A strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe

TD Svotwa

orcid.org/0000-0001-7953- 4854

Thesis submitted for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management at the North-West University

Promoter: Prof Yvonne du Plessis
Co-promoter: Prof Nicolene Barkhuizen

Graduation: April 2019
Student number: 27003876

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My greatest appreciation goes to my promoter, Professor Yvonne du Plessis and co-promoter Professor Nicolene Barkhuizen for their unwavering support, guidance, insightful comments and stewardship. I recall having a supervision meeting for the first time with Prof du Plessis in March 2015 at Gaborone Sun Hotel, Botswana and I still vividly recall her words of encouragement when she aptly emphasised reading widely and staying focused, "Read, read, read, read, read and read focused." From the onset, I thought that embarking on a PhD journey was an insurmountable task. But with God, all things are possible, and glory be to Him the Almighty for His abundant grace. At the International Business Conference in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 27 September 2017, I had the opportunity to meet Prof du Plessis. I was updating her on my progress and I treasured her words of wisdom: "In your research, think about what you are doing, how you are doing it and why you are doing it." From these words I learnt that pursuing a PhD means that one should possess analytical and diagnostic skills in approaching and dissecting research problems.

Secondly, my sincere gratitude also goes to North West University, Mafikeng Campus for granting me a bursary during the first two years of my study. The University also financed my travel expenses to attend the European Academy of Management 8th Early Career Colloquium in Rabat, Morocco in 2017. In addition, the University enabled me to present a paper at the 11th International Business Conference at The White Sands Hotel and Resorts in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 23 to 27 September 2017. In May 2018, NWU sponsored me to attend and present a paper entitled "Success factors for Zimbabwean Small and Medium Enterprises: A qualitative study." The paper was presented at the South African Association of Public Administration and Management (SAAPAM) Conference held at Mmabatho Palms, Mafikeng, from 8-11 May 2018.Without this invaluable financial assistance, it would have been challenging for me; hence, the University made my load lighter. The efforts of Sophy Mogorosi and Lungile Ntsizwane from the NWU School of Business and Governance also need special mention, they facilitated my yearly student registration and attendance at Conferences and workshops.

Thirdly, I would also like to thank Dr Takaruza Munyanyiwa, former Pro - Vice Chancellor (Business Development) at the University of Zimbabwe who assisted me in my preliminary research initiatives in 2011, during my stint at the University of Zimbabwe. Although I had to change my research focus four years later, I still recall when he advised me to initially read through 25 PhD theses and then identify a research gap in literature in my chosen area of motivation. Then, it was not too easy!

Furthermore, the efforts of the European Academy of Management (EURAM) need special mention. I was selected to be one of the two final year PhD students from Africa, for the first time in the history of EURAM to present my first research paper from this thesis at the Doctoral Colloquium held at the International University of Rabat in Morocco from 5 to 7 March 2017. The title of my paper was "Managerial strategies utilised in leading SMEs in Zimbabwe. A qualitative study." EURAM sponsored my accommodation expenses in Morocco.

In addition, this research would not have been possible without the assistance of Mr Etton Kufahazvinei, who was my research assistant, as he played a crucial role in distributing half of the questionnaires to respondents. It would have been a daunting task for me to cover all the geographical areas in which the respondents were distributed.

My family also deserves special mention for their patience and understanding in times of my absence when I had to concentrate on my studies. Thank you to my spouse Yvonne Munyaradzi Svotwa, my daughter Maline, and son, Nyashadzaishe Douglas (Junior). My mother, Maline Svotwa, also deserves great appreciation for moulding me to be what I am today as well as her emphasis on the importance of education in my life although she passed away untimely on 20 January 2017 before I had completed my studies.

"Team Prof Yvonne" should be credited for keeping the momentum burning in our PhD journey-thanks to Josy Scholtz and Jennifer Nzonzo for the constant discussions and words of

encouragement that we shared during our colloquia and online discussions. Teresa Kapp also deserves special mention for her critical role in editing the thesis. Thank you!

Last but not least, to my colleague and former workmate Dr Norman Rudhumbu I thank you for the exciting academic debates we had and those collaborations we shared in writing research articles.

Abstract

Small and medium enterprises *(SMEs)* are the engines of growth for the majority of developed and developing economies. This study explores the role of strategic leadership in SMEs in the manufacturing and engineering sector, with the purpose of developing a framework for the effective implementation of strategy by leaders who hold strategic positions within SMEs. In Zimbabwe, SMEs play a critical role in the economy and account for 84% of the population's livelihoods. Research confirms that only 15 % of these SMEs will survive after 5 years. SMEs are beset by a unique set of challenges that threaten their existence. A majority of SMEs are failing in Zimbabwe, which affects economic development. Effective strategic leadership seems to be a challenge in SMEs due to the high failure rates; hence, needs to be explored to ensure the success in SMEs. Literature shows that, without effective strategic leadership, which contributes to successful strategy implementation, firms will find it difficult to survive the global economic challenges in the future. This study was embedded in a pragmatic research philosophy, employing a sequential mixed- methods exploratory design commencing with a qualitative and ending with a quantitative approach. The population for this study included all owner-managers of the 207 registered manufacturing and engineering SMEs, who were operating for three years and more, located in Zimbabwe's five provinces. In collecting qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were employed, based on a non-probability purposive sampling method, and the sample size (n = 12) was determined by data saturation. Data were analysed using the principles of grounded theory to establish emerging themes for inclusion in the quantitative part of the study.

Quantitative data were collected through a census sampling strategy, whereby self-administered structured questionnaires, developed from literature and qualitative findings and piloted for content validity, were distributed by hand to 220 participants within the 207 SMEs, as some SMEs were co-led, and were analysed using SPSS Version 24. Factor analysis was performed, coupled with hypothesis testing and correlation analyses were carried out. Out of the 220 questionnaires distributed, 173 were successfully complete and usable representing a response rate of 78,6%. The qualitative analysis presented ten core themes that emerged from the data provided by owner-managers based on their experience of SMEs' strategic leadership success

in Zimbabwe: *Strategic direction; Organisational culture, Ethical practices; Organisational resource portfolio; Strategic and control systems; Strategic implementation; Strategic leadership enablers; Strategy management; Embracing organisational challenges; Focus on organisational success factors and Understand the role of Government.* Results from the quantitative phase confirmed that the majority (71.6%) of SME leader respondents provided direction to their SMEs; upheld a sound organisational culture and ethics; managed their resource portfolios; and had balanced strategic and financial controls in place, which are based on their self-report perceptions, indicating their strategic intent in operations of successful SMEs. Based on the results and findings, this study contributes a five-factor Strategic Leadership Framework for manufacturing and engineering SMEs success in developing countries.

The results of this study contribute to theory and practice of social change in a developing country context where manufacturing and engineering SMEs are pivotal to the growth of the national economy. The theoretical framework developed can be refined for SME success in other developing countries. In practice, SME owner-managers can utilise the developed framework to enhance their strategic leadership practices ensuring sustainability and success.

Key words: ***developing country; mixed methods; small and medium enterprises; SME success; strategic leadership***

DECLARATION

I, Tendai Douglas Svotwa, declare that, **A Strategic Leadership Framework for SME Success in Zimbabwe,** is my own original work in content. My promoter and co-promoter provided me with guidance throughout my study and all sources of information I made use of are indicated in the reference list. No other assistance was rendered to me by anyone else besides those stated in acknowledgements.

I declare that the content of this thesis has never been used before for any qualification at any tertiary institution.

Tendai Douglas Svotwa **Date: October 2018**

Signature

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ..... **IV**

DECLARATION ..... **VI**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **VII**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **XIV**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **XVII**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ..... **XVIII**

