driven (Hitt et al 2013), hence building a culture that is innovative, employee motivating, involving and open to decision making is not an option (Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Johnson et al, 2014). Strategic leaders will need to encourage their subordinates to be trusted independent thinkers, driven by a culture that is risk tolerant. Every organisation regardless of size has a culture that is unique and relevant to its operations. As such, organisational culture originates from the business principles and core-values pioneered by top executives and owners of a business. It outlines ethically acceptable and unacceptable standards and behaviours that reveal how an organisation works. According to Owoyemi and Ekwoaba (2014), culture is deeply embedded in values, beliefs, assumptions taken for granted and norms that guide employees to follow a determined behavioural pattern.

Culture in general, refers to the way members of an organisation relate to each other in terms of acceptable behaviours and norms. It can therefore, be defined as thinking in a collective manner (Luqman et al, 2012), a combination of various aspects such as behaviours, norms, habits, symbols, values, and languages (Ahmed and Shafiq, 2014, Owoyemi and Ekwoaba, 2014). These cultural aspects, ultimately give members of a particular organisation or society direction to relate to each other and to outsiders. The definitions show that culture in any organisation is a collection of values, beliefs, norms, behaviours, habits, symbols and communications that is unique to a group of people who depend on it for direction. When new employees join an organisation, they bring along different norms, values, beliefs and behaviours. The amalgamation of values, beliefs, behaviours and norms produce a unique new culture accepted by employees as their organisational culture (Shakil, 2012; Owoyemi and Ekwoaba, 2014). According to Barbars (2017:85) organisational culture is:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems

Shakil (2012) defines organisational culture as values and beliefs that members share overtime, resulting in the development of acceptable behavioural norms that give them cultural direction as they relate to each other.

In light of these definitions, it follows that organisational culture is when organisational members collectively feel committed to all aspects of the organisation guided by common values, shared assumptions taken for granted and beliefs. Robbins and Coulter (2012), state that shared assumptions, values and routines that have evolved over time, prescribe ways of doing things in an organisation. As a result, organisational members feel united as a team; enjoying shared meanings, which they all hold. The whole process shapes organisational daily routines, unifies members and moulds the organisation into a solid and cohesive unit, ready to stand competition. Owoyemi and Ekwoaba, (2014) point out that organisations consider values, beliefs, assumptions, norms and behaviours as pillars for organisational culture that stimulate employee commitment and loyalty; thus, putting an organisation on a better competitive position. In this view, Maseko (2017) contends that employees need to fully understand their organisational culture and be conscious of it. She argues that culture enables employees to have a clear understanding of what their organisation stands for and the direction it intends to take. On this basis, Luqman et al (2012) view organisational culture as glue that bonds all sections and departments of an organisation together. Thompson et al (2015:415) refers to organisational culture as “operating system or organisational DNA”. Organisational culture has four layers: - values, beliefs, behaviours and assumptions taken for granted. Values are organisational statements usually written down as mission statements and objectives, whilst beliefs refer to the way organisational members talk about organisational issues they encounter on a regular basis. Behaviours relate to the way an organisation generally operates with particular emphasis on its structure and control mechanism and assumptions taken for granted refer to those organisational aspects which members of the public including employees of the organisation find difficult to explain. Assumptions taken for granted and embraced in common by all organisational members are the organisation’s paradigm. Johnson et al (2014) are of the view that the paradigm confirms that employees largely operate based on collective experience; thus, allowing members to have a common understanding of situations they encounter.

Organisational culture is a key determinant of organisational performance. As such, organisations should build strong and healthy cultures, geared to stimulate employees to commit themselves to achieving organisation's goals. A strong organisational culture breeds commitment and stimulates morale among employees resulting in increased productivity and overall organisational performance. According to Barbars (2017), strong and healthy organisational culture emanates from a collective acceptance of values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviours and must align with the overall competitive strategy including the way managers implement it. In essence, the development of an organisation's culture should align with its strategy, mission and overall business set-up. According to Ahmed and Shafiq (2014), a healthy organisational culture must fulfil four obligations: - be a source of organisation's identity, drive commitment among members, nurture organisational values and be a control mechanism to shape and align employees' behaviours with the identity of the organisation. In line with the Denison's model of organisational culture, employees must feel involved and committed to the organisation, working as a team; thus, developing a sense of belongingness to the organisation (Shakil, 2012). Denison's theory of organisational culture operates on four variables: - involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission. According to Shakil (2012), involvement occurs when culture drives employees to fully involve and commit themselves to the organisation. Consistency occurs when an organisation's operations are clear, compelling members to shun unnecessary disagreements, preferring to agree on a common point of view. Adaptability refers to the ability by organisations to change while learning from their past mistakes. Mission indicates that an organisation operates with a clear purpose of existence and direction. In view of the above, it is clear that for an organisation to compete successfully in highly competitive global markets, it has to operate under the umbrella of a strong culture. Moreover, the same organisation cannot afford to ignore cultures of other countries.

As organisations face the dictates of the 21st century competitive global landscape, it is prudent for them to understand and appreciate cultural differences from country to country. Competing on the global markets is no longer an option. It calls for organisations to build and drive strategies that are in line with the cultural dictates of those markets. Culture on this note according to Johnson et al (2014:96) becomes "an unintended driver of strategy". Organisations therefore, have to understand that differences in values, norms, expectations and beliefs in whatever countries they enter are a reality and as such, must be prepared to cope with the cultural status quo. Evidently, an organisation finds itself faced with many cultural differences globally and if it becomes a victim of strong national culture, difficulties might arise as it struggles to strategize under a different cultural umbrella (Johnson et al, 2014). However, Gert Hofstede came to the rescue of organisations competing in global markets, articulating that organisations can

successfully compete in these markets if they have a good understanding and appreciation of five cultural dimensions that determine a country's national culture (Johnson et al, 2014). In other words, it is crucial for top managers of companies competing in global markets to understand different ways of doing business country by country. In China for example, managing time is not an issue, hence delegates to a meeting might surface at different times. Equally, driving expensive, top of the range cars and wearing expensive brands are not symbols of status in China. However, Gert Hofstede in an effort to help managers understand and appreciate differences in national cultures developed a five cultural dimensions approach. Gert Hofstede's approach show that differences in national cultures vary according to the five dimensions outlined below: -

- Power Distance: - it is the acceptance of unequal distribution of power in organisations. It refers to the degree to which countries accept that power inequalities are due to differences in physical and intellectual capabilities of their citizens.
- Uncertainty avoidance: - It shows that countries or societies will always differ in the way they tolerate risk and uncertainty. In countries where uncertainty avoidance is low, differences are easy to tolerate, and the opposite is true in countries where it is high.
- Achievement versus nurturing orientation: - In countries where achievement is an issue, people value individual performance and success.
- Individualism versus Collectivism: - Individualism is evident in societies or countries, where people care for their immediate family members and prefer to be associated with their personal accomplishments. Collectivism on the other hand values the achievement of an individual to the overall success of the society or group.
- Long-term versus short-term orientation: - These dimensions associate themselves with the quality of life. In a country whose national culture encourages long-term orientation, individuals tend to value materialism and are usually persistent in achieving long-term goals. Whereas, short-term orientation value relationships, where the welfare of other citizens is of prime importance.

2.7.5 Engage in acceptable ethical practices

Ethics derived from "Ethos" a Greek word, is a crucial management aspect that managers in all organisations regardless of their sizes, view with uttermost importance. It describes behaviours in organisations, highlighting which behaviours are acceptable and which ones are not. Ethical issues are part of a manager's working life, because virtually all decisions managers make to some extent carry ethical dimensions. Organisations across the globe, place due importance on the behaviours of their employees, encouraging them to display ethical conduct in their normal call of duty. Mihelic et al (2010) are of the view that employees should always thrive to uphold ethical behaviours accepted as morally good and right. Concurring Burcea and Croitoru (2014) state that ethics is largely concerned with a society's standards of personal morality, emphasizing that

people or employees should do the same. Salehi et al (2012) argue that the challenge facing organisations today is failure to communicate their ethical values to their employees. They define ethics as the principles that guide individuals in striking a difference between what is morally acceptable and not in their decision-making processes (Salehi et al, 2012). The corporate scandals that rocked the global financial markets in 2008 involving companies like Enron, WorldCom etc necessitated the need for employees to display or exhibit behaviours that are morally acceptable to the society. Salehi et al (2012) argue that because of such cases involving irresponsible, negative and unethical behaviours, the corporate world is now taking necessary measures to enforce proper and acceptable ethical behaviours in organisations. In the USA for example, organisations encourage the use of an ethics code that prescribes guidelines to expected ethical behaviours. According to Mishra and Sharma (2011) an ethics code outlines organisational values and principles to block unethical behaviour of employees from damaging an organisation through illegal practices and actions.

De Cremer et al (2010) state that business ethics looks into actions and practices of top managerial leaders, including employees and evaluates them regularly to establish their acceptability by society. In essence, managers and employees in organisations need to clearly separate right behaviours from bad ones in order to block ethical failures in organisations as much as possible. De Cremer et al (2010) observed that despite such initiatives, managers and employees in organisations continue to engage in unethical business practices, arguing that many do so without knowing. The major complication is that there are some business people who are aware of behaviours considered unacceptable at work places, but, continue to engage in behaviours that are unethical and out of the norm. According to Ogbari et al (2016), there are organisations or companies whose primary aim in business is only to make money, which is fundamentally acceptable. However, what is of concern are the unethical practices and activities these companies engage in during the money-making process. As such, Ogbari et al (2016) conclude that some organisations as a result have earned a bad reputation due to their unethical behaviours. However, organisations can overcome this dilemma, by making sure that managers including supervisors lead by example. They need to set the tone by demonstrating and upholding acceptable behaviours in work places. It is the duty of top managers to set the tone and act as role models for their subordinates by engaging in good ethical behaviours (Shehu and Tota, 2012). To this end, ethics in business plays an important role, bearing in mind that each organisation has to identify an ethical path to follow for survival. Shehu and Tota (2012) highlight the importance of ethics in business, arguing that it has an important role to play in the decision-making process guided by sound moral principles. Organisations entering competitive global markets today hire employees who are astute decision makers and fully equipped with good ethical conduct. Managers staff

these organisations with talented and focused employees who behave ethically and responsibly. Such employees have the capabilities to drive and stimulate their organisations forward in highly competitive global markets. In such organisations, Salehi et al (2012) points out that managers quickly rise as role models and communicate the importance of good ethical behaviours and integrity to their subordinates. The global corporate scandals of 2008 were a wake-up call to many organisations as the importance of following a defined ethical path began to knock on many corporate doors. The Enron scandal in particular was so severe, that Sherron Watkins, its former vice-president used the analogy of “frogs in boiling water” to describe it (Wheelen and Hunger, 2012:82). She equated the unethical behaviour of Enron’s employees to a frog thrown in a pan full of cold water, only to die after slowly turning the heat up without the frog sensing it, until it becomes too late to jump out of the pot. Sherron Watkins described behaviour of Enron employees according to Wheelen and Hunger (2012:82) as follows:

Enron’s accounting moved from creative to aggressive, to fraudulent, like the pot of water moving from cool to lukewarm to boiling, those involved with the creative transactions soon found themselves working on the aggressive transactions and were finally in the uncomfortable situation of working on fraudulent deals

Engaging in acceptable ethical behaviours as organisations venture into the 21st century global competitive landscape, will require adherence to some business ethics principles, usually documented in a code of ethics guide. Ogbari et al (2016), Burcea and Croitoru (2014) and Mishra and Sharma (2011) identified integrity, accountability, transparency, business loyalty and public spiritedness as key principles of ethics in business.

- Integrity: - It is a principle that calls for managers and employees to practice what they preach. It is according to Ogbari et al (2016) a principle that encourages top managers to keep to their promises or word at all times. For example, it becomes unethical for management to promise employees a wage increase, only to turn around at the last minute. Mishra and Sharma (2011) point out that Enron committed the biggest fraud in accounting history due to lack of integrity, depriving investors of their investments at the same time destroying the careers of the unsuspecting 4000 employees.
- Accountability: -Managers need to account for all organisational resources, especially financial and human resources and document their usage. Johnson et al (2014) posit that organizations need to be accountable to their stakeholders and the society. In other words, organisations have to account for their actions at all times to crucial stakeholders such as shareholders.
- Transparency: - It is a principle that requires managers to guarantee and ensure open and clear flow of information in an organisation. A two-way flow of information between top managers

and their subordinates must guide all organisational processes and transactions making sure that they are clear and unhidden (Ogbari et al, 2016).

- **Social Responsibility:** - Organisations need to work towards building the community in which they operate. In essence, organisations have to undertake some corporate social responsibility programmes as a way of thanking that community. Ogbari et al (2016) encourage organisations to show some patriotic love for their countries by involving themselves in some community development projects. They refer to this as “public spiritedness” contending that it is a patriotic feeling commonly evident among civilized citizens of any country.
- **Loyalty:** - Burcea and Croitoru (2014) postulate that loyalty on the part of employees to the organisation is a crucial element in managing a business enterprise. They argue that this is mandatory for the smooth running of a business except in a case where the organisation engages in unethical and illegal practices. However, loyalty thrives when there is mutual respect between employer and employee.

2.7.6 Engage in valuable strategic choices

Competition on the global competitive landscape is becoming fierce and intense due to an increase in globalization, pace of technology and demanding customers who insist on high quality goods and services (Durmaz and Dusun, 2016; Aghazadeh, 2015; Paschal et al, 2017). Berman and Korsten (2010) postulate that many organisations having underdeveloped strategies; survive on the intuition of management and in some cases, have no existing strategies. They are of the view that such a scenario is temporary, arguing that coming up with breakthrough valuable strategies, is the only answer to the dictates of the highly competitive global markets. Established multinational organisations today dominate the global competitive markets and have to their advantage advanced technology and adequate financial resources. As a result, organisations from emerging markets find it tough to compete competitively in global markets as multi-nationals have an edge over them. O’ Sullivan (2012) argues that indeed many organisations are finding it difficult on the turf, in view of the rapid increase in globalization that overpowers them. This is due to the accelerating pace of technology that drives globalization and taking the global economy by storm. Concurring, Paschal et al (2017) are of the view that competing in global markets is not easy for organisations from emerging economies. The easy entry into emerging markets by established multinationals with products and service offerings that locals find difficult to resist worsens their plight. In this light, competing in the 21st century global competitive landscape will not be easy. Many challenges litter the global economy and the dominance of electronic business compels organisations to be highly innovative and creative in order to join the race.

However, despite challenges, competition in the global competitive markets is unavoidable and organisations, regardless of their sizes have to compete for survival. Top SMEs leaders fail to

make strategic choices based on a misguided view that the exercise is for well-established corporate organisations only (Goriwondo, 2012). Yet many scholars and researchers (Paschal et al, 2017; O' Sullivan, 2012; Durmaz and Dusun, 2016; Aghazadeh, 2015; Kasimoglu, 2001) agree that in order to survive competition in the 21st century global competitive markets, organisations regardless of their sizes have to make strategic choices that deliver value to their customers. The growth and development strategies of the 1970's; the generic strategies of the 1980's pioneered by Michael Porter and the emphasis on TQM in the 1990's, are all important and organisations must accept and embrace them as key for their success and survival. In this regard, organisations have to raise their standards by making strategies that deliver value through development of new products while making valuable improvements on existing ones. The dictates of the 21st century global economy as already stated will require strategic leaders to make strategic choices that deliver the best products and services ever, enabling organisations to attain and sustain their competitive advantages. As such, organisations have to refocus and embrace strategic thinking in their strategy making programmes whilst focusing on future organisational priorities (Durmaz and Dusun, 2016). Moreover, consumer preferences, habits, tastes, and market conditions differ from one country to the other. As such, competing successfully in one part of the globe does not guarantee success in another part. In France for example, consumers prefer using top loaded washing machines instead of front-loaded ones, preferred in all other European countries (Thompson et al, 2015).

Survival in the 21st century will require creativity and innovation to guide organisations to enable delivery of value perceived by customers, markets and competitors. According to Paschal et al (2017), innovation moulds an organisation to be in line with rapid developments in the environment allowing it to produce improved goods and services likely to deliver value to customers in both local and global markets. As such, organisations have to come up with strategic choices that focus on the production of quality goods and services, delivered to customers with care and speed. To this end, Kasimoglu (2001) posits that this will require organisations to direct their energies in making strategies that deliver value by: -

- a) Continually improving on their products and services, organisational processes and overall operations
- b) Building customer/supplier relationships dominated by a network of suppliers of high-quality new products and improving on existing ones
- c) Developing and maximizing on their core-competences in order to gain competitive advantage
- d) Swiftly responding to customer needs and expectations, making sure that delivering of goods and services is well on time

In view of the above, Kasimoglu (2001) advises organisations to employ defender, extender, dodger and contender strategies. He argues that organisations in countries like China, Russia, Mexico and the Philippines employ valuable defensive strategies against multinationals like Unilever who are failing to penetrate their home markets. Organisations in these countries have tailor-made their products and services to meet the demands of their domestic consumers whilst embarking on aggressive valuable extender strategies that enable them to penetrate highly competitive global markets. The best defensive strategy is to embark on product innovation on a continuous basis, by introducing new products and services supported by effective distribution and promotional programmes. This according to Kotler and Armstrong (2012) effectively increases an organisation's competitiveness. Extender strategies according to Kasimoglu (2001) allow an organisation to deploy its assets internationally, by embarking on a deliberate global expansion policy and identify international markets ignored by competitors and whose consumer preferences are similar to those at home. Such organisations can be market challengers aggressively fighting for a market share. Kotler and Armstrong (2012) point out that in many cases they choose to be market followers preferring not to rock the boat; thus, avoiding head-on collision with established multi-nationals. However, when an organisation fails to deploy its assets internationally as part of its deliberate international policy, a new business model becomes necessary for it to face the challenges of global competition. Some organisations try to avoid fierce global competition by preferring to enter into strategic alliances and joint ventures with foreign companies as new business models suitable for effective participation in the global competitive markets (Kasimoglu, 2001). Although, organizations following this route are dodgers (Kasimoglu, 2001), the strategy proves to be a viable and favourable platform for firms wanting to access attractive global markets. Such firms acquire technical expertise and the much-needed knowledge of host markets. Econet Wireless International and Mobile Telephone Networks (MTN), both mobile networks companies headquartered in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa (RSA), used strategic alliances as vehicles of their successful expansion into markets across Africa, Asia and New Zealand (Thompson et al, 2015). Organisations that pursue a contender strategy to enter global markets usually deploy their resources for the production of goods and services only for selected niche markets.

2.7.7 Invest in new technologies

Virtually all organisations across the globe today employ some form of technology in their daily operations. Changes in technology that took the world by storm in the 1970s with the introduction of microchips are developments worth remembering in the history of technology development. Technology according to Ahmad (2014) is a prime tool for developing human skills and extracting materials. New technologies according to ICM (2016) "include everything from the internet to drones to big data". The technology employed varies among organisations, ranging from what

might appear simple to complex latest state of the art technologies that call for heavy investment outlay. However, Jemala (2012) argues that for effective employment of technology especially new technologies, top strategic leaders must lead by example pioneering the whole process whilst making sure that the result is a transformed innovative and effective organisation. Information and communication technology (ICT) are a formidable range of new technologies that is changing the face of the global economy through rapid introduction of advanced communication systems (Asabere and Enguah, 2012; Perron et al, 2010). As such, ICT embraces equipment, facilities and all relevant tools employed by experts in the generation and dissemination of information through various electronic platforms such as videos, data, text and voice. As a result, organisations can easily manipulate, distort and store relevant information as they please (Asabere and Enguah, 2012). Investing in new technologies therefore, allows an organisation to assess developments in the competitive global economy. The development of advanced computing devices is increasing rapidly; enabling organisations to enhance their communication capabilities and share information globally.

The relevance and importance of new technologies and their increasing use in organisations are evident in today's competitive global economy. Barack Obama, the former president of the USA highlighted the importance of investing in new technologies. The National Science Board (2012:01) outlines his remarks as follows:

We need to build a future in which our factories and workers are busy manufacturing the high-tech products that will define the century. Doing that starts with continuing investment in the basic science and engineering research and technology development from which new products, new businesses, and even new industries are formed

These encouraging words are not only relevant to American organizations but to all organisations across the globe with a clear message that investment in new technologies is cornerstone for development and growth. The development of education in countries like Ghana has been due to the employment of new technologies such as e- learning (Asabere and Enguah, 2012). The major challenge however, is that every organisation regardless of its size and production capacity has to keep upgrading its production methods and processes in line with the demands of the environment, hence the need for radical changes (Ahmad, 2014). The UN, through its departments such as World Health Organisation (WHO), encourages the use of new technologies to fight economic problems and poverty. As such, the organisation is contributing to overall health improvement throughout developing economies (Perron et al, 2010). Moreover, investing in new technologies promotes flow of information across borders and geographic boundaries making easy transfer of technology among nations.

The major implication of the rapid development and introduction of new technologies in the 21st century is that organisations have to invest in major innovations, since innovation is the basis for advancement in technology. Organisations cannot afford to take a laid-back position in this highly competitive global landscape, as technological advancement is the gateway to survival. Organisations are therefore rushing to invest in new technologies in a bid to outwit each other (Ahmad, 2014). While it is evident that SMEs are institutions still struggling to find their space in today's global competitive economy, it cannot be disputed that their growth and survival hinge on their ability and capacity to embrace new technologies. The second major implication is that the growing use of the internet and other ICT tools such as Skype, video conferencing, e-mail, Face book and other up-coming devices, are opening communications lines globally for every organisation regardless of size. As a result, competition on the global markets is bound to be nasty and demanding (Ahmad, 2014; ICM, 2016; Asabere and Enguah, 2012). As such, organisations have to upgrade their production methods in order to cope with radical changes in a fast-changing global economy.

2.7.8 Developing effective organisational controls

Controlling organisational processes and ascertaining how to employ resources is one of the major functions of a manager. Slavoljub et al (2015) questioned how managers in an organisation could ensure that subordinates perform their tasks and accomplish them to the desired set objectives and satisfaction of shareholders. They found an answer in management control. The origins of management control dates back to 1965 through the works of Robert Anthony, who in his paper "Planning and Control System" argued that there was a close link between operational control and strategic planning in organisations (Slavoljub et al, 2015). He presented his paper on the backdrop of problems that managers in corporations encountered in trying to control and coordinate work of their subordinates. The problems encountered gave birth to the classical theory of management control. Management control is, therefore, a managerial function that focuses on internal organisational processes and monitors progress on the performance of set objectives. It is according to Slavoljub et al (2015), applicable to all organisations regardless of size. As such, the whole purpose of coming up with a control system is to ensure the accomplishment of set objectives. A control process involves progress monitoring of performance before evaluation using a feedback mechanism to determine achievement of objectives (Robins and Coulter, 2012). However, management control only becomes relevant after a thorough planning exercise. According to Slavoljub et al (2015), there can be no controlling in the absence of an initial fluid planning process.

However, there is no common or agreed position on the definition and description of control among researchers (Lakis and Giriunas, 2012). Most definitions seem to point to a common view

that controlling involves accomplishment of set objectives, requiring managers to ascertain that all goes as per plan. Controlling, involves the monitoring of work performance by managers in order to take corrective measures if necessary (Robins and Coulter, 2012, Lakis and Giriunas, 2012). However, Namazi (2012) point out that as managers monitor work performance, they should also make sure that all necessary resources are in place to facilitate the accomplishment of set goals. Management control is the only tool that managers can employ in order to ascertain the accomplishment of set objectives and establish reasons for failure to achieve them. Besides, an organisation should always have effective controls in place to guard against developments from the external business environment such as natural disasters and global financial crises (Robins and Coulter, 2012). Robins and Coulter (2012) posit that controlling organisational activities is mandatory even for units perceived to be doing well because managers cannot ascertain how well a unit is performing in the absence of regular monitoring and evaluation of progress. In essence, management control should be at the heart of every organisation since managers require regular feedback on how their subordinates perform to achieve set objectives. The general view is that having a good organisational structure, plans, and well-motivated employees become meaningless if the organisation fails to achieve its set objectives. This calls for organisations including SMEs to come up with clear management control systems. According to Lopez-Valeiras et al (2015), a control system allows senior business leaders to closely monitor the performance of a business unit since they have a mandate to either maintain existing systems and patterns or make alterations. The purpose of management control systems is to monitor and evaluate performance in line with agreed results using a defined set of procedures. This according to Lopez-Valeiras et al (2015) implies that firstly, management has to agree on set objectives and their attainment, secondly monitor progress and finally get feedback on the actual results achieved in line with set objectives.

Management control systems are predominantly in three forms: - financial, non-financial controls and a combination of both (Lopez-Valeiras et al, 2015; Ilias et al, 2015; Slavoljub et al, 2015). Financial control indicators include profitability, budgets and return on investment whilst non-financial indicators are qualitative in nature. Non-financial control indicators are customers, marketing and sales, internal business processes etc. However, a broader view of management controls now takes into consideration organisational culture and behaviour of employees into perspective (Namazi, 2012). The balanced scorecard is one of the most popular control tools organisations employ in the evaluation of organisational performance. It combines both financial and non-financial indicators to measure performance. Organisational culture as a qualitative managerial control system focuses on organisational values and behaviours of employees. Organisational culture is a crucial control tool that teaches employees, especially new recruits to

distinguish between wrong and right. It further aligns them with the happenings in the organisation and acquaints them with the system (Owoyemi and Ekwoaba, 2014). In essence, it brings order and direction to employees as to how the organisation is run.

2.8 Organisational performance

Financial and market outcomes including return on shareholders' value, form the basis for the concept of organisational performance (Rehman et al, 2019). However, an organisation's ability to convert raw materials into finished products or output is central to the original approach to organisational performance. There was no emphasis at this stage on organisational objectives and profitability, as these became issues of importance to major stakeholders later (Hurduzeu, 2015). Stakeholders later accepted the importance of meeting organisational set goals and making profits. They based their arguments on an understanding that attaining high performance and profitability levels was possible even with limited resources at an organisation's disposal. The growth and success of any organisation depend on its ability to attain satisfactory performance levels. In other words, for an organization to grow and create value for its shareholders, it must fulfil set objectives. Its senior executives must implement strategic choices to accomplish set goals. However, despite the need to achieve set organisational goals, the issue of the quality of employees cannot be overlooked. Essentially, employees must have the required skills to implement the strategies. As such, organisational performance requires staff members to embrace relevant and up to date skills in view of the challenges associated with the ever-changing business environment (Jenatabadi, 2015). They should be committed and be able to embrace teamwork. However, top executives must motivate team members by meeting their individual needs. It is argued that developments from the external business environment have an impact on organisational performance. Top executives and their management teams must motivate team members by meeting their individual needs. Managers of SMEs in Zimbabwe must have the skills to implement strategies and strategic leadership capabilities to drive organisational performance.

Performance is a dependent variable in management research; commonly employed in various management disciplines ranging from marketing, finance, production, human resources to education and information technology. Organisational performance is the employment of financial and non-financial measures to ascertain the accomplishment of set organisational objectives (Rehman et al, 2019; Gavrea et al, 2011). It is defined as any action performed in an organisation to realize profit (Jenatabadi (2015). However, Hurduzeu (2015) notes that defining organisational performance seems problematic to academics, scholars and researchers partly because the concept seems difficult to understand. The problem emanates from the fact that there is no explicit justification of performance in literature. As such, many researchers base its appropriateness on assumptions (Richard et al, 2009). However, despite the difficulties in

articulating the definition and meaning of organisational performance, the general view is that an organisation's financial; product or market outcomes and return on shareholder value form the basis for this concept. These are key areas of interest usually targeted when looking into organisation's measures of performance. In fact, the definition of organisational performance in the 21st century focuses on an organisation's ability and capability to exploit its resources in order to accomplish set organisational goals (Jenatabadi, 2015; Rehman et al, 2019).

The discourse on organisational performance reveals that every organisation values its success and success depends on performance (Almatrooshi et al, 2016). As such, organisations throughout the world share a common view that their growth depends on their performance, hence the importance of performance as an indicator for organisational success. Organisational performance is therefore an essential and critical dependent variable that forms a base for success and survival for an organisation (Richard et al, 2009). In essence, an organisation needs to make a choice, between high performance leading to success and poor performance. However, poor performance is an unacceptable route to failure and collapse of an organisation. It is on this basis, that the measurement of all organisational activities from marketing, finance, human resources to production become necessary to mark their individual contribution to overall organisational performance. On this basis, Richard et al (2009) point out that monitoring of organisational performance on a continuous basis by top managerial leaders is not an option. This allows managers to evaluate organisational activities regularly to ascertain the accomplishment of set objectives. However, this study investigated the awareness of the concept of strategic leadership and its role in enhancing organisational performance by SMEs leaders in Zimbabwe. Literature on SMEs operations in Zimbabwe focuses on their poor performance and failure rates, blamed largely on lack of finance; managerial and marketing expertise and a host of other factors (Nyamwanza et al, 2015). It is however not clear if lack of strategic leadership is partly to blame as well for this poor performance.

While it is widely agreed that organisational performance is cornerstone for organisational success, it is however prudent to analyse its key determinants. Determinants of organisational performance emanate from the internal and external environments of an organisation (Al-Tit, 2017). Gavrea et al (2011) list determinants from the internal environment as - structure of an organisation, strategy, information technology, leadership, innovation and creativity, employees, quality of goods and services, corporate governance and performance measurement. Other authors cite charisma and social networks of the CEO, human capital, organisational learning and intellectual capital as other determinants of organisational performance. In Zimbabwe, Makate (2014) and Mbizi et al (2013) conducted studies to investigate determinants

of organisational performance in SMEs. Despite these studies, understanding of the determinants of organisational performance is still a problem in Zimbabwean SMEs. It is crucial to know the drivers of performance, as this enables policy makers to table policies that enhance SMEs operations and service delivery (Makate, 2014).

2.8.1 Measuring organisational performance

The current trends in the global economy require organisations to be highly competent and competitive. Organisations need to put in place effective measures of performance to monitor organisational performance. Many organisations view performance measurement as key for their survival, prompting researchers and academics to focus on the subject area with keen interest. The quest to dig deeper into the subject of performance measurement, resulted in the number of published academic articles rising to 3,615 within a period of only two years from 1994 to 1996 (Jenatabadi, 2015; Kasie and Belay, 2013). The British government noted the importance of performance measurement in management of organisations and declared in 1994 that British companies must employ measures of performance as the most feasible way of sustaining their businesses in the global competitive markets (Kasie and Belay, 2013). Crucke and Decramer (2016) point out that world bodies such as the World Bank and OECD, view performance measurement as an important tool to monitor organisational performance. These institutions are today encouraging companies across the globe to devise suitable measures to monitor performance. Books on performance measurement started appearing in bookstores across the USA as from 1996 onwards, whilst various industry leaders tried frantically to grasp the concept with a view of putting it into practice (Jenatabadi, 2015).

Defining performance measurement has proved problematic to many scholars and researchers, because they are not agreeing on the correct definition. As a result, many definitions are emerging (Jenatabadi (2015). Santos and Brito (2012) blame this on the lack of consensus among researchers, as the issue of dimensionality of performance indicators remains contentious. Highlighting the degree of disagreement, Santos and Brito (2012) report that an analysis of articles in the strategic management journal by Combs, Crook and Shook (2005) from 1980 to 2004 revealed that about 238 empirical studies used 56 various performance indicators. Financial performance stood out as the most used indicator. Performance measurement therefore, concerns itself with monitoring of all key organizational aspects including its processes, systems and related programmes (USA Department of Health and Human Services, 2012; Kasie and Belay, 2013). The main purpose of measuring performance is to enable management to have a quick short comparison of organizational achievements to its set goals and objectives. In essence, management has to have a clear picture as to whether all organisational systems and processes are functioning well.

Performance measurement is an important managerial activity that managers in organisations of all sizes undertake to evaluate performance of their businesses. It is an analytical tool that organisations employ to record and reveal the past organisational achievements allowing managers to determine the best course of action to follow in future (Jenatabadi, 2015). According to Halim and Sefer (2013), performance measurement enables managers to make regular follow-ups on organisational processes and programmes. It also allows them to accurately report on the actual happenings in the organisation. As such, performance measurement looks at an organisation from two angles; firstly, as an internal management tool to support decision making by managers and secondly as an external tool manager use to keep key stakeholders well informed of the performance of the organisation. By so doing, managers are able to make accurate and incisive decisions on the operations of the organisation (Crucke and Decramer, 2016). In this regard, managers cannot afford to ignore performance measurement, as it is vital in the overall improvement of business performance. Managers can easily plug identified loopholes in the operations of the business.

2.8.2 Historic perspective of performance measurement

The first application of traditional measures of performance to replace the double entry bookkeeping method was in the 14th century (Kasie and Belay, 2013). The need to separate management from shareholders in organisations became an important issue at the turn of 20th century. As such, the accounting world adopted financial measures, emphasizing the return on investment as the best way to monitor performance in organisations (Kasie and Belay, 2013, Jenatabadi, 2015). Many organisations abandoned cost based financial measures in the 1980's and opted for activity-based costing (ABC). According to Jenatabadi (2015), the rapid developments in global markets, rendered cost based financial measures inadequate. The ABC did not survive for a long period either, as researchers felt that merely concentrating on measuring costs was not a convincing approach, especially in the manufacturing industries. The criticism of cost based financial measures and loss of interest in ABC, gave birth to various paradigms of performance management. Researchers, according to Kasie and Belay (2013) directed their interests to multi-dimensional measures of performance to monitor organisational performance from other aspects such as customer satisfaction, learning and growth, internal business processes, innovation, quality and continuous improvement. Some of the most common and highly used tools that emphasize multi-dimensional indicators are the balanced scorecard designed by Kaplan and Norton in 1992, Smart performance pyramid by Lynch and Cross in 1991 and the performance Prism by Neely and Adams in 2000 (Sorooshian et al, 2016).

Performance measurement plays an important role in the overall growth of an organisation. No business set up can successfully grow in the absence of regular performance measurement

programmes and procedures. Kasie and Belay (2013) argue that performance measurement is the lifeline of an organisation. As a result, managers cannot make meaningful decisions in the absence of effective measures of performance. Performance measurement is therefore a business progress-monitoring tool that enables managers to make accurate business decisions (Crucke and Decramer, 2016). It further allows managers to effect organisational controls and determine the need for effective planning, allowing the business to define its direction into the future. As a result, it keeps managers well informed and allows them to feed shareholders, employees and other key stakeholders with information on the position and direction the organisation is going. Jenatabadi (2015) is of the view that performance measurement enhances communication in an organisation through the identification of areas that need improvement because of business failure. Highlighting the role of performance measurement, Kasie and Belay (2013: 598 citing Splitzer, 2007), write –

Measurement done right can transform an organization. It can not only show you where you are now, but can get you to wherever you want to go

2.8.3 Types of performance measures

There are many types of performance measures managers can use to measure organisational performance. However, accounting, economic, and market-based measures seem popular with many organisations nowadays. The accounting-based measures of performance include return on assets (ROA), return on investment (ROI), return on sales (ROS), and earnings per share (EPS). Before the 1980s, many organisations used accounting-based measures of performance. Organisations relied on ROA, ROS, and ROI ratios to determine profit levels. Organisations started to focus on shareholders' value in the mid-1980s. According to Gentry and Shen (2010), the focus shifted towards maximizing shareholders' value.

Accounting measures of performance are also known as objective measures because they rely on financial information to measure performance. Some researchers (Masa'deh et al, 2015, Obeidat and Darkal, 2018) argue that accounting-based measures of performance are not reliable to reveal the correct position of an organisation's profit levels. Besides, the measures cannot establish the effects of variables like risk and inflation on the performance of an organisation. They also fail to incorporate additional capital costs an organisation incurs in its expansion programs. Other researchers argue that accounting measures reflect an organisation's profit levels only in the short run. Obeidat and Darkal (2018) opine that managers and business owners easily manipulate accounting-based activities to reveal non-existent profits. Managers can also distort information due to the organisation's depreciation policies, differences in the treatment of consolidated accounts, and outright dishonesty by managers (Gentry and Shen, 2010). Despite the drawbacks,

accounting-based measures of performance are still commonly used in organisations in tandem with other measures of performance.

The market-based measures of performance gained popularity in the mid-1980s when organisations realized the importance of maximizing the shareholders' value. Market-based measures of performance are also known as subjective measures. They include several metrics like company image and reputation, sales and market growth, and product innovation. Many organisations today value the benefits associated with market-based measures of performance. According to Gentry and Shen (2010), market-based measures are long-term focused. Besides, the information they reveal is more reliable than accounting-based measures. They point out that it is not easy for managers to manipulate and distort information from market-based measures of performance. In other words, market-based measures of performance are robust and reveal relevant data. The measures can also depict a firm's image and reputation in the industry. According to Masa'deh et al (2018), subjective measures like sales growth, for example, can expose an organisation to geographical markets leading to business growth and an increase in revenue. In light of the above, one can conclude that it is beneficial for an organisation to rely more on market-based measures of performance than accounting-based. However, despite the advantages market-based measures have over accounting-based measures, big companies accept both measures as valid for measuring organisational performance.

The need to consistently maximize the shareholders' value in the mid-1980s, gave birth to the economic-based measures of organisational performance. Shareholders in many organisations were not happy with management's failure to consistently deliver shareholders' value. To address the problem, organisations linked executive contracts to organisational performance to ensure the creation of shareholders' value. The value-based indicators of performance include the economic value added (EVA), cash value added (CVA), and the market value added (Obeidat and Darkal, 2018). Organisations in many countries use the indicators to measure the extent an organisation creates value for its shareholders. Essentially, the indicators measure the actual value an organisation creates for its shareholders. Obeidat and Darkal (2018) argue that the primary objective of an organisation's existence is to deliver and maximize shareholders' value hence the importance of economic-based measures of performance. To this end, organisations create shareholders' value when the value of shares surpasses the amount of invested capital. When such a scenario unfolds, shareholders' confidence in the business increases. They may find no reason why they cannot make more investments in the future. They have good reason to make further investments in the organization in light of adequate compensation of the risk associated with the cost of injecting capital into the business.

2.9 Performance measurement models

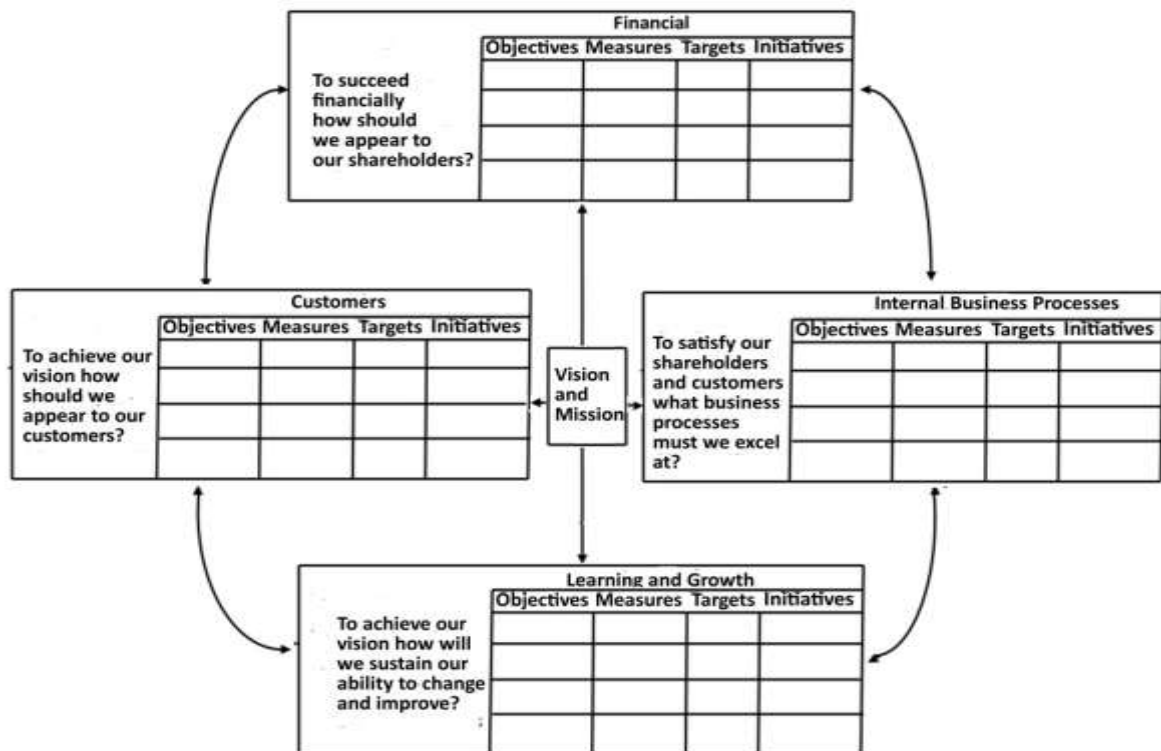
Managerial leaders can measure business performance objectively by monitoring and verifying financial aspects such as profit and sales levels. They can also measure performance subjectively by monitoring and verifying qualitative aspects such as customer satisfaction, market share, quality of goods and services. However, measuring performance from the quantitative and qualitative aspects requires the application of multi-dimensional indicators. This allows managers to have a correct picture of the overall performance of the organisation (Erdogan and Kaya, 2014; Yildiz and Karakas, 2012, Kasie and Belay, 2013; Jenatabadi, 2015). Several performance measurement tools emphasizing on multi-dimensionality are now common and below is an analysis of some tools accepted and employed widely in organisations.

2.9.1 The balanced scorecard (BSC)

Research conducted at Nolan Norton Institute by Kaplan and Norton in 1991 covering many companies, reveal that organisations tend to overlook intangible assets in their performance measurement processes. Riding on this weakness, they developed the balanced score card in 1992 in order to monitor business performance objectively and subjectively (Dudin and Frolova, 2015; Chung et al; 2016; Poureisa et al, 2013). The BSC is therefore a crucial performance measurement tool that seeks to create harmony between organisational strategies and its employees. In some cases, employees might not understand strategies in place, and their own role in accomplishing those strategies (Kairu et al, 2013)

The BSC, designed to supplement traditional financial measures of performance incorporates three additional non-financial performance metrics: - customers, internal processes of business and development and growth. Erdogan and Kaya (2014) are of the view that an organisation is free to use any of the four BSC perspectives, but argue that monitoring of all the perspectives, gives managers a comprehensive view of the business. Measuring customer satisfaction, verifying areas internally that require improvement and monitoring the level of learning and growth in an organisation are some of the intangible assets that traditional financial measures of performance ignored. However, the BSC has had its fair share of criticism. Some view it as a mere tool that is heavily loaded with financial information at the expense of crucial non-financial data (Kasie and Belay, 2013). Despite criticism, the BSC has been widely accepted and acknowledged globally as a performance tool that lends credible support to the achievement of set organisational objectives. It is an effective performance measurement framework that many industries ranging from manufacturing, retail, transport, finance and many more apply with remarkable success (Dudin and Frolova, 2015; Tubis and Werbinska-Wojciechowska, 2017). Indeed, the BSC is no longer a mere performance measurement tool, but a strategic management tool used widely to transform organisational strategies and missions into reality.

Fig 2.6: - The balanced scorecard



Source: - Poureisa et al (2013:975)

The four dimensions of the BSC help managers to come up with answers to four questions: -

- How should we appear in the eyes and views of our shareholders? - Financial perspective
- Are we able to satisfy the needs of our customers? – Customer perspective
- Which internal business processes should we enhance? – Internal business processes perspective
- Are we able to accommodate change innovatively and improve our business? – Learning and growth perspective
- **Financial perspective**

The financial perspective of the BSC looks at an organisation's ability to archive its set financial goals such as profitability and return on shareholders' investment, in view of strategic choices in place (Poureisa et al, 2013). In essence, all strategies executed should focus on enhancing profitability, thus guaranteeing shareholders value.

▪ **Customer perspective**

The focus of every business is to deliver value to customers as a gateway to profitability and growth; hence the narrative that the "customer is king". The customer perspective of the BSC seeks to verify this position by focusing on value delivery to customers. This requires organisations to produce quality goods and services, develop efficient and effective delivery and pricing systems that reflect expectations of customers (Poureisa et al, 2013; Erdogan and Kaya (2014).

- **Learning and growth perspective**

The development and growth perspective seek to monitor any gaps that may need filling. According to Poureisa et al (2013), organisations should focus on innovation, continuous improvement and coming up with new products that create value for customers whilst enhancing profitability.

- **Internal business processes perspective**

This perspective thrives on identifying areas and processes that an organisation can excel at well above other industry members. When an organisation excels well in an activity, that activity becomes a core-competence and a source of sustained competitive advantage (Thompson et al, 2015).

2.9.2 Economic value-added model (EVA)

In today's globally competitive markets, profit-making organisations strive to gain a competitive advantage by making various strategic options. Organisations strive to make profits and create value to meet the expectations of shareholders. This forces managers to focus on increasing company value. Managers can increase company value by focusing on organisational performance to accomplish objectives. The desire to increase company value gave birth to the Economic Value-Added concept to measure organisational performance. Stern Stewart and Company of New York, the founders of the concept in 1991, argued that financial measures such as earnings per share and growth were not accurate indicators of performance measures. Stern and Stewart also noted that the use of ratio analysis does not reflect the true economic success of an organisation. Besides, the use of financial statements to measure performance is now declining and the financial assessment method, in general, is becoming unreliable. As a result, Stern and Stewart developed the EVA model to measure performance. It is argued that the model is more practical as a performance measurement tool. EVA therefore, reveals the actual economic value or profit an organization makes (Shah et al, 2015). It strives to reveal the true economic position of an organisation. It aims at establishing actual economic value created by an organisation and the risks associated with its operations. It is defined as "the residual income a company earns after capital costs are deducted" (ENDE, 2017). Koc (2017:113) defines EVA as "the difference between economic profit and the alternative cost of investing at a similar risk level of investors". In a nutshell, economic value-added refers to the net profit realized above the total annual cost of capital.

Jakub et al (2015) argue that EVA is the most preferred measure of performance because of its simplicity and easy usage. It is said to be motivational since it focuses on achieving economic profit to benefit shareholders in the long run. Top managers of an organisation have a duty to ensure that operations are smoothly run to create economic value expected by shareholders. EVA

is gaining popularity in the USA, and global companies such as Coca-Cola and Siemens use it to measure organisational performance (ENDE, 2017). In summary, EVA creates value, maintains a capital structure policy. It also maximizes the return on shareholders' investment.

2.9.3 Triple bottom lines model (TBL)

The triple bottom line model (TBL) by John Elkington emerged in 1994 to measure organisational performance from three dimensions. The model incorporated the social and environmental dimensions of an organisation into the traditional measures of performance. The two bottom lines of social and environmental dimensions link an organisation to its social and environmental responsibilities (Onyali, 2014). Shareholders and other stakeholders must know the organisation's social responsibility programs and how it handles them. Stakeholders need to know if the organisation's business practices benefit employees and the community at large. They also must know how responsible the organisation is towards the environment surrounding it. Essentially, the organization's environmental practices must be sustainable.

The triple bottom lines framework is an accounting model that goes beyond the traditional measures of performance depicted in models like the balanced scorecard. The TBL framework incorporates the social and environmental dimensions of an organisation, which are not part of the traditional measures of organisational performance. An organisation's traditional measures of performance only focus on an organisation's profit margins, return on shareholder's value, and investment. The model in some circles is known as the three "Ps"; for the planet, people and profits. The purpose of the TBL model is to support and drive an organisation's sustainability programmes (Onyali, 2014); Hourneaux Jr. et al, 2018). The model is now widely accepted as a performance measurement tool by many organisations and governments in various countries. They view it as a necessary tool for survival. Organisations have now come to terms with the fact that stakeholders' interests go beyond meeting their return on investment. Instead, their interests now include issues of organisational sustainability; hence the need for organisations to look into their social and environmental responsibilities (Onyali, 2014). They want to know the value created through an organisation's social and environmental programmes. According to Onyali (2014), many organisations now include social and environmental performance initiatives when reporting results. However, users of the TBL model face challenges, especially failure to have a common unit of measure. The major challenge is that the dimensions do not have a common unit of measure. Hourneaux Jr. et al (2018) note that the TBL approach is not easy to implement despite its wide acceptance and use.

2.9.4 Performance prism

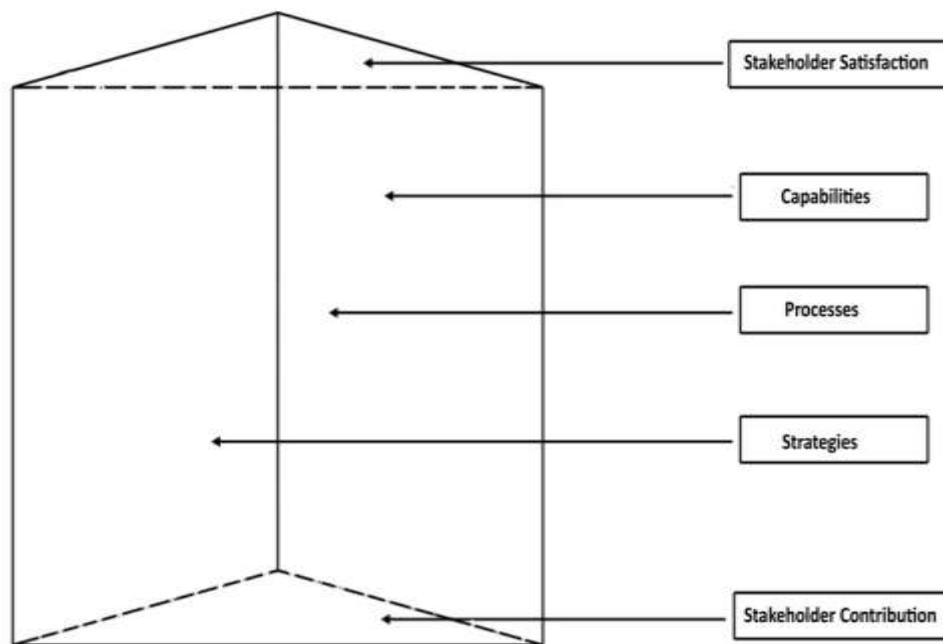
Neely and Adams, developed the performance prism in 2000 as a second-generation performance measurement tool to address shortcomings of first-generation tools, like the balanced scorecard

(Ivanov and Avasilcai, 2014). Researchers argue that early performance measurement models tended to focus narrowly on shareholders and customers whilst neglecting other key stakeholders such as suppliers and employees (Acca, 2012). The development of the prism was on the backdrop of an argument that all stakeholders are important and strategies made need alterations regularly. Managers must know who their stake-holders are, including their needs and expectations. They, at the same time, have to make the stakeholders aware of what the organisation expects from them in return (Ivanov and Avasilcai, 2014). In essence, performance prism focuses on striking a balance between satisfying stakeholders and their contribution to the profitability of the business.

Five business perspectives make up the performance prism. Managers have to think deeply as to what answers they can provide to five questions that go along with these perspectives (Sorooshian et al, 2016; Ivanov and Avasilcai, 2014). The five perspectives and related questions are as follows: -

- **Stakeholder satisfaction:** - Are we able to identify our stakeholders? What are their needs and wants?
- **Stakeholder contribution:** - In return, what do we expect to get from our stakeholders?
- **Strategies:** - What strategic choices do we need to make in view of our stakeholders' expectations?
- **Processes:** - What processes can we roll out in order to complement these needs, wants and expectations?
- **Capabilities:** - What capabilities do we have in terms of human capital, infrastructure and technologies that we can collectively employ to drive our processes effectively and efficiently?

Fig 2.7: - Performance prism



Source: - Ivanov and Avasilcai (2014:400)

- **Stakeholder satisfaction perspective**

An organisation should strive to satisfy the needs and expectations of its various stakeholders, including its customers. As such, it has the duty to deliver well-priced quality goods and services that meet the needs and expectations of various stakeholders (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

- **Stakeholder contribution perspective**

As an organisation fulfils its stakeholders' expectations, they in return should also understand and appreciate what the organisation expects from them. Employees have to achieve their objectives whilst customers demonstrate some degree of loyalty and continued support to the organisation.

- **Strategies perspective**

In view of the deliverables expected in the first and second perspectives, managers can then make strategic choices that enhance value delivery in order to meet stakeholder expectations. However, they must make sure that stakeholders fulfil organisation's expectations as well.

- **Processes: -**

A successful organisation thrives on fluid and transparent processes. As such, organisational leaders have to put in place fluid processes to underpin strategic choices they make.

- **Capabilities perspective**

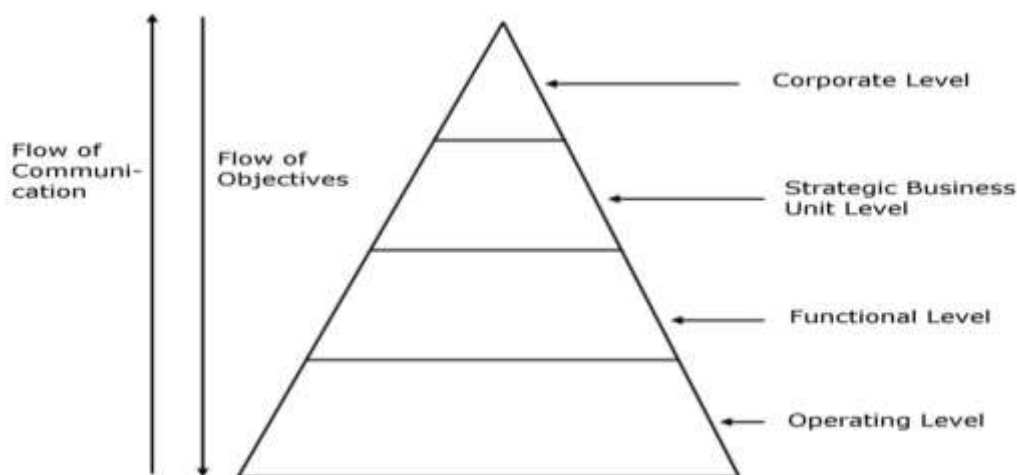
The last perspective reveals that organisations should be loaded with capabilities resident in human skills, new technologies and overall infrastructure. This according to Ivanov and Avasilcai (2014) enables an organisation to create and deliver value across board.

Conclusively the five perspectives of the prism can measure performance of an organisation effectively, provided managers come up with comprehensive answers to the related questions.

2.9.5 The “SMART” performance pyramid

The SMART performance pyramid is a tool developed by Cross and Lynch in 1991 showing a link between four levels of strategy in an organisation (Sorooshian et al, 2016). The linkage between the levels reveals a strategic leadership process, identifying strategic leaders at corporate level as key figures in the strategy making process. The SMART pyramid highlights top managers as makers of strategic choices at corporate level. The pyramid also defines corporate vision and translates it as objectives to second level flowing through all the levels to the bottom of the organisation (Sorooshian et al, 2016; Striteska and Spickova, 2012).

Fig 2.8: - SMART performance pyramid



Adapted from: - Striteska and Spickova (2012:07).

Four organisational levels, the corporate, strategic business unit, functional and operating levels make up The SMART pyramid system. The corporate level at the top of the pyramid sets the tone of the organisation and defines corporate strategies. The second level of the pyramid, defines financial and market measures in line with set objectives (Watts and McNair-Connolly, 2012; Youngbantao and Rompho, 2015). A further definition of these measures takes place in level three, followed by determination of key measures such as levels of productivity and customer satisfaction. Managers finally convert these measures into specific objectives at the bottom level. At this level, they set operational measures per department such as quality of goods and services, prices and delivery (Youngbantao and Rompho, 2015).

2.10 Chapter summary

The chapter examined the concept of strategic leadership, guided by the theory of strategic leadership, which stipulates that making strategic choices rest entirely with those occupying top

organisational leadership positions. However, the chapter further examined the new strategic leadership approach for the 21st century, which advocates for shared strategic leadership instead of it being the prerogative of those at the top. Researchers view such an approach as relevant in enhancing organisational performance in line with the dictates of 21st century global economy. Finally, the researcher analysed the concept of organisational performance and its constructs together with various performance models that organisations including SMEs can employ to measure performance.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this study including the two main research philosophies. It also outlines the researcher's position from the ontological, epistemological and axiological perspectives. The chapter further outlines the mixed methods research approach, as the preferred method employed in this study, together with the rationale for selecting this method. The research design and the chosen sampling method are also outlined in this chapter.

3.1 Research philosophy

A researcher is at liberty to select a research philosophy from the two main philosophies, being positivism and phenomenology. However, many researchers have given both philosophies different names. Haddadi et al (2017) prefer to classify positivism as objectivism and phenomenological paradigm as interpretivism. Others refer to positivism as experimentalist and phenomenology as subjectivist (Easterby-Smith et al, 2015).

Positivism, arguably viewed as a dominant philosophy, is premised on assumptions that reality exists and the researcher is always detached from reality or phenomenon that is being researched (Sefotho, 2015; Saunders et al, 2019). It therefore, thrives on a belief that there is no connection between the researcher and the phenomenon under investigation. In other words, there is some element of independence on the part of the researcher. In essence, positivism looks at the world from an objective point of view, arguing that indeed the world we are living in is external (Easterby-Smith, 2015; Scotland, 2012). It is associated with quantitative research, simply because quantitative researchers make their investigations based on reality, facts and truth. As such, positivism allows a researcher to seek for information concerning the reality under study objectively; thus, enabling him/her to have a complete understanding of the problem under investigation based on scientific experiments. As facts emerge, researchers employ quantitative methods to empirically measure them.

Phenomenology or interpretivism is a research philosophy premised on a belief that human beings naturally seek to make a clear understanding of the world they live in. As such, the meanings of their experiences require subjective interpretation. According to Cohen et al (2011), interpretivists believe that reality is complex in nature. As such, events and situations are not basic interpretations; instead detailed descriptions are required to explain the complexity of such events and situations. Because the meanings of human beings' experiences are numerous and varied, researchers have to rely on the participant's views to make sense of the phenomenon under study.

Since a single event can be subjected to many interpretations, Cohen et al (2011) state that interpretivists strongly advocate for such events and situations to be examined through the lenses of participants instead of the researcher. Blaikie (2007:18) puts it in clearer terms reminding researchers that, “what one participant call a tree, another might call a shelter”. As such, questioning of participants has to be broad and open, allowing them to build a subjective meaning of the problem under study. Open-ended questioning is encouraged because it gives room for participants to explain their experiences widely and share them with the researcher (Creswell, 2014). Interpretivism therefore looks at the world qualitatively. A researcher in this case, becomes part of the research and cannot be separated from what he/she is observing. Phenomenology therefore, focuses on the experiences of research participants and it is up to the researcher to build a holistic picture of what he/she is observing (Easterby – Smith et al, 2015). It follows that a researcher has to battle to fully appreciate and understand developments as they unfold. This study therefore recognized both positivism and Interpretivism. Interpretivism is important because it acknowledges and recognizes the existence of tacit knowledge, bearing in mind that in this world we are living in, it is important to share experiences. As such, in-depth interviews and observations are the best routes for collecting qualitative data (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012; 2015; Sulaiman and Balarube, 2012). Positivism, on the other hand is appropriate because it accommodates large volumes of data, thus exploring the breadth of information (Easterby-Smith et al, 2015; Saunders et al, 2019).

3.1.1 Ontology

Ontology is associated with reality and its focus is on the nature of reality. As it focuses on the nature of reality, it encourages researchers to make sense of the phenomenon under investigation. Sefotho (2015) states that ontology encourages researchers to be explicit on the nature of reality. In other words, a researcher is expected to know his/her position on the nature of reality and should stand by his/her subjective and objective views of social reality. However, what is important is for a researcher to establish whether reality exists or researchers merely create its existence in their minds (Aliyu et al, 2013).

According to Blaikie (2010), the nature of social reality depends on two main opposing theories, realism and idealism. Realists or objectivists argue that the independent existence of a phenomenon, social and cultural, is a reality, not built in human minds and thoughts. All categories of realist ontology, agree that out there in the external world, reality exists regardless of whether humans can observe it or not (Blaikie, 2010). On the other hand, idealists or subjectivists hold a view that the external world is nothing but mere appearances whose independent existence is only in their minds and thoughts (Blaikie, 2010; Saunders et al, 2019). They stand firm on this position making clear assumptions that what humans see as real, is only

real because in their minds it is real. Reality constructed socially in human minds, has therefore no independence of its own. However, despite the differences, both realists' and idealists' views agree on the existence of some form of reality but what is crucial and pertinent is for researchers to get answers to questions like, "what is the nature of this reality and where do we look for it?" (Blaikie, 2007:14).

In view of the above, a researcher at the end must take a clear and particular ontological position, which he/she must explicitly declare or make public as he, or she makes ontological assumptions. In this thesis, the researcher's ontological position is to establish the nature of reality in view of strategic leadership and its role in the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. This position is in line with pragmatism, a philosophical worldview that recognises both systems of reality being realist and idealist ontologies (Creswell, 2014). It is argued that pragmatism underpins mixed methods research in that it allows researchers to make assumptions by investigating a phenomenon quantitatively and qualitatively (Creswell, 2014; Saunders et al, 2019).

3.1.2 Epistemology

Although realist and idealist ontologies as already stated agree that social reality exists, epistemology goes on to ask a question; "how can social reality be known?" (Blaikie, 2007:18). Epistemology tries to give an answer to this question. Epistemology is therefore a philosophical paradigm that seeks to establish the nature and forms of knowledge and how human beings pass it on to others. In the other words, epistemology is concerned with knowledge, its meaning and sources. Analytically, it tries to establish the most appropriate ways of figuring out as to what knowledge is and its sources. According to Blaikie (2010) and Antwi and Hamza (2015), epistemology is much to do with how human beings acquire knowledge of the world they live in. It therefore concerns itself with knowledge; how one acquires it, and how one establishes this knowledge to be true. In essence, it provides researchers with the kind of knowledge that is possible to know and explains how one judges the adequacy and legitimacy of that knowledge (Blaikie, 2010). As epistemology seeks to establish what can be known by a researcher, it therefore ideally gives an answer to questions like "how and what can we know" (Sefotho, 2015:31).

3.1.3 Axiology

The origins of word "axiology" is linked to two Greek words; "**axios**" which means value or worth and "**logos**" meaning theory or logic (Biedenbach and Jacobsson, 2016; Khan, 2012). A combination of these Greek words gave birth to the theory of value. Paul Lapie and E. Hartmann were the first to employ axiology in research at the dawn of the 20th century in a bid to address questions related to what human beings see as right and wrong; good and desirable; and valuable to the society (Biedenbach and Jacobsson, 2016). Axiology is therefore a philosophical science

that attempts to pinpoint what human beings consider valuable, desirable and acceptable to the society. One of its key branches is ethics, which deals with what humans consider right and wrong in view of expected behavioural norms.

Axiology therefore, focuses on human values, their nature and origins. Values are preferences that human beings make in view of what they consider good and desirable to the society (Saunders et al, 2019). In simple terms, individuals have the freedom to select information that they feel is valuable and not valuable to their well-being. This is important because values guide human decisions, which enable individuals to know the difference between what society considers right and wrong.

3.2 Research approach

A research can be quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods in nature. The decision to choose the right approach lies with the researcher. More often than not, a researcher will go the quantitative or qualitative route depending on the problem under investigation. In other words, a researcher must from the onset, determine if the study leans on the quantitative or qualitative side. However, when confronted by a complex problem that requires a deeper investigation, it is advisable to follow the mixed methods way (Creswell, 2014; Palinkas et al; 2013). In this study, the researcher selected the mixed methods approach.

As stated in this study, the majority of SMEs are not formally registered. Their operations are obscure, and many of them do not keep updated financial records. According to the FinScope MSME Zimbabwe Survey (2012), most small to medium-sized business owners/managers lack managerial skills, resulting in their failure to have documented business plans. Under such a scenario, strategic choices are likely to be made haphazardly. To this end, neither quantitative nor qualitative results could independently produce satisfactory results. Employing a mixed-methods approach was the best route to follow to produce convincing results.

3.2.1 Mixed methods research approach

The mixed methods approach combines quantitative and qualitative approaches and collects both sets of data in a study (Creswell, 2014; Palinkas et al, 2013; Easterby-Smith et al, 2015). Data collected using the mixed methods usually reveal a detailed and clearer picture. A researcher confronted by a problem that calls for a deeper investigation, is advised to employ the mixed methods approach. Moreover, investigating the problem from two angles gives a researcher confidence in his/her study findings. Easterby-Smith et al (2015) and Creswell (2014) advise researchers to consider using this method, especially when quantitative and qualitative approaches fail to deliver convincing answers to study questions.

However, defining mixed methods seems problematic to many researchers. Researchers' views have been conflicting in this area as some according to Archibald et al (2017) argue that mixing the first two approaches happens in one study while others hold a view that it happens in a series of studies. Perhaps this is the reason why researchers like Cameron et al (2015) argue that many who embark on combining quantitative and qualitative approaches in their studies do so blindly without adequately equipping themselves with the relevant concepts of mixed methods. Consequently, acknowledgement of the literature, despite the number of sources being increasingly available receives little attention from authors and researchers. Moreover, mixed methods research is still regarded as a methodology that is still in its infancy; hence the reason why it is largely unknown and confusing among many researchers (Cameron et al, 2015). Cameron (2011) reports that an investigation by Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner in 2007 for the definition of mixed methods focusing on (21) twenty-one researchers yielded 19 responses, all seemingly different in relation to what researchers mix, why they mix, how far the mixing should be done and at what stage in the research process should the mixing happen. A clear definition of mixed methods emerged from this investigation. Bazeley (2015:28 citing Johnson et al, 2007) defines mixed methods as:

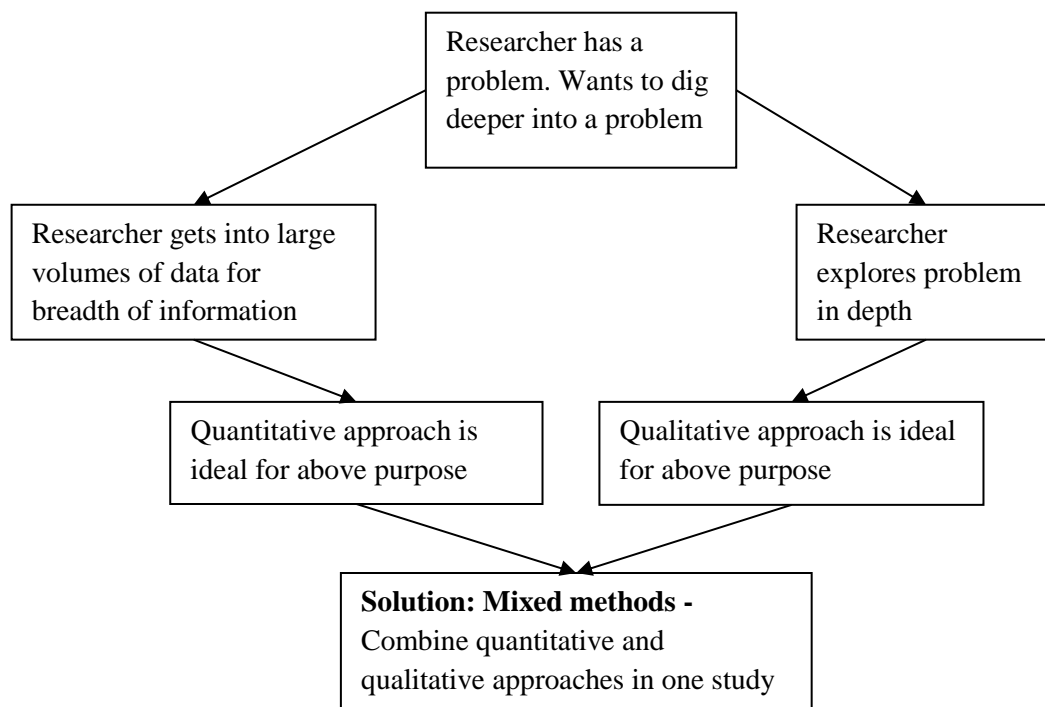
The type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g. use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration

It is clear from this definition that the key benefits researchers derive from mixed methods is breadth and depth of information. However, Cameron (2011:96 citing Creswell and Plano Clerk, 2007) gives a more elaborate definition as follows:

Mixed Methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone.

Central to these definitions is that combining the two approaches in a single study enables a researcher to investigate a problem in-depth. This allows a researcher to get the desired breadth and depth of information from that study. However, the two elaborate definitions above seem to agree with Cameron (2011:96 citing the Journal of Mixed Methods, 2006) that Mixed Methods is a: - "Research in which the investigator collects, analyses, mixes, and draws inferences from both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a program of inquiry". Fig. 3.1 explains the mixed methods approach in research.

Fig. 3.1: - Mixed Methods Approach



Source: - Adapted from (Creswell, 2014; Easterby-Smith et al, 2015).

There are several reasons for using the mixed methods approach in this study instead of the quantitative or qualitative approach. The undisputed benefits of using a mixed methods approach in research have been explained convincingly by a number of outstanding researchers and scholars (Almalki, 2016; Bazeley, 2015; Cameron, 2011; Cameron et al, 2015, Archibald et al, 2017; McKim, 2017; Creswell, 2014; Easterby-Smith et al, 2015) and many more. Guided by the views and arguments put forward by these scholars and researchers, I therefore justify my use of this approach in this thesis for reasons highlighted below: -

- a) Combining the two approaches in a single study allows a researcher to have a deeper appreciation of the problem under investigation by providing him/her with breadth and depth of information. As such, the two approaches can easily complement each other in a study.
- b) The method tends to eliminate the shortcomings that may arise if the two approaches were independently employed in a study.

Finally, triangulation gives a researcher a unique chance to converge and corroborate results; thus, giving him/her confidence in research findings and interpretation of results

3.2.2 Quantitative research approach

Quantitative research is embedded in positivism and employs an empirical investigation to a research problem. It leans more on the theory of statistics, which advances arguments in favour of large samples for data collection as surety for better and reliable research findings. It is on this

basis that Sulaiman and Balarabe (2012:11) refer to it as “research that employs the language of numbers”. Sulaiman and Balarabe (2012:12) further define it as -One that traditionally employs random sample surveys and structured interviews to collect data, mainly quantifiable data and analyse it using statistical techniques”. It is therefore, an objective research approach that numerically gathers data using a questionnaire as the instrument. Measurement and analysis of data involves the use of numerical methods. The highlight of this method is that the researcher is never part of a study. Instead, he/she remains independent of the problem under investigation (Easterby-Smith et al, 2015). Despite being independent, the researcher should strive to objectively unearth the reality of the phenomena under investigation (Easterby-Smith et al, 2015; Saunders et al, 2019).

Quantitative research is therefore deductive in nature and empirical evidence guides researchers in testing theory. By so doing, a researcher is able to focus on a particular situation instead of general patterns (Antwi and Hamza, 2015; Easterby-Smith et al, 2015). In essence, quantitative research is ideal for a researcher whose objective is to get the breadth of information from a study. To succeed, Easterby-Smith et al (2015) advise researchers to go through volumes of data from a large sample.

3.2.3 Qualitative research approach

Qualitative research encompasses several research techniques that include in-depth interviews, observation, participant observation and focus groups. It is a research approach associated with small sample sizes allowing a researcher to get into the depth of information using in-depth interview methods. Defining qualitative research has never been easy. However, Sulaiman and Balarabe (2012:9 citing Denzin and Lincoln, 2010) try to give an informative and encompassing definition. They define it as follows:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices...turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them

The above definition clearly confirms that qualitative research encompasses various research techniques that even include photographs, recordings and memos and further confirms that it is largely interpretive. The definition further makes it clear that the approach collects data using non-numerical methods. Qualitative research is therefore subjective and inductive in nature and researchers employ it to investigate a complicated phenomenon. Baboucarr and Soaib (2014)

advise researchers to be patient when conducting qualitative studies, simply because it takes time to get results that depict a true picture of the problem under investigation. As such, a researcher has to be part of the research and can choose to collect data through observations or interviews (Creswell, 2014). The data collection process is therefore narrative. Qualitative research thrives on the impressions and reactions of the researcher since qualitative researchers do not believe that reality exist. Instead, reality to them exists through observation. As a result, a researcher must first make some observations before coming up with the general patterns of the phenomenon under investigation (Antwi and Hamza, 2015; Easterby - Smith et al, 2015). In this regard, qualitative research leans on observation of reality as a basis for the development of theory.

However, what is crucial for researchers is to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of their informants' feelings and thoughts. In reality, a qualitative research approach merely sends a message to researchers that make them understand why their informants build feelings and thoughts that might drive them to behave in a way they do (Sutton and Austin, 2015). In this regard, it becomes crucial to find the underlying cause of a problem by attempting to dig deeper into the feelings, opinions and thoughts of informants. Participants' opinions and their experiences are important in qualitative research and as such, a researcher must be able to draw valuable information from them (Almalki, 2016). Although concurring, Sutton and Austin (2015) posit that trying to get deeper into peoples' experiences, feelings and thoughts might not be easy. They argue that at times potential informants might not be forthcoming especially when asked questions that touch on their personal issues. Moreover, some people might not want to reveal their experiences; hence recounting them might pose a challenge.

3.3 Research design

According to Kumar (2011), a research design is ideally a blueprint or strategy that researchers employ to investigate a phenomenon. In concurrence, Lowry (2015:15 citing Bryman et al, 2011), refer to a research design as a “framework”, defining it as “a framework for collection and analysis of data”. Some researchers according to Creswell (2014) refer to research designs as “strategies of enquiry”. However, Easterby-Smith et al (2015) give a far-reaching and encompassing definition. They define research design as:

A statement written, often before any data is collected, which explains and justifies what data is to be gathered how and where from. It also needs to explain how the data will be analysed and how this will provide answers to the central questions of the research” (Easterby-Smith et al, 2015:68).

A research design is therefore, a strategy or a roadmap that a researcher must follow in a bid to answer research questions. The study followed the parallel convergent mixed methods research design. It is a design that allows a researcher to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data concurrently before converging results for comparison and interpretation. Such a design according to Creswell (2014) is basic and quite familiar in the world of social research. An exploratory study gives researchers avenues to establish a true picture of the phenomenon under investigation by providing new insights in form of ideas and knowledge (Saunders et al, 2012). It is therefore appropriate when a researcher is not sure of the nature of the phenomenon under study. The nature of strategic leadership in Zimbabwean SMEs and its role in the performance of SMEs is hardly known and not well understood by many; hence the reason for employing this design in this study.

3.3.1 Selecting a research design

Selecting a research design entails making some decisions that compel a researcher to make choices as to what requires some investigation and how to conduct it. As such, the choice of a research design must be in ways that ensure the accomplishment of stated research questions. Kumar (2011) states that researchers making decisions should have the following in mind: -

- The type of design selected for the study
- How the researcher will collect data from potential informants
- How the selection of participants or informants will be done
- How collected data are to be analysed
- How communication of the research findings will be done

The above considerations are unavoidable in research and require literature to justify and support them. Greener (2008) state that a researcher for example has to know who to talk to in the field and the language to use bearing in mind that it is not possible to talk to everybody on the streets. In essence, it is not possible for a researcher to merely get on the streets and try to engage everyone on sight. According to Easterby-Smith et al (2015), it becomes unethical to do so. It is therefore crucial for a researcher to take key aspects of research into consideration. He/she needs to make sure that he/she is ethically cleared and permitted to work with selected and potential informants before getting down to business in the field.

Research designs are in three categories; qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods from which a researcher can select the best method to follow (Creswell, 2014; Easterby-Smith et al, 2015). A researcher is therefore at liberty to select a research method alternative from a host of alternatives that include experiment creation, participative enquiry, grounded theory, ethnography, action research, surveys, operational research, modelling, case studies and many others. Table 3.1 shows

several research methods grouped under the three categories; giving a researcher freedom of choice.

Table 3.1: - Research designs

Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental designs • Non-experimental designs such as surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative research • Phenomenology • Grounded theory • Ethnographies • Case study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convergent • Explanatory sequential • Exploratory sequential • Transformative, embedded or multiphase

Source: - Creswell (2014)

3.4 The choice of research technique

In line with the chosen research design, the researcher found the survey and multiple case study techniques suitable and selected and combined them for use in this study. As such, data collected were both quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (case study). However, as the mixed methods research design has several design types at its disposal, the researcher selected the parallel convergent mixed methods design for the study. As already mentioned in this thesis, SMEs in Zimbabwe, like the rest of the world display similar characteristics such as the owner doubling as the manager and challenges ranging from lack of planning; finance; managerial and marketing skills among many others. Their operations are guided by poor GoZ conflicting policies (Nyamwanza et al, 2015), resulting in some of them operating as unregistered entities. It is on this background, that the researcher saw it necessary to combine the multiple case study and survey methods in a bid to get to the bottom of the problem as some of these enterprises are operating discreetly away from the eyes of the law. Moreover, because of similar characteristics and challenges, it is arguably beneficial to employ a multiple case study so that comparisons can be made, leading to a deep understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

3.4.1 The survey method

The survey research method involves gathering of data or information from a defined sample and data collection vehicles include face to face interviews, telephone interviews, and a questionnaire (Ponto, 2015; Stevanov et al, 2015; Saunders et al, 2019). Surveys are admittedly popular and widely used forms of data collection in social sciences research. Statistics Canada (2010:01) defines a survey as:

any activity that collects data in an organized and methodical manner about characteristics of interest from some or all units of a population using well defined concepts, methods and procedures and compiles such information into a useful summary form

Above definition is in concurrence with the views of Ponto (2015) and Stevanov et al (2015) that gathering of data is crucial and any research cannot materialise without first addressing this issue. As such, surveys are usually associated with large a population from which a researcher can draw a representative sample. However, the representative sample should be reasonably large to accommodate analysis of data using statistical models. In this light, a researcher has to make decisions as to who should be included in the representative sample and how he/she intends distributing the questionnaire to potential respondents or informants. Moy and Murphy (2016) state that data collection is standardised using a questionnaire in a survey research. However, changes emerge in telephone and face-to-face interviews as the process involves some social interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. Social interaction according to Moy and Murphy (2016) determines how informants are likely to respond.

3.4.1.1 The Rationale for the survey method

The rationale for using the survey method was due to its many advantages that no researcher can overlook. Saunders et al (2012; 2019) argue in favour of surveys based on the following advantages. Firstly, surveys are usually less costly to administer bearing in mind that the researcher does not necessarily need to get involved personally but can use third parties or even mail the questionnaire to the respective respondents. Secondly, the use of e-mails; postal services and telephones to reach out to respondents located in different areas is testimony that wide geographical coverage is one of the key advantages of this method. As such, good geographic coverage is possible when using surveys. Thirdly, data collection is immediate and easy to analyse. Moreover, there is a high degree of accuracy as interviewers can easily be on the spot to help with questions that are not clear. Fourthly, there is some degree of flexibility in the use of surveys as Mathers et al (2009) observed that the method is flexible and one can use it in conjunction with other methods. In this thesis, the researcher employed surveys and multiple case study method to gather data. Fifthly, the use of a small representative sample to draw conclusions that encompass the whole study population is clear evidence that the method is efficient.

Despite several advantages stated above, some researchers see the darker side of this method. Moy and Murphy (2016), opine that the biggest challenge with this method is to get potential respondents to participate in a survey. Even if respondents finally agree to participate, they warn researchers not to merely assume that data collected are suitable for use. They argue that many respondents face the challenge of comprehending research questions and getting the right information and coordinating the two to answer questions. Secondly, some potential respondents never find time to respond to a survey while others might feel embarrassed by their failure to understand some questions. Moy and Murphy (2016) also argue that bias is another challenge or disadvantage associated with surveys. The source of bias is twofold; firstly, when a researcher

faces potential respondents who view themselves as best and well informed with all the answers and secondly when the researcher brings his/her own bias to research.

3.4.2 The case study method

Despite the popularity of case studies with researchers in many fields, many conflicting views have emerged as to what are case studies and their defining characteristics. Starman (2013) opines that the reason for divergent views is that many researchers merely focus on a particular case or cases at hand when defining a case study. They in the process lose sight of the fact that a case study is a form of research. Others tend to confuse case studies with participant observation while some employ various terms like case study, case method and case study method interchangeably in their studies (Yin, 2014; Cronin, 2014). Karlsson (2016) defines a case study as an investigation that explores a phenomenon in-depth and in a real-life set-up. Concurring, Yin (2014) and Starman (2013) define a case study as a research that is exploratory in nature, and suitable for investigating complex and unique phenomena. In light of the above, Karlsson (2016:3 citing Beverland and Lindgreen, 2010) concludes that such an investigation requires a researcher to explore many cases during the data collection process. Above definitions reveal that a case study research investigates a single or multiple case in-depth. A case study therefore is qualitative and descriptive in nature focusing on an identified case or cases and employing an in-depth form of investigation. In the process, it gives a researcher a detailed description of the phenomenon under investigation. Cronin (2014) states that an accurate, precise and detailed description of a phenomenon is crucial in a case study arguing that it is imperative for a researcher to achieve this objective. A case study therefore, offers a researcher a window to study a particular phenomenon within the environment it occurs or its real-life context. Some researchers are of the view that there is nothing wrong for a researcher to go through many cases in a case study research. The crucial aspect with multiple case studies according to Yin (2014) is that a researcher should investigate all selected cases intensively in order to allow for comprehensive and robust theory building.

However, despite the divergent views, the researcher noted the mutual understanding and position among researchers that a case study is suitable for investigating complex and unique phenomena to get detailed information about a problem under study. To this end, the researcher employed semi-structured interviews to collect data from many cases. Karlsson (2016) points out that to make an intense and sufficient investigation in a case study, a researcher has to go through multiple case studies instead of a mere one case.

3.4.2.1 The Rationale for the case study method

Despite criticizing case studies as being costly to conduct, requiring deployment of considerable resources and taking too long to investigate, this method has advantages that can easily entice any

qualitative researcher. However, this study followed the multiple case study routes for reasons stated below. In general, Yin (2014) points out that case study researches provide answers to research questions with “why and how” focuses. Guided by researchers like Yin (2014) and Karlsson (2016) who argue in their favour, the researcher found the case study method suitable for use in this study. These researchers are of the view that case studies are ideal to explain some real-life situations that might prove difficult and complicated for survey and experimental methods to handle.

SMEs in Zimbabwe as major economic institutions operate in all provinces of the country. They operate in secrecy as some are registered while others are not. Besides, as institutions still in infancy in a crippling economy, their problems are numerous; hence investigating them quantitatively alone was not sufficient. In order to dig deeper into the problem under study, it became prudent to employ the multiple case study research in conjunction with the survey method. The use of multiple case studies in such a study is according to Karlsson (2016) likely to produce robust and compelling evidence that can result in the development of a rich theoretical framework. The biggest benefit multiple case studies offer is room for cross-case comparison. Yin (2014) argues that a researcher must conduct a multiple case study of up to six (6) cases. If he/she produces similar results or literal replication, then the results of such a research are likely to reflect a convincing high degree of accuracy and certainty. Perhaps the rationale for using the multiple case study method in this study can be summed up by the following note by Yin (2009 cited in Cronin, 2014:20):

One of the most powerful uses of the method is to explain real-life causal links, with the researcher able to appreciate the subjective richness of individuals recounting their experiences in a particular context

3.5 Time horizon

This is a cross-sectional study conducted over a period of (6) six calendar months. Cross-sectional studies are suitable when a researcher studies a phenomenon for a short period and in most cases, they use the survey method to describe circumstances surrounding a particular phenomenon (Easterby-Smith et al, 2015). Saunders et al (2019) point out that in qualitative research; researchers employ cross-sectional studies using the case study method to conduct in-depth interviews over a short period.