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY **20**

1.1. Introduction **20**

1.2. Background to the Problem **22**

1.3. Statement of the Problem **28**

1.4. Research Questions **30**

1.5. Research Objectives **30**

1.6. Significance and Contribution of the Study **31**

1.7. Delimitations **32**

1.8. Definition of Terms **33**

Table 1.1 presents the key definitions of terms used in this study. **33**

1.9. Thesis Structure **34**

1.10 Conclusion **35**

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW **36**

2.1 Introduction **36**

2.1. Historical foundation of Strategic leadership **38**

2.2. Role of Strategic leaders in strategy implementation **41**

2.3. Challenges of Strategic leadership in strategy implementation 46

2.4. Enablers of Strategic leadership 47

2.5. Strategy implementation in SMEs 47

2.6. Strategy management 49

2.7. Theoretical framework 52

2.7.1. Determining the firm's purpose or vision 54

2.7.2. Effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio 56

2.7.3. The sustenance of an effective organisational culture 58

2.7.4. Emphasising ethical practices 59

2.7.5. Establishment of balanced organisational controls 60

2.8. Success factors for SMEs 61

2.9. Conclusion 71

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS 73

3.1. Introduction 73

3.2. Research Philosophy 73

3.3. Research Approaches 76

3.4. Research Design 78

3.5. Qualitative research strategies and methods 82

3.5.1. Population and sampling 82

3.5.2. Qualitative research strategy 84

3.5.4. The process and principles of grounded theory 90

3.5.4.1. Data collection and research questions 90

3.5.4.2. Coding 90

3.6. Qualitative data collection methods 93

3.6.1. Semi - structured Interviews 93

3.7. Ethical conduct and research rigor 97

3.7.1. Data trustworthiness 97

3.8. Qualitative data analysis 97

3.9. Quantitative data research strategies and methods 99

3.9.1. Population and sampling method 99

3.9.2. Sample size 99

3.9.3. Quantitative research strategy 100

3.9.4. Quantitative data collection methods 101

3.9.4.1. Structured questionnaire and instrument 101

3.9.5. Quantitative data analysis 108

3.9.6. General ethical considerations and research rigour 109

3.9.6.1 Data Trustworthiness: Qualitative Data 111

3.9.6.1.1 Credibility 111

3.9.6.1.2 Transferability 111

3.9.6.1.3 Dependability 112

3.9.6.1.4 Confirmability 112

3.9.7 Quantitative ethical considerations and research rigour 113

3.9.7.3 Researcher's reflection of the grounded theory process and analysis 115

3.9.8 Conclusion 116

CHAPTER 4 : QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 117

4.1. Introduction 117

4.2. Participants and interview process 118

4.3. Data analysis using the grounded theory process 120

4.4. Data Coding 123

4.4.1. Open Coding 123

4.4.2. Axial coding 124

4.4.3. Selective Coding 125

4.5. Findings from qualitative data analysis 126

4.5.1. Establishing strategic direction (setting the vision) 127

4.5.2. Effectively managing the enterprise's resource portfolio 128

4.5.3. The sustenance of an effective organisational culture and emphasis on sound ethical practices 129

4.5.4. The establishment of balanced organisational controls 134

4.5.6. Strategic Leadership Enablers 138

4.5.7. Role of strategic leaders in strategy implementation 139

4.5.8. Strategy Management 141

4.5.9. Challenges faced by strategic leaders 146

4.5.10. SME success 147

4.5.11. SME Success factors 149

4.5.12. Government support 151

4.6. Summary of sub-themes and core themes that emerged from the qualitative data 152

4.7. Conclusion 155

CHAPTER 5 : QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND RESULTS 157

5.1. Introduction 157

5.2. Results 157

5.2.1. Demographic characteristics of the sample 157

5.2.1.1. Biographical data 157

5.2.1.2. Frequency distribution of the respondents' gender 158

5.2.1.3. Frequency distribution of the respondents' educational background 158

5.2.1.4. Frequency distribution of the respondents' work designation 159

5.2.1.5. Frequency distribution of work experience 159

5.2.1.6. SMEs predominant industry 160

5.2.1.7. Frequency distribution of SMEs' years in existence 161

5.2.1.8. Frequency distribution of number of employees 161

5.2.1.9. Frequency Distribution of Company's Annual Turnover 162

5.2.1.10. Frequency distribution of ownership 162

5.2.1.11. Frequency distribution of company location 163

5.3. Results: Factor Analysis 163

5.3.1. Factor Analyses: Strategic leadership practices 164

5.3.2. Descriptive Statistics of the Strategic leadership questionnaire 166

5.3.3.1. Item statistics analyses for the Strategic direction factor 167

5.3.4. Factor Analysis: Organisational culture 172

5.3.4.1. Descriptive statistics of the Organisational culture section of the questionnaire 173

5.3.5. Factor Analyses: Leadership Enablers 176

5.3.6. Descriptive statistics of Strategic Leadership Enablers section of the questionnaire 178

5.3.7. Item descriptive statistics 178

5.3.8. Factor Analyses: Strategic Leadership Challenges 181

5.3.8.1. Descriptive statistics of the strategic leadership challenges section of the questionnaire 181

5.3.8.2. Item descriptive statistics for Strategic Leadership Challenges section of the questionnaire 182

5.3.9. Factor analyses for Organisational Success Factors 183

5.3.9.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Organisational Success factor section of the questionnaire 183

5.3.9.2. Item descriptive statistics of the Organisational Success factor section 184

5.4. Testing of Hypothesis 186

5.5. Conclusion 190

CHAPTER 6 : DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS 191

6.1. Introduction 191

6.2. Overview of research findings and results 191

6.2.1. Theme 1: Strategic direction: vision, mission, strategic planning. 192

6.2.2. Theme 2: Effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio 194

6.2.3. Theme 3: Organisational culture and ethical practices 195

6.2.4. Theme 4: Strategic Implementation 196

6.2.5. Theme 5: Strategic and Control systems 197

6.2.6. Theme 6: Strategic Leadership Enablers 198

6.2.7. Theme 7: Strategy Management 199

6.2.8. Theme 8: Embracing strategic leadership challenges 200

6.2.9. Theme 9: Focus on organisational success factors 201

6.3. Conclusion 203

CHAPTER 7 : CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 204

7.1. Introduction 204

7.2. Conclusions from research findings 205

7.2.1. Conclusions based on research framework 205

7.2.2. Conclusions from research findings 207

7.2.3. Recommendations 213

7.2.3.1. Role of Government 213

7.2.3.2. Strategic Leaders should focus on technology and other success factors 214

7.2.3.3. Focus on innovation, entrepreneurial and employee skills 215

7.3. Contributions and implications of research findings 215

7.3.1 Theoretical contributions 215

7.3.2 Managerial/ practical contributions 217

7.3.3 Methodological contributions of the study 219

7.4. Research limitations 220

7.5. Further research 221

7.6. Conclusion 222

REFERENCES 223

APPENDIX 1: DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED SMES IN ZIMBABWE'S PROVINCES 260

APPENDIX 2: LEADERSHIP LEVELS 261

APPENDIX 3: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, INFORMED CONSENT, AND QUESTIONNAIRE 262

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE 278

APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE PRODUCTS FOR CARPENTRY- FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS 287

APPENDIX 6: LANGUAGE EDITING CONFIRMATION 289

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Definition of Key Terms 33

Table 2.1 Role of Strategic Leaders in Strategy Implementation 43

Table 2.2 Definitions of Business Success for SMEs 61

Table 2.3 Success Factors for business 64

Table 3.1 Comparison of four research philosophies in management research 74

Table 3.2 Research design and research type 81

Table 3.3 Semi-structured interviewing, purposive sampling procedure 83

Table 3.4 Seminal Grounded Theory texts 84

Table 3.5 Glaserian and Straussian Schools of Grounded Theory 86

Table 3.6 Qualitative Data Analysis Plan 98

Table 3.7 Multi-stage Sampling Method 100

Table 3.8 Quantitative Data Analysis Process 108

Table 4.1 List of Participants and their Demographics 118

Table 4.2 Axial and Selective Coding for Organisational resource portfolio 126

Table 4.3 Core themes and sub themes on Direction setting 128

Table 4.4 Core themes and themes on the Management of the firm's resources 129

Table 4.5 Core theme and sub themes on Organisational Culture and Ethics 133

Table 4.6 Core theme and sub themes of Balanced organisational controls 137

Table 4.7 Strategic Leadership enablers 139

Table 4.8 Strategic Implementation factors 141

Table 4.9 Core theme and sub themes of Strategy Management 145

Table 4.10 Core theme and sub themes of Organisational Challenges 147

Table 4.11 Core theme and sub themes on SME Success Factors 150

Table 4.12 Core theme and sub themes on the Role of Government 152

Table 4.13 Research Findings: Core themes and Sub themes from Qualitative data 153

Table 5.1 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' age (years) 157

Table 5.2 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' gender 158

Table 5.3 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' Educational background 158

Table 5.4 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' Work designation 159

Table 5.5 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' Work experience 160

Table 5.6 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Predominant industry 160

Table 5.7 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Years of existence 161

Table 5.8 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Number of employees 161

Table 5.9 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Annual turnover 162

Table 5.10 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' ownership structure 162

Table 5.11 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' location 163

Table 5.12 Rotated Component Matrix of Strategic Leadership Practices questionnaire 165

Table 5.13 Descriptive Statistics of the Strategic Leadership Practice questionnaire 166

Table 5.14 Item Statistics Analyses of the Strategic Direction factor 167

Table 5.15 Item Descriptive Statistics for the Strategy Management factor 169

Table 5.16 Item Descriptive Statistics for the Strategic Implementation factor 170

Table 5.17 Rotated Component Matrix Organisational Culture section of the questionnaire 172

Table 5.18 Descriptive Statistics and Reliabilities of the Organisational Culture section . 173

Table 5.19 Item Descriptive Statistics for Organisational Culture 174

Table 5.20 Item Descriptive Statistics for Ethical Practices 175

Table 5.21 Rotated Component Matrix of Strategic Leadership Enablers section of the questionnaire 177

Table 5.22 Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Leadership section of the questionnaire 178