3.6 Sampling methods

One of the most crucial decisions a researcher has to make is to select an appropriate sampling method to employ in a study. A researcher has to make a choice between probability and non-probability sampling methods. In this study, the researcher selected the mixed methods sampling approach, which brings together probability and non-probability sampling techniques in a single

study. As such, the researcher combined the multistage cluster sampling and purposeful sampling techniques in this study. Combining two sampling techniques in a study is an appealing and convincing method in research. Probability sampling leads to breadth of information from units of a large sample selected to give a true representation of the entire population whilst non-probability sampling allows a researcher to get detailed information from a few cases selected purposefully (Etikan and Bala, 2017a; Teddie and Yu, 2007). Since the population of SMEs in Zimbabwe is geographically diverse, institutions such as Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC), Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Zimbabwe (SMEAZ) and Zimbabwe Chamber of SMEs databases provided information on their locations across all provinces in the country.

3.6.1 Probability sampling method

Probability sampling has proved popular with researchers over the years although non-probability sampling has also made considerable in-roads in the academic world lately (Sarstedt et al, 2017). It is a method that strives to give every unit of a given population an equal chance or opportunity to be included in a sample. In simple terms, all units get an equal chance of selection from the entire population for inclusion in a sample. According to Taherdoost (2016), the biggest advantage with probability sampling is that chances of bias over-riding a study are rare. Moreover, it is a reliable sampling method in that produced samples usually reflect true representativeness of the population under study. Tyrer and Heyman (2016) point out that yes; the method is an accurate sampling approach and the results usually pinpoint the research population's actual and true characteristics, but argue that it lacks perfectness. They raise the issue of sampling error, which can emerge as the sample varies from the actual population.

Simple random sampling is the most common probability sampling method that entails giving all known units of a population an equal chance for selection and inclusion in a sample (Etikan and Bala, 2017b). Stratified random sampling splits the entire population into small groups known as stratas, followed by simple random sampling of each stratum. Cluster sampling divides the population into groups known as clusters, followed by random sampling of each cluster. Systematic sampling on the other hand involves selecting the first unit followed by selection of other units in a sequence guided by a determined number e.g. selecting every sixth student in a sequence whilst multistage sampling involves sampling in stages reducing a large geographic area to a small manageable one.

3.6.2 Non-probability sampling method

It is a method associated with qualitative research approach and unlike probability sampling it is cheaper to use and can be implemented quickly. The method does not give any unit of a defined population chance to be included in a sample. Instead, it thrives on using subjective methods in

making decisions as to which elements of the population should be included in the sample (Etikan et al, 2016). As such, the question of a sample being a true representative of a population as well as generalizability might not be possible with non-probability methods. However, generalizability is possible when results from a multiple case study show some evidence of replication; that is when all cases examined produce similar results (Sarstedt et al, 2017).

Researchers select population units using several non-probability methods such as convenience sampling, judgemental or purposive sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling (Taherdoost, 2016; Tyrer and Heyman, 2016). A researcher using the convenience sampling method, selects his/her sample depending on how conveniently participants are located. Participants' selection depends on their location and easy accessibility whilst snowballing involves an initial identification of a few cases from which a researcher can then ask about other cases with similar characteristics. Purposeful or judgemental sampling involves the selecting of participants based on the researcher's expertise or judgement. Quota sampling involves selecting participants based on pre-determined numbers so that distribution of sample characteristics becomes uniform or the same. However, the bottom line is that the researcher has to make decisions as to which non-probability sampling method is ideal for his/her study. In this thesis, the researcher selected and employed two purposeful sampling techniques being the purposeful random and opportunistic sampling methods.

3.6.3 Selected sampling methods and rationale

3.6.3.1 Multistage cluster sampling

Multistage cluster sampling as already stated is a probability sampling method where the study population spread over a large geographic area is reduced to a small manageable one (Sedgwick, 2015). The process involves sampling the population in stages usually two to three stages until selection of the required participants is complete. In this study, multistage cluster sampling was in three stages. Recruiting of participants involved dividing the country into ten (10) provinces or clusters. The researcher subjected the clusters to random sampling to select five (5) clusters. The selection probability was proportionate to size; meaning that provinces or clusters with the greater number of SMEs had a greater probability of selection. The selected clusters became the first stage units or primary units. The second stage involved subjecting the five selected clusters to random sampling to select a sample of units or organizations forming the second stage or secondary units. The last stage involved selecting randomly managers and senior employees from the selected units or organizations allowing the researcher to invite seven-hundred and sixty-eight (768) participants to the study.

According to Sedgwick (2015), the method becomes handy when the study population is geographically diverse; hence directing efforts and resources to a few geographic areas makes the method cost effective and efficient. It follows therefore that the biggest advantage with multistage cluster sampling is that a researcher is able to manage costs by spreading resources in some few geographical areas instead of the whole country. Moreover, not all elements within a cluster are subject to investigation under this method (Alvi, 2016). SMEs in Zimbabwe operate in all the ten (10) provinces making it prohibitively expensive for a researcher to employ simple random sampling method to recruit respondents for the study.

3.6.3.2 Purposeful sampling

Purposeful sampling is a popular method with many researchers. It is also known as judgemental sampling and involves choosing participants or cases deliberately in view of some elements or characteristics displayed by those participants (Etikan et al, 2016). As a non-probability sampling method, its biggest advantage is that it identifies and picks information rich cases relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. It is on this basis that the researcher employed the method in this study. Emphasizing this important aspect, Benoot et al (2016:02 citing Patton, 2002) put it as follows:

The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information rich cases for study in depth. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling. Studying information rich cases yield insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations.

The above words give a vivid description of what is purposeful or purposive sampling. According to Guetterman (2015) sampling in qualitative research is much more to do with information gathered than the representative opinions of researchers. The entire decision in purposeful sampling remains with the researcher who should know exactly what he/she wants to achieve. The researcher should then proceed to select information rich cases or people with all the information required usually derived from their experiences and knowledge. Knowledgeable and experienced individuals, who are familiar with the problem or phenomenon under investigation, are usually preferred as sources of information. It is therefore advisable to engage such individuals through in-depth interviews in a bid to unearth the truth about the phenomenon under investigation (Palinkas et al, 2015). However, success hinges largely on the willingness and cooperation of the participants who also should have the ability to effectively communicate and share their experiences and knowledge with the researcher. A researcher is free to choose a strategy from the many purposive sampling strategies at his/her disposal. This study followed a combination of purposeful random and opportunistic sampling techniques to select seven (7) cases from which twenty-one (21) informants were intensively interviewed using the semi-

structured in-depth interview method. The reason for combining the two purposeful sampling techniques was due to their independent advantages as explained below.

3.6.3.2(a) Purposeful random sampling

Purposeful random sampling method although similar to random sampling, is suitable for use when the purposeful sample is too big to handle (Benoot et al, 2016). It aims at bringing credibility to the purposeful sample as it thrives on utilization of small sample sizes. The researcher employed the technique in this study on the basis that it is simple to employ and is able to produce a credible sample. As a result, the researcher selected four (4) cases from a relatively large purposeful sample. The identification of the other three (3) cases was through opportunistic sampling. SMEs in Zimbabwe, as already stated, are scattered across all provinces and major cities; rendering the research population geographically diverse. Therefore, recruitment of participants involved randomly picking cases from the five selected provinces in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe Chamber of SMEs and other institutions, as already mentioned, provided details of their location within the selected provinces.

3.6.3.2(b) Opportunistic sampling

Opportunistic sampling is an emergent form of purposeful sampling that a researcher can make use of as he/she gets into the field. A researcher can by accident come across the unexpected during fieldwork and be able to pick information rich cases by mere chance (Benoot et al, 2016; Suri, 2011). In the words of Patton (2002 cited in Suri, 2011:71):

Opportunistic, emergent sampling takes advantage of whatever unfolds as it unfolds by utilising the option of adding to a sample to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities after fieldwork has begun.

The main advantage of opportunistic sampling is that a researcher is able to add some information rich cases to the sample, which he/she hardly knew before starting fieldwork. It is useful when research is at its exploratory stage or when the researcher is not sure of developments in the relevant area of research (Suri, 2011). As already stated in this thesis, some SMEs in Zimbabwe operate in secrecy and as such, their exact location might not be clear; hence, the reason for employing opportunistic sampling in this study in order to pick information rich cases in the field by chance. The researcher accidentally came across three (3) information rich cases building the sample size to the required seven (7) cases.

3.7 Research population

A study population encompasses all people or units or items that a researcher intends to investigate and understand (van Rijnsoever, 2017; Rahi, 2017). The units or items should generally meet the criterion of the study. The research population in this study consisted of all SMEs owners/managers including their employees in Zimbabwe. A study population can be

either homogenous or heterogeneous. The elements or units of a homogenous population are usually similar to each other whilst in a heterogeneous population similarity does not exist (Alvi, 2016). In Zimbabwe, the research population is homogenous in terms of SMEs management and ownership. For example, in almost all Zimbabwean SMEs, owners double as CEOs, and management skills are lacking across the board. However, it is also heterogeneous in terms of sectors, technology, capital, age, and adaptability; thus, prompting a study analysis that can give a clear picture of the effects of strategic leadership on organisational performance.

Units or elements of a study population collectively form a study sample if a researcher selects them from the total population for the purposes of data collection, analysis and interpretation (van Rijnsoever, 2017). According to Omair (2014:142), a sample “is a subset of the total population that is of interest for the study topic”. A sample is therefore a small group of units or people selected from the total population for the purposes of investigation and its members become study participants. The small group selected requires investigation especially in quantitative research so that a researcher makes an inference about the total study population. In quantitative research, it is necessary to select a sample that depicts the true representativeness of the entire study population; hence an adequate sample size is necessary to achieve this objective. Elaborating on the difference between research population and sample size, Easterby-Smith et al (2015:79) give an analogy of the pot, soup and spoon. They state that:

The soup in the pot is the population; the spoonful to test is the sample. The size of the spoon is the sample size, and that is what matters. The cook needs to taste enough soup to be able to make a judgement about the pot as a whole

3.7.1 Sample size determination

Determining a sample size is a crucial exercise that a researcher cannot ignore if he/she expects to achieve prime objectives of a study. In quantitative research Omair (2014) points out that the size of a study population has to be taken into consideration when sample size is being determined, including the confidence level and the acceptable margin of error. Taking this into consideration, the researcher invited seven hundred and sixty-eight (768) potential respondents to the study.

In qualitative research there are no set rules and guidelines in the determination of a sample size. As such, many researchers face difficulties in coming up with accurate sample sizes (Omair, 2014). In this study, twenty-one (21) informants from seven (7) cases were, sufficient for conducting a multiple case study research; thus, bringing the total combined sample size, quantitative and qualitative to seven hundred and eighty-nine (789) respondents and participants. This is in line with suggestions by Yin (2014) that six (6) cases, if well interrogated to produce

similar results, are ideally enough for a justified and convincing case study research. Guetterman (2015 citing Creswell, 2013) also states that a comprehensive case study research does not warrant an interrogation of more than five (5) cases selected purposively. The qualitative sample size of twenty-one (21) participants in this study comprised of SMEs owners/managers and all those employees who were key players in the strategic decision-making process; thus, becoming key sources of data.

3.8 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology, approach and design employed in this study. The researcher interrogated at length the advantages and disadvantages of the mixed methods approach, including its historical perspectives. The chapter further outlined the rationales for selecting this approach together with the research design.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the data collection and analysis methods employed in this study. The chapter further outlines the research protocol that guided the data collection process including issues of data analysis, reliability, validity and bias.

The research protocol involved concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data. A questionnaire with structured and semi-structured questions as already stated in this thesis, was the instrument used in the collection of quantitative data. Collection of qualitative data involved the use of semi-structured interviews. Saunders et al (2012; 2019) note that the questionnaire, as a crucial data collection instrument in survey research can be used successfully in conjunction with other data gathering techniques in a mixed methods research. Moreover, the use of structured, unstructured questioning and in-depth interviews is highly advantageous in that the methods tend to complement each other. Zohrabi (2013) is of the view that by so doing, validity and reliability of collected data are assured. Peersman (2014) shares similar sentiments, arguing that it is crucial for a researcher to choose data collection methods that complement each other in terms of strengths and weaknesses. The two data collection methods outlined in this thesis ideally complemented each other.

4.1 The questionnaire

A questionnaire according to Saunders et al (2019) requires respondents to answer questions during a data collection exercise in a defined manner or order. It is a document that carries questions that are in a pre-planned order and asked in that order without giving both respondents and researchers any room for flexibility. In other words, a questionnaire involves writing down a list of questions, which respondents answer in a sequence as they appear. In this case, a questionnaire is said to be close-ended or structured, as there is no room for adjustments by respondents. It is argued that in a survey research design, the questionnaire is perhaps the most widely employed data gathering instrument and is admittedly renowned for its efficiency in collecting data from large samples spread across large geographical areas (Saunders et al, 2019) and questions can easily be coded and produce findings that are easy to summarise and present (Zohrabi, 2013).

4.1.1 Open-ended questioning

Although questionnaires are largely closed-ended or structured, they can also be open-ended /unstructured or a combination of both. A questionnaire with closed questions thrives on rigidity as already stated, allowing respondents to answer questions in a pre-scribed manner leaving them with no room for flexibility. Such questions are more efficient than open-ended questions

due to their ease of analysis (Zohrabi, 2013). In contrast, open-ended questioning gives respondents freedom allowing them to answer questions as they see fit. The whole process does not require a set of rigid pre-scribed questions. Although crucial for depth of information, open-ended questioning can produce data that is difficult to analyse (Saunders et al, 2019). Bird (2009:1310) puts it in a clearer way, stating that: “closed questions are typically difficult to construct but easy to analyse whereas open questions are easy to construct but difficult to analyse”.

Open-ended questions like close-ended ones have their advantages and disadvantages. Open-ended questioning gives respondents freedom to answer questions without following a particular format while at the same time interacting with the researcher sharing their experiences and opinions. However, Zohrabi, (2013) notes that at times researchers can face challenges when several answers to a single question emerge, making the analysis of data a difficult and challenging process.

4.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages of a questionnaire

A questionnaire has its pros and cons. Several authors (Saunders et al, 2019; Zohrabi, 2013; Ponto, 2015; and Kumar, 2011) all agree on the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires. However, these advantages and disadvantages are more evident with structured questionnaires where researchers ask questions in a pre-scribed manner, expecting respondents to answer in a particular format.

Advantages: -

- Questionnaires are less costly to administer, as interviewers do not necessarily have to interview participants, instead, they leave them to complete the questionnaire freely on their own.
- Anonymity of participants prevails, since it is not necessary for the researcher and respondents to meet face to face.
- Collection of data is efficient, done on a large scale over a short period.
- Third parties can deliver questionnaires to a large sample spread across many geographical areas.
- Questionnaires require less training to develop.

Disadvantages: -

- Questionnaires are not suitable for use by an illiterate study population and are thus limited to those who are able to read and write.
- The response rate can be low. Usually, returning of all questionnaires distributed at any given time is unlikely.

- Over reliance on such an instrument in quantitative research can produce data that is artificially accurate due to poor measurement.
- Unclear and ambiguous questions might force participants to abandon the whole exercise leading to extremely low and poor response rate.
- Poorly worded questions can affect participants' responses leading to inaccurate results.

4.1.3 Developing a questionnaire

Developing of a questionnaire with closed questions is not as already stated an easy task. Instead, Zohrabi (2013) notes that the development of a questionnaire need to take cognisance of research objectives and questions and should guarantee delivery of data that is valid and reliable. In essence, a questionnaire should explicitly produce rich data capable of delivering answers to research questions, leading to accomplishment of research objectives. Saunders et al (2019) warn researchers to bear in mind that a poorly designed questionnaire might have negative effects on the response rate, data validity and reliability. Validity means that questions asked should measure what the researcher wants them to measure whilst reliability means that the instrument is capable of producing the same results if the researcher asks the same questions in a similar study.

Saunders et al (2019) encourages researchers to design a lucid and good questionnaire, arguing that it might not be easy for a researcher to go back to the same respondents collecting additional data if the first attempt fails to give answers to research questions. In other words, a second opportunity might not come by; thus creating roadblocks for the researcher. Bird (2009) concurs stating that the wording of questions should be easy, unambiguous and precise to allow easy interpretation of the meaning of various questions. In simpler terms, a questionnaire should carry questions that are clear and easy to understand by participants. Kumar (2011) makes an emphasis on this issue stating that researchers should develop questionnaires that do not give participants headaches purely because nobody will ever come to their assistance explaining meanings of various questions after delivery of a self-administered questionnaire to them. To this end, it makes sense that the layout of a questionnaire should be attractive and easy looking instead of a boring and unclear document that can hardly deliver the right questions to potential respondents. In view of the above, the researcher developed an easy and user-friendly questionnaire successfully accepted by respondents.

4.1.4 Administering a questionnaire

Questionnaires that are self-administered, give respondents freedom to answer questions on their own and in their own time. They can be interviewer administered when respondents answer questions in the presence of an interviewer who might occasionally assist with explanations if necessary.

Delivery of Self-administered questionnaires is either by post or electronically by e-mail and the internet. In some cases, delivery is by hand, directly to respondents, so that they can answer questions freely on their own. However, Zohrabi (2013) points out that sending questionnaires by post has an advantage in that it is efficient and less costly. He however, posits that the response rate can be disappointingly low, as some respondents might not even bother to answer questions while others might find some questions difficult to grasp; because they are too long and ambiguous, forcing them to ignore the questionnaire or give answers in haphazard ways. In concurrence, Saunders et al (2019) point out that the number of respondents who respond to a questionnaire depends on the type of a questionnaire a researcher designs. Equally, sending a self-administered questionnaire by e-mail and internet is admittedly a fast and efficient way of getting to participants located in various geographical areas, but the method has its own challenges. The major obstacle is that some respondents might simply not have access to such technological facilities. Moreover, respondents in some cases might become reluctant especially when confronted with a document carrying sensitive questions from an author they have never known or seen (Saunders et al, 2012; 2019).

Equally, an interviewer can administer a questionnaire through the telephone or by meeting respondents to conduct face-to-face interviews. This is by far the most effective method of collecting quantitative data since the interviewer is always readily available to respond to some questions or queries and any other issues that respondents might raise during interviews. Zohrabi (2013) points out that indeed response rate is likely to be high because respondents might at times feel compelled to respond motivated by the presence of the interviewer. On the negative side, a researcher has to cover a wide geographic area conducting such interviews. According to Saunders et al (2019), the whole process becomes costly and time consuming as the researcher struggles to reach out to respondents scattered over large geographic areas. Telephone surveys have an advantage in that the researcher is always confident that responses received are indeed from the targeted respondents; hence, the response rate is bound to be high. At the same time, administering telephone questionnaires saves time and expenses the researcher or investigator is likely to incur moving from one geographic area to the other. However, the delivery mode according to Saunders et al (2019) and Cohen et al (2011) has some drawbacks. They argue that that there is no guarantee that all potential respondents are privileged with telephones and even if they do there is no guarantee that they will be readily available at the time of calling especially if their jobs require them to move from place to place. Moreover, it is simple logic that asking multiple-choice questions over the telephone might be tricky. A respondent on the other side of the line might not easily remember too many answer options.

4.1.5 The chosen questionnaire delivery mode

In view of the above, the researcher made use of a delivery and collection questionnaire in this study. Such questionnaires are usually hand delivered to the respective respondents, and the researcher returns to collect them on an agreed date after completion by the respondents in their own time. The researcher, assisted by third parties personally hand delivered the questionnaire to respondents encouraging them to carefully go through questions and answer in their own spare time.

The rationale behind this delivery mode hinged on a guaranteed delivery of the questionnaire to potential respondents despite it being costly as compared to mailing it. Delays are possible with the mailing system and documents might be lost in the system. Some respondents might not have access to modern technology such as the e-mail and the internet. The general poor telephone network system in Zimbabwe made it difficult to consider the use of telephone interviews. In any case, some respondents might not have telephones.

4.2 Qualitative in-depth interviews

Qualitative interviewing has gained much popularity over the years in view of its ability to make respondents open up freely on their experiences, feelings and opinions (Edwards and Holland, 2013). Qualitative interviews can be semi-structured and unstructured. The main difference between the two is that semi-structured interviewing requires the interviewer to come to the scene armed with an interview guide; a loose document with questions to be asked during the interview. Unstructured interviewing does not on the other hand compel researchers to arm themselves with such a document during interviews. However, both approaches according to Showkat and Parveen (2017) allow respondents to express their feelings and experiences, at the same time giving researchers time to build their impressions about the problem under study. Emphasizing the strength and popularity of qualitative interviewing, Cohen et al (2007:349) state:

Interviews enable participants, be they interviewers or interviewees to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. In these senses, the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself; its human embeddedness is inescapable

As such, a qualitative interview according to Alshenqeeti (2014) involves partners coming together in a deep searching conversation that must yield rich information about an agreed subject. In view of the above, it is clear that qualitative interviewing, be it unstructured or semi-structured, brings two parties to a table to engage on a dialogue face to face, where one party being the interviewer comes with a number of topics or areas for discussion. In other words, qualitative interviews extract as much information as possible from participants who in the

process should freely open up on their experiences, opinions and feelings. According to Alshenqeeti (2014) qualitative interviewing, when compared to questioning, stands out as a more powerful tool of qualitative data collection that researchers find handy when trying to investigate problems to greater depths. An interviewer in qualitative research holds two positions, that of a miner and a traveller (Showkat and Parveen, 2017). As a miner an interviewer strives to dig deeper into the ground in a bid to unearth buried valuable minerals or metals whilst as a traveller he/she journeys long distances with the interviewee listening and interpreting stories told by the other party as the conversation continues building up throughout the journey. The miner and traveller metaphors simply look at qualitative information as extremely valuable. A researcher can only get that information after a thorough investigation and after listening patiently to those with it for a considerable period.

4.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

The study, as already stated followed a semi-structured in-depth interviewing method for qualitative data collection. Semi-structured interviews are best recommended for use in exploratory studies (Saunders et al, 2019), interviewing individuals or individuals in groups only once, for a duration of thirty to sixty minutes at most per interview (Jamshed, 2014). Such interviews usually involve the use of an interview schedule and do not follow a specified format as to how the interview is to be conducted or the sequence of questioning to be followed. This study, as already stated, is exploratory in nature; hence the employment of semi-structured interviews to collect data. Showkat and Parveen (2017) argue that although semi-structured interviews are slightly different from unstructured interviews in that the interviewer comes to conduct an interview armed with an interview guide, they are in reality in-depth in nature. Besides, in both cases, interviewing is open-ended; giving respondents freedom to widely explain their experiences and opinions leading to a depth of information. However Edwards and Holland (2013), advise semi-structured qualitative interviewers to direct their interests during an interview on the interview context and content.

4.2.2 Qualitative interviewing skills

Sanders et al (2009:319) note that:

There is probably not a day that goes by without you reading about, listening to and watching interviews. We read interviews such as those given by business leaders in quality newspapers, listen to interviews such as those with celebrities on radio programmes and watch interviews on television programmes. However, despite the seeming ease with which they are conducted, using the interview to collect research data requires considerable skills

Indeed, the above words are not far from the truth, as an interviewer conducting a qualitative research has to be equipped with unquestionable interviewing skills. Alshenqeeti (2014) notes

that conducting a qualitative interview is not that easy warning researchers that the process does not involve a mere collection of information. Instead, it involves an exchange of views that may be clashing and deceiving. In light of this observation, it is crucial for researchers to first equip themselves with superb interviewing skills before conducting interviews. Central to qualitative interviewing is the researcher's ability to master the crucial skill of listening. A good qualitative interviewer needs to spend about ninety percent (90%) of his/her time listening to the respondent in an interview (Showkat and Parveen, 2017) and should do so without showing any signs of boredom (Saunders et al, 2019). In that way, logically a researcher is able to go along with what the interviewee is saying. Listening attentively is therefore a critical interviewing skill that requires a researcher or interviewer to be an astute listener who keeps focused; maintaining an eye contact with the interviewee throughout the dialogue. Attentive listening and paying attention to detail according to Edward and Holland (2013) forms the basis for responding to whatever the interviewee is saying; allowing the interviewer to probe further as a tactic to make the other party open up with more information.

To this end, it is imperative to conduct a qualitative interview under a conducive, free and friendly environment that encourages a researcher to partake in the discussion freely without any pressure or interruptions. Cohen et al (2011) advise researchers not to be judgemental and to learn that an interview is not a mere exercise for data collection but an encounter between two parties that is social and interpersonal; hence the need for mutual respect and politeness to guide the interview. Besides, the researcher should question participants in a simple, lucid and coherent manner with a picture in mind that all respondents in the concerned study are simple non-professionals. Showkat and Parveen (2017) are of the view that respondents should never struggle to understand words and terminology used by the researcher. As such, an interviewer has to transgress him/herself in a polite and careful manner throughout the interview, demonstrating his/her communication prowess under an environment that is welcoming enough for respondents to say it all.

4.2.3 Advantages and disadvantages of open-ended interviews

Many researchers and authors (Easterby-Smith et al, 2015; Saunders et al, 2019; Cohen et al, 2011; Alshenqeeti, 2014; Edwards and Holland, 2013; Showkat and Parveen, 2017) agree that open-ended qualitative interviews, be it semi-structured or unstructured, have major advantages over structured interviews. Firstly, interviewers have the ability to investigate a phenomenon in detail enabling researchers to gather rich data leading to a depth of information. In other words, information unearthed is usually rich and does not require the use of quantitative research instruments like closed-ended questionnaires to obtain it. Secondly, they also agree that open-ended interviews promote some form of social interaction between the researcher and the

researched, arguing that detailed information emerges as mutual understanding between the two parties flourishes. Thirdly, they point out that such interviews allow interviewers to record respondents with a high degree of accuracy using gadgets like recorders and smartphones as detailed information filters in.

However, despite all these positives, open-ended interviews have their darker side. One of their major drawbacks is that analysing collected data can be cumbersome and problematic bearing in mind that data classification is only possible after conducting a content analysis (Showkat and Parveen, 2017). In some cases, respondents might only reveal what they are prepared to reveal at that moment concerning their experiences, which might not be the reality on the ground. Alshenqeeti (2014:43 citing Walford, 2007) argues, “Interviews alone are an insufficient form of data to study social life” because of the possibility that both parties to an interview might not be knowledgeable about the problem under study. Moreover, some respondents might struggle to explain themselves. On the other hand, open-ended interviews are prone to investigator or interviewer bias, especially when an interviewer enters the interview room with pre-conceived views about the problem under study.

4.3 Secondary data collection methods

Primary data initially gathered by other researchers becomes secondary data. The processes and all steps employed in a primary data analysis exercise are similar to those employed in the analysis of secondary data. The collection of secondary data is in many cases done in tandem with the collection of primary data although gathering of such data is ideally suitable for those researchers whose research programmes are constrained by time and resources (Johnston, 2014).

Secondary data can either be survey or document review based. Survey-based secondary data refers to data initially gathered as primary data using survey strategies such as censuses and regular or continuous surveys (Saunders et al, 2019; Creswell et al, 2014). Governments across the globe conduct census surveys after a number of years requiring all citizens to participate. Saunders et al (2019) argue that data collected are usually comprehensive and rich requiring strict monitoring and adherence to collection methods used. Regular or continuous surveys are those that are conducted on a regular basis; usually twice per year or quarterly. The sources of such data are usually surveys on consumer; labour and market trends as well as surveys produced regularly by international organisations such as World Bank, International monetary fund (IMF), and the United Nations (UN). Documents review based secondary data on the other hand refers to data obtained from many sources that include company reports, minutes of meetings, plans, policy documents, technical documents, e-mails, memos, company newsletters,

and all communication records (Saunders et al, 2019). However, in this study, both sources of secondary data became useful bearing in mind that organisations such as the World Bank, UN and FinMark Trust have conducted a lot of research mainly on challenges faced by SMEs in Zimbabwe over the years.

However, there are advantages and disadvantages associated with secondary data collection methods. On the positive side, the methods allow researchers to access documents and survey reports at times suitable to themselves, as information is always readily available. Secondly, researchers do not need to spend their time and money trying to transcribe information since it is explicitly available. On the negative side, Creswell (2014) list the following drawbacks with both survey based and document review methods: -

- At times organisations might not feel comfortable releasing their classified, sensitive and closely guarded documents to members of the public.
- Information in some documents and survey reports might not be authentic; and as such, it might be misleading.
- At times, the original producers of such documents might have left out some important information either by human error or deliberately.
- Such documents require transcribing to facilitate information entry on computer.

4.4 Research protocol

This study was conducted from November 2018 to April 2019. The researcher guided by ethical considerations in research, informed respondents of the research and further invited them to participate using an informed consent letter. The letter which also introduced the researcher, emphasized issues of confidentiality and respect informing respondents that the data collected were for academic purposes only and that there was going to be no disclosure of names as a result. Respondents read the letter and confirmed their acceptance by signing consent forms. The researcher and his third parties later collected the forms in sealed envelopes.

4.4.1 Quantitative data collection

Quantitatively data collection followed these steps: -

Firstly, the researcher sent a questionnaire to six organisations in Harare as a pilot study. This was meant to test if the questions asked were clear and easy to understand by respondents. The organisations later returned the questionnaire with their comments. The researcher made the necessary amendments. The distribution of the questionnaire to respondents followed in five provinces of Zimbabwe, namely Harare metropolitan, Bulawayo metropolitan, Midlands, Masvingo and Mashonaland East provinces. Copies of the questionnaire were hand delivered to the respective respondents using third parties with an agreement that the collection of the

completed copies would take place on an agreed date. Copies of the informed consent letter and consent form accompanied the questionnaire.

The researcher requested respondents to deposit completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes by the reception areas of their organisations for collection by the researcher and his third parties. The researcher and his third parties visited respondents on the agreed dates and time to collect completed questionnaire copies. It was after collection of completed questionnaires that quantitative data analysis commenced.

4.4.2 Qualitative data collection

The Interviews to explore the problem understudy in depth involved twenty-one (21) respondents from seven (7) organisations. The researcher interviewed three (3) respondents from each of the seven selected SMEs. Of the twenty-one (21) respondents, seven (7) were owner/managers located in major cities and provinces as follows: - Harare metropolitan (3); Bulawayo metropolitan (2); Midlands Province (Gweru) (1) and Masvingo (1). Each interview lasted for a period of thirty to sixty minutes and was intensive. Respondents other than owner/managers were interviewed to capture their views and thoughts so as to check for any corroboration with the views of owners/managers on the concept of strategic leadership and its role in performance of their organisations.

However, qualitative data collection followed these steps: -

- Firstly, the researcher prepared a list of questions for use during the semi-structured interviews conducted on some SMEs selected purposively. The list known as the interview guide was initially sent as a pilot study to three SMEs in Harare to get respective participants to familiarize themselves with what was to be discussed during the interviews; thus validating the questions. An interview guide is according to Edwards and Hollard (2013) a basic tool available to a researcher in semi-structured interviews.
- Secondly, the researcher then made appointments with the concerned owner/managers including selected employees for suitable dates and times to conduct interviews. On the agreed dates and times, the researcher arrived armed with the interview guide. Respondents allowed the researcher to use their organisational settings for the interviews. Interviewee settings are an important aspect in face to face interviewing in that privacy, especially on the part of the researched, has to be respected; hence a participant's office in his/her place of employment can ideally be the best place to deliver the desired privacy (Edwards and Hollard, 2013).
- The researcher followed the interview guide, listening attentively throughout the interviews but occasionally strayed from this path as new leads emerged during the interviews. The

interviews were hand recorded as participants felt uncomfortable with machine recording of interviews. Machine recording of interviews is by far the most reliable and effective method of collecting qualitative data in face-to-face interviews but at times problems might arise when respondents feel uncomfortable going through the process leading to clashes with the researcher (Jamshed, 2014). In view of the above, the researcher went along with the wishes of the participants.

- The researcher then typed collected data and forwarded them back to participants for confirmation that the captured data were in line with the actual discussions during the interviews. The researcher made necessary corrections. Commencement of data analysis followed these corrections when both the researcher and the researched came to an agreement on the contents of the interviews.
- Upon request, the researcher had access to relevant company documents such as company newsletters, plans and policy documents.

4.5 Contextualization of selected SMEs

This section gives an overview of those SMEs selected purposively and whose managers were interviewed qualitatively. The researcher is convinced that this overview will give readers a precise background of the selected organisations as SMEs with rich information ideal for qualitative research. The selection process identified seven (7) organisations named in this study as - SMEHR1; SMEHR2; SMEHR3; SMEBY1; SMEBY2; SMEGR1; SMEMV1. These enterprises are located in the provinces of Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru and Masvingo.

4.5.1 SMEHR1

SMEHR1 is in the passenger transportation business, operating a fleet of coaches in Zimbabwe. The company established in 2011, focuses on providing passenger transport service to the public. However, due to delays in getting the required finance from local finance institutions, SMEHR1 only started operating at the end of March 2012. The company started with only two coaches, purchased on a loan scheme from a local finance institution. The initial route was Harare to Bulawayo, offering a semi-luxury daily service twice per day between the two cities. The daily services start at 07.00 hrs and 14.00 hrs. Since then, SMEHR1 has never looked back and to date six (6) more coaches have been added to the fleet, bringing the total number of coaches in operation to (8) eight. Commenting on the drive to enter this industry, the Managing Director stated: -

We saw a gap in the passenger transportation business between Harare and Bulawayo. Luxury coaches were too expensive for the travelling public and the usual rural buses were cheap but offered a poor and chaotic service, characterised by overloading of buses. We decided to come in between, offering a semi-luxury service which has proved popular (CEO)

The shareholders and directors of the company are two male colleagues who, as shareholders and directors invited their spouses to come in as directors as well. To date the company has four (4) directors; two males (husbands) and two females (spouses) who are all Zimbabwean nationals. One of the shareholders also occupies the position of managing director and is a man of immense experience, having been in the passenger transportation business for fifteen (15) years. He holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree and to his credit, he has been at the helm of two bus companies in the position of General Manager before starting SMEHR1. He is, as well, the CEO of the Coach and Bus Operators Association (CBOA) of Zimbabwe, an organisation that supervises and oversees the operations of its members in the public passenger transportation industry. The head office of SMEHR1 is located in Harare and does not have any branches in Zimbabwe. Instead, the company has appointed agents along its relevant coach routes. The agents book passengers and they sell tickets at designated locations along the routes. SMEHR1 has three functional departments: -administration, operations, and ticket sales, each under the supervision of a departmental head. The organisation employs (30) thirty workers, of which eighteen (18) are bus drivers and crew while the rest are managers and ordinary employees. An organisation employing 30 workers in Zimbabwe is a small enterprise, which makes the selection of SMEHR1 ideal for a case study in this study. SMEHR1 is a value driven organisation. Its value statements are as follows:

Vision: - To provide reliable, affordable and safe transportation for low and middle income earning passengers.

Mission: - To provide affordable passenger transport services through operating a standard bus fleet that is safe, comfortable and reliable, while adding value to our staff.

Core values: -

- Integrity: - to operate in an environment of honest, where our passengers are issued with tickets, report corruption, theft and crime in general.
- Reliable: - to provide well maintained buses in order to enhance passenger safety.
- Passenger first: - to enhance the concept of affordability, safety and quality of service provision.
- To cater fully for the welfare of all employees in order to improve their output.
- To have systems that allow for increase in company profitability.

In view of its expansion, SMEHR1 increased its services between Harare and Bulawayo to three (3), at 07.00hrs, 10.00hrs and 14.00hrs daily. In addition, cross border routes to the Republic of South Africa are operational. To date services from the two small towns of Marondera and Bindura to Musina, RSA via Harare are running. The routes to RSA are as follows -

- Bindura – Harare - Musina (Mondays and Thursdays)
- Musina – Harare - Bindura (Tuesdays and Fridays)

- Marondera – Harare - Musina (Tuesdays and Fridays)
- Musina – Harare - Marondera (Wednesdays and Saturdays)

The expansion came with more customer care deliverables expected on the part of SMEHR1.

SMEHR1 confirms this as follows: -

We value our passengers immensely due to their pivotal role in our business. In this regard, we acquired state of the art vehicles with the highest possible safety features to enhance the travel experience of our passengers (CEO)

To deliver value to its customers, SMEHR1 views time management as a crucial and fundamental issue in business. As such, drivers observe and follow set times religiously at all times. Drivers stop along the routes only when picking passengers or giving passengers time for refreshments at designated points. SMEHR1 runs an on-line booking system and boast of an efficient luggage handling system. SMEHR1 has this write up to support its claim:

We also have the most efficient luggage categorization system on the coaches, which has allowed us to have an impenetrable luggage protection system (CEO)

SMEHR1 is looking at expanding the business in the future and according to the Managing Director, the projected fleet size should be twenty (20) coaches within the next five years. Statistically, SMEHR1 has witnessed an increase in passengers transported within Zimbabwe and across the border into RSA. However, SMEHR1 could not avail figures upon request to support this claim. SMEHR1 claims to have a market share of about (25%) twenty-five percent and hopes to boost it in the next few years in view of its projected expansion programmes.

4.5.2 SMEHR2

SMEHR2 is a light engineering and fabrication company involved in the manufacture of grain processing equipment, small mining equipment and steel structures. The product range for SMEHR2 is wide and varied. The grain processing equipment includes hammer mills, peanut butter mills, grain dehullers and batch mixers. The small-scale mining equipment includes ball mills, stamp mills, jaw crushers, concentrators, diamond pans and the mining hammer mill introduced lately as an innovation emanating from new ideas coming from the CEO and his team. Steel structural engineering involves erecting shades, factory shells, communication, and transmission towers, including greenhouses, staircases, and wrought iron fencing. SMEHR2 operates from its head-office located in the Southerton industrial area of Harare, Zimbabwe. The company does not have branches in or outside Zimbabwe.

SMEHR2 was born out of a management buyout, as the business was previously under a different ownership. The incorporation of the new enterprise was on 25.09.2013 and immediately started operating on the same premises as the previous company. The buyout involved three former managers from the previous company who are now shareholders in

SMEHR2. Two of the shareholders are executive directors whilst the other is a non-executive director. The three directors are, according to world standards, highly educated business executives, with two of them holding MBA degrees whilst the other is a qualified chartered accountant. The top managerial leadership of SMEHR2 consists of two executive directors, one operating as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the other as the finance director. There are four functional or departmental managers, heading the finance, human resources, marketing, and production departments. SMEHR2 boast of a thriving workshop inherited from previous owners and has a total workforce of 43 workers including managers but excluding directors. The human resources functional head comments as follows: “at our best and under normal circumstances we can employ up to 100 workers at a time”. In view of this statement, SMEHR2 complains of a serious lack of resources especially a skilled work force as confirmed by the following:

We also have a serious challenge as we lack skilled manpower. We depend on semi-skilled labour forcing us to outsource the lacking resource (CEO)

However, despite this challenge, SMEHR2 has a competitive advantage over and above other players in the light engineering industry. The new enterprise acquired the assets of the previous business together with its product range and decided not to change the trading name of the previous enterprise. The enterprise further retained all employees from the previous company, whose knowledge of the product range and markets is excellent. SMEHR2 according to the definition of SMEs in Zimbabwe is a medium enterprise despite changing hands from previous owners. A medium enterprise in Zimbabwe is an organisation that employs between 41 and 100 workers at any given time; hence the selection of SMEHR2 in this study. Despite being a medium enterprise, SMEHR2 strives to operate in the same lines as established corporations. Production takes place in the workshop as per drawings upon receipt of a customer order. The marketing department co-ordinates delivery of finished products to customers and conducts after sales service initiatives making sure that the company meets customer expectations at all times. To this end, SMEHR2 claims:

Our purpose is to partner and enrich people by utilizing Zimbabwe’s competitive advantage, to continuously improve the quality and nature of our thoughts, products and services, employees’ welfare, community life and our environment (Marketing manager)

In line with this claim, SMEHR2 increased its product range by diversifying into other areas producing products that meet customer expectations. As a result, a new product focusing on the small-scale mining sector has taken the market by storm and SMEHR2 sees room for

improvement in the future if the economy stabilizes and improves. The vision statement of SMEHR2 reads as follows, “to be the biggest engineering company of choice in the manufacturing of grain processing equipment, small scale-mining equipment and steel structures”. However, the mission statement seems weak, as it does not specify the company’s purpose of existence clearly. The statement reads as follows, “SMEHR2 is an engineering company that is focused and versatile in product range yet unified in purpose”. On the marketing side, SMEHR2 claims to have gained considerable ground against competition. Although reluctant to substantiate the claim with figures, SMEHR2 states as follows:

In as far as competition is concerned; we are now a force to be reckoned with. We have gained respect in the new areas we have ventured into. We are now getting close to market leaders. We are not abandoning our traditional products and markets but we are simply moving into new areas with new products (CEO)

As already stated, SMEHR2 moved into new markets, especially the small-scale mining sector with innovations that have taken the market by storm. The diversification was due to a decline in business from the traditional large-scale mining operations caused by viability problems. SMEHR2 claims to have a market share of between 40-45% and there are no clear future expansion plans.