Table 5.23 Item Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Leadership Enablers 179

Table 5.24 Item Descriptive Statistics for Firm's Resource portfolio 180

Table 5.25 Component Matrix 181

Table 5.26 Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Leadership Challenges 181

Table 5.27 Item Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Leadership Challenges 182

Table 5.28 Component Matrix for Organisational Success factors 183

Table 5.29 Descriptive Statistics of Organisational Success factors 184

Table 5.30 Item Descriptive Statistics of Organisational Success factors 184

Table 5.31 Correlation Analysis 187

Table 5.32 Pearson Correlations of the Second Order Factor analyses 189

Table 6.1 Main areas that should be applied by SME Strategic leaders; core themes from findings 192

Table 7.1 Theoretical Contributions of the Study 216

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework 53

Figure 2.2 Business Success Factors..... 67

Figure 3.1 Research Design flow process..... 79

Figure 3.2 Sequential exploratory design 81

Figure 3.3 Grounded Theory process..... 88

Figure 3.4 Location of Interviewees 96

Figure 3.5 Distribution of Questionnaire to registered SMEs in Zimbabwe's ten Provinces 107

Figure 3.6 Researcher's reflections of the Grounded Theory process and analysis..... 115

Figure 4.1 Example of a Transcript, Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4years' working experience, Top manager 120

Figure 4.2 Grounded Theory process and analysis 121

Figure 4.3 Memoing: Direction Setting (Strategic and operational planning)..... 122

Figure 4.4 Memoing: Organisational Culture..... 122

Figure 4.5 In-vivo codes and important words 123

Figure 4.6 Coding using important words..... 124

Figure 4.7 Axial coding: Role of Strategic leaders in SMEs 125

Figure 5.1 Hypothesised Model 186

Figure 7.1 Final Strategic Leadership Framework 206

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	MEANING
CEO	Chief executive officer
CMV	Common method variance
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EURAM	European Academy of Management
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
IDBZ	Infrastructural Development Bank of Zimbabwe
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KMO	Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin
MSMEs	Micro, small and medium enterprises
NWU	North-West University
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAYE	Pay as you earn
QUAL	Qualitative
QUAL → quan	Qualitative quantitative

QUAN	Quantitative
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
SEDCO	Small Enterprise Development Corporation
SMDECO	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation
SMEAZ	Small and Medium Enterprise Association of Zimbabwe
SME	Small and medium enterprise
SPSS	Statistical package for social sciences
TMT	Top management team
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
US$	United States dollar
VAT	Value added tax
WB	World Bank
ZIMSTATS	Zimbabwe Statistics

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This chapter will set the scene by introducing the study and explain the background to the problem to be researched. The aim of the study is to explore the role of strategic leadership in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the manufacturing and engineering sector, with the purpose of developing a framework for the effective implementation of strategy by leaders who hold strategic positions within SMEs. Many SMEs are long-established family businesses, or are managed by the founder and owners, holding both management and operational roles, with the aim of achieving personal objectives, in addition to generating shareholder return (Ng & Kee, 2018; Oxford Economics, 2017).

Various researchers have defined strategic leadership as the ability of the leader to anticipate, envision, think strategically, being flexible, and empower others in the creation of strategic change as necessary (Ireland & Hitt, 1999; Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2007). Furthermore, assertions have been made that strategic leadership sets the vision, goals, meaning, purposes, and direction of the organisation. The focal point of strategic leadership is that a small group of people, the strategic leaders, those who are located at the apex of the organisation have a significant effect on organisational outcomes (Bass, 2007; Nastase, 2010; Strand, 2014). In the context of SMEs, the owner-managers are supposed to be the strategic leaders.

Strategy implementation defines the way an organisation should develop, utilise and combine the structures, control systems, and culture to follow strategies that lead to competitive advantage and improved organisational performance (Sorooshian, Norzima, Yusof, & Rosnah, 2010). The success of the business is determined mostly by the implementation of strategies (Speculand, 2009); as the implementation rather than the crafting of the strategy delivers revenue, and success. While the formulation of a strategy may be challenging, operationalising it throughout the organisation is even harder, since it requires the total commitment of everyone within the

organisation to work towards the attainment of the firm's goals and objectives, hence, implementation is key to organisational performance (Hrebiniak, 2006; Jooste & Fourie, 2009). Implementation of the strategy is part of the strategic management process, and a lack of strategic leadership has been identified as one of the main barriers to effective strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009; Misankova & Kocisova, 2014). The question, therefore, is not whether managers occupy strategic positions and set strategies, but whether these managers at the apex of the organisation can act as strategic leaders and apply strategic leadership practices in the implementation of strategy. Managers in all organisations are expected to perform the leadership function. The major challenge in strategy implementation is the low success rate of intended strategies with research studies indicating it to be as low as 10% (Raps, 2005).

An organisation's daily operations and setting its future direction is normally overseen by those at the top of organisations, that is, the supposedly strategic leaders (Davies & Davies, 2008; Rowe & Nejad, 2009). Rowe and Nejad (2009) posited that the long-term prosperity of an organisation depends on having strategic leaders at the helm of the organisation. Strategic leaders in these organisations implement strategies that enhance the long-term survival of the organisation as opposed to managerial leaders who are mostly focused and preoccupied with the status quo. Therefore, strategic leadership and the role of the strategic leader are critical to the success of any organisation in driving and implementing the firm's chosen strategy, working in collaboration with employees of the organisation.

In Zimbabwe there are 3.4 million SMEs and 85% are not registered with the local council/authority (Finscope, 2012). In 2012, through surveys, it was estimated that of the currently employed population over the age of 15 of 5.4 million, 84% were in informal employment, 11% were in formal employment and 5% were in employment not classifiable, (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, (Zimstats, 2012). The trade and manufacturing sector is key to the economic development of Zimbabwe and has strong linkages with other sectors particularly agriculture, mining, services and construction (Zimstats, 2011). Since the manufacturing sector is critical to Zimbabwe's economy, this served as justification to study

manufacturing and engineering SMEs. Given the importance of SMEs to Zimbabwe, one could argue that the role of strategic leadership in SMEs warrants an investigation with the aim of enhancing their success through effective implementation of appropriately identified business strategies. Strategy implementation is the hallmark of effective leadership, which can only be successful when it is complemented by effective strategic leadership (Mapetere et al., 2012). Many SMEs are failing to meet their set targets as a result of their limited exposure to strategic leadership; knowledge of strategic leadership is critical due to a myriad of demands from an organisation's array of shareholders and stakeholders (Carmeli et al., 2011; Carter & Greer, 2013).

1.2. Background to the Problem

There is no universal definition of SMEs; however, size is the variable most often used which is measured by the number of employees, sales, or assets. The World Bank, (2013) provided a categorization of SMEs based on the following definitions:

- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines an SME as having between 10 and 250 employees with a maximum of €10 million in sales, which is equivalent to about (US$13.1 million) or annual balance sheet total.
- The European Union (EU) (2015) defines an SME as having employees between 10 and 250, with turnover ranging from €10 to €50 million (about USD$13.1 million to US$65.7 million), or an asset value ranging between €10 to €43 million.
- The International Finance Corporation (IFC) defines an SME as having employees ranging between 10 and 300, with an asset base that ranges between US$100,000 and US$15 million (about €11.4 million).
- The World Bank does not have a single definition for an SME. With regard to their research surveys, the number of employees within an SME ranges between 5 and 99, and in the majority of their research, SMEs are defined as constituting a maximum of 250 employees.

In Zimbabwe, SMEs are based on the number of employees and gross annual turnover as mentioned by the following bodies: The Small Enterprise Development Corporation, (SEDCO)

(2010) defines an SME as a firm that has a maximum of 100 employees, with US$830 000 as the maximum annual sales turnover. The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) (2012) defines a small enterprise as one that employs up to a maximum of 50 people which acts as a registered entity. Medium enterprises are firms that employ a maximum of 100 people. The owner-manager in an SME performs multiple tasks and is normally the key stakeholder of the business and the strategic leader, to an extent that ownership and control are intertwined, hence inseparable (Beaver, 2002).

SMEs play a pivotal role in the development of an economy as they are important engines to stimulate the economic growth of any country and are the key drivers of innovation. Furthermore, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) (2007) supports the notion of SME importance in developing countries, whereby they refer to the backbone of India with more than 80% of the total number of industrial enterprises as SMEs, and Malaysia, where 80% of all goods sold within the economy originates from SMEs. The RBZ (2007) further indicated that in Brazil, SMEs account for about 46% of Brazil's investment in data transmission infrastructure, thus Zimbabwe is no exception and can follow in these developing countries' footsteps. It is also stated by multiple sources that small businesses are the largest employers in most countries (Ates, et al., 2013; Bamiatzi & Kirchmaier, 2014; Bloch & Bhattacharya, 2016; Fjose, Grunfeld & Green, 2010; Jutla, et al. 2002; Kemayel, 2015; Lussier & Halabi, 2010; McLarty et al. 2012; Minović, Lazarević–Moravčević & Beraha, 2017; Muenjohn & McMurray, 2016; Ng, 2016; Ng & Kee, 2018; Oxford Economics, 2017; Rodney Turner, Ledwith & Kelly, 2009; Seo & Chae, 2016; Simpson, Padmore & Newman, 2012; Van Gils, 2005; Wang, 2016; World Bank, 2017; Zhang, 2009; Zhu et al. 2012).

In Southern Africa the role of SMEs has been widely explored by researchers, who concurred with the assertions of Meredith and Miller (2009) that SMEs play a pivotal role in job creation, innovation, reduction of poverty, industrial development and restructuring, satisfaction of local demand for products and services and supporting larger firms with inputs and services (Fjose, Grunfeld & Green, 2010; Oladele, 2013; Tadesse, 2009; Wang, 2016). In other words, SMEs are now the engines of economic growth for every country, with SMEs constituting more than 95%

of all firms in sub-Saharan Africa (Fjose, Grunfeld & Green, 2010). The National Credit Regulator (2011) pointed out that in South Africa, SMEs contribute between 52% and 57% to the GDP and provide about 61% of all employment, while in Botswana, the Local Enterprises Authority (2007) stated that SMEs contribute 75% of formal employment. In addition, Yen and Santos (2009) posited that SMEs are responsible for 31% of all employment in Mozambique and contribute 16% of the GDP.

In Zimbabwe, like in most emerging markets, SMEs are the backbone of the economy, contributing more than 50% of the GDP, and are responsible for the livelihood of 84% of the population (RBZ, 2007; 2017; World Bank, 2017; Zimstats, 2012). The adverse operating environment has resulted in increasing informalisation of the economy, which is now largely driven by micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), (RBZ, 2017). The Zimbabwean economy is now dependent on SMEs since the majority of industries have closed or downsized, shedding thousands of jobs in the process and the country has recorded one of the highest rates of unemployment in the world estimated at about 80% (Mashokori, 2014).

Furthermore, in 2015, Global Finance Magazine placed Zimbabwe as the second poorest after the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in its survey of 184 countries. Some estimates put the rate of unemployment at 95%, but official figures are never revealed. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) survey data, showed Zimbabweans' average annual income between 2009 and 2013 was around US$589 (£410). Hankes (2017), asserted that, in 2008, Zimbabwe experienced the most severe episode of hyperinflation in 2008 recorded at 89.7 sextillion %. In October 2017, Zimbabwe again experienced the second verified episode of hyperinflation, with an annual inflation rate of 348% (Hankes, 2017).

The concept of strategic leadership has been widely explored in large, public organisations while it has been neglected in entrepreneurial firms and SMEs (Simsek, Jansen, Minichilli & Escriba-Esteve, 2015). The reason could be that SMEs are small, and as such, strategic leadership may not be necessary in small businesses. SMEs have received greater attention from The

Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) since the setting up of the SEDCO in 1983 through an Act of Parliament, Chapter 24:12. SEDCO is a Zimbabwean financial development institution that was created and tasked with the promotion, nurturing and development of micro, small and medium enterprises in the country (SEDCO, 2014). The GoZ changed SEDCO to the small and medium enterprises development corporation (SMDECO) in 2014. Starting January 2015, the SMEDCO was brought under the purview of the RBZ, and its mandate is to promote the development of MSMEs and cooperatives by providing financial assistance and capacity- building programmes (RBZ, 2017).

Furthermore, the early 1990s witnessed the establishment of the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development by the GoZ to provide support to new SMEs, thus acknowledging the contribution of SMEs to the economy. According to the Ministry's website, it is responsible for economic growth and empowerment through the development of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development is mandated to create and maintain an enabling environment that promotes a vibrant SME sector. Some of the major functions of the Ministry include, among others, the development of a legal and regulatory framework for the development of SMEs; the promotion, coordination and monitoring of innovative SME financing schemes and the provision of skills and management training that capacitate the development of entrepreneurship and growth of firms.

According to the Growth and Equity through Microenterprise Investments and Institutions (GEMINI) base line survey that was conducted by McPherson in 1991, small manufacturers dominated the SME sector in Zimbabwe (Mugwindiri & Madanhire, 2013). The manufacturing sector accounted for about 70% of all SMEs, while 23% could be classified as traders. A mere 3% of Zimbabwe's SMEs are in the trade sector, therefore, the manufacturing enterprises are most prevalent in the urban areas. The SEDCO (2012) postulated that Zimbabwean SMEs generally fall into four broad categories:

- Agri-based SMEs, which are mostly concentrated in farming activities, agricultural produce, and trading in farm produce, with a staff complement of less than 100 employees;
- Manufacturing SMEs, constituted by not more than 50 employees;
- Mining SMEs, involved in the mining and processing of a variety of minerals with a maximum of 50 employees or US$1 000 00 as the maximum asset base and turnover;
- Service-based SMEs, SMEs that are involved in retail, commerce, micro- and cross- border activities, transport, and tourism. Such SMEs have a maximum of 50 employees and an asset base of not more than US$1 000 000 in value.

Strategy implementation is one of the major challenges in many companies, including SMEs (Raps, 2005). The problem is indicated by the poor success rate (only 10-30%) of intended strategies (Raps, 2005). In view of the foregoing, it is imperative to undertake research within manufacturing SMEs especially due to their invaluable contribution to the Zimbabwean economy. It is important to determine the role played by the owner-managers as strategic leaders in various SMEs in pursuit of implementing strategies formulated, and confirm as to who is actively involved in the implementation process. The present study will seek to provide the answer and to recommend possible strategies for implementation to be employed by the SMEs, to remain competitive and continue to positively contribute to the development of the Zimbabwean economy.

Previous research on SMEs has mainly focused on leadership and strategic management, such as the studies by Morrison (2003), Huang(2009), Gold *et al.,* (2007), Crittenden and Crittenden, (2008), Ates, (2008), Ates and Bititci (2009), and Ates *et al*., (2013). Few studies, such as those by Jooste and Fourie (2009) and Karda (2009), have attempted to examine the role of strategic leadership in firms. Based on a response rate of 7.6% from the directors of the Financial Mail Top 200 companies in South Africa, Jooste and Fourie concluded that strategic leadership positively contributes to effective strategy implementation in South African organisations. Karda (2009) concluded that Hungarian SMEs did not have formal strategic plans in place, and that the majority of the strategic leaders spent 80% of their time on daily operational issues (‘short

terminism'), instead of focusing on the strategic issues of the SME. The results showed that only 4% of the strategic leaders spent the majority of their time on strategic tasks and thinking, hence the failure of SMEs. Detarsio, North, and Ormaetxea (2016) concurs with Karda's assertion by arguing that most of the SMEs which they studied did not have defined long-term strategies (more than 5 years). The identified SMEs planned and acted short-term and used the great advantage of SMEs, that is, flexibility of adaptation, which can-not be enjoyed by big companies.

Furthermore, Kanyangale (2017), explored what Malawian entrepreneurs as strategic leaders of their entrepreneurial SMEs did to ensure business survival and growth in a competitive environment. Based on a purposive sampling strategy, twelve local strategic leaders were identified from six entrepreneurial SMEs. Results indicated that entrepreneurs as strategic leaders displayed four interrelated individual characteristics namely: opportunity-seeking wisdom, building of appropriate social capital, entrepreneurial resilience, curiosity, and practice-led learning. Research on strategic leadership in SMEs in this regard has not received prominence, hence needs to be explored further.

SMEs play a critical role in the Zimbabwean economy, they account for the livelihood of 84% of the population and contribute more than 50% of the country's GDP, (RBZ, 2017; World Bank, 2017; Zimstats, 2012). Their contribution has further been acknowledged by the GoZ in its Industrial Development Policy (2012-2016) wherein it stated that it prioritised the promotion and support to SMEs which are viewed as an important engine for employment creation and economic growth. SMEs are beset by many challenges that threaten their existence. Research shows that only 50% of SMEs survive the first five years of their existence (Karel, Adam, & Radomir, 2013; Laitinen, Lukason & Suvas, 2014).

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Many SMEs are failing in Zimbabwe which affect economic development. Effective strategic leadership seems to be a challenge in SMEs, due to the high failure rates, hence, this needs to be explored as an enabler of success in SMEs. The lack of strategic leadership has been found to be a constraint in the organisation's quest for competitiveness, performance, sustainability and ultimately, success (Bansal & Desjardine, 2014).

In Zimbabwe, statistics are worrisome, and as postulated by SEDCO (2004), in the first year of establishment, about 60% of SMEs fail, while 25% fail within the first three years, with the remaining 15% showing the likelihood of survival. Eventually, the implication is that about 85% of SMEs will perish. Literature shows that, without effective strategic leadership that contributes to successful strategy implementation, firms will find it difficult to survive the global economic challenges in future (Hrebiniak, 2005, 2008; Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Taylor, 1995). The survival and success of an SME, equal to a larger organisation, depends on management who needs to have a strong strategic focus through strategic leadership (Carmeli et al., 2011; Duursema, 2013; New Zealand Institute of Management, 2004).