4.5.3 SMEHR3

SMEHR3 is a company in the security services sector, located in the Southerton heavy industrial area of Harare. The company’s incorporation as a private security company was in December 2010 and started operating in January 2011. Prior to this, the company was an internal security division of a stock listed engineering group. As such, formation of SMEHR3 was through an acquisition of this division by four entrepreneurs, who are now shareholders and directors of the enterprise. Only one director occupying the position of Managing Director is executive, whilst the other three are non-executive. The board chairperson is one of the non-executive directors. All the four directors are highly educated, with two non-executive directors holding PhD degrees from South African universities whilst the other two, the Managing Director and company secretary have MBA degrees as their highest qualification. The Managing Director is at present pursuing a law degree at a local university and hopes to embark on some doctoral studies once he is through with his law studies. He has over 15 years of security experience having worked as a senior police officer in the national police force for a considerable period. His qualifications and experience in the security services sector portray him as an executive who can easily handle issues of strategic leadership in any organisation.

The company’s head-office is in Harare and does not have any branches in Zimbabwe. SMEHR3 claims that its operations are guided by written down value statements. The vision

reads as follows- “to be the security partners of choice to the Zimbabwean community” whilst the mission statement states, “we aim to provide total security solutions in Zimbabwe with client relations at heart. We aim not to be just guards but partners in security with our clients”. In view of the above, SMEHR3 further claims to be a security organisation, that offers professional service with a difference. The company claims as follows:

We offer a professional service in an environment where clients are asking; “who will guard the guards?” Whether your security needs are residential or commercial, large scale or small-scale, permanent or short-term, we provide customised security solutions to suit your needs in all cases. We don’t believe in half-baked security solutions (CEO)

The top managerial team at SMEHR3 considers communication a crucial tool to boost employee morale and build teamwork. In this view, SMEHR3 claims that its lines of communication between managers and subordinates are open and fluid. The company further claims to have an open door communication policy, which uses other forms of communication such as memos and circulars. The company also puts emphasis on the welfare of its employees, arguing that staff welfare is a very sensitive matter in the sense that guards’ morale affects customers. As such, SMEHR3 claims to pay its employees on time, arguing that this raises staff morale and minimises pay-related disgruntlements and absenteeism. Besides, the company claims to have a policy of rewarding for good work done and discipline. The company further avoids over-working its employees, arguing that guard fatigue and an increased wage bill can have a negative influence on the organisation and customers.

SMEHR3 offers a wide variety of security services which include: - 24-hour guard services at commercial, residential, retail and industrial premises, functional guards at church, weddings, party and soccer gatherings, short-term guarding services at residential places on weekends and holidays, private undercover guards, CCTV services, armed guards and patrol dog services. The market share for SMEHR3 is low at 0.2% and the company hopes to gain more market share in view of its future expansion plans. Commenting on its operations and promises to customers, SMEHR3 writes:

We believe in partnering with clients for total security. Our clients tell us their security worries and we provide the matching security. The added advantage is that with our experienced staff, we are able to advise you on security risks that you may not be aware of. We provide customer specific service, which answers our clients’ security concerns. Our corporate approach embraces modern management axioms hinged on cultural excellence, and “the customer is king” principle. In pursuit of such, we are cognisant of the need for and importance of broad based experience, and both academic and professional qualifications. Our directors are not wanting in these areas (CEO)

SMEHR3 employs one-hundred (100) workers excluding directors, of which 95 are security guards and the other five (5) are managers and ordinary employees. This makes SMEHR3 a medium size enterprise suitable for investigation as a case study guided by the definition of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The company has three functional departments, finance and administration, marketing and operations each headed by a departmental manager. The recruitment of employees is quite stringent as it involves thorough vetting by the police criminal investigation department and in-house training for recruits is available. As a continuous process, employees go for specialised courses like customer care, fire fighting, first aid, use and maintenance of firearms, and dog handling. Emphasizing the training and development of employees, SMEHR3 has this to say:

We always have a sizeable number of trained guards on stand-by to cater for expansion. We have grown to give attention to detail, and our staff, is trained to give you the peace of mind that you deserve. We do not subscribe to the rhetoric, “any inconvenience caused is sincerely regretted”. We are obsessed with achieving desired results so much that we are always running; if we cannot walk. If we cannot walk, we crawl. Whatever we do, we keep going forward (CEO)

The future seems bright for SMEHR3 as depicted by its plans. The company plans to increase its operations by showing its presence in other provinces of Zimbabwe. This will see the company opening three (3) regional branches in the major cities of Bulawayo, Mutare and Masvingo in 2019. The Managing Director of SMEHR3 states:

In 2019 we intend opening three regional branches in Bulawayo, Mutare and Masvingo to enable us to respond to Government tenders that require national coverage. When you do not have such regional offices, your chances of being considered for such tenders are slim. Many companies have denied us business before upon discovering that we did not have offices in other major cities where they have some branches. (CEO))

The company further intends introducing new products as well in future such as introducing services like CCTV monitoring systems for its customers. Above all, establishing of a training institution in future is on the cards that will allow the company to reduce dependence on third parties and cut costs.

4.5.4 SMEBY1

SMEBY1 is a safety equipment manufacturing company incorporated in December 2002. The organisation’s head-office is located in the central business district of the city of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe and employs a staff complement of (51) fifty-one employees including management staff. The owner occupies the position of managing director and the wife occupies the position

of finance manager/director. She also handles administrative and human resources issues. Other departmental heads include the purchasing manager, sales and marketing manager, and production manager respectively. SMEBY1 claims that the capabilities of its top managers and all other employees are the best and that the strength of its management team stems from the combined expertise of its top managers and technical team. SMEBY1 further claims that its directorship is composed of highly qualified professionals including its management team that has been instrumental in setting goals broad enough to meet the demands of fast changing global markets. However, both the managing director and his wife have A-levels as the highest educational qualification attained.

SMEBY1 manufactures and distributes a wide variety of safety equipment ranging from helmets, goggles, dust masks, gloves, raincoats, safety shoes and uniforms. As a medium sized company that has operated for a number of years, SMEBY1 claims to be a leading manufacturer in its industry, supplying products that are the best in terms of quality and price. As such, SMEBY1 boasts:

With the demand for safety equipment, the opening of a production line locally will doubtlessly bring down the current market prices of otherwise expensive safety equipment that used to be from South Africa and Botswana (CEO)

In light of this, the focus of SMEBY1 is on its customers and believes that customer care is paramount for its survival. The organisation claims to sell its products at wholesale prices and a constant review of prices is done with the price sensitive customer in mind. Emphasizing the importance of customers for its survival, SMEBY1 writes:

To us the client is paramount despite day to day pressures, technical problems or whatever; nothing should stand in the way of first class products being delivered to you. Our product delivery is based on the concept of customer service convenience (CEO)

SMEBY1 goes further:

To defend ourselves from competitors and to keep ourselves ahead of established competitors in our industry; we will always take into consideration why customers deal with us instead of our competitors and continuously strengthen that reason. (CEO)

SMEBY1 claims to manufacture its products to international standards as evidenced by the following:

Our workmanship has surpassed the standard of the industry so that you need not to go elsewhere for shopping and pay extra for we have always emerged as number one in the business arena having carved a niche in the markets ahead of the pack (CEO)

In this view, SMEBY1 claims to have built a good name over the years, which is today paying dividends. As such, the company has further added some product lines in form of gas analysers, gas detectors, under-ground mining locomotive batteries and cap lamps for miners. In view of this expansion, the Managing Director for SMEBY1 comments as follows:

Surely this has not happened overnight. The jump has been too high and has surpassed our peers; succeeding beyond our wildest dreams. However, we still believe the desire, dedication and capacity to visualize ourselves can make us achieve more than we might dream possible. For we are doing this with a dedicated staff compliment of 51 personnel whose commitment, suitability and capabilities are second to none

SMEBY1 claims to have achieved a market share of (40%) forty-percent to date. The company boasts as follows:

Competitors in this field have not caused any threat to us; for their products are less attractive due to erratic supplies, poor quality and bear exorbitant prices. In our business we target the decision makers; the very people who give the nod when it comes to clinching a business deal (CEO)

Despite all these claims, SMEBY1 remains silent on its vision and mission statements as these seem not documented if there are any. However, claims of market leadership by SMEBY1 and its ability to survive over the years in an unstable economy made it a suitable candidate for inclusion in the qualitative interviews. The researcher came across this seemingly rich case by chance in the field and used the opportunistic sampling method to select it for inclusion in this study.

4.5.5 SMEBY2

The incorporation of SMEBY2 under the Zimbabwe Companies Act, Chapter 24:03, was in 2014. The enterprise is located in the city of Bulawayo. The enterprise is in the leisure and entertainment industry, operating a bar selling both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages to the public. SMEBY2 has been operating for the past four (4) years. Originally, SMEBY2 was a liquor retail section of an established hotel group in Bulawayo. The CEO/owner of SMEBY2 claims that before acquiring the business, it was a neglected and struggling sleeping giant abandoned by its regular customers. The CEO's comments are as follows:

This was a sleeping giant and business was going down earning a nickname, “the old peoples’ home.” Regular patrons were no longer frequenting the place

In view of such an opportunity, SMEBY2 acquired the sleeping giant with a vision to turn it around and make it an attractive leisure and entertainment centre within the Bulawayo central business district. Today SMEBY2 is a stand-alone business enterprise completely divorced from the hotel group.

SMEBY2 employs a staff compliment of ten (10) people including the CEO/owner. The owner who doubles as the CEO is administratively supported by two supervisors who control finance and human resources functions. The rest of staff members include bar attendants, waiters and security personnel. In view of the above, the departmental set up is not clear as most functions are under the control of the owner/CEO. The owner/CEO claims to have awakened the sleeping giant stating that:

Our customers include those who had deserted the place prior to our takeover. They are now coming back. We also see a number of young people frequenting the place now

As a result, SMEBY2 has become a popular leisure and entertainment centre in Bulawayo and the CEO/owner claims to be receiving good comments about the business from many customers who keep coming back as repeat customers. According to the CEO/owner, such comments have encouraged management of SMEBY2 to pay particular attention to the needs of its valued customers. SMEBY2 claims to be a growing enterprise and puts its market share at (20%) twenty-percent. The future for SMEBY2 seems clear, as plans are well ahead to open another bar outlet in the Bulawayo central business district. The CEO/owner confirms this possible expansion as follows:

We have already started making plans to expand our business in Bulawayo and have actually identified a place. It is our hope that our second bar will be fully operational soon

As SMEBY2 plans to expand its operations, written down value statements are non-existent. The researcher made use of the purposeful random sampling method to select SMEBY2 for inclusion in this study.

4.5.6 SMEGR1

SMEGR1 is a company in the corporate communications industry, located in the city of Gweru, Zimbabwe. The company started operating in March 1999 and it employs around fifty-five (55) people excluding directors. SMEGR1 has a branch in Bulawayo and other branches in the

neighbouring countries of South Africa, Zambia and Malawi. It operates three functional departments; each headed by a departmental manager. The company's directorship comprises of four directors, being the Managing Director, Creative Director, Sales and Marketing Director and the Finance Director. However, the brains behind the formation of SMEGR1 are the Managing Director and his wife, who occupies the position of Finance Director. The two directors are responsible for making all key decisions. A company that employs between forty-one (41) and one-hundred (100) people is a medium enterprise in Zimbabwe. SMEGR1 falls in this category by virtue of its employment levels; hence, the researcher found it suitable for inclusion in this study as a medium size enterprise.

SMEGR1's product offerings include screen printing, embroidery and the manufacture of a range of corporate communications materials that includes flags and banners, caps, golf shirts, round neck t-shirts, golf umbrellas, gym bags, sportswear, bags, pens, key rings, folders and diaries, and in-store and out-door promotional materials. SMEGR1 claims to be a creative organisation, specializing in the manufacture and supply of high quality products. Emphasizing its position as a highly creative organisation, SMEGR1 writes:

Our creative philosophy is driven by the need to achieve clarity and express not only the apparent but latent differentiation that can unlock full brand potential (CEO)

SMEGR1 goes further stating as follows:

We apply a creative process that individualizes every service or brand we handle. We take full cognisance of the philosophy of "one market one idea". Because consumer behaviour is always shifting, we follow a moving creative process to track market trends for all brand advertising and corporate communications (CEO)

SMEGR1 further claims to be a customer driven organisation that takes cognisance of the importance of good customer relationship management. In this context, SMEGR1 writes:

We generously develop relationships with our customers to sufficiently understand their business products and the markets they service. We thus treat each client differently and tailor our service package to answer needs specific to each one (CEO)

SMEGR1 is a growing organisation, evidenced by the opening of branches beyond the Zimbabwean borders in Zambia, Republic of South Africa and Malawi. The organisation claims to have experienced a phenomenal growth in market share since its inception in 1999. SMEGR1

claims that success has been largely due to its ability to turn around everything it does. To this end, SMEGR1 boasts:

Today the business environment is so dynamic and turbulent that any delay in execution is a cost to the business. We thus strive to reduce our execution cycles to a minimum. We are young, dynamic, vibrant and responsive. Procrastination does not exist in our dictionary (CEO)

The CEO of SMEGR1 also claims that his organisation has received good reports from customers, all positively happy with the company's speedy delivery service, excellent communication channels and high quality products. As a result, SMEGR1 has successfully managed to expand into regional markets. However, the general view of the CEO and his team is that the poor negative economic environment in Zimbabwe has affected the overall performance of SMEGR1. Despite the organisation's rapid expansion into regional markets, the CEO and his team were reluctant to reveal figures related to the organisation's financial position and market share.

SMEGR1 is a value driven enterprise and its value statements are well articulated. The enterprise's vision is "to become a one stop, corporate communication services company; driven by efficiency, effectiveness, speed and responsiveness to market demands". The mission statement on the other hand reads as follows, "to provide high quality corporate communications and promotional material and advisory services that enhance visibility in the competitive market place contributing meaningfully to brand equity for our clients". The company's core-values are listed as flexibility, creativity, confidentiality, honesty and integrity, responsiveness and empowerment.

4.5.7 SMEMV1

SMEMV1 is a small enterprise operating in the energy industry in Zimbabwe. The company based in the city of Masvingo, is a supplier of motor-vehicle fuels and related lubricants. The formation of SMEMV1 was in 2017 and operations started in December of the same year as a franchise business. The franchiser, a major regional distributor of fuels and energy related products is located in the Republic of South Africa. However, SMEMV1 operates only one fuel outlet in Zimbabwe, although the CEO has some plans for the future. He claims to have identified a potential in the market to make money; hence the vision to have a chain of service stations in the future.

The enterprise is headed by the owner, who doubles as the CEO, assisted by a bookkeeper who takes care of financial issues and his son who heads the sales department. The three officials are

the enterprise's top management team. The CEO holds a bachelor's degree in business studies from the University of Zimbabwe. SMEMV1 employs eighteen (18) workers including the top management team. Employees operate in shifts of five per shift although a shift of six employees would be ideal according to the CEO. However, for reasons beyond control, the CEO points out that the organisation has to operate day shifts only. He comments as follows:

We are supposed to operate for twenty-four (24) hours but because of fuel shortage and security reasons we have for now suspended our night shift operations

SMEMV1's core business is to supply motor-vehicle fuels and related lubricants to the general motoring public. As part of its strategic options, SMEMV1 also supplies the same products to selected key customers who by arrangement make pre-payments for their requirements. This group consists of large corporations and are considered key and strategic to SMEMV1's survival since they procure their requirements in bulk quantities. In view of their uniqueness, the CEO comments, "at any given time, we have to make sure that fuel is readily available for these key customers". The CEO points out that because the fuel supply business is based on volumes, which have to be moved continuously, he on his own initiative has gone out to scout for such customers, and claims his efforts to have paid off. He further claims that this approach is the only way his organisation can achieve the required daily volumes in order to meet set targets. Apart from fuels and lubricants, SMEMV1 claims to offer motorists other services free such as tyre pressure, checking engine oils and windscreen cleaning.

SMEMV1 claims to be running an attractive business where according to the CEO "every cent counts and one has to be hands on". The CEO claims that because the type of business requires reconciliation on a daily basis, every cent has to be accounted for; hence the need for a hands on approach. However, the margins according to the CEO are small, only making \$0.15 cents per litre. The organisation claims to procure petrol at \$3.19 and retails it at \$3.34 per litre whilst diesel is procured at \$3.00 retailing it at \$3.15 per litre. In view of the small margins, SMEMV1 believes that survival depends on moving volumes; hence, the need for more service stations in the near future. Despite the small margins, SMEMV1 claims to be gaining ground by moving volumes to its key bulk customers. As a result, the organisation claims to have earned a good reputation in the market from satisfied customers. To take care of its customers both key and ordinary, SMEMV1 plans to open a convenience shop soon where refreshments will be readily available at affordable prices. When asked about SMEMV1's vision, the CEO claims that his company's vision is "to be a fuel supplier of choice", although there was no documentary evidence to support his claim.

4.6 Data Analysis and interpretation

Any form of raw data, quantitative or qualitative requires thorough processing and analysis in order to convey meaningful information to researchers or any interested party (Kawulich, 2013). Since quantitative data is associated with large volumes of data from a relatively large sample, it becomes prudent for a researcher to employ a data analysis approach that reduces such data to a position where their interpretation becomes possible. Like quantitative data, it is also important to reduce qualitative data to a position where their interpretation becomes possible. Despite collecting qualitative data narratively from a small sample, a thorough analysis of collected data is necessary in order to convey meaningful information to researchers.

4.6.1 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis is common in large-scale investigations where data gathered are usually voluminous. It has been to some extent employed in small-scale investigations (Cohen et al, 2011). The introduction of computer based analysis software like the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS); admittedly the most commonly used software has made the analysis of quantitative data much easier for researchers. Saunders et al (2019) however, advise researchers to learn more about statistical software and their applications and if necessary seek for advice. They argue that researchers find themselves with wrong results due to the use of software packages that are not suitable for the research purpose. On the other hand, Cohen et al (2011) advise researchers to be clear of the following issues before embarking on a quantitative data analysis process: -

- Establishment of scales of data
- Having a clear position as to which statistics to employ; descriptive or inferential
- Finding out if there is need to identify variables in the study
- Clarifying on the relationships prevailing; linear or non-linear

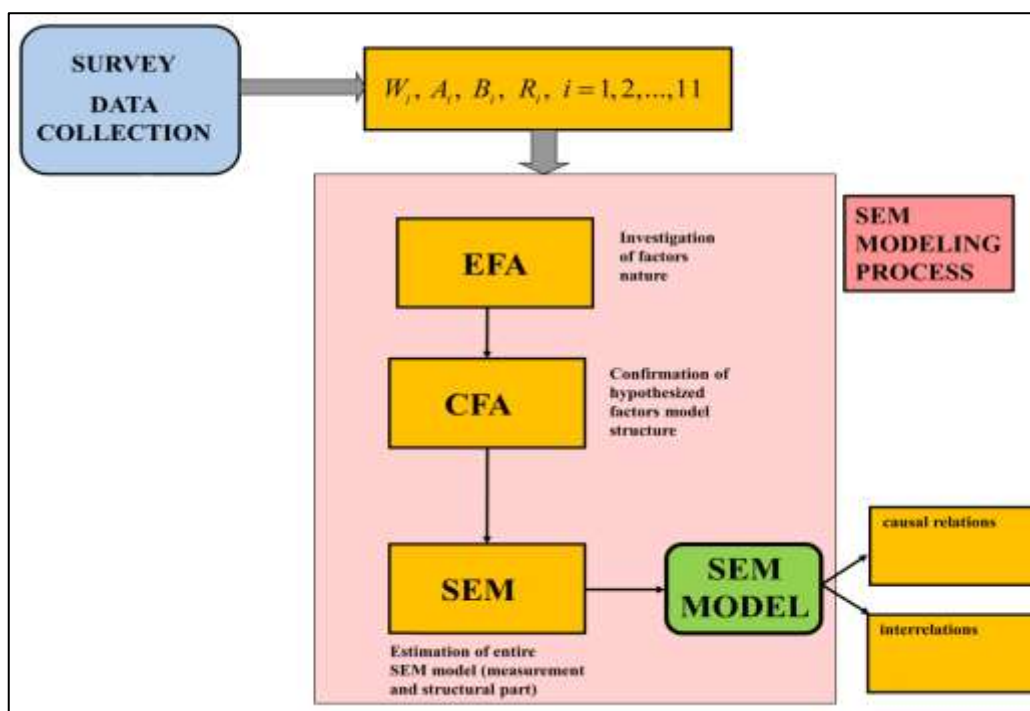
4.6.1.1 Approach to quantitative data analysis

The approach followed several steps outlined below: -

- The first step involved establishing data types or scale of measurement, as this according to Saunders et al (2019) allows a researcher to come up with the right techniques for data analysis, presentation and summary. The researcher entered data manually into the SPSS computer software system row by row with the aid of data codes developed for that purpose.
- This was followed by compilation of the response rate; a table of numbers and percentages that show and describes the number of respondents who responded to the survey and those who did not. The table was drawn using descriptive statistics, which according to Creswell (2014) is a crucial tool that presents useful information at the beginning of a data analysis process.

- Using the SPSS software, the researcher employed the exploratory factor analysis (EFA-SEM process) to analyse quantitative data. Exploratory factor analysis is suitable for analysing categorical data (ordinal and nominal). It is according to Yong and Pearce (2013), an approach suitable for reducing variables that are observable and measurable to fewer latent ones that are unobservable. The method is suitable when the sample size is about 300 and above. The quantitative sample size in this study was 768 respondents.
- Although the researcher employed EFA as the major dimension reduction technique, there was also need to validate the reliability of the EFA constructs by employing the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using SPSS Amos. This enabled the researcher to confirm EFA results. However, confirmation of EFA results does not explain causal relationships among latent factors. In order to explain the causal relationships and interpretations among these factors, it became necessary to further employ the structural equation modeling (SEM) in order to guarantee the robustness of the final strategic leadership model developed by the researcher.
- In essence, quantitative data analysis in this study followed the **EFA-SEM analysis process** as shown in figure 4.1 below.

Fig 4.1: -EFA – SEM process



Source: - Kovacic et al (2015:17)

4.6.2 Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data analysis process starts with the identification of patterns and themes that show some relationships between data. A theme is “an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity

to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations” (Kawulich, 2015:99). According to Kawulich (2015), qualitative data are first organized, then summarised and organized to reduce them before identifying and linking themes and patterns.

4.6.2.1 Approach to qualitative data analysis

While there are many approaches to qualitative data analysis that include ethnographic, narrative, content, phenomenological, interpretive, discourse and grounded theory analyses, the thematic analysis approach guided the researcher in this study. Thematic analysis is a method that researchers can use to identify, analyse, and report patterns or themes in qualitative research. According to Maquire and Delahunt (2017), the main aim in using thematic analysis is to identify themes that keep emerging in the data set; thus attracting the interest of a researcher. Narantuya (2016:02 citing Braun and Clarke, 2006) state that, “rigorous thematic approach can produce an insightful analysis that answers particular research questions”. Taking guidance from Braun and Clarke (2006) six-step thematic analysis framework, the researcher used NVivo12 pro software to analyse data, as it is efficient and timesaving. The researcher therefore followed these steps throughout the data analysis process: -

- The process started with the reading of transcripts several times allowing the researcher to familiarize himself with the data. The purpose was to pick out participants’ general ideas and their tone. Braun and Clarke (2006) point out that it is important for a researcher to immerse him/herself in the data to a point that he/she remains extremely familiar with the breadth and depth of the content.
- The second step marked the beginning of the coding process. However, the process involved inputting interview transcripts into the computer using NVivo12 pro software. The idea behind coding is to reduce data into small chunks that somehow reveal some meaning. Coding according to Cohen et al (2011), allows researchers to pick codes that occur frequently and their patterns.
- The researcher created and organized themes or nodes before coding. He, however, created some themes as they emerged during the coding process. In other words, the researcher coded at new nodes from his source material. The process involved dragging selected content to the new nodes using NVivo12 pro software. As a result, fifty-five (55) parent themes and child or sub-themes emerged. The researcher therefore, identified and listed all themes and child themes with high coding references for analysis purposes. He also picked direct and similar quotes in verbatim, in which participants expressed similar views or points.
- The fourth stage involved reviewing and modifying of themes, making sure that they made sense. In essence, a thorough review of coded data extracts under each theme became

necessary to make sure that a coherent pattern emerged. Nowell et al (2017) point out that themes should reflect accurately the true meanings found in a data set.

- Lastly the researcher took time to refine themes, trying to figure out how they were related to each other. This according to Maquire and Delahunt (2017) enables a researcher to understand what each theme is saying.

4.7 Validity and reliability

Although validity and reliability are concepts that researchers rely upon to assess the accuracy of their research findings, their meanings differ in quantitative and qualitative research approaches. However, Creswell (2014) posits that no research can ever achieve a (100%) hundred percent validity. He points out that in quantitative research, researchers should acknowledge existence of an inbuilt measure of standard error whilst in qualitative research, a degree of bias in view of participants' experiences, opinions, feelings and attitudes always exist. As such Creswell (2014) concludes that the best researchers can do is to maximise validity and fight to minimise invalidity.

4.7.1 Validity and reliability in quantitative research

Validity in quantitative research refers to whether the research instrument used to collect data is capable of measuring what the researcher wants it to measure. According to Heale and Twycross (2015) validity refers to the accurate measurement of concepts in quantitative surveys. As such the key to validity in quantitative research is the quality of the research instrument used. As a result, researchers can employ instruments of their choice for data collection. It follows therefore; that they should put more emphasis on the quality of instruments they employ in order to draw meaningful information from a study.

Content validity, construct validity, internal validity, external validity and concurrent validity are types of validity that are common in both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Content validity seeks to verify if what was meant to be measured in a study was actually measured (Creswell, 2014; Cohen et al, 2011). In essence, validity seeks to establish the effective and efficient measurement of elements such as for example behaviours and skills. Construct validity on the other hand is largely to do with the validity of empirical measures and hypothesis testing done to test theoretical concepts (Creswell, 2014; Cohen et al, 2011). Internal validity is associated with accuracy. It seeks to verify if the research findings described the problem under study accurately whilst external validity compares the generalizability of research findings to other settings like the entire research population or other cases. Concurrent validity seeks to verify if data collected using one instrument correlates with data collected using another instrument (Cohen et al, 2011).

Reliability in quantitative research focuses on the consistency of research findings, their dependability and applicability. The crucial aspect with reliability is to verify if consistency in results is possible using a research instrument several times on a similar group of participants under the same context. Defining reliability Bashir et al (2008:36) candidly state: -

The extent to which results are consistent overtime and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable

Zohrabi (2013) notes that storage of data in a quantitative form makes it possible to come up with similar results in quantitative research. To this end, achieving similar results in qualitative research might not be possible in view of the fact that data gathering is narrative.

4.7.2 Validity and reliability in qualitative research

Validity in qualitative research as already stated has a different meaning all together as it largely depends on trustworthiness. It is when a researcher according to Creswell (2014) undertakes to verify the accuracy of research results by employing certain procedures. Driven by the spirit of trust, both the researcher and the researched should collectively build validity throughout the research process from the gathering of data to their interpretation. Validity in qualitative research therefore builds its strengths on the accuracy of the research results from the researcher's and participant's points of view. Reliability in qualitative research is when a researcher undertakes a consistent approach across different research projects. However, the issue of reliability in qualitative research is irrelevant and misleading (Bashir et al, 2008); hence, researchers prefer to use the word "dependability" instead. As such, credibility of the researcher is crucial when addressing issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research.

4.7.3 Strategies to ensure validity and reliability

Researchers can employ several strategies in order to maximise validity and reliability in both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. In quantitative research, the simplest strategy to measure validity is to engage independent researchers to assess questions outlined in the questionnaire. This according to Saunders et al (2019) verifies if questions asked were essential or may be not essential but useful. Kumar (2011) points out that validity verification can also be through logic in quantitative research, implying that each question in the questionnaire should be justified in relation to study objectives. In other words, a questionnaire should be designed to fulfil its purpose as a measuring instrument in research. Reliability can be verified with the use of test/retest and split half techniques. The test/retest method involves correlating data with data gathered using the same questionnaire under similar conditions (Saunders et al, 2019). In other words, a questionnaire administered first time is under similar conditions repeated. The split-half method involves correlating half the questions in the questionnaire with the other half as a

way of verifying consistency across all questions (Kumar, 2011). In this study, the researcher designed a questionnaire that ensured the validity of quantitative data. The researcher made sure that consistency prevailed in the event of a second measurement done on a similar study under same conditions.

In qualitative research, addressing of validity is through employing of a number of strategies to verify accuracy of research findings. Recommended strategies areas follows: -

- **Triangulating:** -Triangulating involves using of different sources of data collection in one study. Creswell (2014) is of the view that bringing data from various sources together enhances validity by building themes that can be coherently justified.
- **Checking by members:** - This involves making follow-up visits to the field. It also involves interviewing respondents and giving them opportunity to make their own comments on research findings. Creswell (2014) argues that it is quite beneficial for a researcher to allow participants to check on major themes and research findings as this guarantees their accuracy.
- **Describing themes and findings:** - Verification of validity is possible if researchers strive to describe major research themes and findings using thick and rich descriptions (Creswell, 2014; Noble and Smith, 2015).
- **Longer periods in the field:** -This requires a researcher to spend longer periods in the field with participants, allowing them to open up on their feelings and experiences as much as they can. According to Creswell (2014) this strategy gives a researcher an in-depth understanding and appreciation of the problem under investigation.
- **Researcher's bias:** -Researchers usually bring their own bias to a qualitative study. However, they need to take a reflection of the bias they bring. Noble and Smith (2015) argue that they should explicitly state how their backgrounds are likely to shape the interpretation of the research findings.
- **Selection bias:** -Selection bias is associated with sample size determination. Noble and Smith (2015) insist that researchers should acknowledge the possibility of selection bias in research and must make sure that the sampling process does not fall victim to this form of bias.
- **Debriefing by another researcher:** -This involves an independent person who comes in asking questions about the study. Creswell (2014) is of the view that such a person comes in handy, asking questions about the study so as to achieve an interpretation well beyond that of the researcher.

Creswell (2014) outline strategies researchers can employ to guarantee reliability in qualitative research as follows: -

- By embarking on a data cleaning exercise, thoroughly checking of all scripts and transcripts for minor mistakes.
- By checking on the definition of codes and making sure that the meanings do not change throughout the coding process.
- By crosschecking other codes developed by other researchers.

Taking a cue from above listed strategies, the researcher employed the mixed methods approach in this study. As such, collection of data required the researcher to triangulate. Triangulation is according to Cohen et al (2011) a strong and powerful technique that guarantees validity in qualitative research. As such, it is important for a researcher to gather data using various instruments such as interviews, observations and questionnaires in order to ensure validity of data and results (Zohrabi, 2013). This study made use of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to collect data. Equally, description of major themes and findings was in detail. The researcher also made follow up field visits seeking for the views and opinions of participants on major themes and findings. Returned scripts were thoroughly checked for minor mistakes and data codes were also checked for any possible variations in meaning.

4.8 Bias in research

In a data collection and analysis exercise, a researcher can knowingly or unknowingly deviate from the truth. This according to Simundic (2013) becomes a source of bias in research that can result in the publication of false results. Smith and Noble (2014) define bias as a distortion of research findings that can be systematic. Bias, be it intentionally or unintentionally is highly undesirable, immoral and unethical and will always prevail in research. However, Smith and Noble (2014) while admitting that bias is unethical and exists in all types of research designs, point out that it is arguably difficult to eliminate. They further argue that as it surfaces, it brings a serious impact on the validity and reliability of study results. As such, the only option for researchers is to minimise it, provided there is an early identification of its sources in a research process. Kumar (2011) holds a view that a researcher who fails to control or minimise bias should not proceed with the research as it becomes unethical to do so.

Bias surfaces in research in many forms. It can be a design bias when a researcher chooses a wrong research design for the study or a selection bias when a researcher employs a wrong sampling method to select a sample that is not representative of the entire population. A wrong sampling technique will logically lead to over-representation or under-representation of the population; thus breeding a fertile ground for selection bias to emerge. A researcher can therefore, employ random sampling in the selection of respondents in order to get a true representative sample. This method ensures that every item or unit of the population gets an

equal chance to be included in a study (Simundic, 2013; Smith and Noble, 2014). Other types of biases that can emerge in a research are data collection or researcher bias and analysis bias. Data collection or researcher bias surfaces when a researcher approaches the study guided by his/her personal beliefs whilst data analysis bias emerges when researchers choose to ignore study results. According to Smith and Noble, (2014) when this happens the quality of research is affected, ultimately affecting the results of the study. The researcher bias ultimately determines the way data are gathered. Ignoring study results forces a researcher to go for data that merely agrees with his/her hypothesis. According to Simundic (2013), the sources of bias in data analysis and presentation are the fabrication and manipulation of data and reporting of non-existent data from non-existent experiments; including the elimination of data that is not in support of the researcher's hypothesis.

In view of the above and in particular guided by Smith and Noble (2014), the researcher acknowledges that bias exist in virtually all research designs and its total elimination is a researcher's dilemma. In this light, the researcher took several steps to minimise bias bearing in mind that failure to do so might be a recipe for disaster in view of results that might not be convincing and reliable. Measures taken were as follows: -

- The researcher employed the mixed methods research design to investigate the research phenomenon quantitatively and qualitatively; thereby minimizing the chances of design bias emerging during the course of research.
- The questionnaire carried well thought out questions that allowed respondents to disclose freely their true positions, knowledge and general feelings about the problem under investigation without distortion of facts.
- The researcher recorded the actual words of respondents instead of what he believed to be true or what he wanted to hear. In other words, the researcher approached the study without any pre-conceived beliefs that could have been instrumental in determining data collection procedures.
- The study employed sampling methods that selected participants to reflect true representativeness of the entire research population.
- The researcher recognised and acknowledged the dangers of fabrication and manipulation of results. As such, the researcher handled data analysis process with enough precision to reflect the true results of the study.

4.9 Ethical considerations

Ethics depends on an approach to decision-making that requires human beings to strike a difference between right and wrong when making decisions. Research ethics therefore refers to what researchers view as right and wrong (Powell et al, 2012). According to Akaranga and

Makau (2016) ethics deals with peoples' behaviour standards and norms. In essence, it guides them. As such, ethics hinges on six values namely, "honesty, fairness, objectivity, openness, trustworthiness and respect for each other" (Udo-Akang, 2013:54). Ethics in research therefore, requires researchers to uphold the dignity of participants, protect them from possible harm, respect their privacy and anonymity and hold information given by them in confidence.

The underlining principles of ethics are autonomy, justice, beneficence and non-beneficence. The concept of beneficence in research stresses a point that a researcher should always be guided by the principle of "doing good" for the participants. Akaranga and Makau (2016) are of the view that a researcher should always strive to engage on a research process that ultimately benefits participants without causing any harm to their well-being. As such, justice has to prevail in favour of participants. However, while it is necessary for participants to enjoy the benefits of research, maleficence or risks associated with participating in a study can also be an issue of concern to them. Akaranga and Makau (2016) argue that it is up to participants to weigh the pros and cons of participating so that they make informed decisions as to whether to be part of the research or not. In view of the above, it becomes mandatory for a seasoned researcher to address issues of informed consent, anonymity of respondents and confidentiality in a research project. Cheraghi et al (2014) point out that the three issues need addressing, especially in qualitative research purely because researchers have to respect the rights and privacy of participants or respondents. Concurring and emphasizing how researchers value the three issues in research, Udo-Akang (2013:56) writes:

It is too easily accepted that when standard statements of informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and respect for research participants are included, research is deemed ethical

4.9.1 Informed consent

Informed consent requires informing participants in advance of the pending research process and inviting them to participate. Respondents have to agree to do so voluntarily without any coercion. The whole idea behind informed consent is that a researcher should explicitly inform participants of a pending research exercise and invite them to participate. The researcher has to advise them of the research purpose and the benefits that come with the research together with any potential risks or harm that they can encounter because of their participation. Cheraghi et al (2014) insist that consent which is an agreement, verbal or written between the researcher and the researched, can only be given by willing participants who have been informed about the research and voluntarily agree to participate without due influence. Researchers are therefore duty bound to ensure that participants are well informed of the research and that their consent is

asked for and received before getting down to gather data. Informed consent dates back to the Nuremberg code of 1947 which is known for its strong advocacy in favour of protecting participants' rights in research (Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011; Powell et al, 2012) .

However, participants have the freedom to withdraw from the study anytime they feel like, but must be assured that no harm will come their way because of their withdrawal. Withdrawal especially in the face of a mutual relationship that has developed between the researcher and the participants during the course of the research process is not advisable. According to Fouka and Mantzorou (2011) validity of the research findings becomes questionable.

4.9.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality go hand in hand especially in qualitative research. This is so because participants' anonymity and their privacy must be protected. In this regard, the relationship between the researcher and the researched becomes crucial in view of the researcher's ability to uphold confidential information and privacy.

Confidentiality develops when researchers promise and further agree to treat and hold information given by participants in confidence as a way of protecting their identities (Cheraghi et al, 2014). In essence, the privacy of participants in a research project is important and comes through anonymity and confidentiality. Confidentiality has much to do with the researcher's management of information given in confidence by the researched; hence privacy and anonymity become issues that deserve respect in research. Powell et al (2012) are of the view that maintenance of confidentiality cannot be over-emphasized bearing in mind that giving and withholding of information rest entirely in the hands of respondents and participants.

Anonymity is to do with the protection of participants' identity in research. A researcher should bear in mind that as he/she successfully wins the hearts of respondents to participate in a research, their identities remain concealed. According to Fouka and Mantzorou (2011), anonymity of participants is certain if there is no link between their identities and their responses. They point out that a researcher who is unable to guarantee anonymity should instead strive to address issues of confidentiality. Moreover, researchers often face ethical dilemma in qualitative research especially where interview quotations appear in reports. To this end, Fouka and Mantzorou (2011) are of the view that in order to protect respondents' identities and maintain confidentiality, researchers should use pseudonyms including the removal from reports of any other information that can easily reveal their identities. However other issues such as plagiarism, data mismanagement and fabrication and falsification of study results appear in literature as practices that are ethically taboo in research.

4.9.3 Measures taken to ensure good ethical approach

In view of the above, the researcher acknowledges the importance of ethics, especially issues to do with respect, privacy and rights of respondents. Guided by the principles of ethics: - autonomy, justice, beneficence and non-beneficence, the researcher took several measures to ensure anonymity of respondents and confidentiality of gathered information as follows: -

- The researcher sent a covering letter to all potential respondents accompanying the questionnaire informing them of the study purpose and seeking for their consent to participate in the study. The letter also assured them that there were no risks coming their way because of their participation.
- The letter further stated that participation was purely voluntary, and that withdrawal from the study was free anytime they felt like, without any consequences on their part.
- Respondents were further notified that data collected were for academic purposes only and would be securely stored for a period of five years upon completion of the study.
- The researcher informed participants that their identities were a secret and agreed to keep information received from them in confidence. As such, the researcher coded qualitative data and used pseudonyms to identify participants.
- Finally, the researcher observed the consequences of data fabrication and falsification of results and analyzed data with precision to reveal true results of the study.

4.10 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined quantitative and qualitative data collection methods employed in this study and the approach to data analysis. As such, the chapter revealed data collection instruments used including their advantages and disadvantages as well as the rationales behind their employment. It also outlined the research protocol and gave an overview of those SMEs the researcher selected purposively to participate in the qualitative component of the study. The chapter further outlined the various strategies a researcher can employ to ensure validity and reliability in research. Approaches to good ethics and issues of bias in research were also addressed in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION – RESULTS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents quantitative data analysis results. As already stated in this thesis, the researcher employed the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), as the major dimension reduction technique to help extract the key dimensions from the thirty (30) items that were measured. The chapter further outlines how the researcher employed the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in order to validate the reliability of the EFA constructs. Finally, the chapter also outlines how the researcher employed the structural equation modeling (SEM) in order to explain causal relations and interpretations among the latent factors.

5.1 Response rate

Data analysis involved a sample size of (768) respondents. The survey required owners/managers of SMEs to complete a questionnaire as per protocol. Five hundred and forty-one (541) respondents completed and returned the questionnaire. The achieved response rate was 70% against an estimate of 50%.

Table 5.1: - Response rate

No	Province	Questionnaire delivered	Questionnaire returned	Response rate
1	Harare	269	196	70%
2	Bulawayo	230	155	67%
3	Midlands	115	79	69%
4	Mashonaland East	77	54	70%
5	Masvingo	77	57	74%
Totals	5	768	541	70%

Source: Author's own

5.2 Respondents' demographic variables

A summary of demographic variables appears in table 5.2 on the next page.