Several studies have been conducted on challenges faced by SMEs during strategy implementation. However, a search of the literature showed that little attention has been given to the strategic role of leaders in strategy implementation processes in Zimbabwean SMEs. The following research studies confirmed the dearth of literature in the role played by strategic leadership in the implementation of strategies in SMEs. Magaisa, Kanhai, and Matipira (2013, 2014) analysed the formulation and implementation of strategies in SMEs; Nyamwanza (2013) examined the link between strategy formulation and implementation in SMEs, while Nyamwanza and Mavhiki (2014) explored how SMEs implement strategy.

Furthermore, Msasanure and Mtisi (2012) explored the role of strategic management in enhancing the growth of SMEs in Zimbabwe but did not mention strategic leadership. In addition, Mapetere, *et al.,* (2012) investigated the role of strategic leadership in strategy implementation in Zimbabwe's state-owned enterprises, while Mpofu and Chigwende (2013)

conducted research on the factors influencing marketing planning and implementation in Zimbabwean SMEs. Gunhe (2014) investigated the role of leadership styles on SME performance in Zimbabwe. In light of the foregoing, it is evident that there is a growing interest and need for research in strategy and SMEs, however the gap of SME owner-managers as strategic leaders and the strategic leadership factors to be practiced for SME success is still unexplored within the Zimbabwean SME context. Therefore, this research, which explores the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategies in SMEs hopes to close this gap in the literature on SMEs.

The general problem is that SMEs are failing and face challenges at strategic level to effectively direct strategy implementation in these organisations (Carter & Pucko, 2010), ensuring sustainability and future success. The business problem in developing country SMEs, and specifically in Zimbabwe, is that SME owner-managers might not uphold strategic leadership practices, which might contribute to 85% SME failure. Strategic leadership practices for the effective implementation of strategies in SMEs have not been developed, which is especially important in developing countries. Although Zoogah (2009) attempted to operationalise strategic leadership within the general African context, it was not particularised to SMEs. Irrespective of much research on SME failures, SMEs are still failing to succeed beyond the three-year critical period. Therefore, the present study will address the following research problem: *SME owner-managers, as strategic leaders, in the Zimbabwean manufacturing and engineering sector are failing to sustain their businesses beyond the three-year critical period.*

The purpose of this study is to explore the leadership strategies employed by current successful SME owner-managers in Zimbabwean manufacturing and engineering and determine how they have managed to succeed beyond the critical three-year time-line. The development of *a strategic leadership-driven framework to be utilised by SME owner-managers as strategic leaders to move beyond the three-year critical period is envisaged as the key outcome of this study.* Such a study will contribute to the theory and practice on SME success in developing countries. It will be the first of its kind in Africa.

1.4. Research Questions

The primary research question is: *What are the factors in a strategic leadership framework that lead to success beyond the critical time line of three years that if implemented, will lead to the success of manufacturing and engineering SMEs in a developing country context?*

The following secondary questions will support the primary research question:

- Does strategic leadership play a role in the implementation of strategies in SMEs?
- How do SME owners as strategic leaders view the strategies they use to manage manufacturing and engineering SMEs?
- What are the challenges/barriers faced by strategic leaders in implementing strategy, and why do they face these challenges?
- What are the enablers of effective strategic leadership in strategy implementation, in manufacturing and engineering SMEs in Zimbabwe?
- What are the success factors for manufacturing and engineering SMEs' sustainable performance?

1.5. Research Objectives

The primary research objective is to explore and establish the strategic leadership factors for SMEs and develop a strategic leadership framework that if implemented will enable success within manufacturing and engineering SMEs in Zimbabwe as a developing country.

The secondary objectives, in support of the primary objective, in this study are:

- To identify and describe the role of strategic leadership in the management process and implementation of strategy in manufacturing and engineering SMEs.
- To establish the views of strategic leaders regarding the strategies they use to manage/lead SMEs.
- To examine the challenges faced by strategic leaders in implementing strategy and the reasons for the challenges.
- To establish enablers of effective strategic leadership in the implementation of strategy in SMEs.

- To explore the factors critical for the success and sustainable performance of manufacturing and engineering SMEs.

1.6. Significance and Contribution of the Study

This study will expand the SMEs' strategic leadership theory in sub-Saharan Africa. Also, this research intends to fill the gap in the body of literature on the extant role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategies in informal SMEs which has not been undertaken in the African context. Many studies on strategic leadership have been conducted in large organisations in the Western, developed economies (mostly in the USA) such that it is unknown and unexplored how strategic leadership behaviours vary throughout the world (Ates, et al., 2013; Boal & Hooijberg, 2000; Elenkov, Judge, & Wright, 2005). Strategic leadership in developing economies is very limited (Eyong, 2017; Zoogah, 2009).

The GoZ could use the framework to be developed in strategic leadership regarding policy-making and the development of entrepreneurs. The government, through the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development may come up with training programmes on strategic leadership, thus nurturing the SMEs' future growth. The outcome of the study will enable owner-managers of the SMEs to have a better understanding of strategic leadership, to enhance the implementation of strategies in their firms. The SME owner- managers could benefit in terms of running their enterprises through the acquisitioning of new knowledge emanating from the study.

Developmental institutions such as the Infrastructural Development Bank of Zimbabwe (IDBZ), the SEDCO and commercial banks (through their Small Business units), which advance loans to SMEs to capacitate them, may also benefit from the research, with reference to the provision of business mentoring and training programmes to the SME/owner- managers.

1.7. Delimitations

This research was conducted mainly in the Harare Metropolitan Province, Harare is the capital city of Zimbabwe. This is where the majority (89.86%) of registered SMEs (registered with the Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Zimbabwe, (SMEAZ) are located. The researcher was a resident of the province for 16 years, which made it easier for him to approach the owners/managers of the sampled SMEs, in order to solicit information. The researcher accessed the SMEAZ's website on 3 December 2014 and identified 207 SMEs trading within the engineering and manufacturing sector.

Furthermore, the research extended to Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe's third- largest city, which is part of Mashonaland East Province (7.24% of registered SMEs are located here), Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, Zimbabwe's second largest city (0.966 % of the SMEs are located here,) as well as Gweru, Zimbabwe's fourth-largest city in the Midlands Province (0.966 % of the SMEs are located here). Norton, a town in the Mashonaland West Province has 0.966% of the registered SMEs. The research focused on manufacturing and engineering SMEs, since they are key to the economic development of Zimbabwe, and the sampling units were the owner-managers as they are supposed to be the strategic leaders. SMEs which had been in operation for at least three years were considered since it is possible to gauge the outcomes of strategy implementation within that time frame.

1.8. Definition of Terms

Table 1.1 presents the key definition of terms used in this study.

Table 1.1 Definition of Key Terms

Key Term	Definition
Strategy	The creation of a valuable and unique position that is constituted by an interplay of various sets of activities (Porter, 1996).
Strategic leader	One who has overall responsibility for organisational functioning and performance (Hambrick, 1989). The owner-manager is also referred to as the strategic leader.
Strategic leadership	"Defining the vision and mission and translating these into action. It is a means of focusing on the direction, and capacitation of the organisation to achieve a directional change or shift." (Davies & Davies, 2010: 5).
Strategic implementation	An iterative process of implementing strategies, policies, programmes and action plans that enable a firm to fully utilise its resources and capitalise on the opportunities that are located in the competitive environment (Harrington, 2006).
Small and medium enterprise (SME)	A small enterprise is a registered entity with a minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 employees; a medium enterprise has 51-100 employees, with a maximum annual turnover of US$830 000 (GoZ, 2012; SEDCO, 2010).
Management	A series of processes and activities undertaken in order to enable a business to attain or realise its objectives or goals through the employment of human, financial, and physical resources (Erasmus, Strydom, & Rudansky-Kloppers, 2013).
Success	"The ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for owner/managers and their employees by maintaining the optimum level of activity with which they can cope." (Beaver, 2002: 180).

1.9. Thesis Structure

This thesis is structured in seven chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the Study: The chapter gives the topic, background to the problem, and the key concepts of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: This chapter gives a broader context of the research area of strategic leadership theory and provides the theoretical framework for the study. Key success factors for SMEs are also explored in this chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods: Chapter 3 positions the study as sequential exploratory research design, using a mixed- methods approach, including in-depth, semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data and a structured questionnaire in the collection of quantitative data.

Chapter 4: Qualitative Data Analysis and Findings: The chapter gives an analysis of the findings from the qualitative research based on 12 semi-structured interviews. The principles of grounded theory will be used in performing data analysis in answering the main research question provided in Chapter 1.