Table 5.2: -Demographic variables

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	364	67	67	67
	Female	177	33	33	100
	Total	541	100	100	
Age	0-19 years	2	0	0	0
	20-29 years	134	25	25	25
	30-39 years	219	40	40	65
	40-49 years	151	28	28	93
	50 years and above	35	7	7	100
	Total	541	100	100	
Functional background	Finance	125	23	23	23
	Marketing	154	28	28	51
	Production	76	14	14	65
	HRM	73	14	14	79
	Engineering	72	13	13	92
	Total quality management	41	8	8	100
	Total	541	100.0	100.0	
Positions at work	Top management	104	19	19	19
	Middle management	204	38	38	57
	Supervisory level	153	28	28	85
	Ordinary employee	80	15	15	100
	Total	541	100	100	
Level of education	Never gone to school	1	0	0	0
	Primary education	1	0	0	0
	O Level	64	12	12	12
	A Level	172	32	32	44
	University graduate	243	45	45	89
	University post graduate	60	11	11	100
	Total	541	100	100	
Tenure	1-5 years	335	62	62	62
	6-10 years	144	27	27	89
	11-15 years	41	7	7	96
	15 years and above	21	4	4	100
	Total	541	100	100	

Source: Author's own

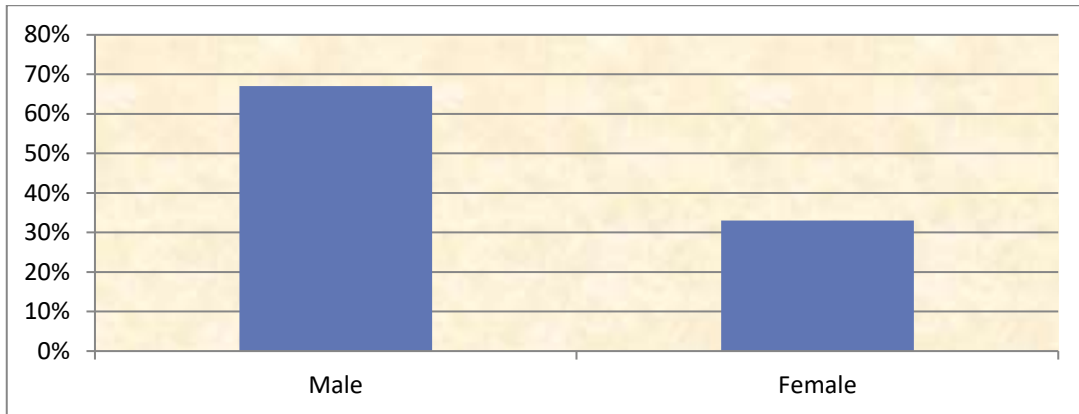
Demographic variables reported in a summary form on table 5.2 above include the gender of respondents, their age ranges, functional backgrounds, positions at work, level of education and length of service or tenure. Figures 5.1 to 5.6 below show these variables in form of bar charts.

5.2.1 Gender

The percentage of male respondents in this study was 67% while that of female respondents was 33%. In other words, there was an element of gender imbalance since the number of male

respondents (364) who participated in the study surpasses that of female respondents (177). This implies that there are more male employees occupying top leadership, middle management and supervisory positions in SMEs as compared to female employees. Figure 5.1 below shows the gender imbalance in SMEs.

Fig 5.1: -Gender

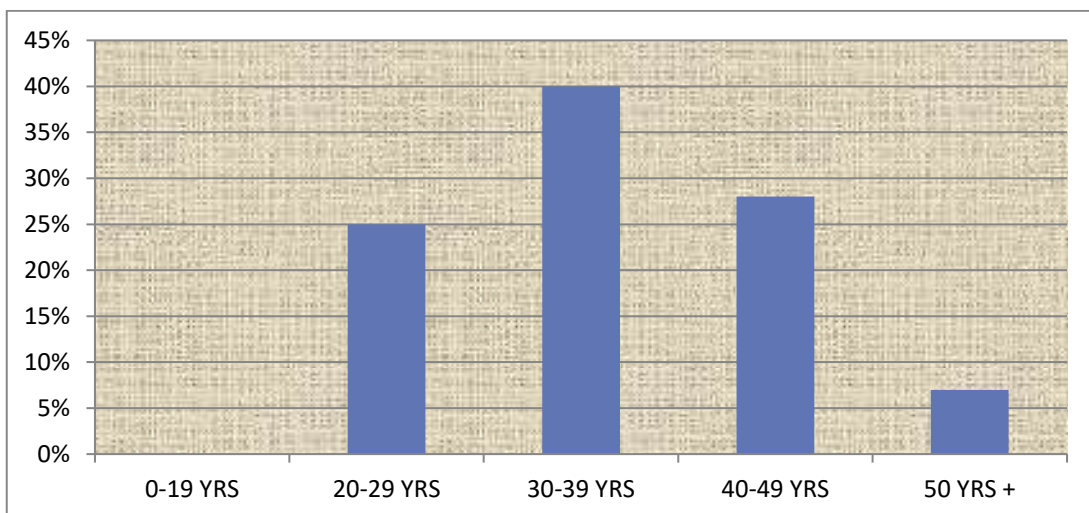


Source: Author

5.2.2 Age

As shown in figure 5.2 below, the ages of respondents ranged from 20 to 59 years with a mean age of 36 years. The highest number of respondents was in the age range of 30-39 years at 40%; followed by those in the age range of 40-49 years at 28% and 20-29 years at 25% respectively.

Fig 5.2: -Age



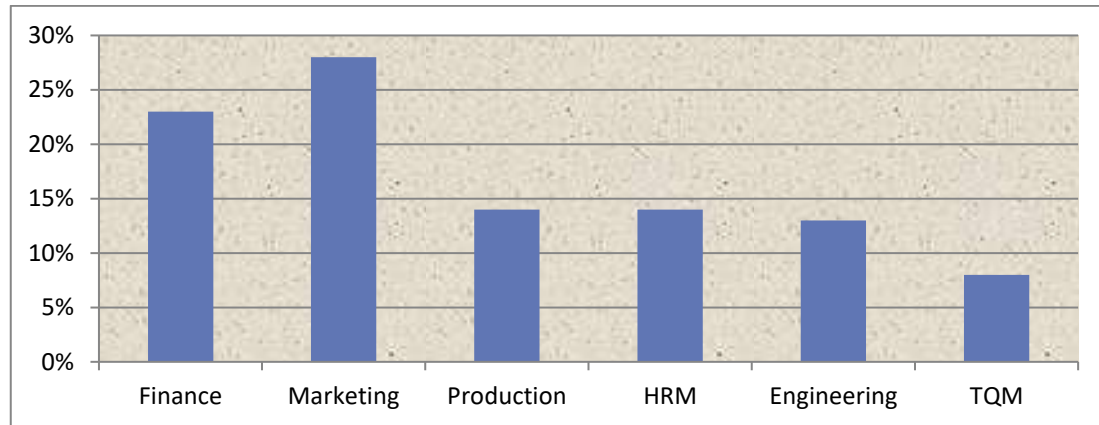
Source: Author

5.2.3 Functional backgrounds

Figure 5.3 below shows different functional backgrounds of respondents. The functional backgrounds ranged from finance, marketing, production, HR management, engineering to total quality management (TQM). Respondents with a marketing background totalled 154,

representing about 28% of the respondents, followed by 125 respondents with a financial background at (23%) twenty-three percent. The other 262 respondents had their backgrounds in production (14%), human resources management (14%), engineering (13%) and total quality management (8%). It follows that most senior SMEs executives, middle managers and supervisory staff had marketing and financial backgrounds.

Fig 5.3: -Functional backgrounds

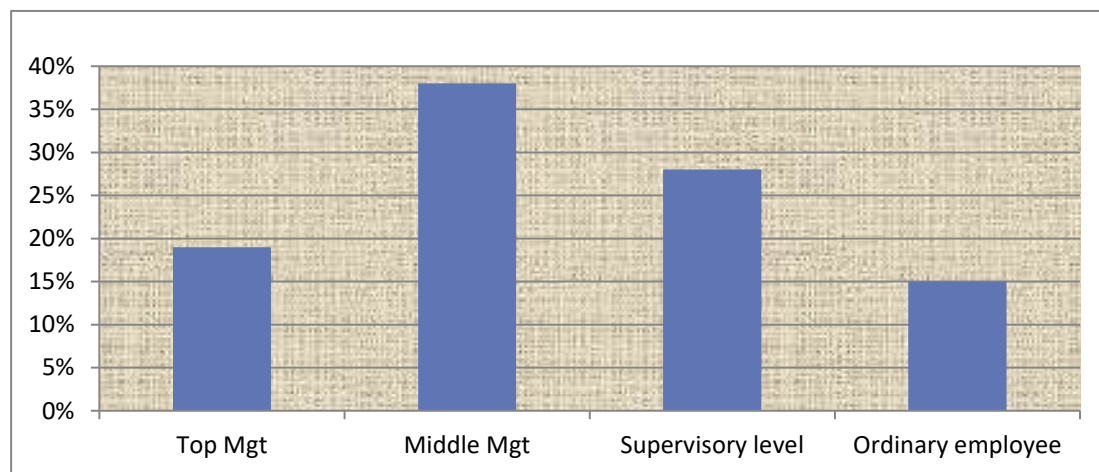


Source: Author

5.2.4 Positions at work

Figure 5.4 below reports various positions of respondents at work. The highest number of respondents came from middle management level at about 38%, followed by supervisory staff at 28% and top managers at only 19%. It follows that most small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Zimbabwe to some extent have clear managerial structures.

Fig 5.4: -Positions at work



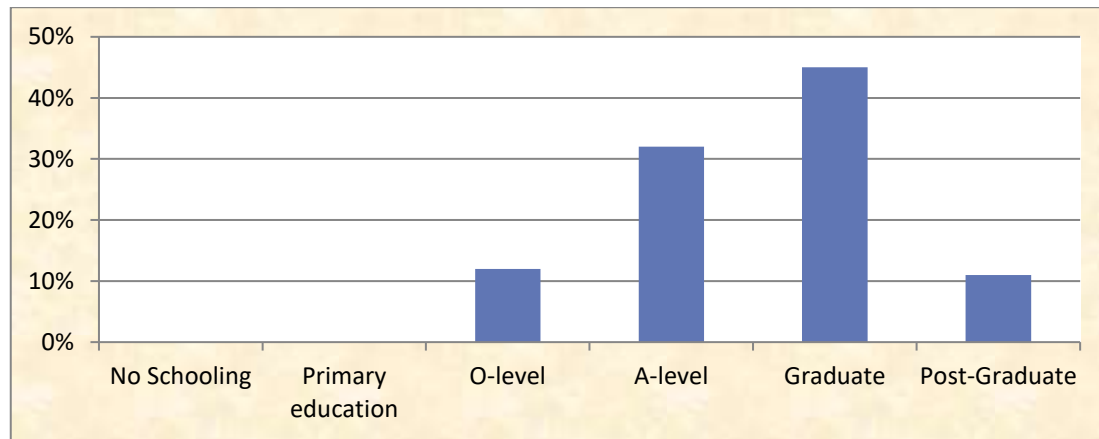
Source: Author

5.2.5 Levels of education-

Figure 5.5 below shows that respondents achieved high levels of education. Results show that a sizeable number of respondents were actually university graduates. Respondents holding first

degrees numbered 243, which is about 45% of the total number. Those holding post-graduate degrees were 60 representing about 11% of the respondents. This means that about 56% of the respondents achieved high levels of education. Those holding high school advanced level certificates numbered 172 representing about 32% of the respondents.

Fig 5.5: -Levels of education

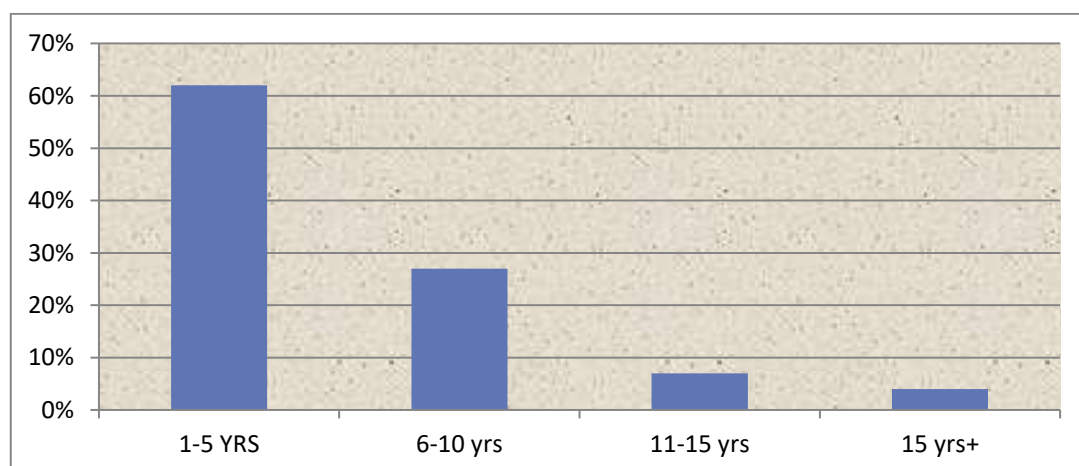


Source: Author

5.2.6 Tenure-

Figure 5.6 below reports the number of years respondents spent in the employ of their organizations. Most of the respondents had been with their organizations for not more than ten years. About 335 respondents (62%) had been with their organizations for about 1-5 years whilst 144 respondents (26%) had spent 6-10 years in the employ of their organizations. This means that about 479 respondents had been in the employ of their organizations for not more than ten (10) years. This represents about 88% of the respondents.

Fig 5.6: - Tenure



Source: Author

5.3 EFA – SEM analysis process

As already stated in the preceding chapter, qualitative data analysis followed the EFA-SEM analysis process. Figure 4.1 in the preceding chapter highlights this process.

5.3.1 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

A total of 30 items were considered for this study and were collated from various literature sources, with 6 items for each of the five constructs. Because the items were many, with a view to establishing the principal factors, Field (2016) recommends the use of dimension reduction techniques. According to Conway and Huffcutt (2003), these dimension reduction techniques help to reduce a large number of observed variables into a small set of variables, with each clustering together those variables that have a common underlying structure. In other words, dimension reduction techniques explore the underlying structure among a set of heterogeneous variables and can help in the classification of items into homogeneous groupings, otherwise known as factors or components (Hair et al, 2012). For this study, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used as the major dimension reduction technique to help extract the key dimensions from the 30 items that were measured (Field, 2016). The sixth research objective sought to establish the dimensions that would help the researcher in creating the strategic leadership model for SMEs.

5.3.1.1 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test

The applicability of factor analysis is only valid upon the satisfaction of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's tests. The KMO statistic tests whether the sample used is adequate or not and the sample is considered to be sufficient if the KMO statistic is at least 0.5 according to Kaiser (1974), Hair et al, (2014) and Field (2016). However, KMO values between 0.7 and 0.8 are considered to be good, while those between 0.8 and 0.9 are considered to be very good (Pallant, 2013). On the other hand, the Bartlett's test of sphericity is a measure of multivariate normality and tests whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix or not (Field, 2016; Pallant, 2013, Hair et al, 2011). According to Hair et al (2014) and Field (2016), the Bartlett's test should be significant at $p < 0.05$ if the assumption of multivariate normality is to be met.

These two tests were computed for the 30 items that were used for the first research objective. The corresponding results are presented in Table 5.3. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy was computed as 0.844 and for the Bartlett's test at, $\chi^2 (435) = 9546.568$; $p < 0.05$.

Table 5.3: - KMO and Bartlett's Test - Strategic leadership constructs
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.844
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	9546.568
	df	435
	Sig.	.000

Source: Author

Given that the KMO was above the 0.5 threshold, we can posit that the sample used for this study was adequate for the use of exploratory factor analysis. Further, with the p-value being less than 0.05, the multivariate normality assumption measured by the Bartlett's test was also validated and, therefore, approving the factorability of the correlation matrix.

5.3.1.2 Factor extraction

For this study, the principal component analysis (PCA) was used as the optimal component extraction method in lieu of maximum likelihood, which is optimal for confirmatory factor analysis and principal axis factoring, which is optimal when the multivariate normality assumption is not met (Schmitt, 2011; Hair et al, 2012; Yong and Pearce, 2013).

To improve accuracy and eliminate ambiguity, the factors were rotated as prescribed by Field (2016). Because the researcher assumed the components to be uncorrelated, orthogonal rotation was done in lieu of oblique rotation which assumes that the factors are correlated. More specifically, varimax rotation, an orthogonal rotation technique, was used as it simplifies the factors rather than using oblimin rotation, another orthogonal rotation technique, which simplifies the variables (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).

5.3.1.3 Communalities matrix

Communalities in exploratory factor analysis refer to the magnitude of correlation between an item and the rest of the other items (Kyriazos, 2018). In other words, communalities measure the ratio of common variance within an item and they determine the amount of variance in each and every item that is explained by the other factors after extraction (Field, 2016). According to Newsom (2018), communalities should be at least 0.4 (40% of the variance). Values less than 0.4 means that the item under consideration does not fit well with the rest of the other items within a specific component and this ought to be disregarded.

The principal component analysis was used as the extraction method (Field, 2016). The corresponding communalities matrix for the extraction of constructs which measure strategic leadership development was computed and this is presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: -Communalities matrix - EFA constructs

	Initial	Extraction
The culture of strategic leadership is continuously imparted	1.000	.573
Regular strategic leadership development workshops are conducted in-house	1.000	.674
Managers attend other workshops on strategic leadership hosted by other organisations	1.000	.664
Manager appraisals include the evaluation of strategic leadership	1.000	.639
Both the managers and non-managers receive training in strategic leadership	1.000	.635
The HR values of the company incorporate the need to have an effective strategic leadership	1.000	.573
Ability to influence individual and organizational performance	1.000	.664
Ability to anticipate and envision a viable future for the organization	1.000	.728
Ability to use of strategy by working through others to achieve goals	1.000	.697
Ability to empower employees to create strategic change	1.000	.636
Ability to express the strategic vision for the organization	1.000	.617
Ability to plan and execute organizational change	1.000	.505
Establishing strategic controls	1.000	.791
Determining the organisation's strategic direction	1.000	.846
Developing human capital	1.000	.855
Exploiting and maintaining core competencies	1.000	.751
Sustaining an effective corporate culture	1.000	.789
Influencing and managing organisational change	1.000	.490
Enabled staff to develop the attributes, attitudes and competencies for organisational development	1.000	.550
Employees have been re-oriented to focus on quality service	1.000	.698
Change management is now being handled swiftly by management	1.000	.690
Organisational goals and objectives are now being communicated efficiently	1.000	.684
Leaders and employees now focus on long-term objectives	1.000	.676

Employees now follow developed action plans for all their activities and programmes	1.000	.571
Return on assets	1.000	.579
Return on equity	1.000	.713
Net profit margin	1.000	.642
Market share growth	1.000	.602
Customer satisfaction	1.000	.747
Employee productivity	1.000	.712

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Author

It is evident from the above results, that none of the computed communalities were less than the prescribed minimum of 0.4. To this effect, the researcher argues that the items under study were highly correlated with the rest of the items. This meant a high factor determinacy as all the items were deemed to be ideal for the factor extraction (Dimitrov, 2012).

5.3.1.4 Total variance explained – EFA constructs

The total variance explained refers to the summation of the individual variances of each and every individual principal component and these are determined based on the eigenvalues. For this study, the eigenvalue threshold of 1.0 was used as the component cut-off point (Schmitt, 2011; Hair et al, 2012). The corresponding total variance explained is presented below.

Table 5.5: Total variance explained - EFA constructs

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.802	22.675	22.675	6.802	22.675	22.675	4.619	15.398	15.398
2	3.772	12.572	35.247	3.772	12.572	35.247	3.697	12.324	27.722
3	3.385	11.285	46.532	3.385	11.285	46.532	3.666	12.221	39.943
4	2.845	9.484	56.016	2.845	9.484	56.016	3.480	11.600	51.543
5	2.112	7.040	63.056	2.112	7.040	63.056	2.726	9.088	60.631
6	1.072	3.575	66.631	1.072	3.575	66.631	1.800	6.000	66.631
7	.922	3.074	69.705						
8	.859	2.864	72.569						
9	.739	2.462	75.032						

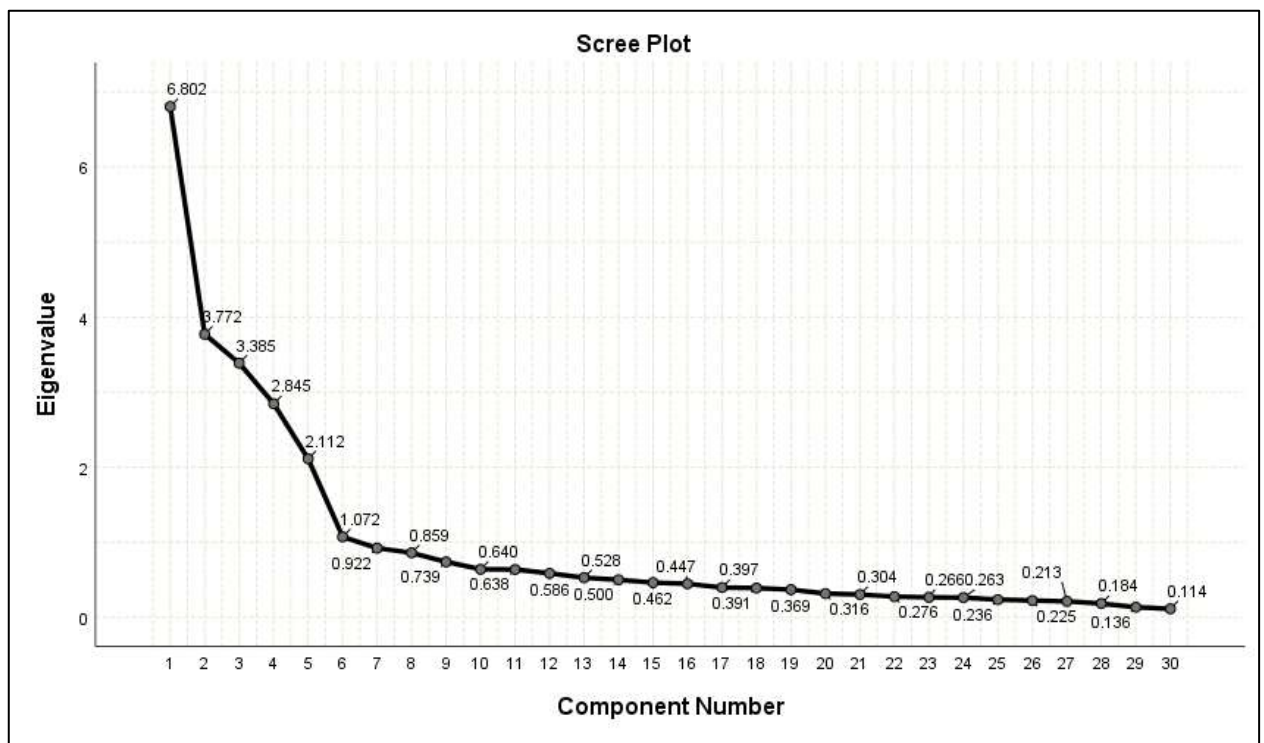
10	.640	2.134	77.166						
11	.638	2.125	79.292						
12	.586	1.953	81.245						
13	.528	1.760	83.004						
14	.500	1.667	84.672						
15	.462	1.540	86.212						
16	.447	1.490	87.702						
17	.397	1.323	89.025						
18	.391	1.302	90.327						
19	.369	1.230	91.557						
20	.316	1.054	92.612						
21	.304	1.013	93.625						
22	.276	.920	94.544						
23	.266	.888	95.432						
24	.263	.877	96.309						
25	.236	.786	97.095						
26	.225	.748	97.843						
27	.213	.710	98.553						
28	.184	.614	99.167						
29	.136	.452	99.620						
30	.114	.380	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Author

From the results, a total of 6 components were extracted with an eigenvalue that was above the cut-off eigenvalue of 1 as shown by the scree plot in **Figure 5.7**.

Figure 5.7: -Scree Plot - EFA Constructs



Source: Author

Component 1 had an eigenvalue of 6.80 and had a rotated percentage variance of 15.39%. Component 2 had an eigenvalue of 3.77 and this translated to 12.32% variance, while component 3 had an eigenvalue of 3.39 (12.22 variance). The fourth component had an eigenvalue of 2.85 and a 11.60% variance explanation. Component 5 had a variance of 9.09%, with a respective eigenvalue of 2.11. The last component had an eigenvalue of 1.072, with the respective variance explanation of 6.00%. Field (2016) recommends a minimum of 50% for the total variance explained. The cumulative variance explained for the first four components was 51.54% and 66.63% was achieved by all the six components. These findings, therefore, show that the cumulative variance explained criteria was met by just the first four components, and adding more components resulted in a higher cumulative percentage variance

5.3.1.5 Rotated component matrix - EFA constructs

The rotated component matrix is presented in Table 5.6. As mentioned above, a total of 6 components were extracted and the corresponding factor loadings for each of the 6 components are presented in table 5.6 below. According to Dimitrov (2012), the optimal factor loadings to consider would be those greater than 0.5. Hair et al. (2018) further supports this, citing a minimum threshold of 0.5 for exploratory factor analysis and 0.7 for confirmatory factor analysis. Nevertheless, other scholars such as Ertz et al (2016) argue that even factor loadings as low as 0.4 are still acceptable. For this study, the researcher opted for 0.5 as the minimum

threshold for the factor loadings to minimize the likelihood of cross-loadings (Schmitt, 2011) and those that met the criteria are listed in bold in table 5.6.

Table 5.6: -Rotated Component Matrix - EFA Constructs

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Developing human capital	.906	.110	.040	.105	.091	-.012
Determining the organisation's strategic direction	.887	.173	.013	.082	.137	-.063
Establishing strategic controls	.867	.128	-.021	.124	.085	-.015
Exploiting and maintaining core competencies	.847	.140	.022	-.070	.032	.093
Sustaining an effective corporate culture	.835	.239	.057	-.056	.095	.140
Influencing and managing organisational change	.631	.121	-.069	.040	.138	-.227
Leaders and employees now focus on long-term objectives	.014	.786	-.011	.188	.000	.146
Employees have been re-oriented to focus on quality service	.176	.779	.076	.063	.224	.020
Change management is now being handled swiftly by the management	.209	.764	-.053	.138	.195	-.053
Organisational goals and objectives are now being communicated efficiently	.319	.750	.021	-.065	.122	.003
Employees now follow developed action plans for all their activities and programmes	.013	.712	.030	.159	.012	.194
Enabled staff to develop the attributes, attitudes and competencies for organisational development	.334	.655	.069	-.056	.020	.030
Ability to anticipate and envision a viable future for the organization	.080	-.032	.845	-.004	-.059	.057
Ability to use of strategy by working through others to achieve goals	.018	-.010	.826	.067	.100	.000
Ability to empower employees to create strategic change	.007	.014	.778	.048	.149	-.081
Ability to express the strategic vision for the organization	.029	.156	.734	-.085	.166	-.133
Ability to influence individual and organizational performance	-.082	.032	.732	-.026	-.060	.340
Ability to plan and execute organizational change	-.023	-.018	.707	.041	-.040	.017
Regular strategic leadership development workshops are conducted in-house	.038	.050	.051	.792	-.026	.200
Manager appraisals include the evaluation of strategic leadership	.027	.057	-.005	.781	.103	-.120

Managers attend other workshops on strategic leadership hosted by other organisations	.005	.164	.070	.752	-.040	.255
Both the managers and non-managers receive training in strategic leadership	.032	.122	-.126	.739	.116	-.207
The culture of strategic leadership is continuously imparted	-.040	-.103	.082	.734	-.077	.099
The HR values of the company incorporate the need to have an effective strategic leadership	.178	.198	-.018	.658	.146	-.216
Customer satisfaction	.115	.139	.057	.064	.835	.101
Employee productivity	.223	.115	.029	.052	.794	.122
Market share growth	.191	.066	.168	.037	.698	.209
Net profit margin	-.063	.193	-.009	.030	.551	.544
Return on assets	-.044	.118	.043	.027	.279	.695
Return on equity	.053	.164	.001	-.008	.491	.665

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Source: Author

Component 1 had 6 items with all factor loadings greater than 0.5. Component 2, again, had 6 items, component 3 with 6 items, component 4 with 6 items. However, component 5 had 4 items, and one of its items was cross-loaded to component 6, which had just 3 items. Basing on the findings, none of the items was below the threshold and, therefore, none of them was dropped (Hair et al, 2011; Hair et al, 2018).

5.3.1.6 Naming the factors - EFA

Having successfully run the exploratory factor analysis, the next stage as prescribed by Field (2016) was to come up with the corresponding interpretation of the components/themes. For this exercise, as mentioned earlier, only those components with factor loadings greater than 0.5 were selected from each of the six components.

5.3.1.6 (a) Component 1 – Role of strategic leadership

The respective items that were extracted from component 1 included:

- *Developing human capital*
- *Determining the organisation's strategic direction*
- *Establishing strategic controls*
- *Exploiting and maintaining core competencies*
- *Sustaining an effective corporate culture*

- *Influencing and managing organisational change*

From the foregoing, the common element among the items above revolved around the role of strategic leadership. The researcher therefore labelled and interpreted this component as “**role of strategic leadership**”.

5.3.1.6 (b) Component 2 – Strategic leadership effectiveness

With respect to the second component, the corresponding items included:

- *Leaders and employees now focus on long-term objectives*
- *Employees have been re-oriented to focus on quality service*
- *Change management is now being handled swiftly by the management*
- *Organisational goals and objectives are now being communicated efficiently*
- *Employees now follow developed action plans for all their activities and programmes*
- *Enabled staff to develop the attributes, attitudes and competencies for organisational development*

With respect to the second component, the recurrent aspect in all the items had to do with the effectiveness of strategic leadership. Effectively, the researcher named the second component “**strategic leadership effectiveness**”.

5.3.1.6 (c) Component 3 – Strategic leadership awareness

The third component comprised of the following items:

- *Ability to anticipate and envision a viable future for the organization*
- *Ability to use strategy by working through others to achieve goals*
- *Ability to empower employees to create strategic change*
- *Ability to express the strategic vision for the organization*
- *Ability to influence individual and organizational performance*
- *Ability to plan and execute organizational change*

The items above all relate to the understanding and awareness of strategic leadership and in this regard, the third component was labelled “**strategic leadership awareness**”.

5.3.1.6 (d) Component 4 – Strategic leadership acceptance

The fourth component was extracted from the EFA results and the respective items included:

- *The culture of strategic leadership is continuously imparted*
- *Regular strategic leadership development workshops are conducted in-house*
- *Managers attend other workshops on strategic leadership hosted by other organisations*
- *Manager appraisals include the evaluation of strategic leadership*
- *Both the managers and non-managers receive training in strategic leadership*
- *The HR values of the company incorporate the need to have an effective strategic leadership*

The common element emerging from the foregoing items was about the adoption, embracement and acceptance of strategic leadership. The researcher labelled this component “**strategic leadership acceptance**”.

5.3.1.6 (e) Component 5 – Non-financial performance

The fifth component that was considered had only four items and these include:

- *Market share growth*
- *Customer satisfaction*
- *Employee productivity*
- *Net profit margin*

Three of the items above related to non-financial performance with the fourth relating to financial performance. The latter was also cross-loaded to the sixth component. Because the items with the highest factor loadings were all non-financial measures, the component was labelled “**non-financial performance**”

5.3.1.6 (f) Component 6 –Financial performance

The last component had three items only and these were:

- *Return on assets*
- *Return on equity*
- *Net profit margin*

One of the items, net profit margin, had been cross-loaded under component 5. However, comparing these three, they had one main thing in common, that is, they were all financial measures. In this regard, the component was labelled “**financial performance**”.

5.3.1.7 Reliability analysis

With respect to reliability analysis, scholars prescribe the Cronbach’s Alpha as the benchmark for the testing of internal consistency, that is reliability (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Field, 2016). This was applied to each of the six constructs above and tested against the respective items. A benchmark of 0.7 was used in this section as the minimum threshold for reliability in line with the literature (Leedy and Ormrod, 2013). The corrected item-total correlation coefficients were used and Field (2016) argues that items with a coefficient that is less than 0.3 do not qualify to be part of the construct being tested for reliability.

5.3.1.7 (a) Strategic leadership acceptance

The reliability analysis results for strategic leadership acceptance are presented in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: - Reliability Analysis – Strategic Leadership Acceptance

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.846	.846	6

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The culture of strategic leadership is continuously imparted	19.35	13.001	.561	.361	.833
Regular strategic leadership development workshops are conducted in-house	19.39	12.204	.679	.501	.810
Managers attend other workshops on strategic leadership hosted by other organisations	19.33	12.733	.656	.500	.815
Manager appraisals include the evaluation of strategic leadership	19.37	12.423	.673	.505	.811
Both the managers and non-managers receive training in strategic leadership	19.46	12.689	.628	.446	.820
The HR values of the company incorporate the need to have an effective strategic leadership	19.39	13.142	.564	.384	.832

Source: Author

The Cronbach's alpha for the acceptance construct was 0.846, and the alpha based on the standardized items was also 0.846. The alpha was higher than the 0.7 threshold. Likewise, none of the corrected item-total correlations was less than 0.3 (Field, 2016). To this effect, it follows that the strategic leadership acceptance construct was internally consistent and very reliable.

5.3.1.7 (b) Strategic leadership awareness

The reliability analysis results for the awareness construct are presented below. From the results, the Cronbach's alpha was 0.865 for the 6, and the standardised alpha was 0.866. This being greater than 0.7, it follows that the construct was internally consistent. Further, because none of the items had a corrected item-total correlation less than 0.3, none of the items was

dropped. It also follows that strategic leadership awareness construct was internally consistent and very reliable.

Table 5.8: - Reliability Analysis – Strategic Leadership Awareness

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.865	.866	6

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Ability to influence individual and organizational performance	18.59	17.827	.621	.425	.850
Ability to anticipate and envision a viable future for the organization	18.56	16.806	.742	.586	.828
Ability to use of strategy to working through others to achieve goals	18.68	16.713	.741	.564	.828
Ability to empower employees to create strategic change	18.56	17.665	.665	.468	.842
Ability to express the strategic vision for the organization	18.84	17.141	.621	.412	.851
Ability to plan and execute organizational change	18.57	18.052	.582	.349	.856

Source: Author

5.3.1.7 (c) Role of strategic leadership

The reliability analysis results for the strategic leadership role construct are presented in figure 5.9.

Table 5.9: -Reliability Analysis – Strategic Leadership Role

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.926	.924	6

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Establishing strategic controls	17.61	25.428	.823	.733	.907
Determining the organisation's strategic direction	17.62	25.156	.869	.797	.901
Developing human capital	17.61	25.253	.878	.786	.899
Exploiting and maintaining core competencies	17.75	25.628	.775	.645	.914
Sustaining an effective corporate culture	17.67	26.231	.803	.692	.910
Influencing and managing organisational change	17.20	29.417	.565	.330	.938

Source: Author

From the results above, the Cronbach's alpha for the role of strategic leadership construct was 0.926 and the standardised items was 0.924. This being greater than the 0.7 threshold, it was confirmed that this construct was internally consistent. In addition, considering the corrected item-total correlations, none of the items had a coefficient that was less than 0.3 (Field, 2016). In this regard, none of the items was dropped from this construct.

5.3.1.7 (d) Strategic leadership effectiveness

The reliability analysis results for the strategic leadership effectiveness construct are presented in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10: - Reliability Analysis – Strategic Leadership Effectiveness

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.868	.868	6

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Enabled staff to develop the attributes, attitudes and competencies for organisational development	18.03	15.101	.591	.431	.859
Employees have been re-oriented to focus on quality service	17.80	14.315	.722	.557	.835
Change management is now being handled swiftly by the management	17.89	14.534	.707	.539	.838
Organisational goals and objectives are now being communicated efficiently	17.95	14.420	.713	.553	.837
Leaders and employees now focus on long-term objectives	17.85	14.929	.674	.546	.844
Employees now follow developed action plans for all their activities and programmes	17.80	15.424	.588	.460	.859

Source: Author

From the results, the Cronbach's Alpha statistic was 0.868 for the 6 items. This means that the construct is internally consistent and reliable. On the other hand, all of the corrected item-total correlations were all greater than 0.3, with the observed minimum being 0.431. Effectively, all the items under the strategic leadership effectiveness construct were confirmed to be valid, and none was dropped.

5.3.1.7 (e) Non-financial performance (measuring effectiveness)

The reliability analysis results for the SMEs non-financial performance construct are presented in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: - Reliability Analysis – SMEs Non-Financial Performance

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.811	.810	3

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Market share growth	7.82	3.204	.579	.339	.821
Customer satisfaction	8.03	2.683	.725	.540	.673
Employee productivity	7.99	2.670	.687	.506	.715

Source: Author

From the results, the Cronbach's Alpha was computed to be 0.811 for the 3 items, and being greater than 0.7, it was confirmed that the non-financial performance construct was very reliable. With respect to the corrected item-total correlation, all the coefficients in Table 5.11 were greater than the prescribed minimum of 0.3. In this regard, all the items were confirmed to be valid constituents of the non-financial construct and none of them was dropped.

5.3.1.7 (f) Financial performance (measuring effectiveness)

The last construct was the financial performance and the analysis of the reliability of the SMEs financial performance construct is presented in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12: - Reliability Analysis – SME Financial Performance

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.755	.755	3

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Return on assets	8.15	2.557	.464	.240	.803
Return on equity	8.17	2.074	.703	.519	.531
Net profit margin	8.21	2.239	.599	.451	.656

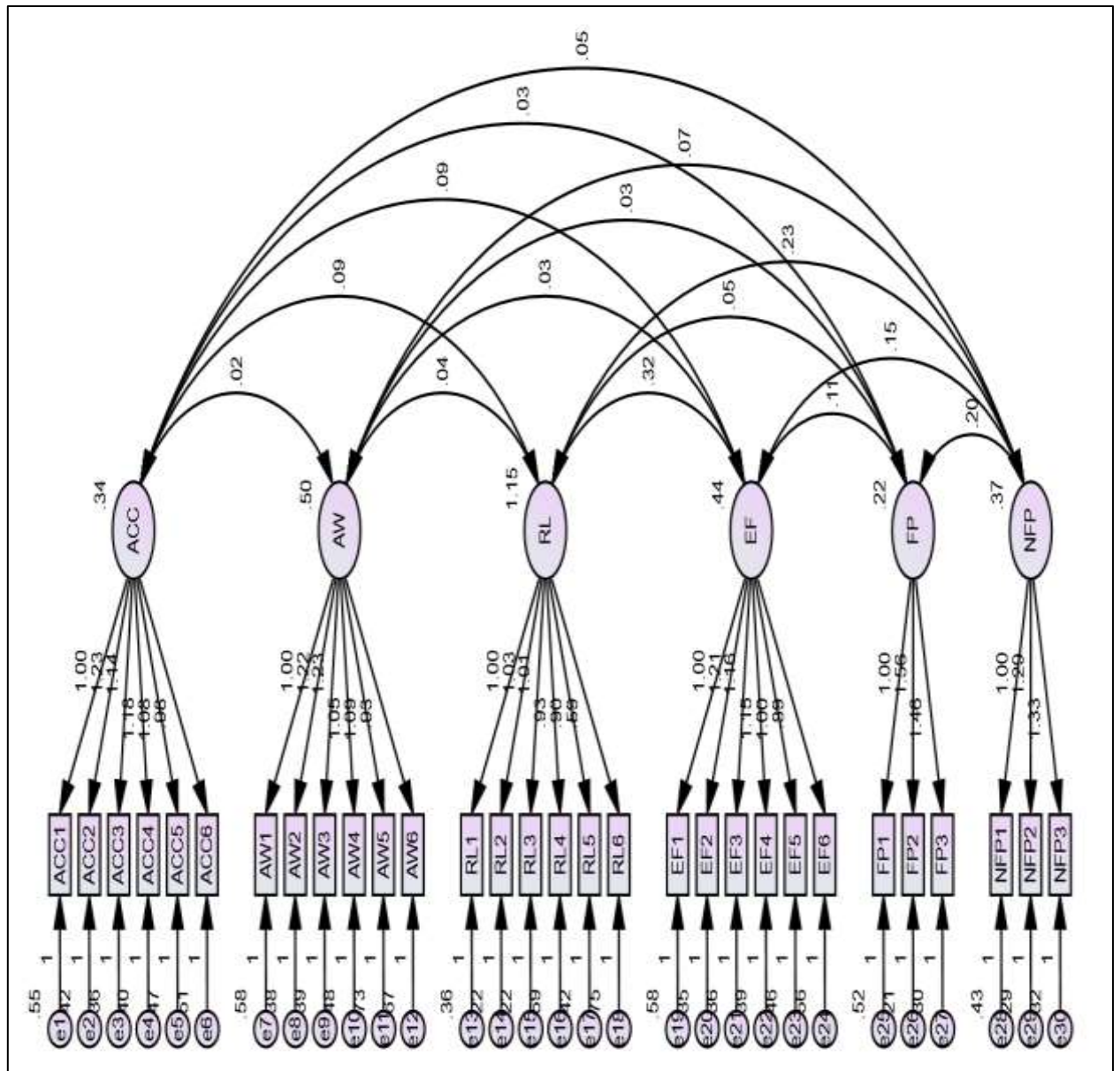
Source: Author

The Cronbach's alpha statistic was 0.755, and this was greater than the minimum expected 0.70, meaning the construct was reliable. On the other hand, the minimum corrected item-total correlation was 0.531, and being greater than the minimum 0.30, all the items were confirmed to be valid and none of the three was dropped.

5.3.2 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Having validated the reliability of each of the six constructs, the second level of validation was through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). This was attained through the use of covariance-based CFA using SPSS Amos to test the construct validity of the six constructs. Construct validity was tested using convergent and discriminant validity (Bryman and Bell, 2015). While convergent validity confirms whether a set of items measuring a single construct converge, discriminant validity is used to confirm that a number of constructs are actually different from each other. According to Field (2016), acceptable coefficients for convergent validity should never be less than, 0.5 at the very least, and 0.6 at best, while coefficients for discriminant validity should never exceed 0.85 (Field, 2016; Hair et al, 2014). The diagrammatic illustration of the results is shown in Figure 5.8.

**Figure 5.8: - Confirmatory Factor Analysis – Strategic leadership constructs
(Convergent validity)**



Source: Author

The corresponding tabular results complementing the confirmatory factor analysis model above, showing the respective path coefficients for both the convergent and discriminant validity statistics are summarised in Tables 5.13 and 5.14.

5.3.2.1 Convergent validity

Table 5.13: - Confirmatory factor analysis – convergent validity

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
ACC1 <--- ACC	1.000				
ACC2 <--- ACC	1.232	.092	13.411	.000	
ACC3 <--- ACC	1.136	.085	13.372	.000	
ACC4 <--- ACC	1.181	.089	13.345	.000	
ACC5 <--- ACC	1.081	.086	12.561	.000	
ACC6 <--- ACC	.983	.083	11.855	.000	
AW1 <--- AW	1.000				
AW2 <--- AW	1.217	.075	16.308	.000	
AW3 <--- AW	1.232	.076	16.280	.000	
AW4 <--- AW	1.051	.070	14.968	.000	
AW5 <--- AW	1.085	.079	13.803	.000	
AW6 <--- AW	.928	.072	12.971	.000	
RL1 <--- RL	1.000				
RL2 <--- RL	1.035	.033	31.634	.000	
RL3 <--- RL	1.014	.032	31.429	.000	
RL4 <--- RL	.932	.039	23.627	.000	
RL5 <--- RL	.901	.035	25.790	.000	
RL6 <--- RL	.588	.039	15.225	.000	
EF1 <--- EF	1.000				
EF2 <--- EF	1.211	.078	15.591	.000	
EF3 <--- EF	1.162	.076	15.345	.000	
EF4 <--- EF	1.154	.076	15.118	.000	
EF5 <--- EF	.998	.072	13.954	.000	
EF6 <--- EF	.893	.071	12.580	.000	
FP1 <--- FP	1.000				

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
FP2 <--- FP	1.556	.128	12.133	.000	
FP3 <--- FP	1.456	.122	11.940	.000	
NFP1 <--- NFP	1.000				
NFP2 <--- NFP	1.293	.082	15.771	.000	
NFP3 <--- NFP	1.328	.085	15.719	.000	

Source: Author

From the outcome above, all the path coefficients were greater than 0.5, and this meant that the convergent validity was not violated. In this regard, with a very good convergent validity results, none of the items was dropped from any of the six constructs that had been considered in this study (Hair et al, 2010).

5.3.2.2 Discriminant validity

With respect to discriminant validity, the respective co-variances between the constructs (also shown in Figure 5.8) are presented in Table 5.14 below.

Table 5.14: - Confirmatory factor analysis – discriminant validity

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
ACC <--> AW	.017	.021	.818	.413	
ACC <--> RL	.091	.031	2.958	.003	
ACC <--> EF	.094	.021	4.476	.000	
ACC <--> FP	.027	.015	1.868	.062	
ACC <--> NFP	.053	.019	2.836	.005	
AW <--> RL	.040	.036	1.121	.262	
AW <--> EF	.030	.023	1.316	.188	
AW <--> FP	.029	.017	1.712	.087	
AW <--> NFP	.068	.022	3.067	.002	
RL <--> EF	.321	.040	7.970	.000	
RL <--> FP	.051	.025	2.039	.041	
RL <--> NFP	.234	.035	6.614	.000	
EF <--> FP	.111	.019	5.785	.000	

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
EF <--> NFP	.153	.024	6.429	.000	
FP <--> NFP	.197	.024	8.192	.000	

Source: Author

According to Hair et al. (2010), discriminant validity is violated when the co-variances are greater than 0.85. From the results above, the highest covariance was 0.321 and this was observed between strategic leadership acceptance and strategic leadership awareness. The rest of the co-variances were all less than 0.85. To this effect, the researcher confirms that the discriminant validity was not violated. With both convergent validity and discriminant validity having been tested for the extracted constructs, the researcher confirms that the six constructs extracted through the EFA were adequately validated and confirmed to be relevant.

5.3.3 Structural equation modeling (SEM)

Having validated the research constructs, in line with the objective to develop a strategic leadership model for small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe, the researcher went on to establish the linkages between the research constructs. This was done using structural equation modeling (SEM) as prescribed by Hair et al. (2010). Nevertheless, to validate the use of SEM, multivariate normality and model fitness tests were done and these are presented below.

5.3.3.1 Multivariate normality

According to Brown (2012), the multivariate normality is tested using the multivariate kurtosis, and this should be greater than 7.0. The results are presented below.

Table 5.15: - Assessment of multivariate normality

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
NFP3	2.000	5.000	-.355	-3.369	-1.096	-5.205
NFP2	1.000	5.000	-.337	-3.199	-.696	-3.302
NFP1	1.000	5.000	-.548	-5.207	-.639	-3.032
FP3	1.000	5.000	-.401	-3.812	-.808	-3.837
FP2	1.000	5.000	-.488	-4.630	-.661	-3.138
FP1	2.000	5.000	-.545	-5.178	-.701	-3.329
EF6	1.000	5.000	-.146	-1.384	-.448	-2.128

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
EF5	1.000	5.000	-.025	-.235	-.492	-2.334
EF4	1.000	5.000	.116	1.106	-.799	-3.795
EF3	1.000	5.000	.125	1.191	-.905	-4.297
EF2	1.000	5.000	-.107	-1.018	-.798	-3.789
EF1	1.000	5.000	.098	.930	-.598	-2.837
RL6	1.000	5.000	-.744	-7.061	-.158	-.752
RL5	1.000	5.000	-.231	-2.191	-.720	-3.419
RL4	1.000	5.000	-.327	-3.104	-.844	-4.006
RL3	1.000	5.000	-.384	-3.649	-.644	-3.060
RL2	1.000	5.000	-.365	-3.463	-.745	-3.539
RL1	1.000	5.000	-.439	-4.166	-.720	-3.418
AW6	1.000	5.000	-.468	-4.447	-.640	-3.037
AW5	1.000	5.000	-.316	-3.001	-.728	-3.455
AW4	1.000	5.000	-.668	-6.341	.224	1.065
AW3	1.000	5.000	-.482	-4.574	-.290	-1.375
AW2	1.000	5.000	-.572	-5.430	-.334	-1.588
AW1	1.000	5.000	-.502	-4.762	-.243	-1.152
ACC6	1.000	5.000	-.291	-2.762	-.740	-3.511
ACC5	1.000	5.000	-.163	-1.553	-.875	-4.155
ACC4	1.000	5.000	-.300	-2.848	-.828	-3.931
ACC3	1.000	5.000	-.285	-2.709	-.785	-3.728

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
ACC2	1.000	5.000	-.558	-5.303	-.072	-.340
ACC1	1.000	5.000	-.435	-4.133	-.414	-1.964
Multivariate					224.464	59.575

Source: Author

The multivariate kurtosis from the results above was 224.464, and the multivariate critical ratio was 59.575. Because the multivariate kurtosis was greater than 7.0, and the critical ratio was greater than 1.96 (95% significance z-score), then this confirms that the multivariate normality assumption was not violated. With respect to the validity of the structural equation model, the researcher went on to assess the fit indices.

For the absolute fit index, which does not use an alternative model for the fitness assessment, the CMIN/DF was used. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), the statistic ought to be less than 3.0, although Hair et al. (2014) cite 5.0 as the maximum. For the relative fit indices, NFI, IFI, and CFI were used to compare to the baseline model, and the minimum threshold of 0.90 was considered (Beaujean, 2014), while PNFI and PCFI were used to evaluate the model parsimony. According to Hair et al. (2014), the model parsimony measures must be greater than 0.50. Lastly, was the RMSEA statistic, and the maximum threshold considered was 0.08 (Warner, 2012; Beaujean, 2014). The results of the model fit are presented in tables 5.16, 5.17, 5.18 and 5.19 below.

Table 5.16: -CMIN

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	85	984.438	380	.000	2.591
Saturated model	465	.000	0		
Independence model	30	9742.010	435	.000	22.395

Source: Author

Table 5.16 shows the CMIN/DF statistic. From the results above, the CMIN/DF statistic was 2.591, and being less than 3.0, the absolute fit index was valid.

Table 5.17: - Baseline Comparisons

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	.958	.937	.923	.916	.932
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Source: Author

Table 5.17 shows the relative fit indices, NFI, IFI, and CF. used to compare to the baseline model. From the baseline comparisons, NFI, IFI and CFI all exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.90 with respective ratings of 0.958, 0.923 and 0.932

Table 5.18: - Parsimony-Adjusted Measures

Model	PRATIO	PNFI	PCFI
Default model	.874	.749	.779
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000
Independence model	1.000	.000	.000

Source: Author

Table 5.18 shows the model parsimony. Regarding PNFI and PCFI, both were greater than 0.50, being 0.749 and 0.779 respectively, and because they were within the acceptable range, it meant that the model parsimony was less complex.

Table 5.19: -RMSEA

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90	PCLOSE
Default model	.070	.066	.074	.000
Independence model	.199	.196	.202	.000

Source: - Author

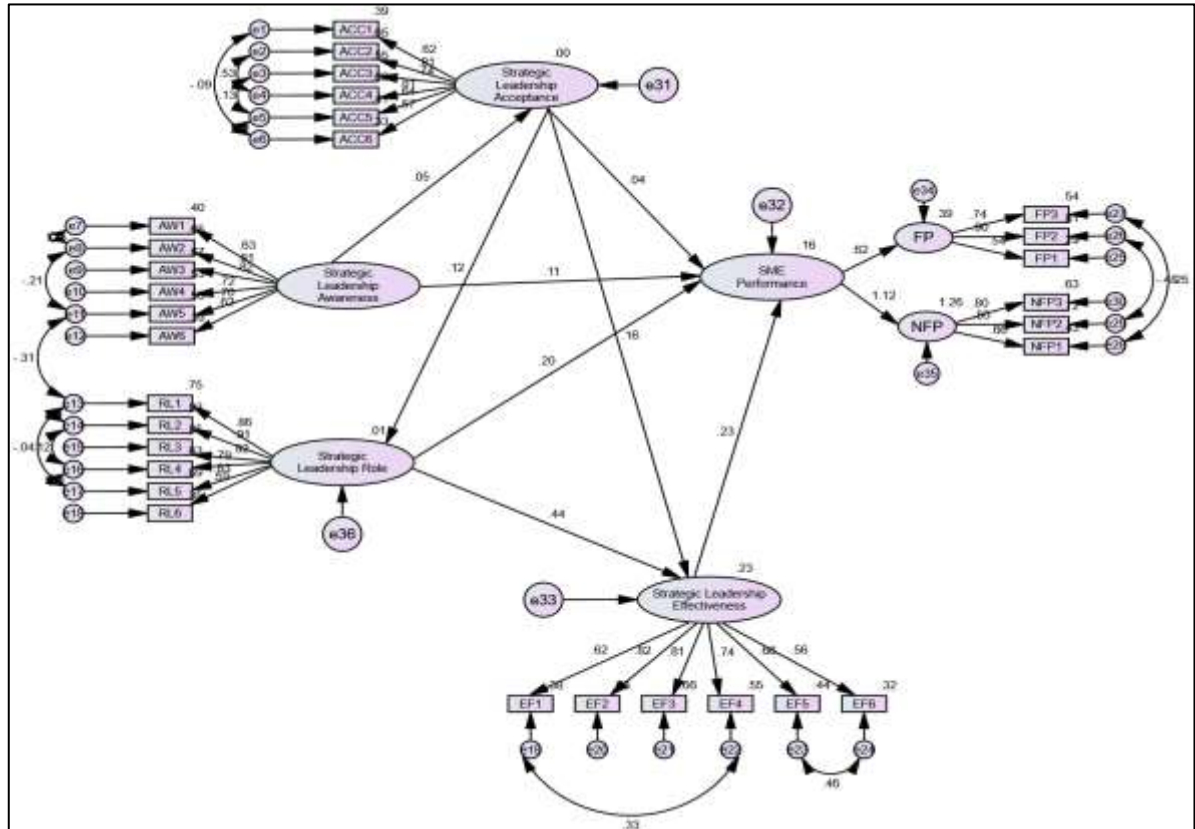
Lastly, Table 5.19 shows the RMSEA statistic. With respect to the RMSEA statistic, the computed figure was 0.070, and again, being less than 0.08, this meant that this assumption was

not violated. With all these tests validating the model fit, the researcher argues that the generated SEM model used in this study was valid.

5.3.3.2 SEM model

Pursuant to the above model validation, the corresponding SEM model illustrating the key relationships tested is presented in Figure 5.9.

Figure 5.9: - Structural Equation Model



Source: Author

Above SEM model is not the final model to be developed as per the main objective of the study, but it merely guarantees robustness of the final strategic leadership model for SMEs developed in this thesis. Table 5.20 below summarises the above model and further presents the standard error (S.E.), critical ratio (C.R.), the significance level (p) and the standardised regression weights.

Table 5.20: - SEM Model

	Estimate	Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P
Acceptance <--- Awareness	.038	.048	.038	.993	.321
Role <--- Acceptance	.146	.121	.057	2.558	.011

	Estimate	Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P
Effectiveness <--- Role	.430	.440	.056	7.754	.000
Effectiveness <--- Acceptance	.187	.158	.054	3.434	.000
Performance <--- Role	.210	.201	.050	4.174	.000
Performance <--- Awareness	.115	.115	.042	2.754	.006
Performance <--- Effectiveness	.249	.234	.055	4.519	.000
Performance <--- Acceptance	.050	.040	.052	.965	.335

Source: Author

With respect to SME performance as a dependent variable, the major significant determinant with the greatest beta coefficient was strategic leadership effectiveness ($\beta = 0.234$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), followed by the perceived role of strategic leadership ($\beta = 0.201$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). The third significant factor was strategic leadership awareness ($\beta = 0.115$, $p = 0.006 < 0.05$). Nevertheless, strategic leadership acceptance did not have a significant impact on performance ($\beta = 0.040$, $p = 0.335 > 0.05$). However, strategic leadership acceptance ($\beta = 0.158$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and strategic leadership role ($\beta = 0.440$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) both had significant relationships with strategic leadership effectiveness. Acceptance as well had a significant relationship with strategic leadership role ($\beta = 0.121$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). The outcomes above tend to show the possible moderating effect of both strategic leadership role and strategic leadership effectiveness on the relationship between strategic leadership acceptance and SME performance. Lastly, there was no significant relationship between strategic leadership awareness and strategic leadership acceptance ($\beta = 0.048$, $p = 0.321 > 0.05$).

With respect to the collective effect of the above factors on SME performance, the magnitudes of variability explained are presented in Table 5.21.

Table 5.21: - Squared Multiple Correlations

	Estimate
Acceptance	.002
Role	.015
Effectiveness	.235
Performance	.663

Source: Author

From the results above, the predictors of SME performance explained a cumulative effect of 0.660, and this meant that 66.3% of the variation in SME performance was explained by role, awareness, effectiveness and acceptance. Further, only 23.5% of the variability in the level of strategic leadership effectiveness was explained by role and acceptance. Lastly, the role and acceptance as dependent variables did not yield a high explained variance, being only 1.5% and 0.2% variability.

5.3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined quantitative data analysis results, obtained using the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) as a major factor dimension reduction technique employed by the researcher to extract key dimensions from the 30 items that were measured. All the six (6) components per construct had factor loadings greater than 0.5. The researcher confirmed the validity of these results by employing the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The chapter also outlined how the researcher employed the structural equation modeling (SEM) to explain the causal relationships and interpretations among these factors. The results show that strategic leadership awareness, its acceptance, role and effectiveness are all factors that have an impact on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. However, awareness, role and effectiveness constructs had a significant impact on performance of SMEs. As such, strategic leadership acceptance did not yield a significant impact on performance.

CHAPTER SIX

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION – RESULTS

6.0 Introduction

Despite collecting qualitative data narratively from a small sample, a thorough analysis of collected data is necessary in order to convey meaningful information to researchers. This chapter reports the qualitative study findings in accordance with the research protocol outlined in this study. The research protocol involved interviewing twenty-one (21) participants drawn from seven (7) SMEs operating in five provinces of Zimbabwe. Participants selected for the semi-structured interviews were mainly SMEs top managers/owners, departmental managers and their supervisors. The researcher considered these officials as makers and implementers of strategic choices in their respective organisations.

6.1 Participants' demographics

Of the 21 participants interviewed fifteen (15) were males and six (6) were females. This calculates to 71% males and 29% females, showing a gender imbalance within the top leaders of SMEs. Their ages ranged from 20-59 years and the mean age was 43 years. Their educational backgrounds varied from mere ordinary (high school) certificate holders to post graduate degree certificate holders. Twelve (12) of the 21 participants held university degrees and the rest were high school certificate holders. In view of their good educational backgrounds, participants fluently answered questions during interviews without any difficulties. Participants came from various industries such as retail, leisure and entertainment, corporate communications, security services, light engineering and retail. Of the twenty-one (21) participants, seven (7) were CEOs/owners, ten (10) were departmental managers, and four (4) were supervisors. In some organizations, supervisors held positions of authority reporting directly to the CEO/owner hence; their inclusion in the interviews.

6.2 Themes and child-themes

This study sought to verify participants' awareness and understanding of the concept of strategic leadership. It further sought to establish its acceptance and the role it plays in the performance of Zimbabwean SMEs. The overall objective is to develop a strategic leadership model that suits the operations of SMEs in Zimbabwe. In view of the above, the researcher developed (50) themes and child themes. However, the researcher's focus was on parent and child themes with high coding references throughout the data analysis process. A summary of themes and child themes with high coding references is shown in Table 6.1

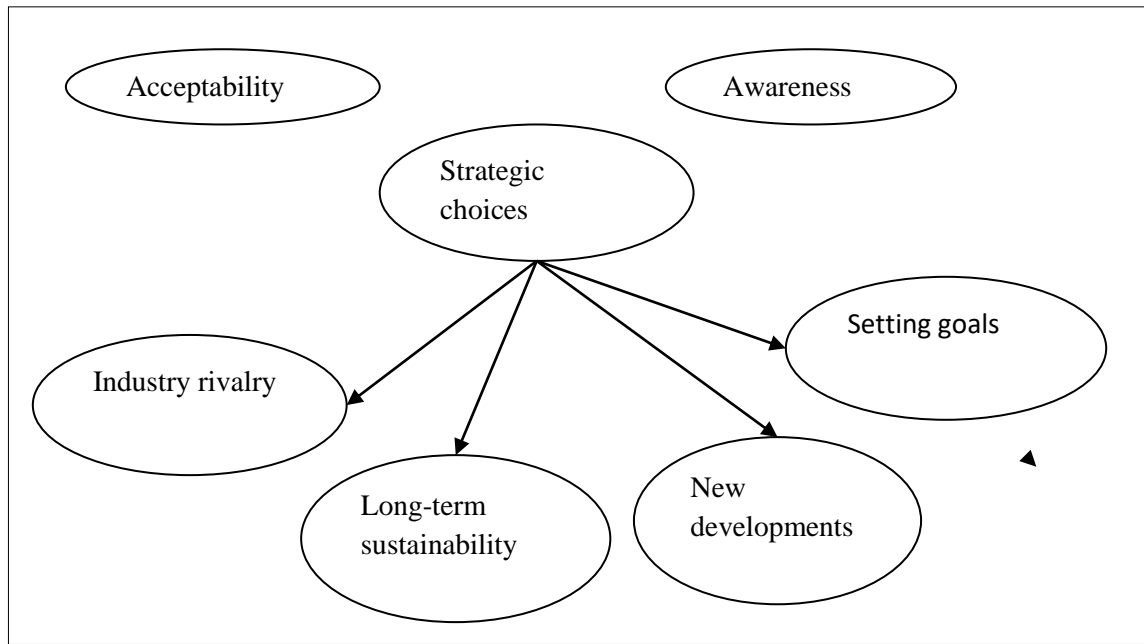
Table 6.1: -Summary of themes and child themes with high coding references

Question	Name of theme	Type	Coding references
1	Strategic choices	Parent	61
1	Awareness	Parent	35
1	Acceptance	Parent	20
2	Existence of a model	Parent	85
2	Communicating strategic decisions	Child	34
3	Enhancing performance	Parent	97
3	Modern technology	Child	23
3	Direction	Parent	29
4	Positive developments	Parent	27
5	Growth	Parent	106
5	Effects of the environment	Parent	49
6	Sales performance	Parent	99
6	Production levels	Parent	32
7	Cash shortage	Parent	63
7	Deteriorating economy	Parent	53

6.2.1 Strategic leadership awareness

The awareness of the strategic leadership concept by SMEs top managerial leaders revealed 7 themes and child-themes as shown in figure 6.1 below. Making strategic choices came out as the most outstanding theme with 61 coding references, followed by awareness of the concept of strategic leadership with 35 coding references. Figure 6.1 shows the 7 themes developed.

Fig 6.1: -Theme map



Source: Author

6.2.1.1 Strategic choices – main theme

Making strategic choices was an over-arching theme with (61) sixty-one coding references. The aggregated theme had (4) four child or sub themes as reported in figure 6.1 above. As such, participants closely associated their awareness of strategic leadership with making of strategic choices or decisions by top managerial leaders that enhance organisational performance. In other words, top managerial leaders in SMEs have a mandate to make strategic decisions capable of stimulating the performance of their enterprises. This was confirmed by about 18 participants who were explicitly clear about their awareness of strategic leadership. This represented about 86% of the participants. As such, participants BY1R1 and BY2R2 stated:

The CEO and senior managers should on daily basis hold planning meetings where decisions to map the way forward are taken. The whole purpose is to find best possible decisions or strategies that can help in stimulating the performance of the organization

BY1R1

My understanding is that planning and coming up with strategies to map our way into the future is a must if our dreams are to be realized

BY2R2

In essence, making of strategic choices should help organisations to grow as they venture into the future. This was confirmed by GR1R1, BY1R2 and MV1R2 as follows:

We are a growing organisation and because of our good and solid strategies we have established a branch locally in Bulawayo and three regional ones in the Republic of South Africa, Zambia and Malawi. It's all about good strategic choices

GR1R1

We are required to sit down as a team and make those critical decisions that can help our organization to grow and prosper into the future

BY1R2

Our CEO, the owner of the business believes in strategies as the best way to guide the organization into the future

MV1R2

In view of the above, the awareness of strategic leadership by SMEs leaders is that they have to make strategic choices that guide their enterprises into the future. The findings confirm the awareness of strategic leadership as linked to making of strategic decisions by top organisational leaders. Strategic decisions or choices made should be effective enough to enhance the performance of their organisations.

6.2.1.2 Awareness – main theme

This theme focused on the number of times participants repeated the word understanding as they explained their awareness of strategic leadership. The theme had thirty-five (35) coding references, meaning participants repeated it 35 times during interviews. The findings reveal that participants understood the concept of strategic leadership as referring to the process of making strategic choices that enhance the performance of their organisations. HR1R1 stated:

The reason why I intend bringing in consultants is because as the CEO of this company, I have a clear understanding of strategic leadership and its role in driving and enhancing the performance of our company

HR1R1

Other participants GR1R2, GR1R3, BY2R1, BY2R2, BY1R3, all confirmed their awareness of strategic leadership as follows: -

My understanding of strategic leadership is that top organisational leaders should at all-times make strategies that drive performance of the organisation and in the process drive it forward

GR1R2

My understanding of strategic leadership is that an organisation should be involved in planning in the long-term and requires top managers to come up with clear strategic plans

GR1R3

My understanding of strategic leadership as the CEO of this company is that top leadership of an organisation should come up with strategies that give direction into the future through enhanced performance and growth

MV1R1

My understanding of strategic leadership is that for an organisation to grow, directors must sit down and make crucial strategies that can be implemented effectively

BY2R2

My understanding of strategic leadership is that as the top executive in this company, I am expected to make crucial decisions that stimulate profitability and growth of the organisation

BY2R1

Strategic leadership to my understanding refers to how senior managers make decisions for the betterment of the organisations

BY1R3

The confirmation of awareness of strategic leadership reveals that top organisational leaders have a mandate to make strategic choices in line with the dictates of strategic leadership theory. The theory states that top managerial leaders have a mandate to make strategic choices (Hambrick and Mason, 1984).

6.2.1.3 Acceptance of strategic leadership – main theme

This theme had 20 coding references, meaning that participants repeated it 20 times during interviews. However, a clear awareness of strategic leadership by participants also confirmed that strategic leadership is a concept, which SMEs leaders accept as necessary for the performance of their enterprises. SMEs in the east African countries of Kenya and Uganda have become successful business enterprises because leaders of these institutions understand strategic leadership and embrace it as a necessary tool for organisational performance (Mwangi et al, 2013). In line with this view, 13 participants representing 62% confirmed their acceptance of strategic leadership concept as necessary for organisational performance as follows:

It is a concept that we as top leaders of this organisation fully accept and embrace for the better performance and growth of this organisation

BY1R2

Other participants also confirmed acceptance of strategic leadership concept in their organisations, as follows:

We have been attending in-house training courses as departmental managers, intended to equip us with a good understanding of the benefit of strategic leadership. Somehow, I can safely say it is an accepted concept in our organisation

BY1R3

Strategic leadership has been accepted by our top leaders and they strongly feel it is necessary to grow our company

GR1R1

I am happy to confirm that strategic leadership is a concept that has been accepted in our organization. Our CEO the owner of the business believes in strategies as best way to guide the organisation into the future

MV1R2

I sincerely believe in strategic leadership and I am convinced that our success hinges on us coming up with fluid strategies capable of lifting our organisation to greater heights

HR3R1

However, while HR3R1 confirmed as the CEO that success of their organisation hinged on acceptance of strategic leadership, HR3R2 a departmental manager in the same organisation, had a different view:

Strategic leadership is a new concept in our organisation and appears difficult to comprehend. Departmental managers are struggling to embrace this concept, but I am not sure if this will bring any desired results to our organisation

HR3R2

HR3R3 also took a doubtful position as HR3R2 when asked to confirm if departmental managers shared similar views as their CEO on acceptance of strategic leadership.

HR3R3 stated:

Managers in this company seem to have different views and opinions on the concept of strategic leadership. Some are of the view that coming up with strategies is good for the performance of a company whilst others believe that the whole process under the current environment is a waste of time and resources

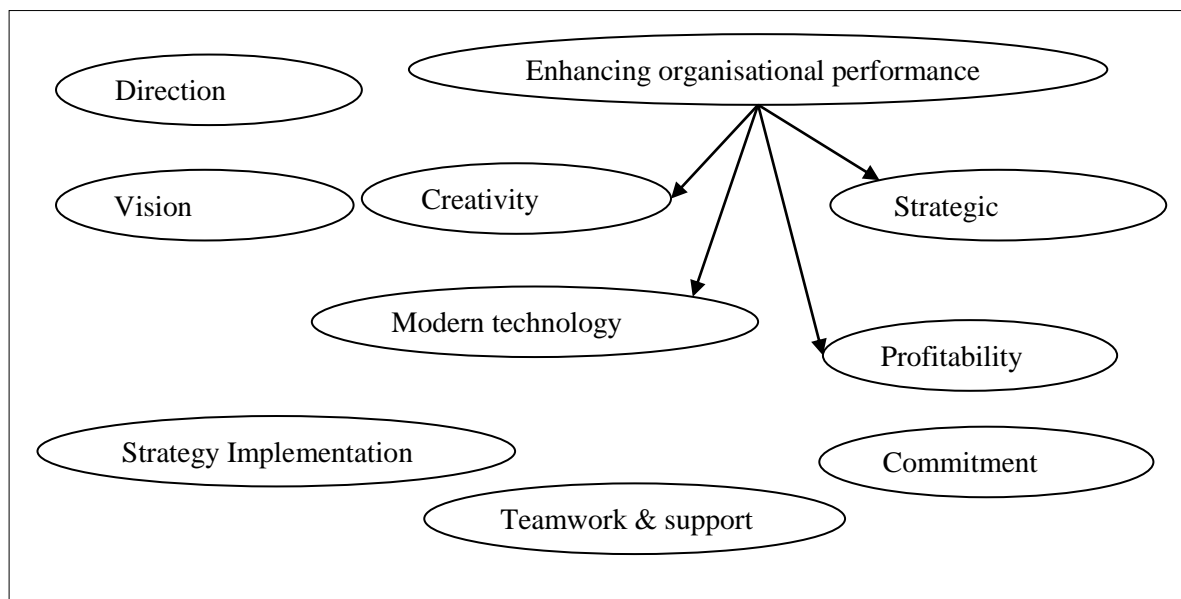
HR3R3

Such doubtful views indicate that strategic leadership may be well understood in SMEs as necessary for organisational performance but accepting and embracing it might be a challenge. Besides, a situation where departmental heads differ with their CEO as was the case with HR3R2 and HR3R3, reveal that in some organisations the concept might not be very clear to employees. This might pose a challenge as employees struggle to implement strategies.

6.2.2 Role of strategic leadership

The researcher developed nine parent and child themes in order to establish participants' awareness of the role of strategic leadership and its impact on organisational performance. Enhancing organisational performance was the most outstanding theme with 97 coding references. Figure 6.2 reports identified themes and child themes.

Fig 6.2: -Theme map



Source: Author

6.2.2.1 Enhancing organisational performance – parent theme

This over-arching theme had 97 coding references. Eighteen (18) participants, representing about 86% of the total participants stated that the role of strategic leadership in their organisations was to enhance performance. They agreed that strategic leadership had therefore a crucial role to play in the overall performance of their enterprises by clarifying the direction into the future and encouraging team work among employees. They also stated that strategic leadership enhances the production of quality goods and services, leading to an increase in customer satisfaction. Participants BY1R2, BY2R1, GR1R2 and GR1R3 confirmed this as follows:

Strategic leadership is a crucial concept for our organisation in the sense that it has played a key role in bringing our organizational members together to operate as a team. Its most crucial role in our organisation is that it enhances performance and we now know the direction the organisation is heading

BY1R2

The role of strategic leadership is to help to improve or enhance areas of business when necessity demands so. Strategic leadership also makes our customers come to notice how we handle them. In other words, the quality of our service needs to improve all the time. This encourages customers to keep coming back for our services. The more the customers we serve the better as the business expands. At the end, overall company performance is enhanced as profitability increases

BY2R1

Our recent expansion into neighbouring countries of RSA, Zambia and Malawi is evidence that the strategic leadership of our organisation has played a significant part in its performance

GR1R2

GR1R3 a departmental manager in the same organisation SMEGR1 supported above claim by GR1R2 and stated:

I would say there has been growth in our sales and on business in general. Our revenue figures point to this fact and performance has been achieved positively

GR1R3

GR1R3 further stated:

We are a growing company when compared to our competitors. Our performance and growth has resulted in an expansion into neighbouring countries. Branches have been opened in Bulawayo, RSA, Zambia and Malawi. This cannot be achieved by a failing company. Strategic decisions our bosses take have been responsible for our sterling performance

GR1R3

However, some participants felt that strategic leadership also encouraged strategic thinking, creativity and innovation in their organisations resulting in enhanced performance.

HR2R1 stated:

The major role of strategic leadership is to ensure that the organisation pulls in the right direction, knowing where we are coming from and where we are going so as to enhance organisational performance. My whole team is aware of this role and when we make decisions, departmental heads are tasked to ensure that every organizational member is aware and knows as to what we want to achieve. As a result, organisational members have embraced strategic thinking as they feel encouraged to think out of the box

HR2R1

In support of the above, HR2R3 also stated:

We have seen positive results coming out in form of introduction of new products and entering new markets as well. Strategic leadership, although having a critical role of guiding our organisation into the future, also encourages strategic thinking and innovation among our managerial and supervisory teams

HR2R3

In light of the above, it is evident that SMEs managerial leaders appreciate and understand the role of strategic leadership in the performance of their enterprises. Prominent gate keepers and SMEs funders in Zimbabwe, ZNCC and SMEDCO confirmed this position. They pointed out that in general, leadership of medium enterprises in particular accept strategic leadership as a necessary tool for organisational performance. However, depending on the age and maturity of the business, some enterprises tend to embrace strategic leadership intensively while others ignore it completely. The study involved seven (7) enterprises and by virtue of the Zimbabwe definition of SMEs, four (4) were medium and the other three (3) were small enterprises. The four medium enterprises had been in business for a period of 6 – 20 years. SMEGR1 in particular is a mature medium enterprise and has been in business for 20 years. Business leaders of such enterprises tend to accept and appreciate the role of strategic leadership as necessary for the successful performance of their organisations.

6.2.2.2 Modern technology -child theme.

Some participants pointed out that strategic leadership encouraged innovation in their organisations leading to enhanced organisational performance. Emphasis was on the development of creative and innovative ideas as a result of good strategic leadership in SMEs. GR1R1 stated:

Strategic leadership has given our employees room to be creative and innovative. Employees have equally been given room to make their own independent decisions. Our printing department for example can be creative and make new designs and printing methods

GR1R1

HR1R2 also stated:

We are seeing a lot of improvement from many angles. All our employees are showing a lot of commitment to their work and we are even getting some innovative ideas from our bus crew on how we can further improve the running of our bus service

HR1R2

HR2R1 equally stated:

I am confident about my team. My managers are becoming innovative and strategically are on top of the situation. I am talking of people who can make fluid decisions on their own

HR2R1

6.2.2.3 Direction – Main Theme

This theme had 29 coding references, an indication that participants kept mentioning it during interviews. In other words, some participants felt that the role of strategic leadership in organisational performance was to give an organisation direction into the future. This was confirmed by 14 participants during interviews, representing about 65% of the participants to the study. Participant HR2R2 was confident about the direction of their enterprise as a result of good strategic leadership. HR2R2 boasted as follows:

Confidently I can say our heads are above water but the important issue for us is to know the direction we are going and where we are coming from. The role of strategic leadership in this case is very clear, we know our direction

HR2R2

Equally, GR1R3 was confident and stated:-

Strategic leadership helps a company to move from where it is to where it intends to be. We have witnessed such a move in our company as movement to our intended direction has been possible and positive

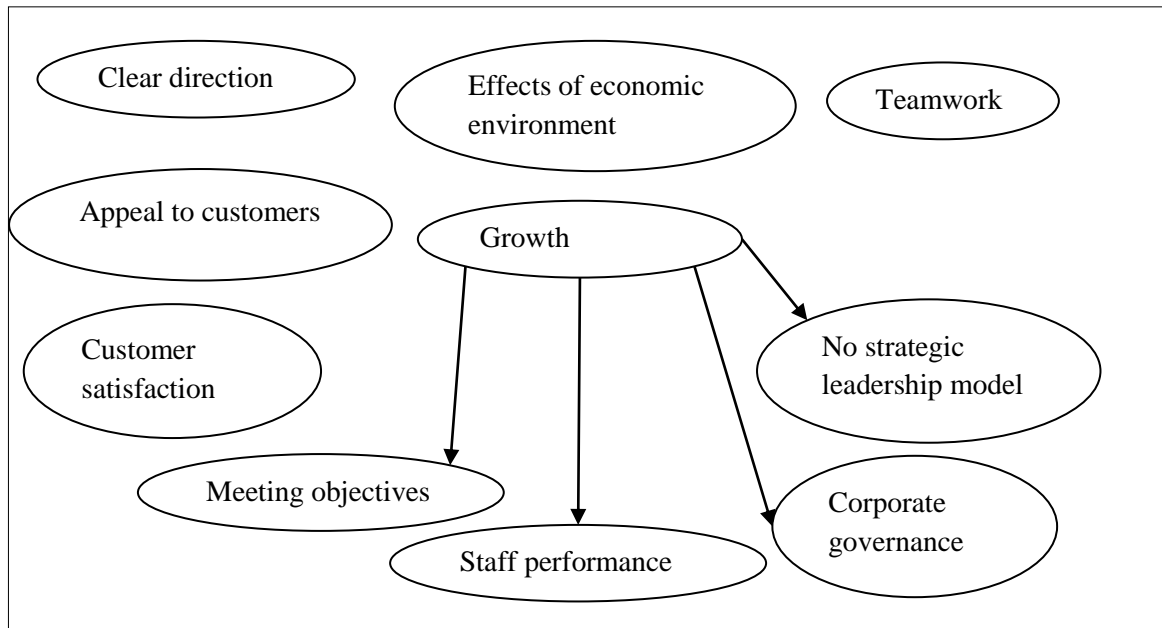
GR1R3

The findings reveal that strategic leadership plays a crucial role of giving an organisation direction to the future. It is therefore important for top leaders/owners to be clear with the direction of their organisations and how they will reach their desired destinations (Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016). As such, CEOs/owners/managers of SMEs have a duty to map the direction their enterprises have to follow.

6.2.3 Effectiveness of strategic leadership

Participants' account of the effectiveness of strategic leadership of their organisations revealed (10) ten themes and child themes as reflected in figure 6.3 below. Growth and effects of the economy were the most outstanding themes.

Fig 6.3: -Theme map



Source: Author

6.2.3.1 Growth – parent theme

Organisational growth as a parent theme, had (106) coding references. This over-arching theme had five (5) child themes as reported in figure 6.3 above. About 15 senior managers and departmental heads from all SMEs, representing 71% of the participants indicated that strategic leadership of their organisations was effective. They felt it had some positive effect on organisational performance. They in particular, mentioned customer satisfaction, staff performance and financial performance as areas that have been greatly enhanced by embracing the concept of strategic leadership. Customer satisfaction is the heart and soul of every organisation because highly satisfied customers are a source of organisational loyalty, which in turn leads to enhanced performance (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). However, (6) organisational leaders from SMEBY1, SMEHR1, SMEHR2 and SMEHR3 representing 29% of the participants had negative views on the effectiveness of strategic leadership of their organisations. As such, scenarios such as a CEO claiming strategic leadership being effective, only to be countered by a departmental head claiming otherwise emerged. Perhaps, the problem centres on how these institutions measure effectiveness of their strategic leadership.

Six participants, BY1R1, GR1R1, HR1R2, HR3R1, BY2R1 and MV1R2 in particular from SMEs SMEBY1, SMEGR1, SMEHR1, SMEHR3, SMEBY2 and SMEHV1 showed some degree of excitement relating the effectiveness of strategic leadership of their organisations. Four of the above participants were CEOs/owners and two were departmental managers.

BY1R1 stated:

We have witnessed the effectiveness of our strategic leadership through improved organisational and staff performance over the years. Our employees have proved to be effective especially on meeting objectives set and other tasks they have to do

BY1R1

BY1R1 went on to elaborate on improved staff performance in their organization as follows:

Our staff members have been encouraged to foster and understand strategic leadership and its benefits. They are trying hard to drive the organisation forward and all set strategies are implemented with much enthusiasm

BY1R1

GR1R1 emphasized how strategic leadership of SMEGR1 has enhanced customer satisfaction leading to organisational growth. GR1R1 stated:

Our growth strategies for example have paved way for us to enter new markets well beyond our borders. Similarly, our competitive strategies aim at delivering quality products well priced to the expectations of our customers. We have been able to retain our key customers simply because we listen to their requirements and expectations. Our success borders on turning around everything we do and today customers are commenting positively on the good service we offer them

GR1R1

MV1R2 equally commented on how strategic leadership enhanced customer satisfaction in their organisation SMEMV1:

Thanks to our pre-paid customers who have not let us down; this group of customers has shown some sincere confidence in our service. Some have delivered cakes to our organisation as a way of thanking us for services well rendered

MV1R2

Other participants also mentioned overall organisational performance and customer satisfaction as evidence of strategic leadership effectiveness in their organisations.

HR1R2 stated:

Effectiveness of strategic leadership of our organisation is clear when looking at the rate at which our clientele base is growing. We have a good reputation with our customers. We are not saying we are one-hundred percent correct but we hear customers talking good about our organisation

HR1R2

It is important for an organisation to attain good reputation from its customers. This can only happen if an organisation builds a pool of happy and satisfied customers. SMEs are organisations still finding their market positions in industries they operate in and as such, they need to distil good customer care programmes in order to earn a good reputation in a highly competitive global market. Besides attaining a good reputation from customers, HR1R2 also mentioned an increase in sales figures as a sign of growth leading to organisational performance.

HR1R2 further stated:

Our sales figures are picking up. We are now achieving our targets and the big boss is all smiles. As a result, performance of our organisation has increased over the years and we can safely say our organisational performance is above seventy- percent

HR1R2

HR3R1 similarly focused on financial performance when asked to explain how effective the strategic leadership of SMEHR3 was.