Chapter 5: Quantitative Data Collection, Analysis and Results: The purpose of this chapter is to corroborate the findings from the qualitative data, since this study is based on a sequential exploratory study. The results of factor analysis, correlation analysis, and hypothesis testing will be reported in this chapter.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Findings: This chapter merges the findings from both qualitative and quantitative data and postulates a strategic leadership framework. The contribution of the study in terms of theory and managerial implications is also set out in this chapter.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations: This is the final chapter, which summarises the key findings from the research, based on the research objectives, and suggests a strategic leadership framework for the success of SMEs. The limitations of the study, together with possible areas for future research, are outlined in this chapter.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter explored the contributions of SMEs to various economies in general and to that of Zimbabwe in particular. Zimbabwe has acknowledged the prominence of SMEs through the establishment of institutions such as the SEDCO, the IBDZ, and the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development with the aim of facilitating SME operations. Undoubtedly, SMEs are making significant contributions to Zimbabwe's employment since 84 % of the population is now employed in the informal sector.

The high failure rates of SMEs in Zimbabwe, (only 15% of the established SMEs will survive after five years) warrants an investigation of strategic leadership practices in such SMEs. Research has confirmed that strategic leadership should be the main focus, not only for big organisations, but also SMEs as they need to have a strategic focus, in order to survive in the dynamic, volatile, and complex environments, in which they find themselves in. In view of the foregoing, it becomes imperative that strategic leadership be explored further so that SMEs can continue to contribute to the economic development of Zimbabwe.

Chapter 2 delves into the historical foundations of strategic leadership, the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategies, challenges faced by strategic leaders, as well as the key success factors for SMEs.

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the development of strategic leadership in organisations. Distinctions will be made between leadership in general as a process as well as strategic leadership, as both a process, and as a position. However, greater emphasis will be placed on strategic leadership as a position since strategic leaders are the ones charged with the responsibility of formulating the vision and mission of the organisation (direction- setting). As identified in Chapter 1, the success of an organisation depends on leaders with strategic decision-making responsibilities, especially the chief executive officer (CEO), i.e., the SME owner-manager. There is indeed empirical evidence to suggest that CEOs matter when it comes to company performance. Longitudinal studies conducted by Bennedsen, Perez-Gonzalez and Wolfenzon (2006) on 74 880 firms in Denmark demonstrated that CEOs are extremely important for a firm's growth prospects and overall performance. Results of the study found out that firms' prospects were significantly negatively affected by the loss of their CEOs (through death), affecting the firm's operating profitability, its investment decisions and sales growth. CEOs or founders of SMEs have been found to wield a great deal of influence in the firm as regards the operations and decision-making processes of the firm (Simsek, Jansen, Minichilli & Escriba-Esteve, 2015).

An important assumption that this study makes in terms of organisational theory at the micro level (individual organisations level) is that the behaviour of the SME is voluntaristic and is not determined by the operating environment. In other words, decisions made by the SME owner-managers drive firm level behaviour. This view is buttressed by Astley and Van de Ven (1983:247) who argued that: "Seen from the voluntaristic orientation, individuals and their created institutions are autonomous, proactive, self-directing agents; individuals are seen as the basic unit of analysis and source of change in organizational life." Managers in SMEs are therefore viewed as independent in terms of the choices they make and ultimately the decisions they uphold. In addition, SME owner-managers are perceived as proactive in coming up with firm strategy, as opposed to being reactive to the dynamic challenges of the environment.

The relevant literature has been reviewed and distilled regarding: strategic leadership in general; the role played by strategic leaders in SMEs, the challenges they face in the implementation of strategies, as well as the identification of key success factors for SMEs. A review of the literature may add content to a chosen topic, make a contribution to the study or expand the conceptual framework of a study. Therefore, the purpose of the literature review was to make a critical analysis and synthesis of the diversity of sources used in the search for relevant literature and ultimately locate a research gap. Resultantly, the review of literature was useful in coming up with a strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe.

In critically reviewing the literature, I extensively used the North-West University (NWU) Online Library's business and management databases to get information spanning from the late 1960s to 2018. I was able to access Emerald Insight; Elsevier: Science Direct; Business Source Complete; EBSCOhost and ProQuest databases. Other search engines included Google Scholar and Google. The use of such sources enabled me to extract web textbooks, web articles, peer-reviewed journal articles, theses and dissertations. Focus was mainly on research articles that had been published in the last five years which provides currency of the subject. The majority of the peer-reviewed literature was accessed from Google Scholar. The most prominent scholarly peer-reviewed journals included the following: *Academy of Management Review, Journal of Management Development, Strategy and Leadership, Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, International Journal of Business, The Leadership Quarterly, Strategic Management Journal, Harvard Business Review, Journal of Business Strategy and Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. In addition, some seminal scholarly textbooks were used especially in the area of strategic leadership and grounded theory.

Part of my literature search strategy was to use key words and a combination of key words in the peer-reviewed literature relevant to strategic leadership in Zimbabwean SMEs, which included: *definition of SMEs in general and in the Zimbabwean context; contribution of SMEs to the economy; historical foundation of strategic leadership theory; strategic leadership in SMEs; strategy management; strategy implementation; enablers of strategic leadership; strategic leadership challenges, the role of the Zimbabwean Government in the SME sector; and SME key*

success factors. Relevant literature was then noted down from the different sources which included the identification of the author(s), the title of the research, research design and methods, findings and results, discussion of the results, limitations and suggestions for further research. This approach assisted me to identify the possible gap in literature which confirmed that the majority of strategic leadership studies have mainly focused on corporates in developed economies. The search for literature further indicated that the role of strategic leadership in SMEs globally, and in developing countries, in particular, has not received attention.

Because the main purpose of this study was to develop a strategic leadership framework for SMEs, the first part of the literature review focuses on the historical foundation of strategic leadership, and then moves on to the roles that strategic leaders play in the implementation of strategies. The theoretical framework for the study is also dissected in this chapter. Concluding remarks for the chapter are offered in the last section of the chapter.

2.1. Historical foundation of Strategic leadership

Leadership is a process of influencing an organisation (or group within an organisation) that facilitates the attainment of the goals of the organisation (Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington, 2008; Yukl, 2013). Leadership is a phenomenon that precedes and facilitates decisions and actions and involves the marshalling, energising, and unification of people toward the pursuit of a vision (Allio, 2013; Kent, Crotts, & Azziz, 2001). One of the key distinctions between leadership and strategic leadership, noted by Hambrick and Pettigrew (2001) is that leadership theory refers to leaders at any level in the organisation, whereas strategic leadership theory refers to the study of people at the top of the organisation. On the other hand, Grint (2005), argued that leadership could be understood from four dimensions namely: 1) The person: *who* are the leaders?; 2) The result: Is it *what* is achieved by leaders that make them who they are, as leaders?; 3) The position: Does *where* leaders operate make them leaders?; and 4) The process: Does the process of *how* leaders get things done distinguish them from non-leaders?. Strategic theory of leadership is concerned with the leadership *"of"* organisations (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000) as opposed to leadership *"in"* organisations, which is the primary focus of supervisory

leadership. Supervisory leadership focuses on the achievement of tasks, it primarily involves individuals, and its time horizon is medium to short-term (Kur, 1995).

Supervisory theories of leadership, for instance, path-goal theory focuses on the task and person-oriented behaviours for leaders as they provide support and feedback to subordinates as well as guidance to the organisation (Boal & Schultz, 2007; House & Aditya, 1997). As noted by Boal and Hooijberg (2000:515-516), "By the mid 1980's, however, a metamorphosis away from supervisory leadership toward the study of strategic leadership had begun." The distinction between supervisory leadership and strategic leadership is well articulated by Duursema, (2013) who opined that strategic leadership influence extends to the organisation in its entirety or its major segments, whereas supervisory leaders exert their influence primarily on their immediate subordinates.

On the other hand, strategic leadership as a responsibility has been viewed by other researchers as permeating all the management levels of the organisation- first line, middle, and top management, and not being limited to only the top management (Hitt & Ireland, 2002, Zaccarro, 2001). Researchers have also focused on leadership as a position and argued that strategic leaders focus on both (day –to-day) - operational issues, and the long- term strategic orientation of the organisation (Slawinski, 2007). Hambrick and Pettigrew's opinion is supported by Zoogah (2009), who argued that leadership refers to the process of influencing other people in an organisation in order to attain the set mission and objectives of the organisation, while strategic leadership focuses on the strategy of the organisation.

Hambrick and Mason (1984), cited in Phipps and Burbach (2010), proposed what was then known as 'upper echelon theory' which asserted that since leaders operate at a strategic level, organisations are reflections of the personality and values of their top managers, known as The Top Management Team (TMT). The specific knowledge, experience, capabilities, value systems, and preferences of top managers will ultimately influence the choices they make about strategies for their particular organisations (Phipps & Burbach, 2010). Finkelstein *et al.* (2009) further

posited that the performance of the TMT is also affected by the environment within which the organisation operates. The theory argues that individual psychological factors and observable experiences affect strategic choices, which, in turn, affect organisational performance (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1990).