HR3R1 stated:

When we do our performance quarterly reviews, we realize that we are always meeting our targets. Our performance is therefore encouraging and impressive. Our profits have been increasing by 20% every quarter. By the end of much, 2015, our liabilities were more than our assets by \$10000.00 and to date our equity has dropped to - \$25000.00. This means that our profit ranges from \$20000.00 to \$30000.00 per annum

HR3R1

However, participants HR1R1, HR2R1, HR2R2, HR3R2 and HR3R3 who were all departmental managers except HR1R1 and HR2R1 expressed negative views on the effectiveness of strategic leadership of their organisations. They somehow contradicted their CEOs who expressed positive sentiments on the effectiveness of strategic leadership of their organisations. HR3R2 and HR3R3, departmental heads in SMEHR3 an enterprise in the security services industry, contradicted their CEO who claimed that strategic leadership of his organisation was effective and went on to display figures to support his claim. HR3R2 commented as follows:

It becomes difficult to give a correct evaluation as to whether our strategic leadership is effective or not. Besides, the current economic conditions make it difficult to implement strategies due to shortage of resources like finance and human capital. In reality, I am not seeing the effectiveness of our strategic leadership as a result

HR3R2

HR3R3, although fairly new in the organisation as a departmental manager, doubted the effectiveness of strategic leadership in SMEHR3 and commented as well:

My view is that for the little time I have been here, I am not seeing a real positive picture that magnifies the effectiveness of strategic leadership in this organisation. I am still to get the right picture on the performance of the organisation. I however, express my reservations on the effectiveness in view of the current problems organisations are facing in Zimbabwe

HR3R3

Surprisingly, participants HR1R1 and HR2R1 who were CEOs also had negative views on the effectiveness of strategic leadership of their organisations. Naturally, CEOs as high ranking business executives would protect their turf by claiming success even in the absence of any. They would want to be seen as executives with capabilities to drive their organisations forward and blame failure on something else. However, in this case HR1R1 blamed himself for strategic leadership ineffectiveness. HR1R1 commented:

Currently I am not happy with the level of effectiveness of strategic leadership of our organisation. Yes our business is growing and revenues are coming in but I would want to see a better picture. I would like a situation where business should flow even if I am not around. For a long-time since the company was formed, I have always been around, and all decisions depended on me and this has not been beneficial to my employees and the organisation

HR1R1

In view of the above, HR1R1 seemed to regret his strategic leadership approach and further commented as follows:

I have learnt my lessons and although I am the key strategic decision maker, I now also involve my top management team so that we come up with an agreed common ground when making strategic choices

HR1R1

The theory of strategic leadership state that the CEO as the top organisational leader and his/her top management team (TMT) have a mandate to make strategic choices that guide the organisation into the future (Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016). However, HR1R1 as the CEO, made all strategic decisions on his own without involving his TMT. The results turned negative, hence the regret. HR2R1 also a CEO, blamed lack of effectiveness of strategic leadership on the negative economic developments in the country. HR2R1 commented:

At the moment we are not growing but merely surviving. A lot will depend on the government policies in place and how good they are. Yes, effectiveness of strategic leadership is seen by achievement of results, but we operate with limited financial resources. At times, even marketing trips have to be cancelled and some projects get derailed due to our inability to complete them on time

HR2R1

The findings reveal that strategic leadership of SMEs is effective despite the effects of the subdued economy. However, it becomes difficult to comprehensively assess the effectiveness given that a departmental manager in one organisation would contradict his/her CEO instead of them coming up with one position. However, those who professed lack of effectiveness blamed this on the negative effects of the business and economic environment in the country. The Zimbabwean economy has been on a downward spiral since the demise of the GNU. At the moment, the economy is characterized by a serious liquidity crunch, lack of foreign currency,

high unemployment levels and political instability due to fights between the two major political parties. In this regard, operating under such environment can be a challenge to organisations like SMEs whose financial base is naturally weak.

6.2.3.2 Effects of the business environment – main theme

Despite confirmation by about 71% of participants that the strategic leadership of their organisations was effective, participants across the board lamented the negative effects of the economic and business environment on the smooth making and implementation of strategic decisions. The Zimbabwean economic environment has not been favourable to successful organisational operations across board. SMEs as organisations burdened by a host of challenges have become easy victims of the current economic environment. Many enterprises are failing to realize growth in view of the challenges they face as a result. The external environment naturally brings along variables that are usually beyond influence and control of any organisation regardless of its size and the industry it belongs (Thompson et al 2015).

Fifteen (15) participants, representing about 71% of the participants including those who indicated that the strategic leadership of their organisations was effective showed some concern on the general state of the economy. BY1R1 the CEO of SMEBY1 is one of the participants who indicated that strategic leadership of his organisation was effective. However, despite coming out positive on strategic leadership effectiveness, BY1R1 lamented the effects of the environment and commented:

Our Staff members have been encouraged to foster strategic leadership and its benefits. They are trying hard to drive the organisation forward and all set strategies are implemented with much enthusiasm. The problem or challenge comes from the hostile economic environment and if the situation is not addressed soon, we might in the future face staff exodus to nearby countries

BY1R1

BY1R2 a departmental head in SMEBY1 also felt that developments from the environment were doing the enterprise more harm than good despite accepting that strategic leadership of SMEBY1 was effective. BY1R2 stated:

I can simply say the effectiveness of our strategic leadership is acceptable. Our guys are fully geared and do understand the benefits of strategic leadership, but their efforts are met by the negative winds of the economy blowing from the opposite direction

BY1R2

BY1R2 further stated:

I can proudly say our employees are enthusiastic and are showing a lot of commitment to their work. However, the current economic hardships have forced our customers to cut down on costs which have a big impact on our sales and profitability levels

BY1R2

HR3R1 the CEO of SMEHR3 also commented that the negative economic environment slowed down growth of his organisation. HR3R1 stated:

We are now focused and operate as a solid team with a clear direction where the organisation is going. In fact had it not been the current negative economic environment our performance levels would be higher. Our growth would be tremendous

HR3R1

However, BY2R1 a CEO with positive comments on the effectiveness of strategic leadership of SMEBY2, felt the effects of the economic environment can always be minimized by being positive and remaining on top of the situation. In other words, SMEs leaders can be on top of the situation by being able to incisively read the environment. A proactive CEO can only be on top of the situation by meticulously reading the environment looking for threats and opportunities (Thompson et al, 2015, Johnson et al 2014). In view of the above, BY2R1 stated:

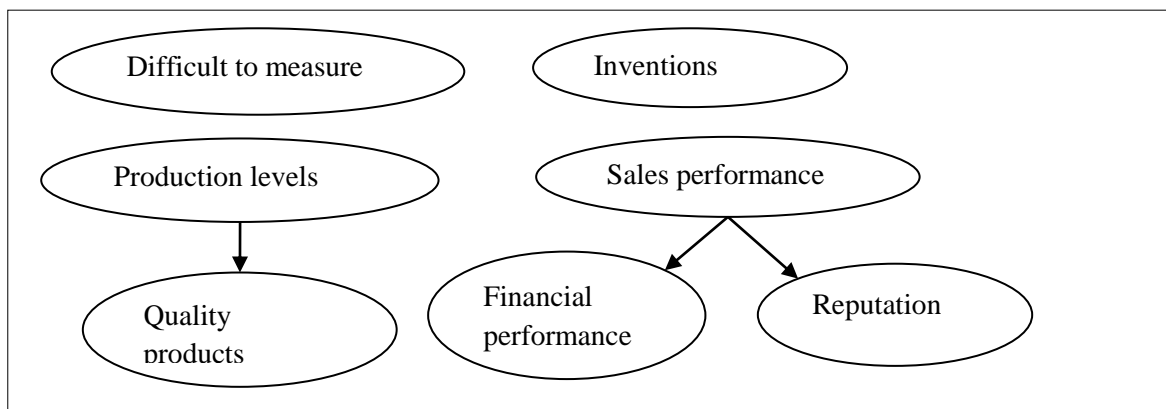
We are all affected by all these problems especially shortage of cash in the economy. Our re-order levels are affected as a result. But you see when faced by such problems one has to be on top of the situation and be pro-active all the time

BY2R1

6.2.4 Measuring effectiveness of strategic leadership

An account by strategic leaders on how they measure effectiveness of the strategic leadership of their organisations revealed (4) main themes and (3) child themes. Figure 6.4 below show the (7) themes.

Fig 6.4: -Theme map



Source: Author

6.2.4.1 Sales performance levels – parent theme

This over-arching theme with two child themes had 99 coding references. Sales performance is a crucial organisational objective especially in SMES where owners/managers largely direct their efforts on pursuing personal goals. Wang et al (2007) are of the view that SMES owners/managers in general do not pay much attention to strategic decision making and

planning. Instead, they prefer to concentrate on making sales and profits to boost their personal life styles at the expense of their enterprises. By so doing they make sure that their businesses remain small to serve their personal goals. About 16 participants identified levels of profitability and reputation as their preferred measures of strategic leadership effectiveness. This represented about 76% of participants. The two variables seem to be the most common measures of strategic leadership effectiveness in SMEs. However, participants mentioned other variables like market share, degree of creativity, staff commitment and production of quality of goods and services as other measures of strategic leadership effectiveness.

Of the 16 participants, 8 stated that reputation was an important measure of strategic leadership effectiveness. The participants were from SMEs, SMEHR1 (public transport), SMEMV1 (energy supplier) SMEBY2 (entertainment industry). SMEHR1 is a public transporter, whose core business is to transport the public from one corner of the country to the other and across borders. SMEMV1 is in the energy industry, supplying fuel and lubrication oils to the motoring public from all walks of life. SMEBY2 is in the entertainment industry and on a daily basis deals with the members of the public. In this view, it makes sense for these enterprises to focus on good customer care programmes in order to earn a good reputation from the members of the public. BY2RI a CEO as a result stated:

Customer care is a key area in our industry. Remember we are in the entertainment industry dealing with customers from all over. We cannot take chances because our name can easily be tarnished. We need to display a good picture in front of our patrons. Yes, we consider our profit levels as well which must be met at all times but handling of customers tops the list

BY2RI

BY2R2, a departmental manager supported BY2RI and commented as follows:

The more the customers we get the better for us. We cannot afford not to take into cognisance the number of our repeat satisfied customers. This is good for us. This gives us hint on how effective our decisions are. Moreover, we want to maintain a good reputation in town. A good image is best in our industry

BY2R2

MV1R1 and HR1R2 also commented on the importance of image and reputation as suitable for measuring strategic leadership effectiveness of their organisations. MV1R1 commented:

Our Business is largely customer based as we deal with members of the public from all walks of life. We therefore rely heavily on feedback from our customers especially our pre-paid customers. We also have a listening ear to customers' complaints because our image is very important for our survival

MV1R1

HR1R2 also commented:

The reputation of our company says a lot on the effectiveness of our strategic leadership. Usually disgruntled customers can easily destroy a company. Thanks to our good strategic leadership programmes; our image before our customers is perfect and most of them talk good about us

HR1R2

Customer care and retention are areas that attract the attention of scholars in marketing literature simply because a disgruntled customer can be an obstacle to the survival of an organisation. Kotler and Armstrong (2012) argue that satisfied customers are likely to be good ambassadors for the organisation because they will relate their good experiences of the organisation to others. Disgruntled and dissatisfied customers will go for competitors' offerings.

The other eight (8) participants identified profitability levels as ideal for measuring effectiveness of the strategic leadership of their organisations. In reality, organisations in general with the exception of non-profit making ones, go into business to make profit. However, for a business to grow into a large organisation there is need for attainment of set objectives in order to be profitable. SMEs are institutions that operate without vision for the future and their owners/managers go into business to simply make money to boost their lifestyles (Wang et al, 2011). However, some SMEs like SMEHR3 seemed to be in business to grow into large organisations. SMEHR3 felt they were a major player in the security services industry and preferred to embrace measures of performance like the balanced score card to determine effectiveness of strategic leadership. The balanced score card is a performance measurement tool commonly employed by established large organisations although the tool is suitable for use by any organisation regardless of size and age. The leadership of SMEHR3 is made up of well-educated executives. The enterprise has a board of directors and two of them are holders of doctoral degrees from esteemed South African universities while the CEO is an MBA degree holder from a local university. SMEHR3 leadership is therefore aware of the importance of employing advanced measurement tools like the balanced score card. In this light, HR3R1 commented on the use of the balanced score card by SMEHR3:

We also use the balanced score card to measure our organisational performance; hence, determine the effectiveness of our strategic leadership

HR3R1

HR3R1 further commented on the use of the balanced score card as follows:

The balanced score card allows us to have a quick look at how we perform from the customer, finance, training and improvement of our internal systems perspectives

HR3R1

GR1R2, GR1R1, BY1R1, BY1R2 also identified attainment of profit as a key measure of strategic leadership effectiveness. GR1R2 stated:

We take into consideration our profit margins and our sales revenue figures to determine if our organisation is on the right track

GR1R2

BY1R2 corroborated above comments and stated:

We consider sales revenue and profit levels as crucial in the measurement of strategic leadership effectiveness. These two give us a direction as to where our organisation is headed

BY1R2

6.2.4.2 Production levels – main theme

This theme had 32 coding references and participants emphasized the production of quality products in order to meet set targets or objectives. About 15 participants, representing (71 %) of the participants stated that meeting set organisational objectives was an important measure of the effectiveness of strategic leadership of their organisations. Participants HR2R1, GR1R1 and BY1R1, all CEOs in their respective organisations stated that meeting set objectives was not an option.

HR2R1 Stated:

We are an organisation that strongly believes in achieving set targets. We therefore measure the effectiveness of our strategic leadership by setting targets which we all strive as a team to accomplish. We know times are hard but if performance targets are not achieved as per set time, it becomes a worry to all of us

HR2R1

GR1R1 made similar comments concerning meeting set targets as follows:

Our sales figures reveal a positive picture for a medium size company operating in a hostile economic environment. We are still able to meet our set targets despite shortages of foreign currency to import raw materials. It's all because of good strategic decisions making that has taken us this far

GR1R1

BY1R1 confirmed that set targets and production levels form the basis for measuring strategic leadership effectiveness despite using variables like sales performance levels, staff performance and pricing structure. BY1R1 stated:

We measure the effectiveness of our strategic leadership by constantly monitoring our sales performance based on our set targets and production levels. We check if decisions taken concerning any of the above are implemented successfully

BY1R1

BYIR2 a departmental head in the same organisation supported above statement and commented:

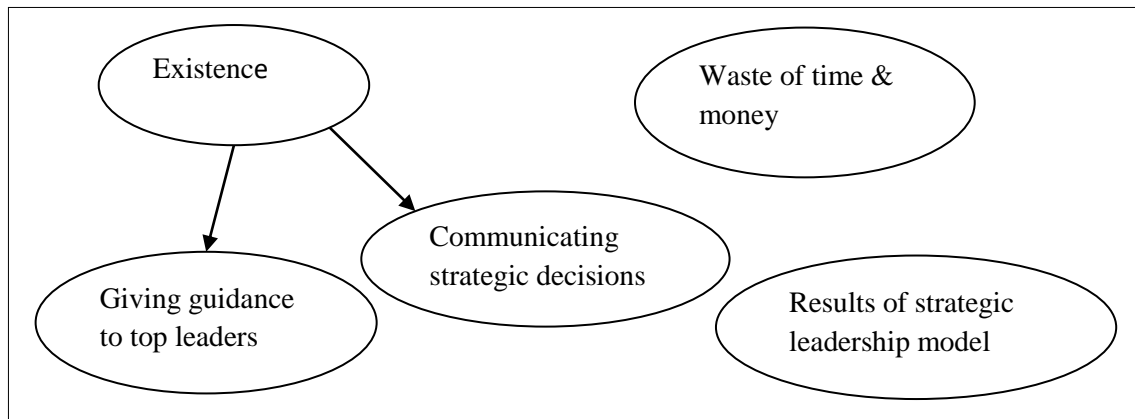
Remember strategies we craft are meant to enable the accomplishment of set goals and objectives and failure to do so means a decrease in our sales revenue and profits. We cannot let this happen, hence the need to monitor movements. But also, all of this must be backed by production of high-quality goods

BY1R2

6.2.5 Strategic leadership model

The researcher developed five themes and child themes as shown in figure 6.5 below relating to the existence of a strategic leadership model to guide SMEs leaders in making strategic choices. Existence of a model and communicating strategic decisions came out as the most outstanding main and child themes. Existence of a model had 85 coding references while communicating strategic decisions had (34) thirty-four.

Fig 6.5: -Theme map



Source: Author

6.2.5.1 Existence of a model – parent theme

Existence of a model was the most outstanding theme, with two child themes. This over-arching theme had (85) eighty-five coding references. Of the 21 participants, 8 clearly declared that their organisations had a model to guide them in their strategy making programmes. This represented about 38% of the participants to the study. However, none of the 8 participants was able to produce evidence of a documented model. The other 13 participants indicated during interviews that their organisations did not have a model in existence and some were not sure of what a model was. This represented about 62% of participants. In view of the above, it is important for organisations including SMEs to have a clear strategic leadership model to guide top leaders in making strategic choices that ultimately enhance organisational performance. Those who confirmed the existence of a model in their organisations stated as follows:

In our organisation, strategic decisions are taken at the top and the process is centralized in the hands of two top directors, 1 as the general manager and three departmental heads. All decisions taken are then communicated to all other employees for implementation. You see our model is therefore inclusive because it is important to make sure that all employees are aware of all decisions taken

GR1R1

Yes we have a strategic leadership model that our directors follow when making their strategic decisions. It is a model that gives the CEO as the top organisational leader the mandate to solely come up with all strategic options capable of driving the organisation forward

HR1R3

As the CEO, my model of strategic leadership involves weekly management meetings with my top management team, where all departmental heads are expected to demonstrate their understanding of the direction the company is going. Strategic decisions taken at these meetings are communicated to all departments

HR2R1

Our strategic leadership model requires us to firstly conduct an environmental analysis looking for opportunities and threats from the external environment

HR3R1

However, most participants who confirmed the existence of a model occupied the position of CEO/owner. Participants who professed ignorance of a model and those who clearly stated that their organisations were not guided by a model were mostly managers and supervisors at departmental level. As such, some departmental managers contradicted their bosses on the existence of a model. Participants holding negative views claimed as follows:

I am not sure of what a strategic leadership model is but what I know is that the directors together with the Chief Executive usually sit as a team to come up with all strategic decisions

HR1R2

Above words simply confirm ignorance on the part of the participant perhaps necessitated by top management's failure to communicate and be clear with subordinates on the existence or non-existence of a model. According to Ejimabo (2015), communication is an important organisational tool and top managerial leaders must effectively communicate in order to stimulate operations of a business enterprise. HR2R2 had a clear position on the non-existence of a model and stated as follows:

I must confess my ignorance when it comes to the meaning of a strategic leadership model. In our organisation we do not have a documented way of doing it. Perhaps my understanding of strategic leadership model is completely out

HR2R2

HR2R3 and MV1R2 agreed with HR2 R2 and stated as follows:

I am not very conversant with the meaning of a strategic leadership model but when we do our planning in marketing for example, we start by coming up with budgets followed by marketing plan

HR2R3

Our organisation is still a small one by any standards and I don't think we have such a thing as strategic leadership model. Everything comes from the CEO and he merely shares ideas with me to keep me posted as his right-hand man

MV1R2

It is evident from the above findings that SMEs operate without any model to guide their top leaders in making strategic choices. As for those enterprises claiming to have a model, it might not be clear to their top managerial team members and might not be documented. Failure to communicate the model and its benefits to senior managers leaves them not clear and ignorant of its existence. One would assume that SMEs like SMEHR2 and SMEHR3 whose leaders are holders of high academic qualifications would understand the importance of having a strategic leadership model to guide them in making strategic decisions. SMEHR3 for example claim to have successfully moved into new geographical areas such as RSA, Zambia and Malawi due to good strategic leadership but could not produce any evidence of a documented model despite claiming to have one in place.

6.2.5.2 Communicating strategic decisions – child theme

This child theme had 34 coding references. Participants who claimed that a model was in existence in their organisations, stated that employees, especially at low levels were responsible for implementation of strategic decisions made. In other words, SMEs business leaders or owners communicate decisions they make by passing them down to low level managers and their subordinates for implementation. Communicating strategic decisions is therefore a crucial skill a business leader must demonstrate for the success of a business enterprise (Ejimabo, 2015). BY1R2 stated:

My husband as the CEO and myself as the Finance Director sit down after getting the views of our departmental managers, to come up with those key decisions or strategic plans that can push our organisation forward. Decisions we make are then passed to all our employees for implementation.

BY1R2

GR1R2 and HR2R1 also stated that in their organisations, top managerial leaders communicate decisions they make by cascading them to subordinates:

The CEO and departmental heads have come up with a model to follow and all decisions are made in line with this model. Decisions made are cascaded to low level employees so that implementation can be made

GR1R2

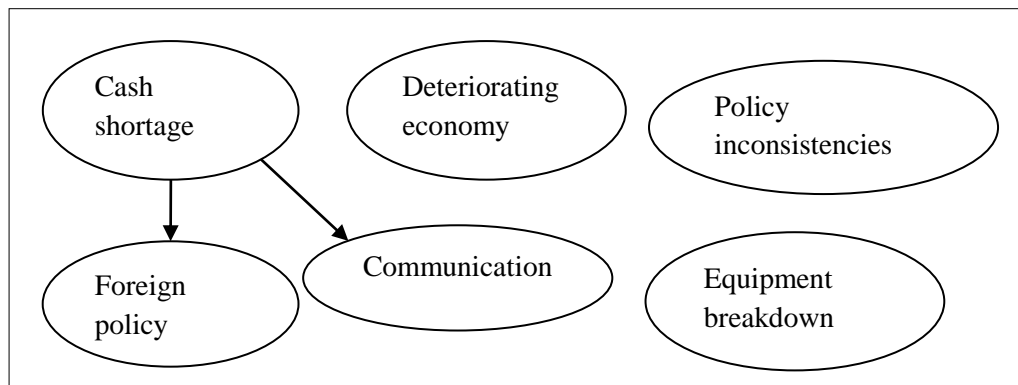
Strategic decisions taken at our meetings are communicated to all departments

HR2R1

6.2.6 Variables derailing strategic leadership effectiveness

Participants account of variables likely to derail strategic leadership effectiveness in Zimbabwe SMEs revealed (6) six themes and child themes as reported in figure 6.6 below. Cash shortage and deteriorating economy came out as the most outstanding themes. Cash shortage had 63 coding references while deteriorating economy had 53 coding references respectively.

Fig 6.6: -Theme map



Source: Author

6.2.6.1 Cash shortage – parent theme

Liquidity crunch is becoming a bottleneck to the operations of SMEs in Zimbabwe, in view of the overall poor economic performance. The problem has engulfed organisations big or small, across all industries, resulting in the closure of many firms including SMEs. SMEs are an important source of employment creation especially to the middle class in Zimbabwe (Majoni et al 2016). As such, SMEs require support in the form of loans and any other assistance they can get from respective financial institutions and relevant arms of the government. In this regard, their growth and survival can be enhanced in order for them to make meaningful contribution to the economy. SMES are therefore feeling the heat due to the prevailing liquidity crunch and their day to day operations are badly compromised. Participants painted a gloomy picture, relating how their operations were affected by general cash shortage in the economy. About 16 participants representing 76% of the participants lamented the problem of liquidity that has forced organisations to resort to the black or parallel market for survival. BY1R1, BY2R1, HR2R1 and HR3R1, all CEOs commented on the problem as follows:

The problem of liquidity makes sourcing of raw materials a major problem to our operations. At times we become so desperate that we resort to the parallel market for funds and this is at a premium. The banks are never helpful and this has an effect on our pricing structure

BY1R1

Shortages are the order of the day. There is a liquidity problem and we have to resort to the black market to source expensive money. How else can we stock our bar if we don't do this? The banks have no money to give their clients **BY2R1**

We have been finding the going getting tougher on a daily basis. We have been forced to abandon some of our well thought strategies purely because of the liquidity crunch. We cannot afford to finance our routine operations with funds from the parallel market. The rates are unbearable, and pricing becomes difficult

HR3R1

SMEs like SMEMV1 operating in the energy sector are facing yet another problem besides that of liquidity. SMEMV1 is an importer and supplier of petroleum fuels and related products. The enterprise relies on the availability of foreign currency to bring in the required products. However, foreign currency is hard to come by, forcing many organisations like SMEMV1 to resort to the parallel market for supplies. MV1R1 the enterprise's CEO commented:

I think our biggest challenge is the availability of fuel because at times we do not get what we would have ordered. We have a problem of getting foreign currency to import enough fuel to satisfy our commitments

MV1R1

SMEGR1 is in the corporate wear industry and also relies on foreign currency to import required raw materials. The enterprise is badly affected by the shortage of foreign currency bearing in mind that some of the required raw materials come from countries as far as Turkey and China. GR1R1 the CEO commented as follows:

Firstly we import some of our raw materials and it is proving difficult to get the required foreign currency. We are unable to get some raw materials locally, thus forcing us to import from as far as Turkey and China

GR1R1

In essence liquidity and foreign currency are crucial requirements that drive the wheel of an economy. As such, their non-availability can eventually grind an economy to a halt.

6.2.6.2 Deteriorating economy – main theme

This theme as already stated had 53 coding references. About 86% of participants lamented the general state of the economy as not conducive to effective strategic leadership of their organisations. They cited increase in unemployment levels, political and economic instability and poor economic performance as symptoms of a dying economy. As a result, participants complained about the general state of the economy over and above the problem of liquidity. They commented as follows:

Our directors are worried that the current developments in the economy especially the challenges of cash and foreign currency shortages can possibly derail our efforts to enhance performance of our organisation

GR1R2

I am concerned that we might face roadblocks in our bid to boost performance of our company due to numerous challenges currently pummeling the economy. Right now, our biggest challenge is the general poor performance of the economy

GR1R3

The major obstacle to strategic leadership is lack of stability in the economy. This makes it impossible to plan for the long term

HR2R1

Factors from the political and economic environments are the biggest obstacles to strategic leadership programmes as these are beyond our control

HR2R2

In my view micro-economic fundamentals are a major obstacle to the concept of strategic leadership not only in SMEs but in all companies in general

HR3R3

6.3 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined how the researcher analysed qualitative data. The researcher employed themes and sub-themes to analyse data developed using NVivo12 pro software. Results show that participants understood and are aware of the concept of strategic leadership as necessary for enhancing performance of their enterprises. However, acceptance of strategic leadership appeared to be a challenge to some SMEs managers. Equally, study findings show that participants also understood the role of strategic leadership as that of enhancing overall performance of an organisation from financial, shareholders' value and marketing aspects. However, on the negative side, results show that Zimbabwean SMEs owners/managers make strategic decisions in the absence of a strategic leadership model to guide them in their strategy making programmes. However, the researcher makes a comparison between qualitative and quantitative results in the next chapter to establish the degree of convergence and non-convergence.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONVERGENCE OF RESULTS

7.0 Introduction

Since the parallel convergent mixed methods research design involves collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data separately, emphasis is on the assessment of combined results from each phase of the study, picking areas of convergence (agreement) and contradictions (disagreements). This helps in answering the mixed method research question “to what extent do the results from the two phases of the research converge?” The major issue with the parallel convergent mixed methods design is that research findings from the two data sets should at the end be the same (Creswell, 2014). Similar results from the two databases confirm validity of the study results. This chapter therefore presents a comparison of quantitative and qualitative results in line with the dictates of mixed methods research design. The researcher used tables to make the comparison. Results from the two sets of data reveal some degree of compatibility. Both quantitative and qualitative findings reveal that: -

- SMEs owners/leaders/CEOs understood the concept of strategic leadership as a necessary tool for enhancing organisational performance. Strategic leadership awareness of the concept is therefore a significant factor of organisational performance.
- Acceptance of strategic leadership is also a factor of organisational performance with no significant impact on the performance of SMEs.
- The role of strategic leadership is equally a significant factor of organisational performance. As such, SMEs owners/leaders/CEOs and their managers understood the role of strategic leadership as that of enhancing overall performance of their organisations by making strategic decisions that guide their organisations into the future.
- Strategic leadership therefore, helps an organisation to move from where it is to where it wants to be and it also enhances the production of quality goods and services.
- Strategic leadership of Zimbabwean SMEs is effective despite lack of a strategic leadership model to guide owners/managers in making key strategic decisions. Quantitatively, effectiveness of strategic leadership had the greatest impact on organizational performance. Qualitatively, owners/managers witnessed an improvement in customer satisfaction, staff and financial performance in their organisations.
- The poor economic environment and liquidity crunch are factors likely to derail the strategic leadership of SMEs in Zimbabwe.

7.1 Strategic leadership awareness

Table 7.1 below shows results of the awareness of strategic leadership from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. Both quantitative and qualitative results reveal

that strategic leadership involves the making of the strategic choices that enhance organisational performance by top leaders. Quantitatively, understanding of strategic leadership is a factor that had a significant impact on organisational performance. The component had factor loadings greater than 0.5 and its beta coefficient was ($\beta = 0.115$, $p = 0.006 < 0.05$). A factor loading like “ability to anticipate and envision a viable future for the organization” for example, had a factor loading of 0.845 and “ability to influence individual and organisational performance had a factor loading of 0.732. These are all greater than 0.5. Qualitatively, 86% of participants showed their understanding of strategic leadership as related to making decisions that determine performance, allowing an organisation to find its way into the future. As such, there is evidence of a high degree of convergence and compatibility between quantitative and qualitative results.

Table 7.1: - Awareness/understanding of term strategic leadership

Item	Qualitative (participants)		Quantitative (Component analysis)
	Name (pseudonym) n	%	
Participants who associated their understanding/awareness of strategic leadership with making of strategic decisions/choices to enhance performance	BY1R1; BY1R2; BY1R3; BY2R1; BY2R2; By2R3; GR1R1; GR1R2; GR1R3; HR1R1; MV1R1; HR2R1; HR2R3; HR3R3; HR3R1; HR3R2; MV1R1; MV1R2	18	86
Participants not associating their awareness/ understanding of strategic leadership with making of strategic decisions	HR1R2; HR1R3; HR2R2	3	14
Total		21	100

Source: Author

7.2 Acceptance of strategic leadership

Table 7.2 below shows comparison of quantitative and qualitative results in relation to the acceptance of the strategic leadership concept by SMEs leaders and their TMTs. The results from the two data sets show some degree of compatibility. Quantitative results confirm

acceptance of strategic leadership as a factor that has an impact on organisational performance although not significantly. The component had factor loadings greater than 0.5 but the beta coefficient showed that the factor did not have a significant impact on performance. The beta coefficient was ($\beta = 0.040$, $p = 0.335 > 0.05$). Qualitatively, 62% of participants understood and accepted the concept of strategic leadership as a necessary tool for organisational performance while 24% also understood the concept but could not accept and embrace it for varied reasons. In this view, acceptance of strategic leadership becomes less significant as a determinant of organisational performance.

Table 7.2: - Acceptance of strategic leadership concept

Item	Qualitative (participants)		Quantitative (Component analysis)
	Name (pseudonym)	n %	
Participants who understood and accepted strategic leadership as a necessary tool for organisational performance	BY1R1; BY1R2; BY1R3; BY2R1; GR1R1; GR1R2; GR1R3; HR2R1; HR1R1; MV1R2; MV1R1; HR3R1; HR2R3	13 62	Acceptance of strategic leadership as a factor of organisational performance with no significant impact: Factor loadings > 0.5 Beta coefficient = ($\beta = 0.040$, $p = 0.335 > 0.05$).
Participants who understood and are aware of strategic leadership, but are not accepting concept	HR3R2; HR3R3; BY2R2; BY2R3; HR2R2	5 24	
Participants not accepting strategic leadership	MV1R3; HR1R2; HR1R3;	3 14	
Total		21 100	

Source: Author

7.3 Role of strategic leadership

Table 7.3 below shows a comparison between quantitative and qualitative results in relation to the understanding of the role of strategic leadership in organisational performance. Results from the two data sets show some high degree of convergence and compatibility. Quantitative results confirm that the role of strategic leadership is a key determinant of organisational performance. As such, the role of strategic leadership as a factor of performance is to make decisions that give an organisation direction into the future. The component had factor loadings greater than 0.5

and a beta coefficient of ($\beta = 0.201$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Qualitatively, 86% of participants stated during interviews that the role of strategic leadership was to enhance performance by coming up with decisions that guide their organisations into the future. They also stated that such decisions result in the production of quality products that meet the needs of their customers. The findings reveal that SMEs top managerial leaders and their TMTs accept that strategic leadership in general has a role to play in the performance of their organisations.

Table 7.3: - Role of strategic leadership

Item	Qualitative (participants)			Quantitative (respondents) (Component analysis)
	Name (pseudonym)	n	%	
Participants who said that the role of strategic leadership was to enhance performance by giving direction into the future	BY1R1; BY1R2; BY1R3; BY2R1; BY2R2; BY2R3; GR1R2; GR1R3; HR1R1; HR1R3; HR2R1; HR2R2; HR2R3; HR3R2; HR3R3; MV1R1; MV1R2; HR1R2	18	86	Role of strategic leadership as a factor of organisational performance: - Factor loadings > 0.5 Beta coefficient = ($\beta = 0.201$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$).
Participants who did not agree	GR1R1; HR3R1; MV1R3	3	14	
Total		21	100	

Source: Author

7.4 Strategic leadership effectiveness

Table 7.4 below shows a comparison of quantitative and qualitative results in relation to the effectiveness of strategic leadership of SMEs. Both sets of results confirm that strategic leadership of SMEs was effective. Quantitative results show strategic leadership as a major determinant of organisational performance, with the greatest beta coefficient of ($\beta = 0.234$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). The component like other factors, had factor loadings greater than 0.5. For example component item like “leaders and employees now focus on long-term objectives” had factor loading of 0.786, which is greater than 0.5. Qualitatively, 71% of participants clearly stated that strategic leadership of their organisations was effective, although they indicated that the negative economic environment was an impediment to their strategy making efforts. They identified the ability to meet set objectives by employees, enhanced staff performance, and the ability to satisfy customer needs as evidence that the strategic leadership of their organisations was indeed effective. Only 5 participants representing 24% of the participants stated during interviews that the strategic leadership of their organisations was not effective. Only 1

participant representing 5% of the participants was not sure. In this regard, there is evidence of compatibility and convergence between the two sets of results.

Table 7.4: -Strategic leadership effectiveness

Item	Qualitative (participants)		Quantitative (respondents)
	Name (pseudonym)	n	% (Component analysis)
Participants who said strategic leadership of their organisations was effective	BY1R1; BY2R3; BY1R2; GR1R1; BY2R1; GR1R2; BY2R2; GR1R3; HR1R2; HR1R3; HR2R3; HR3R1; MV1R1; MV1R2; MV1R3	15	71
Participants who claimed strategic leadership was not effective and those not sure	HR1R1; HR3R2; HR3R3; HR2R1; HR2R2: BY1R3	6	29
Total		21	100

Source: Author

7.5 Measuring strategic leadership effectiveness

Table 7.5 below shows a comparison between quantitative and qualitative results relating to how SMEs leaders measure the effectiveness of the strategic leadership of their organisations. Both sets of results show that financial and non-financial measures were factors that determine strategic leadership effectiveness leading to SMEs performance. Quantitative results show that the factor loadings for the two components, financial and non-financial performance were greater than 0.5. Qualitative results show that about 62% of participants stated during interviews that they use financial performance to measure effectiveness of strategic leadership. Thirty-eight (38%) identified non-financial variables such as reputation, market share, degree of creativity and innovation, staff commitment and production of quality goods and services. In summary, both quantitative and qualitative results point to the fact that SMEs leaders/owners rely on both financial and non-financial performance to measure strategic leadership effectiveness.

Table 7.5: - Measuring strategic leadership effectiveness

Item	Qualitative (participants)		Quantitative (respondents) (Component analysis)
	Name	n %	
Participants who identified financial performance.	BY1R1; BY1R2; BY1R3; BY2R3; GR1R1; GR1R2; GR1R3; HR1R1; HR1R3; HR2R1; HR3R1; MV1R2; MV1R3	13 62	Financial performance indicators as measures of effectiveness/performance: - Factor loadings > 0.5
Participants who identified non-financial factors	BY2R1; HR2R2; HR2R3; HR3R2; HR3R3; MV1R1; BY2R2; HR1R2;	8 38	Non-financial indicators as measures of effectiveness/performance: - Factor loadings > 0.5
Total		21 100	

Source: Author**7.6 Chapter summary**

As per the dictates of the parallel convergent mixed methods approach, the researcher made a comparison of the two sets of results in this chapter so as to establish the degree of convergence and non-convergence between them. Using tables, it is evident that there is a high degree of compatibility or convergence between the results. The understanding of strategic leadership, its acceptance, role and effectiveness are all determinants of organizational performance in small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe. However, strategic leadership acceptance does not have a significant impact on performance.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

8.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the study findings on the awareness/understanding, and acceptance of strategic leadership as a factor of organisational performance by SMEs top leaders/owners and managers. The chapter further discusses the findings on the role of strategic leadership in the performance of SMEs and its effectiveness. The researcher supports these findings with literature and highlights areas where it agrees and disagrees with them.

8.1 Study findings

The chapter discusses the study findings as follows: -

8.1.1 Awareness and acceptance of strategic leadership

Awareness/understanding and acceptance of the strategic leadership concept is central to long term organisational sustainability and performance (Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016). The findings from the qualitative aspect of the study reveal that most SMEs owners/top managers and some of their departmental managers have a clear understanding of strategic leadership as a factor of organisational performance. Their awareness and understanding of strategic leadership is associated with the making of strategic choices by top organisational leaders. Participants indicated that top SMEs leaders/CEOs/owners have to make strategic decisions or choices that enhance the performance of their organisations. Top leaders/owners of SMEGR1, SMEBY1, SMEHV1 and SMEHR2 were clear with their understanding and acceptance of the strategic leadership concept in their organisations. However, some departmental heads had difficulties in accepting the concept of strategic leadership as a necessary tool for organisational performance in Zimbabwean SMEs. Leaders/owners of SMEHR3, SMEBY2 and SMEHR1 in particular, felt that their departmental heads were still battling to understand strategic leadership resulting in their failure to accept the concept. In fact, the CEO for SMEHR1 confirmed that even his business partner/co-director also had difficulties in comprehending the concept. The functional heads of these enterprises confirmed their failure to fully accept strategic leadership concept. They cited the current poor economic environment as prohibitive to the performance of their enterprises. As a result, they felt that it was a concept suitable for established organisations. Quantitatively, the study findings equally reveal that strategic leadership understanding or awareness has a significant impact on the performance of SMEs. This component, as per the EFA results had its factor loading greater than 0.5. It is therefore, a major significant determinant of SMEs performance with a beta coefficient of ($\beta = 0.115$, $p = 0.006 < 0.05$). However, results show that acceptance of the concept does not have a significant impact despite having factor loadings greater than 0.5. The factor had beta coefficient of ($\beta = 0.040$, $p =$

0.335>0.05). In other words, both set of results point to the same direction, confirming that strategic leadership acceptance does not have a significant impact on the performance of SMEs. In essence, while some SMEs leaders have a good awareness and acceptance of strategic leadership, they equally find it difficult to accept the concept especially under the current poor economic conditions in Zimbabwe.

In line with strategic leadership literature, CEOs are executives who really matter because they are expected to make strategic decisions that drive their organisations forward (Wang et al, 2016). Strategic decisions they make determine the successes and failures of organisations they lead. In view of the above, top SMEs leaders/owners are not an exception. Their awareness and understanding of strategic leadership is important as they have to make strategic decisions or choices that enhance the performance of the organisations they lead. SMEGR1 for example, is an enterprise that has made some strategic moves into geographical areas outside the country. The enterprise successfully entered and established operations in the regional markets of South Africa, Zambia and Malawi. Such strategic moves can only materialize if top organisational leaders make fluid and incisive strategic decisions that ultimately stimulate the performance of their organisations. It however becomes a problem, when some top organisational leaders have difficulties in accepting the concept of strategic leadership. Under such a scenario, it becomes difficult for top leaders/owners to come up with a co-ordinated position when making strategic decisions.

Literature is clear on the concept of strategic leadership. The concept of strategic leadership states that the CEO and his or her top management team (TMT) have a mandate to make strategic choices that enhance organisational performance (Hambrick and Mason, 1984, Hiller and Beauchesne, 2014, Wang et al, 2016, Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016). SMEs are small organisations that require nurturing to grow and compete actively against established companies. Their owners/top leaders therefore require assistance from functional heads, especially in medium size enterprises to come up with fluid strategic decisions. In other words, owners/CEOs must consult their functional heads and work together as a team during the strategy making sessions. It therefore follows that owners/managers and their functional heads must have a clear understanding and acceptance of the concept of strategic leadership. Moreover, advocates for strategic leadership for the 21st century argue that the making of strategic choices should not be for the top leaders and their TMTs alone, instead, all organisational members should be part of the process (Hitt et al, 2013, Hitt et al, 2010, Arikan and Enginoglu, 2016).

8.1.2 Role of strategic leadership

Quantitative results reveal that the role of strategic leadership has a significant impact on the performance of SMEs. The EFA rotated component had factor loadings greater than 0.5 and a beta coefficient of ($\beta = 0.201$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). In other words, results reveal that the role of strategic leadership in SMES has a strong impact on their performance regardless of their sizes and ages. Qualitatively, the study findings show that the role of strategic leadership is to enhance the overall performance of organisations by mapping their direction into the future, delivery of quality goods and services, encouraging teamwork, promoting creativity and innovation and improving their profitability levels. Although most owners/CEOs were clear about the role of strategic leadership, some of their functional heads strongly felt that strategic leadership was suitable for big established organisations with financial muscle. The implication is that strategic leadership has no role to play in the performance of SMEs. Yet, according to Arikan and Enginoglu (2016) the role of strategic leadership is to address issues of competitiveness, allocation of resources and making financial decisions that enhance the overall performance of an organisation regardless of size. This requires organisations to direct their efforts to the development of human capital as their source of core-competencies. To this end, enhancing of organisational performance depends on the skills and capabilities of a strategic leader who should be visionary and capable of exploiting organisational core-competencies. Organisational performance according to Florian (2013) focuses on an organisation's financial performance, especially returns on shareholders' value and its ability to come up with distinct competitive products and identified potential markets.

Qualitative results in particular reveal that some SMEs managed, due to good strategic leadership, to grow and expand their operations into new geographical locations. SMEGR1 for example, is an established medium enterprise with regional operations in the Republic of South Africa, Zambia and Malawi. Equally, SMEHR3 is also a growing medium enterprise with clear plans to expand its operations into major urban centres of Zimbabwe. Such enterprises are destined for change as they grow into the future. There is therefore evidence that the role of strategic leadership is to enhance performance of an organisation resulting in its long-term sustainability and growth. This suggests that owners/top leaders of these enterprises are visionary and seem to have the right skills to grow and stimulate the performance of their organisations. This is in line with the views of Schoemaker et al (2013) who emphasize the importance of having the right skills to drive organisational performance. They argue that only a resolute visionary strategic leader who can easily anticipate the future, challenge the status quo, interpret events as they unfold, make informed decisions, align him/herself with current views and ideas and learn continuously, can successfully drive the performance of an organisation

he/she leads. Abdow (2015) concurs, pointing out that the role of strategic leadership is to bring about desired organisational change and as such, strategic leaders need to display clear strategic leadership practices that drive organisational performance. Strategic leaders especially those managing SMEs have to be highly visionary and be capable of developing core-competencies in order to create and sustain competitive advantage. Du Plessis et al (2016) point out that the role of strategic leadership in bringing about change, resulting in enhanced performance, is clear. They argue that strategic leadership clarifies the direction an organisation must follow by making sure that the organization has a clear vision and strategic decisions in place to stimulate performance. This forms the basis for attaining competitive advantage, which is a key determinant of organisational success or failure.