Upper echelons theory has been criticised for not directly studying actual strategic leadership behaviour. Researchers such as Priem, Lyon, and Dess (1999) raised issues on the use of demographic indicators as a proxy for strategic leadership behaviours. Other critics of the upper-echelons theory include Kriger and Zhovtobryukh (2013), who postulated that strategic leadership in firms need not necessarily be limited to the TMT, since there are a lot of actors within the organisation that includes other managers. These other levels of management also have an effect on organisational performance.

Upper echelon theory was adapted and expanded by subsequent authors, and later became known as *strategic leadership theory* (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996) as cited in Phipps and Burbach (2010). As the theory was refined by subsequent authors, strategic leadership theory grew to address the larger question of how a top-level leader contributes to organisational performance by setting the direction, meaning, purpose, and goals of the organisation (Bass, 2007; Phipps & Burbach, 2010). Duursema (2013) posited that strategic leadership focuses on the survival and success of the organization, its critical audience involves the community of employees, and its time horizon is long-term.

Strategic leadership is constituted by a wide array of activities and decisions that are taken by people in leadership positions which include a process-oriented view through which, over time, the past, the present, and the future of the organisation intersect. Strategic leadership enhances the linkages between the past, the present, and the future, by reaffirming core values and identity to ensure that the organisation adapts and pulls through the diversity of known and unknown environmental challenges (Boal, 2004). Furthermore, the ability of the leader to anticipate, envision, exhibiting flexibility, and empowering others in the creation of strategic change as

necessary has been viewed as constituting strategic leadership (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2007). Strategic leadership implies behaviours which aim at ensuring the prosperity and survival of the organization (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000).

Carter and Greer (2013) postulated that over the past 30 years, much scholarly research has focused on the analysis of different leadership styles, in relation to - transactional, transformational, and charismatic leadership and its influence on the performance of organisations. Little- research has been conducted on strategic leadership, with a focus on leadership styles of lower-level managers and the performance of team units within the organisation, without taking into consideration the impact of such styles on the overall organisation's performance.

2.2. Role of Strategic leaders in strategy implementation

Strategy implementation is defined as the process that turns strategies and plans into action, or the realisation of strategy (David & David, 2017; Hakonsson, et al., 2012; Sage, 2015). The majority of studies on strategic leadership have mainly concentrated on large organisations; for instance, Hambrick, Finkelstein and Mooney, (2005) explored the executive job demands, strategic choices and leadership behaviours in large organisations in the USA, that had implications on strategic decision making and executive leadership. Hagen, Vaicys, and Hassan (2011) focused on implementation of strategic leadership in the globalised era, and Zoogah (2009) examined the determinants of strategic leadership on organisations in Africa, including culture, personality, and motivation. Nastase (2010) examined the development of a strategic leadership approach within organisations, focusing on attributes of strategic leaders. Dimitrios, Sakas, and Vlachos (2013) explored the role of strategic leadership in non-profit organisations, with special emphasis on the formulation and implementation of strategic planning.

Strategic leadership is key to the success of implementing strategies. There is no doubt about the importance of strategic planning in an organisation; however, formulated strategies need to be implemented, otherwise the whole planning phase becomes redundant and a waste of

organisational resources (Carter & Pucko, 2010; David & David, 2017). In this regard, Jooste and Fourie (2009) argued that research indicates that the ability to implement a strategy is viewed as considerably more important than the formulation of strategy, it is central to the performance of an organisation. Strategy implementation means putting the formulated strategies into concrete actions, which should be linked to financial budgets. It is the process of providing goods and services in accord with a plan of action, designing an appropriate organisational structure, implement effective control systems, and culture to pursue strategies that results in the firm attaining competitive advantage. This process requires special motivation and leadership skills on the part of the strategic leader (David, 2011; Gilbert & Behnam, 2009; Hill & Jones, 2004; Hodgetts, Luthans, & Doh, 2005).

One of the key strategic roles of management, particularly general and functional managers is to use their expertise, passion and drive in providing strategic leadership for their subordinates (Jones & Hill, 2004). One of the key drivers of effective strategy implementation has been strategic leadership and is characterised by the fact that those who practice it have a global vision, and in motivating others, they show commitment to that vision. They pay attention first of all, to the organisation in its entirety, and not to its departments or divisions (Hill & Jones, 2004; Hrebiniak, 2005; Nastase, 2010; Thompson & Strickland, 2003). Strategic leaders usually adopt a broader and encompassing perspective, settling for the global, or national perspective (Low, 2010).

Strategic leadership represents one of the fields with the highest impact on the performance of an organisation. It is not a leadership style in and of itself, but is a framework upon which successful leadership style categories should be grounded (Nastase, 2010; Williams & Johnson, 2010).Some of the characteristics of good strategic leaders that do lead to high performance include: vision, eloquence, and consistency; commitment; being well informed; willingness to delegate and empower; and astute use of power and emotional intelligence (Hill & Jones, 2004).

Literature confirms that strategic leadership plays a critical role in the effective implementation of strategy. The responsibility for the effective implementation of strategy lies squarely on the shoulders of the strategic leaders; and the creation of a sustainable competitive advantage can be based on strategic leadership (Jooste & Fourie, 2009; Slawinski, 2007). In addition, the determination of a strategic direction for the organisation is the strategic leadership action that is perceived to play the most critical role in the effective implementation of strategy (Daft, 2005; Jooste & Fourie, 2009). The implementation of the strategic vision requires that the leader rely on the competencies of people around him or her, for whom he creates a conducive environment for developing and behaving as effective leaders. As the environment becomes unpredictable, strategic leaders show a high degree of adaptability and flexibility in the ways in which they meet their objectives (Nastase, 2010). Table 2.1 provides a review of related literature and the related conclusions on the role of strategic leaders in strategy implementation.

Table 2.1 Role of Strategic Leaders in Strategy Implementation

Author(s)	Description of role of strategic leadership in strategy implementation
Taylor (1995)	Effective strategic leadership contributes to successful strategy implementation, and, without strategic leadership firms will find it difficult to survive in future.
Boal & Hooijberg (2000)	Strategic leadership focuses mainly on the creation of the purpose, vision and meaning for the organisation.
Bossidy & Charan (2002); Kaplan & Norton (2001)	Strategic leadership is one of the key drivers in the implementation of strategy.
Hrebiniak (2005); Hill & Jones (2004); Thompson & Strickland (2003)	Strategic leadership is characterised by a global vision, and paying attention to the organisation, and strategic leaders are involved in the implementation of the strategy.
Boal (2004)	Strategic leadership makes sense of and gives meaning to the ever changing, volatile and turbulent environment, by providing the vision path that allows an organisation to adapt and respond to such environmental changes.

New Zealand Institute of Management (2004)	To sustain the survival of the SME itself, management needs to have strong strategic focus-strategic leadership; this is just as important to the SME as it is to the larger organisation.
Ireland & Hitt (2005)	"Strategic leadership is one of the key issues facing organisations and without strategic leadership, organisations will be faced by a multiplicity of challenges in achieving superior performance given the global challenges that confront organisations." (p.67)
Elenkov, Judge, & Wright (2005)	The process of developing the firm's vision, communicating it to subordinates, influencing and inspiring, and rewarding followers, and engaging in mutual strategy-supportive discourses with peers and subordinates.
Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson (2007)	"The leader's ability to anticipate, developing the firm's vision, and exercising flexibility in the empowerment of others in creating strategic changes deemed relevant and important." (p.375)
Jooste & Fourie (2009)	The major driver of effective strategy implementation is strategic leadership.
Rowe (2009)	The long-term prosperity of an organisation depends on having strategic leaders at the helm of the firm who will implement strategies that will enhance the long- term survival of the firm.
Davies & Davies (2010)	"Strategic leaders create the vision, and future direction, and balance strategic and operational issues. Strategic leaders also deliver strategic action (implementation.)" (p.5)
Nastase (2010)	In the implementation of the strategic vision, the leader relies on the competencies of people around him, for whom he or she creates a stimulating environment for developing and behaving as effective leaders. As the environment becomes unpredictable, strategic leaders show a high flexibility in the ways by which they achieve their objectives.
Sorooshian, Norzima, Yusof, & Rosnah (2010)	The role of top management as strategy makers has more influence on implementation of the strategy; they have authority in decision-

	making that consequently affects the entire organisation.
Hakonsson, Burton, Obel, & Lauridsen (2012)	SME executives are involved, not only in formulating strategic choices, but also in implementing these.
Misankova & Kocisova(2014)	One of the main barriers to effective strategy implementation is the lack of strategic leadership.