8.1.3 Strategic leadership effectiveness

Results from the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study reveal that strategic leadership effectiveness has a positive effect on the performance of SMEs. Qualitatively, 71% of participants stated that strategic leadership of their organisations was effective in view of enhanced customer satisfaction, staff and financial performance. However, some SMEs owners/managers felt that the strategic leadership of their organisations was not effective. They felt that the current negative economic developments such as liquidity crunch, conflicting government policies and the general collapse of infrastructure across most sectors of the Zimbabwean economy have a compromising effect on the effectiveness of strategic leadership of SMEs. As such, conflicting views emerged in some SMEs where an owner/CEO would claim during interviews that strategic leadership of his/her organisation was effective, only to be countered by his/her functional head claiming that it was not. This was the case with organisations like SMEHR3 where the owner/CEO's position on the effectiveness of strategic leadership differed with that of his functional heads whose positions were to the contrary. Perhaps this has to do with how effectiveness of strategic leadership is measured in these institutions. Quantitative results also reveal that strategic leadership effectiveness was a major significant determinant of organisational performance with the greatest beta coefficient of ($\beta = 0.234$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). The rotated component had factor loadings greater than 0.5. Strategic leadership effectiveness of these institutions marks a positive development in the Zimbabwean economy that is under-performing evidenced by high unemployment levels and a liquidity crunch. Moreover, many of these institutions operate without a strategic leadership model to guide their owners/managers in making strategic decisions.

The study findings show that strategic leadership effectiveness can only be realized if SMEs owners/managers encourage and nurture strategic thinking, innovation and creativity in their institutions. However, this requires SMEs owners/managers to display some visionary

leadership and strategic leadership capabilities. Qualitative study findings reveal some evidence of visionary leadership among some owners/managers. HR1R1, the CEO/owner/manager of SMEHR1 for example was initially a poor communicator who never bothered to involve his top management team (TMT) in making strategic decisions. He was virtually a lone ranger, but soon realized that it was important to develop and communicate the vision of the organisation by involving his TMT in the strategy making process. HR1R1 now involves his top management team in order to come up with a common ground when making strategic choices. Such an approach breeds effectiveness of the strategic leadership as the owners/top leaders and their top managers work as a team. The concept of strategic leadership by Hambrick and Mason (1984) clearly glorifies the CEO and his/her top management team (TMT) as executives with a mandate to make key strategic decisions effective enough to enhance the overall performance of an organisation. However, this can only be possible if the CEO is a visionary top executive who is able to communicate the organisation's vision to the rest of his/her team members. He/she must be a strategic thinker, always guided by innovation and creativity as he/she and the TMT put the pieces of strategy together. Besides, the owner/manager must as well develop key strategic leadership capabilities, necessary to drive the organisation forward. Many authors (Hitt et al, 2013, du Plessis et al, 2016, Abdow, 2015, Martin et al, 2014, Papulova, 2014, Tankovic, 2013, Agwu et al, 2016) have written on the importance of developing a clear strategic vision and how a communicated vision can drive organisational growth and performance. Abdow (2015) contends that it is mandatory for an organisation to have a clear strategic vision simply because organisational leadership becomes meaningless if a strategic leader is not clear of the direction the organisation is going. Organisational stakeholders should be made to understand the long-term direction the organisation is taking and should believe and be convinced that top managers know the intended destination (Thompson et al, 2015). In essence, strategic leaders need to motivate their subordinates with a clear vision or picture that is effectively communicated to all parties. Agwu et al (2016) agree, arguing that a clear strategic vision gives all organisational members an explanation as to what their organisation desires to be like in the future. As such, a strategic vision should be shared and ably give all organisational stakeholders a better and clear picture of the organisation's future.

In view of the above, a clear strategic vision should not only be communicated to others but must get their full support as well (Papulova, 2014). These views are in line with du Plessis et al (2016 citing Hitt et al, 2010) that strategic leadership effectiveness depends on the development of key strategic leadership capabilities by top organisational leaders. Developing and communicating a strategic vision is one of the key capabilities listed as central to strategic leadership effectiveness. They argue that in order to meet the dictates of the 21st century global

competitive landscape, strategic leaders must equip themselves with certain key capabilities that allow them to successfully drive performance. Other key capabilities listed are the ability by strategic leaders to build organisational core-competencies, develop human capital, engage in acceptable practices that are ethical, develop effective and healthy organisational culture, have balanced organisational controls in place, implement effective strategic decisions, and to invest in modern day technologies. Mwangi et al (2013) confirm that the East African economies of Kenya and Uganda witnessed effective strategic leadership of their SMEs through developing and communicating vision and total commitment by their owners/managers. As a result, SMEs in these economies are today showing signs of growth and innovativeness and creativity that are likely to sustain them well into the future.

8.1.4 Measuring strategic leadership effectiveness

Organisational leaders usually measure the effectiveness of strategic leadership using various financial and non-financial performance factors such as image or reputation of the organisation, ability to meet set objectives, pace of innovation and market share. As such many organisations today employ the balanced scorecard (BSC) to measure their financial, shareholders' and marketing outcomes. Moreover it is prudent for strategic leaders, regardless of the sizes of organisations they lead, to put emphasis on measuring the performances of their organisations. This according to Crucke and Decramer (2016) enables them to make informed decisions during their strategy making sessions. It further enables them to meet the demands of various stakeholders. Strategic leadership therefore focuses on strategic decisions top organisational leaders make in order to enhance financial, shareholders' and marketing outcomes. Both quantitative and qualitative results reveal that Zimbabwean SMEs owners/managers prefer using financial and non-financial performance factors as their preferred measures of strategic leadership effectiveness. Using the Cronbach's alpha to test reliability, quantitative results show that both financial and non-financial performance were reliable constructs and the two rotated components had factor loadings greater than 0.5.

Financial performance takes into consideration financial measures or tools that managers can employ to measure organisational performance. Such indicators or tools include net profit, cash-flows, profit margins, return on assets, return on investment and return on capital employed. However, return on investment (ROI) or shareholders' value is the most preferred measure (Erdogan and Kaya, 2014; Florian, 2013). Managers employ these tools to identify possible organisational weaknesses and strengths from the financial point of view (Beukes and Wyk, 2016; Erdogan and Kaya, 2014). Non-financial indicators are also necessary according to Erdogan and Kaya (2014) to determine or measure performance. As a result, the balanced scorecard developed by Kaplan and Norton in 1992 came in handy to address the shortcomings

of financial measures as it combines financial and non-financial indicators to measure performance (Awadallah and Allam, 2015). The economic meltdown of 2008 to 2009 in Zimbabwe resulted in the formation of many SMEs driven by the need to make ends meet. The period was marked by high unemployment levels, poverty and deteriorating standards of living. Owners of these institutions therefore viewed financial performance indicators such as net profit, profit margins and cash flows as important for their personal survival. According to Makate (2014) their focus was on their day to day financial needs in order to put food on the table. Garavan et al (2015) observed that in general, unemployment and the desire to have a regular household income have been largely responsible for the mushrooming of SMEs in many economies across the globe. This has been the position with many SMEs in Zimbabwe as observed by Makate (2014). However, some owners/managers of Zimbabwean SMEs have since come out of this dilemma and are convinced that positive financial performance can grow their organisations into large established corporations. A number of participating SMEs during interviews showed signs of growth and their managers claimed that financial performance enabled them to open new branches and moved into new geographic areas locally and regionally. For example, SMEGR1 claims to have managed to open a branch locally and three others regionally due to good financial performance driven by effective strategic decisions the enterprise's top managers make.

Reputation of an organisation as a non-financial measure is mostly associated with how customers and other stakeholders view the organisation in terms of its ability to meet and satisfy their needs. It therefore gives birth to the image an organisation portrays to the outside world. Strategic management and strategic marketing management literature highlight the importance of attaining a good reputation as the basis for attaining competitive advantage. As such, an organisation with a bad reputation cannot expect to grow and attain its competitive advantage no matter how good the strategies made by its top leaders are (Thompson et al, 2015, Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). One cannot forget the corporate scandals of 2008 during the global financial crisis that dented the reputation of world class companies such as Enron, resulting in their total demise (Wheelen and Hunger, 2012). In contrast, Hyundai's good reputation and focus on quality turned the automobile's brands into household names in the United States of America (USA) during 2008 global financial crisis, at a time when other players in the automobile industry were downsizing (Thompson et al, 2015). Back home, organisations like Econet Wireless grew from a small enterprise in 1993 to a global giant due to good reputation for its innovative and differentiation skills. To date the organisation has a formidable impact on the global communications competitive landscape and has successfully spread its operations across the African continent and the pacific rim (Thompson et al, 2008). To this end, Zimbabwean

SMEs owners/managers are on the right track by using reputation of their enterprises as a measure for effectiveness of their strategic leadership. Qualitative findings in particular reveal how serious some SMEs owners/managers view the importance of having a good company reputation.

8.1.5 Factors derailing strategic leadership of SMEs

The qualitative findings show that the deteriorating economic environment and liquidity crunch currently ravaging the Zimbabwean economy are the two main factors likely to derail the effectiveness of the strategic leadership of SMEs. Indeed, the economic environment is currently not conducive enough for effective business operation. The economy is characterized by alarming unemployment levels, inflationary trends, shortages of electricity and potable drinking water and a general collapse of infrastructure such as road and railway networks. Operating under such an environment is not easy especially for small organisations such as SMEs. Qualitative findings further show that some SMEs owners/managers felt helpless about the situation and some business leaders can easily surrender their business operations to fate. The World Bank (2017) Ease of Doing Business paints a gloomy picture of Zimbabwe and considers the country as one of the worst within the SADC region to do business. Instead of surrendering, Schoenberg et al (2013) encourage organisations to fire-fight in order to survive.

According to UNDP (2014), all positive economic developments brought by the GNU vanished after the elections in 2013 and the economy went on a speedy decline marked by increases in unemployment, company closures and black-marketing. The decline resulted in an accelerated pace of deindustrialisation and a flourishing informal sector. According to Kanyenze et al (2017), deindustrialisation created more harm than good for the economy as it has reached alarming rates. They argue that teething issues such as shortages of electricity, water and raw-materials, breakdown of machinery and failure to access financing capital has forced around 4610 companies within a period of five years from 2011 to 2015 to shut their doors sending around 55,443 employees to the streets. Researchers and scholars such as Nyamwanza et al (2015), Majoni et al (2016), Fields et al (2015) and Chitiyo et al (2016) blame this decline on conflicting populist policies many of which are piecemeal and have a negative effect especially on the operations of SMEs. Nyamwanza et al (2015) select and describe the Policy and Strategy Framework of 2012 to 2016 meant to regularize SMEs operations as conflicting and weak. Besides, other policies meant to boost SMEs operations such as the Indigenization and Economic Empowerment Policy of 2011 were neither helpful to the growth of SMEs.

Mlambo (2016) points out that the decline is also due to the current liquidity crunch that began in 2015 after the collapse of the GNU. Liquidity crunch is usually associated with a general cash

shortage in an economy and can have a negative effect on the banking sector as a whole if not addressed on time. Dlamini and Mbira (2017) state that liquidity crunch in Zimbabwe resulted in the collapse of many banks and loss of confidence in the banking sector. As the crisis worsened, problems such as difficulties in getting credit from banks, increase in lending rates and demands for high collateral emerged (Sanderson, 2014) and the ordinary citizen left with no choice, resorted to hoarding cash (Dlamini and Mbira, 2017). SMEs in Zimbabwe generally suffer from inadequate financing and the worsening crisis lands a heavy blow to their operations. Without liquidity, organisations, even well established ones, cannot survive. Their survival depends on the availability of enough liquidity in an economy (Sanderson, 2014). As the situation stands to date, organisations in Zimbabwe without financial muscle like SMEs are feeling the heat since financial institutions are dry. Organisations are resorting to the thriving parallel market for cash to finance their operations. The same parallel market is also the source of foreign currency for those organisations that rely on imported raw-materials for the production of goods and services.

However, despite the liquidity crunch and decaying economy, some SMEs are showing signs of resilience and are confident of their future growth and performance. This is in line with the views of Schoenberg et al (2013) who advise business enterprises operating in declining economies to fire-fight and implement turnaround strategies such as cutting costs and focusing on their core-businesses. The whole idea is to financially stabilise their operations and focus on profitable markets, offering products and services that bring about sustainable competitive advantage (Schoenberg et al, 2013). Obviously this involves a lot of fire-fighting for enterprises operating in an unstable economic environment like Zimbabwe. For example, HR1R1 the CEO/owner of a public transport operator SMEHR1 sounded positive of his enterprise's growth in the future. He is confident despite problems that within the next five years, his bus fleet would have increased to about twenty. The business leader will require perseverance and a lot of fire-fighting in order to win. Chitiyo et al (2016) observed that Zimbabwean organisations such as SMEHR1 carry on with their operations driven by perseverance and do so with limited resources under a demanding economic environment.

8.2 Summary – comparing study findings to literature

Table 8.1 below reports the summary of study findings comparing them to the current position of literature. This helps in identifying areas of convergence (agreement) and non-convergence (disagreement) between the two.

Table 8.1: - Summary of study findings

Item	Study findings	Literature	Convergence	Non-convergence
Understanding of strategic leadership /strategic leadership awareness	Strategic leadership is associated with making strategic decisions that enhance overall performance	Strategic leadership is associated with making strategic decisions that enhance overall performance	Yes,	No
Acceptance of strategic leadership	It is a concept that leaders can embrace for better performance and growth of their organisations	Acceptance of strategic leadership is central to long-term organisational sustainability and performance.	Yes,	No
Acceptance of strategic leadership	Strategic leadership is a concept that leaders find difficult to comprehend and is a waste of time and resources.	Understanding and acceptance of strategic leadership is central to long-term organisational sustainability and performance.	No,	Yes, Strategic leadership is a concept that leaders find difficult to comprehend and is a waste of time and resources.
Role of strategic leadership	Strategic leadership guides an organisation into the future resulting in enhanced performance	Strategic leadership guides organisation into the future resulting in enhanced performance	Yes	No
Role of strategic leadership	Strategic leadership helps to move an organisation from where it is to where it wants to be	Strategic leadership helps to move an organisation from where it is to where it wants to be	Yes,	No

Role of strategic leadership	Strategic leadership promotes creativity and innovation resulting in delivery of quality goods and services	Strategic leadership promotes creativity and innovation resulting in delivery of quality goods and services	Yes	No
Effectiveness of strategic leadership	Strategic leadership effectiveness is enhanced by visionary leadership	Effectiveness is due to visionary leadership	Yes.	No
Effectiveness of strategic leadership	Production and delivery of quality goods and services and customer satisfaction enhance strategic leadership effectiveness	Production and delivery of quality goods and services and customer satisfaction enhance strategic leadership effectiveness	Yes	No
Measuring strategic leadership effectiveness	Use financial and non-financial measures.	Use financial and non-financial measures	Yes,	No
Factors that can derail strategic leadership of SMEs	Economic decline and liquidity crunch	Economic decline, conflicting policies, liquidity	Yes,	Yes, conflicting policies

Source: Author

8.3 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed study findings by making comparisons to existing literature. In general, the study findings agree with literature especially on how respondents and participants understood the concept of strategic leadership. Their understanding of the concept is in line with the theory of strategic leadership, which states that top organisational leaders have a mandate to make strategic decisions that enhance organisational performance. Similarly, the findings also agree with literature that the role of strategic leadership is to move an organisation from where it is to where it wants to be. Equally, the findings agree with literature that customer satisfaction, employee and financial performance are good measures of strategic leadership effectiveness in organisations. However, the slight departure is on strategic leadership acceptance where 38% of the participants expressed their non-acceptance as they felt it was a

waste of time and resources. This confirms the study findings that strategic leadership acceptance in Zimbabwean SMEs does not have a significant impact on their performance.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.0 Introduction

This chapter presents conclusions drawn by the researcher from the study findings as discussed in Chapter 8. It also outlines suggested recommendations in line with the conclusions made.

9.1 Conclusions

In view of the study findings outlined in the preceding chapter, the researcher makes the following conclusions.

9.1.1 Awareness and acceptance of strategic leadership

- SMEs owners/leaders and some of their managers have a clear understanding of strategic leadership as a factor that has a significant impact on the performance of their organisations. Conclusively, they are aware that they have to make key strategic decisions that enhance the performance of their enterprises. However, qualitative findings indicate that only owners/CEOs had a clear understanding of the concept and not their departmental heads. As such, departmental managers are left out in the strategy making process, whereas they should be members of the enterprises' top management teams (TMTs) assisting owners/CEOs in making strategic decisions.
- SMEs owners/CEOs feel threatened by involving their top functional heads in the strategy making process. This has a negative effect on the understanding of strategic leadership and acceptance of the concept by functional heads as a necessary tool for enhancing organisational performance.
- As a result, strategic leadership acceptance, although being a factor of organisational performance, does not have a significant impact on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe.

9.1.2 Role of strategic leadership

- SMEs owners/CEOs and their managers have a clear understanding of the role of strategic leadership in the performance of their enterprises. The key role of strategic leadership is to give an organisation direction into the future. Strategic leadership role is therefore a significant factor of organisational performance. However, the leaders feel that the poor economic environment in Zimbabwe, is subduing the operations and performance of their enterprises. In this view, it is possible for SMES owners/CEOs to take a backsliding position, feeling helpless about the situation.
- They are therefore, likely to pay a lip service to the strategic leadership of their organisations in view of the current dictates of a declining Zimbabwean economy. The researcher further concludes that this might make them fail to appreciate the role of strategic

leadership under a belief that making strategic decisions becomes pointless under negative economic conditions.

9.1.3 Strategic leadership effectiveness

- Strategic leadership effectiveness is a factor that has a significant impact on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. SMEs owners/leaders acknowledge that effectiveness largely drives the overall performance of their enterprises.
- As a result, SMEs are now focusing on the production of quality goods and services in order to meet the needs of their customers.
- Employees are also showing some high degree of commitment towards accomplishing set organisational goals and objectives.
- On the negative side, the researcher concludes that strategic leadership effectiveness might be overshadowed by the current economic meltdown if Zimbabwean SMEs owners/leaders fail to take proactive measures.

9.1.4 Measuring strategic leadership effectiveness

- Both financial and non-financial indicators are important measures of strategic leadership effectiveness even in SMEs. The quality of products and services SMEs produce, their market share and employee commitment are all key factors that determine their growth and performance.
- Qualitative study findings in particular, show that SMEs owners/leaders rely on financial performance and reputation as key factors that measure the effectiveness of strategic leadership. They give less consideration to other non-financial measures like market share, product quality and levels of employee commitment. The researcher concludes, that SMEs owners/leaders are much more concerned with their survival, hence their preference for financial performance as an ideal factor. In other words, they do not see the importance of non-financial measures except in the reputation of their organisations.

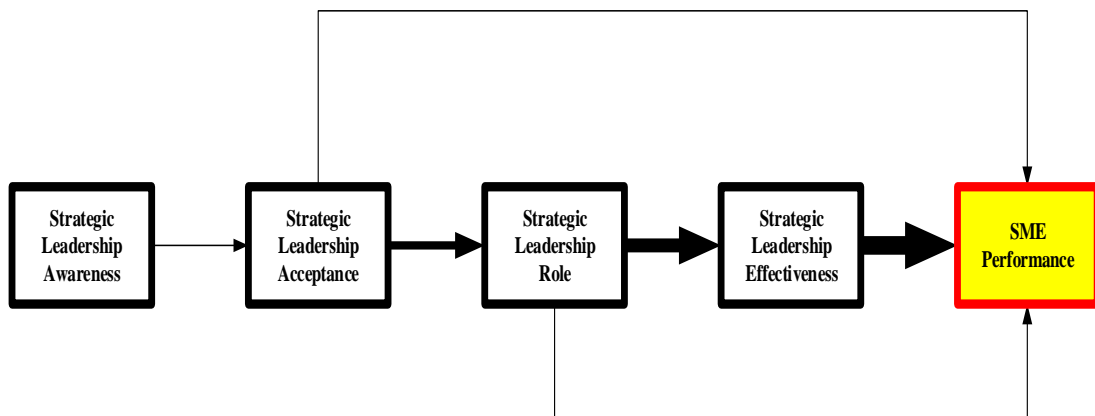
9.1.5 Factors derailing strategic leadership

- The Zimbabwe operating business environment is not user friendly, evidenced by the current economic downturn that is grinding the economy to a halt. The liquidity crunch is biting and businesses, small, medium and large are facing challenges in getting the required cash to run their operations effectively. This is a teething problem especially to SMEs, whose financial stability is questionable.
- The researcher concludes that this problem emanates from the Zimbabwean Government policies that are piecemeal and conflicting and can easily derail strategic leadership of SMEs. As such, SMEs owners/ CEOs/managers have a genuine cause for concern operating under the prevailing economic conditions.

9.2 Developing a strategic leadership model

The main objective of this study was to develop a strategic leadership model that suites the nature of strategic leadership of SMEs in Zimbabwe. In view of this objective and subsequent research questions, study findings reveal that the understanding or awareness of strategic leadership, its acceptance, role and effectiveness are all factors that have an impact on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. Quantitative results show that these constructs had factor loadings greater than 0.5 and their beta coefficients indicate that they had an impact on organizational performance as independent variables. However, acceptance of strategic leadership did not have a significant impact on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. Qualitative results on the other hand, show that SMEs owners/leaders make strategies in the absence of a model to guide them, despite their good understanding of strategic leadership, its role and effectiveness. The researcher concludes that lack of a strategic leadership model is due to fear of the unknown, hence the general view that having a model is a time and resource wasting process. This is a misguided view, especially in Zimbabwe, where SMEs are now key players in an economy abandoned by large, established companies. As such, SMEs owners/CEOs lack adequate knowledge on what a strategic leadership model is and how it can positively guide them in their strategic decision making. Guided by these findings, the researcher proposes a strategic leadership model, shown in Figure 9.1 below as suitable for use by SMEs owners/leaders to guide them in their strategic decision making sessions.

Fig 9.1: - Strategic leadership model



Source: - Author's own

SMES are organisations still in their infancy and their owners/CEOs still believe in making strategic decisions as lone rangers. Some SMEs have pronounced functional departments, headed by managers who have little input on strategic decision making as this function rests entirely with the owners/CEOs. However, as growing institutions, SMEs require a lot of nurturing and their owners/CEOs have to make strategic decisions in consultation with their functional heads. The above model is therefore, designed to guide owners/CEOs in their

strategy making programmes. It is not in any way intended to undermine existing strategic leadership models, but to add knowledge to existing literature. The model therefore confirms that in order to make incisive and effective strategic choices or decisions that enhance organisational performance, SMEs owners/leaders must demonstrate a good understanding and acceptance of strategic leadership and also appreciate its role and effectiveness. All these factors have an impact on the performance of their organisations.

9.3 Recommendations

As a follow-up to the above conclusions, the researcher presents the following recommendations: -

- Small and Medium Enterprises are crucial business institutions by Zimbabwean standards, employing up to 100 workers. There is need for owners/CEOs of these institutions to have a clear awareness and understanding of strategic leadership in order to fully embrace it. As such, they should have clear strategic visions for their organisations that define the direction into the future.
- In view of the above, owners/CEOs have a duty to open communication lines between themselves and their subordinates. They have to make them aware of the future direction of their enterprises and make strategic decisions as dominant teams or coalitions and not as lone rangers. On this basis, departmental managers can easily accept the concept of strategic leadership.
- In order to foster strategic leadership acceptance by departmental managers and their subordinates, SMEs owners/CEOs should continuously impart a culture of strategic leadership by making sure that human resources values incorporate the need to have an effective strategic leadership. On this basis, in-house training in form of workshops and seminars attended by both top leaders and departmental managers should be conducted regularly.
- SMEs owners/CEOs need to build on their good understanding of the role of strategic leadership in organisational performance. They should avoid paying lip service to the concept in light of the current economic down-turn in Zimbabwe. Instead, they should fire-fight and make sure that all organisational members understand and appreciate the role of strategic leadership. In this regard, they should be clear with their organisations' strategic directions into the future and exploit core-competencies successfully. In essence, they should know the current positions of their organizations and where they want them to be in the future.
- SMEs owners/CEOs should be able to make incisive strategic decisions that stimulate strategic leadership effectiveness leading to organisational performance. They need to embrace strategic thinking, innovativeness and creativity in order to make and deliver

quality goods and services beyond the expectations of their customers. They therefore need to exercise visionary leadership.

- In view of the above, top leaders and their management teams should focus on long-term objectives that must be communicated to their subordinates. There is therefore, a need to develop clear organisational activities and programmes that can easily be followed by all employees.
- The researcher recommends the use of both financial and non-financial measures to evaluate effectiveness of strategic leadership of SMEs in Zimbabwe. However, SMEs leaders should not only focus on financial measures and reputation of their organisations. It is recommended that other non-financial measures like market share, quality of products and services, degree of innovation and creativity and level of employee commitment be employed.
- In view of the declining Zimbabwean economy and its subsequent effects on operations and performance of business enterprises, SMEs owners/CEOs should persevere and avoid surrendering the operations of their enterprises to fate. They need to fire-fight and employ strategies that can make their enterprises survive in a subdued economy. As such, they need to employ cost cutting measures likely to bring efficiency in their operations. The researcher recommends that they focus on their core-business activities, streamline their product lines and concentrate on defined markets where profitability can be realised.
- As the main drivers of the Zimbabwean economy in terms of employment creation and poverty alleviation, it is important for SMEs owners/managers to display key strategic leadership capabilities in order to build a solid foundation for SMEs as engines of growth and development of the Zimbabwean economy.
- Above all, the responsible authorities on their part should outline policies that are solid and not conflicting. The policies should focus on possible financing of SMEs and training in strategy making procedures and business development methods.
- Having a strategic leadership model to guide owners/CEOs in their strategic decision making process is therefore paramount. As such, the researcher makes a recommendation that SMEs owners/CEOs make their strategic decisions guided by a documented process as highlighted in figure 9.1 above.

9.4 Study limitations

Both quantitative and qualitative findings confirmed that the role of strategic leadership is to enhance performance by guiding enterprises into the future. SMEs owners/CEOs interviewed qualitatively confirmed that the strategic leadership of their enterprises was effective. Some boasted the remarkable growth and performance of their enterprises, evidenced by their ability to expand their operations to new geographic areas within and outside Zimbabwe. However, the

owners/CEOs failed to produce documentary evidence in terms of figures to confirm claims of growth and profitability. It became evidently difficult to quantify such claims. Secondly, participants who claimed to have a model guiding them in their strategy making programmes, failed to produce documented evidence to that effect. These limitations, confirm that SMEs in Zimbabwe largely operate in secrecy, although enterprises involved in this study, quantitatively and qualitatively were all registered.

9.5 Suggested areas for further study

The upper echelons model by Hambrick and Mason (1984) formed the basis for the conceptual framework in this study. The model and others that followed were developed with established corporations or organisations in mind and not SMEs. SMEs in general, do not have well pronounced managerial structures, although some have functional departments. The suggested model in this study is therefore suitable for SMEs operations, since these institutions require nurturing and leadership that is driven by strategic thinking, innovation and creativity. This is likely to stimulate effectiveness of strategic leadership of SMES, resulting in their performance and growth, allowing them to make meaningful contribution to the economic development of Zimbabwe. This model will therefore require testing for applicability in line with SMEs operations in Zimbabwe and other parts of the globe. Secondly, a combination of EFA factors highlighted in this study as key drivers of strategic leadership leading to organizational performance will require further investigation.

9.6 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined conclusions and recommendations made, in view of the study findings. As a result, the researcher concluded that a strategic leadership model was necessary to guide SMEs owners/ CEOs in making key strategic decisions that enhance the performance of their enterprises. The proposed model encourages owners/leaders of SMEs and their subordinates to demonstrate a good awareness and understanding of strategic leadership, its role and effectiveness and embrace it as a crucial tool for the successful performance of their enterprises. These constructs have a positive impact on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe.

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Appendix A



THE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire consists of the following sections:

Section A: - Questions on general information about the organization

Section B: - Questions on demographics (structured)

Section C: - Other questions (structured and semi-structured)

Kindly tick your answer in boxes where ever provided

SECTION A

1. Please kindly state the name of your organization.

.....
.....

2. To which sector or industry does your organization belong?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| A. Manufacturing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. Retail and wholesale | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. Information and Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. Tourism; Travel and Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. How old is your business?

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| A. 0 –2yrs. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. 3 –5yrs. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. 6 –10yrs. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. 11 – 15yrs. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Where are you operating from?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. My own residence | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. A serviced industrial stand | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- C.** Streets and pavements ☐
- D.** An office space in the CBD ☐
- E.** A farm ☐

5. Are you a registered / licenced operator?

- A.** Yes ☐
- B.** No ☐

6. If not registered, state reasons

- A.** Never got time ☐
- B.** Our business is too small ☐
- C.** Do not know how to go about it ☐
- D.** It's a cumbersome process ☐
- E.** No benefit to organization ☐

7. Are you compliant with the laws; i. e. statutes?

Yes No Not Sure

- A.** Labour relations act ☐ ☐ ☐
- B.** NASSA ☐ ☐ ☐
- C.** PAYE ☐ ☐ ☐
- D.** VAT ☐ ☐ ☐
- E.** EMA, Environmental Management Act ☐ ☐ ☐
- F.** City Health by-laws ☐ ☐ ☐

8. How many employees does your organization have?

- A.** 6 –40employees ☐
- B.** 41 –75employees ☐
- C.** 76 –100employees ☐
- D.** Not sure of numbers ☐

SECTION B

9. Gender

A. Male

B. Female

☐

10. Age

A. 0-19 yrs.

☐

B. 20-29 yrs.

☐

C. 30-39 yrs.

☐

D. 40-49 yrs.

☐

E. 50 yrs. and above

☐

11. At what level are you employed in your organization?

A. Top Management / CEO /Owner

☐

B. Middle Management Level

☐

C. Supervisory level

☐

D. Ordinary employee

☐

12. How long have you been with the organization?

A. 1 -5 yrs.

☐

B. 6 -10 yrs.

☐

C. 11- 15 yrs.

☐

D. More than 15 yrs.

☐

13. What is your level of education?

A. Never gone to school

☐

B. Primary education

☐

C. Secondary education, O-Level

☐

D. Secondary education, A-Level

☐

E. University graduate

☐

F. University post-graduate

☐

14. What is your functional background?

- A.** Finance ☐
- B.** Marketing ☐
- C.** Production ☐
- D.** Human Resources Management ☐
- E.** Engineering ☐
- F.** Total Quality Management ☐

15. State your monthly income as per income groups below.

- A.** No income; payment in kind ☐
- B.** US\$100–200 ☐
- C.** US\$201–301 ☐
- D.** US\$302–402 ☐
- E.** Above US\$402 ☐

16 State your socio-economic status

- A.** Highly educated and influential ☐
- B.** Highly educated and less influential ☐
- C.** Highly influential and averagely educated ☐
- D.** Highly respected and well paid ☐
- E.** Highly respected and lowly paid ☐

17 In terms of skills level, how do you rate yourself?

- A.** Professional ☐
- B.** Highly Skilled ☐
- C.** Skilled ☐
- D.** Semi-skilled ☐
- E.** Not skilled at all ☐

SECTION C

ACCEPTANCE

18 To what extent is strategic leadership embraced in your organization as a necessary tool for top managerial leaders?

Not at all embraced	
To a less extent	
To a moderate extent	
To a great extent	
Fully embraced	

19 Can you rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements?

	SD	D	N	A	SA
The culture of strategic leadership is continuously imparted					
Regular strategic leadership development workshops are conducted in-house					
Managers attend other workshops on strategic leadership hosted by other organisations					
Manager appraisals include the evaluation of strategic leadership					
Both the managers and non-managers receive training in strategic leadership					
The HR values of the company incorporate the need to have an effective strategic leadership					

20 If your organization embraces strategic leadership, state what makes top managerial leaders in your organization embrace it in their operations

	SD	D	N	A	SA
It encourages strategic thinking throughout the organization					
It enhances organizational performance					
It guides the organization into the future					
The importance of SL is reinforced from the top management					
Managers embrace it for no particular reason					

21 If your organization does not embrace strategic leadership, state why this is so

	SD	D	N	A	SA
It is meant for big established companies only					
Top managers have no time for such a practice					
Top managers do not believe in strategic leadership					

It is a waste of time and resources					
I am not sure					

UNDERSTANDING / AWARENESS

22 To what extent are you aware of the concept strategic leadership?

Not at all aware	
To a less extent	
To a moderate extent	
To a great extent	
Fully aware	

23 What do you understand by the term “strategic leadership?”

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Making strategic decisions by top managers to enhance organizational performance					
Making strategies by top managers to enhance performance in some few departments					
Making strategies by top managers only if problems emerge in the company					
Making strategies by top managers as directed by shareholders					
I am not sure					

24 Top managers should be trained in the following areas as part of their strategic leadership development programmes

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Strategic planning in leadership					
Transition to leader					
Developing leadership competencies					
Leadership for performance improvement					
Culture and change management					
Coaching, mentorship and planning					

ROLE

25 Are top managerial leaders in your organization aware of their role as makers of strategic choices?

Yes, they are aware and involved	
Yes, they are aware but believe is for big companies only	
Yes, they are aware but not involved	
No, they are not aware	
It is difficult to tell	

26 To what extent do you agree that your organization has a clear strategic leadership model that guides top managerial leaders in making their strategic choices?

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

27 Please explain briefly your answer to above question

.....

.....

.....

.....

28 Strategic leadership has a role to play in the overall performance of small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

29 If agreeing, what do you think is the role of strategic leadership in the performance of your organization?

.....

.....

.....

30 If do not agree, what do you think is the role of strategic leadership in any organization?

.....

.....

.....

EFFECTIVENESS

31 To what extent is the strategic leadership of your organization effective?

Not at all effective	
To a less extent	
To a moderate extent	

To a great extent	
Very effective	

32 To what extent do you agree with the following attributes emerging from the implementation of strategic leadership:

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Enabled staff develop the attributes, attitudes and competencies for organisational development					
Employees have been re-oriented to focus on quality service					
Re-oriented employees and made them more focused on delivering quality service to customers					
New skills are now being applied which enhance customer satisfaction					
Employees now have ownership to the organisation's duties and responsibilities					
Employees now follow developed action plans for all their activities and programmes					
Leaders and employees now focus on long-term objectives					
Organisational goals and objectives are now being communicated efficiently					
Change management is now being handled swiftly by the management					

33 Are there any factors that can derail its effectiveness in your organization? State them.....

.....

34 If yes, explain how the effectiveness of strategic leadership is measured in your

Organization.....

35) Since the adoption of strategic leadership, the following measures of financial performance have shown some improvement

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Return on assets					
Return on equity					
Net profit margin					

Annual turnover					
Total sales per annum					
Total customers per annum					
Level of customer satisfaction					

36) The following variables or factors are responsible for its effectiveness

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Strategic thinking					
Creativity					
Innovation					

37) Are there any factors that can derail its effectiveness in your organization? State them

.....
.....
.....

38) How strong are such factors?

.....
.....
.....

39) What suggestions can you give to managers in your organization to block such factors?

.....
.....
.....

Appendix B



RESEARCH INTERVIEW GUIDE/SCHEDULE

Name of Researcher: -

Name of Interviewee: -

Place of Interview: -

Date of Interview: -

Opening

1. Firstly the interviewer will establish rapport by introducing himself and the institution he is coming from (**Establishing Rapport**).
2. Secondly the purpose of the intended interview will be explained (**Purpose**).
3. Thirdly the interviewer will explain the benefits of the research to respondents (**Motivating Respondents**).
4. Lastly the researcher will state how long the research will take (**Time Factor**)

Questions

1. What do you understand by the term “strategic leadership”?
2. What kind of strategic leadership model does your organization embrace in the strategy making process?
3. What do you think is the role of strategic leadership in your organization?
4. How would you describe the role of strategic leadership in your organization?
5. How effective is strategic leadership of your organization?
6. How do you measure its effectiveness?
7. Do you think strategic leadership of your organization can be derailed or compromised?

Code Structure

Mr. Nleya Qualitative Data Analysis

8/18/2019 5:43 PM

Hierarchical Name	Nickname	Aggregate	User Assigned Color
Node			
Nodes			
Nodes\\Accepting strategic leadership		No	None
Nodes\\Assessing understanding of strategic leadership		No	None
Nodes\\Economic environment		No	None
Nodes\\Economic environment\\Liquidity		No	None
Nodes\\Economic environment\\Pricing		No	None
Nodes\\Economic environment\\Resources		No	None
Nodes\\Economic environment\\Unstable environment		No	None
Nodes\\Making strategic decisions		No	None
Nodes\\Making strategic decisions\\Competition		Yes	None
Nodes\\Making strategic decisions\\Innovation		No	None
Nodes\\Making strategic decisions\\Long-term organisational sustainability		No	None
Nodes\\Making strategic decisions\\Planning		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1			
Nodes\\Question 1\\Acceptance		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Business environment		Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Business environment\\Fluctuating prices		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Business environment\\Funding		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Business environment\\Human capital and finance		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Business environment\\Instability		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Strategic choices		Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Strategic choices\\industry rivalry		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Strategic choices\\Long-term sustainability		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Strategic choices\\New developments		No	None
Nodes\\Question 1\\Strategic choices\\Setting goals		No	None

Nodes\\Question 1\\Understanding concept	No	None
--	----	------

Nodes\\Question 2

Nodes\\Question 2\\Existence of a model	Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 2\\Existence of a model\\Communicating strategic decisions	No	None
Nodes\\Question 2\\Existence of a model\\Giving guidance to top leaders	No	None
Nodes\\Question 2\\Results of the strategic leadership model	No	None
Nodes\\Question 2\\Waste of time and money	No	None

Nodes\\Question 3

Nodes\\Question 3\\Direction	Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Direction\\Vision	No	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Enhancing organisational performance	Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Enhancing organisational performance\\Creativity	No	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Enhancing organisational performance\\Modern	No	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Enhancing organisational performance\\Profitability	No	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Enhancing organisational performance\\Strategic thinking	No	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Strategy implementation	No	None
Nodes\\Question 3\\Teamwork and team spirit	No	None

Nodes\\Question 4

Nodes\\Question 4\\Commitment	No	None
Nodes\\Question 4\\Inspiring	No	None
Nodes\\Question 4\\Motivation	No	None
Nodes\\Question 4\\New ideas	No	None
Nodes\\Question 4\\New products	No	None
Nodes\\Question 4\\Positive developments	No	None

Nodes\\Question 5

Nodes\\Question 5\\Clear Direction	No	None
Nodes\\Question 5\\Growth	Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 5\\Growth\\Meeting set objectives	No	None
Nodes\\Question 5\\Growth\\Staff Performance	No	None
Nodes\\Question 5\\Lack of corporate governance	No	None
Nodes\\Question 5\\Lack of strategic leadership Model	No	None

Nodes\\Question 5\\Team Work	No	None
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Nodes\\Question 6

Nodes\\Question 6\\Appeal to customers	No	None
Nodes\\Question 6\\Difficult to measure effectiveness	No	None
Nodes\\Question 6\\Inventions	No	None
Nodes\\Question 6\\Production levels	Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 6\\Production levels\\Quality products	No	None
Nodes\\Question 6\\Sales performance levels	Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 6\\Sales performance levels\\Financial	No	None
Nodes\\Question 6\\Sales performance levels\\Reputation	No	None

Nodes\\Question 7

Nodes\\Question 7\\Cash shortage	Yes	None
Nodes\\Question 7\\Cash shortage\\Foreign Currency	No	None
Nodes\\Question 7\\Communication	No	None
Nodes\\Question 7\\Deteriorating economy	No	None
Nodes\\Question 7\\Equipment breakdown	No	None
Nodes\\Question 7\\Policy inconsistencies	No	None

09 November 2018

Mr Lizanani Nleya (217076170)
Graduate School of Business & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Nleya,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1176/018D

Project title: Strategic leadership and organizational performance in Small and Medium Enterprises in Zimbabwe: Developing a Strategic Leadership Model

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 02 August 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

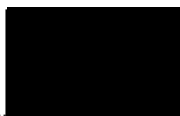
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Dr Bibi Zaheenah Chummun
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Muhammad Hoque
Cc School Administrator: Ms Zarina Bullyraj

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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APPENDIX E

Strategic Leadership and Organizational Performance in Small and Medium Enterprises in Zimbabwe: Developing a Strategic Leadership Model

ORIGINALITY REPORT

2%	%	2%	0%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	D. Betsy McCoach, Robert K. Gable, John P. Madura. "Instrument Development in the Affective Domain", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2013	<1%
	Publication	
2	"Regional Conference on Science, Technology and Social Sciences (RCSTSS 2014)", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2016	<1%
	Publication	
3	Azizah Hashim, Che Mohd Zulkifli Che Omar, Mohd Sahandri Gani Hamzah, Azmi Umar. "Leadership Behaviour, Entrepreneurial Orientation and Organisational Performance in Malaysian Small and Medium Enterprises", International Business Research, 2018	<1%
	Publication	
4	Sanjay Mohapatra, Rituparna Mohanty. "Adopting MOOCs for affordable quality education", Education and Information	<1%