Source: Researcher's own compilation

From the review of literature highlighted above, one can make the following salient conclusions:

- The success of an organisation depends, to a large extent, on having strategic leaders at the helm of the organisation to co-ordinate the various functional activities of the organisation.
- Strategic leadership greatly influences strategic implementation processes in the organisation and ultimately affects the overall organisation. Strategic leadership is central to the implementation of strategies. Without strategic leadership, firms will find it difficult to survive in the dynamic, turbulent and ever-changing environment.
- The vision and future direction of the organisation can only be charted by strategic leaders who should also have the ability to situate the organisation in its broader environmental context.
- In the process of implementing strategies, strategic leaders need to communicate clearly the vision to subordinates and peers, since they also play a significant part in the implementation of strategies. Subordinates are the ones who are involved in the day to day operations of the organisation, that is, the implementation process.
- The implementation of strategy by strategic leaders envisages the empowerment of others in creating organisational change in circumstances or situations that warrant such changes. Empowerment means that subordinates will be given leeway to make informed decisions within defined parameters.

From the preceding discussion it is clear that strategic leadership plays a critical role in the implementation of strategies if the SMEs are to survive in the competitive global environment.

2.3. Challenges of Strategic leadership in strategy implementation

The major challenges that strategic leaders face include change, strategic flexibility and the implementation process (Hagen, Vaicys, & Hassan, 2011). Effective management of change is needed in organisations, but it is difficult, because it is risky. Strategic leaders should have the capability of initiating and managing organisational change. Changes in the market are occurring at a fast pace which demands that managers have the ability to manage change effectively, adjust and adapt their business practices rapidly enough to keep up with the pace of competitive pressures of the environment, while balancing the management of change (Wolfe, 2012). With regard to flexibility, organisations should continuously examine their current strategic decisions and actions, internal and external communication systems, the culture of the organisation, coupled with the structure of the organisation.

Strategic flexibility refers to the capability of the firm in responding rapidly to the changing conditions on the competitive front, and thereby developing and sustaining a competitive advantage. Strategic leaders should be flexible since the environment is highly unpredictable (Hagen, Vaicys & Hassan, 2011; Nastase, 2010). Implementation problems encompass inefficiency in co-ordinating activities, inadequate leadership and direction, inadequate training, and poor definition of key implementation tasks and activities.

Strategy implementation, especially in SMEs, has been confirmed as a major challenge in the business world in many research studies (Njuguna Chege, Wachira, & Mwenda, 2015). Hrebiniak (2013) posited that many managers are more conversant with the formulation of strategies than in executing them, making the strategy implementation process challenging. In addition, it has also been argued by a number of researchers that poor strategy formulation is a common impediment to strategy implementation, and that strategies which are formulated but not implemented are irrelevant (David & David, 2017; Hrebiniak 2005; Pucko & Cater 2008; Taylor & Taylor, 2014). Previous research has also shown that SMEs are less reliant on leadership, communication, planning, and the assignment of job responsibilities when implementing strategy (Ates et al., 2013; Cater & Pucko, 2010; Taylor & Taylor, 2014).

2.4. Enablers of Strategic leadership

There are several enablers of strategic leadership, and several strategies proffered as ways of effective implementation of a strategy, the prominent ones being those suggested by Ireland and Hitt (1999), cited in Hagen, Vaicys and Hassan (2011). These include:

- **Growth orientation:** Competition in the market place demands that organisations focus on growth, rather than on downsizing and cost cutting; as such, strategic leaders can embark on acquisitions, innovation, and product development in order to provide customers with value.
- **Knowledge management:** Strategic leaders must enable their organisations to develop, and exploit, and protect the intellectual capital contained in their citizen's knowledge bases.
- **Mobilisation of human capital:** In order to cope with changes in the business environment, technologies, and markets, strategic leaders will be expected to mobilize organisational members in a manner that increases their adaptive abilities. Employees should be capacitated by the organisation in order to devise their own ways of attaining their goals. In this regard, human capital has been viewed by strategic leaders as an enabler in both innovation and the creation of the firm's core competencies, through which competitive advantages are successfully exploited (Rowe, 2009, Ireland & Hitt, 2005).
- **Developing an effective organisational culture:** An organisation's corporate culture exerts a strong influence on its performance. In order to enhance the development of values geared towards the success of the organisation, strategic leaders should exhibit honesty and transparency in interacting with all internal and external stakeholders of the firm.

2.5. Strategy implementation in SMEs

Strategy implementation is a combination of all the activities and choices required for the operationalisation of the strategic plan (Wheelen & Hunger 2006). The implementation of strategy is part of the strategic management process and the success of implementation is dependent on managers, employees, their organisation, as well as by the transformation of a company's culture (Misankova & Kocisova, 2014). As noted earlier, while formulating a strategy is difficult, making it work, that is, implementing it throughout the organisation is even harder (Hrebiniak, 2006). Strategy implementation, especially in SMEs, remains a major challenge in the business world, a fact that has been confirmed by many researchers (Calopa,

2017; Njuguna Chege, Wachira, & Mwenda, 2015). Raps (2005), cited in Carter and Pucko (2010) argued that the real success rate in the implementation of strategy is so minimal, ranging between 10 and 30 %. In view of this, the cornerstone to the success of implementing any idea in an organisation is a strong, supportive and committed leadership (Achanga et al., 2006).

Strategy implementation is critical to the building of a capable organisation, the development of the organisation hinges on strategic implementation, with the aim of achieving its longer-term vision and the stated mission, through good planning for overall corporate success (Crittenden & Crittenden, 2008). Literature highlights that strategy implementation in SMEs is managed in an informal and intuitive fashion, with a fire- fighting approach, also known as *short terminism* (Ates & Bititci, 2008). Research by Ates and Bititci (2008) confirmed that the implementation phase of strategies included activities such as allocation of resources, planning and budgeting, workforce alignment, institutionalising the strategy, communication of the strategy, and managing strategic change.

Various models for strategy implementation in SMEs have been proposed. Hrebiniak and Joyce (cited in Pucko & Carter, 2010) argued that a strategy that is well crafted and articulated is the first critical component in the process of strategy implementation. The design of a primary organisational structure that establishes functional objectives, the design of operating structures, and the creation of proper rewards, control mechanisms that support the implementation process should follow the crafting of the strategy. Research findings by Pucko and Carter (2010) revealed that managers in Slovenian SMEs relied more on those activities that are part of planning and organising than on those that resort under leadership and controlling.

Successful strategy implementation requires the input and co-operation of every member of a company's workforce, who should have clear assignments of responsibilities regarding detailed implementation activities (Crittenden & Crittenden, 2008; Raps, 2005). The commitment of strategic leaders, discipline, and sacrifice are imperative for successful strategy implementation (David & David, 2017; Raps, 2005). The implementation process also requires that strategic

leaders plan, devise policies, motivate employees, organise, and make available resources for the implementation process to be a success, coupled with the organisation's agility and ability to adapt to the rapidly changing environment (David & David, 2017; Frantz et al. 2017; Miller et al., 2004).

2.6. Strategy management

The concept of strategy has its roots in the Greek military. Strategy comes from the Greek military. The word *strategy* originates from the Greek word *strategos,* which is the art of a general, planning to destroy enemies through effective resource utilisation (Bracker, 1980; Mainardes et al., 2014; Stead & Stead, 2008; Steiner & Miner, 1977). Strategy was associated with the leadership in armies outcompeting and outwitting adversaries in a competitive battle. Military strategies were then extended, after World War II, to the fields of business, economics, and management, and strategic management is now concerned with on out-manoeuvring competitors and winning customers, with customers being perceived as the competitive battlefield.

The concept of strategy has been much debated, and there seems to be no unanimity in the discourses on defining it. Strategy may refer to policies, objectives, goals, tactics or programmes. Drucker (1954) defined strategy as analysing the present situation and changing it whenever necessary. Steiner and Miner, (1977), posited that strategy can be described as the formulation of missions, purposes and basic organisational goals, policies and programs to meet them, and the methods needed to ensure that strategies are implemented to achieve organisational objectives. On the other hand, Barney (2001) argues that strategy is the theory of the firm on how to compete successfully, which must be communicated to all employees for it to be successful (Hrebiniak, 2005); while Davies and Davies (2008:16) posited that strategy is a plan of action which highlights "where you are going and why you are going". David and David (2017) defined strategy as how the long-term objectives of the firm will be achieved. In addition, strategy has been defined as a company's game plan for achieving its intended goals and objectives.

Strategy and strategic management have been confused, but there is a clear delineation between the two concepts. Strategic management can be defined as the process through which business owners, managers, and leaders employ long-term goals, and direction, to address major issues concerning their organisation (Frantz et al., 2017). David and David (2017) posited that the strategic management process is just as important for small firms as it is for large firms. As such, strategies are part of the strategic management process, since they are viewed as the tactics to achieve an end. All organisations possess a strategy, even if the strategy evolves from day- to-day operations, such strategies determine the long- term competitive advantage of the firm in its chosen markets (David & David, 2017).

Bracker (1980) postulated that the need for a strategy arose as a result of changes taking place in organisations due to rapid changes in science and technology. The performance of an organisation, to a greater extent depends on the strategies utilized to realise the firm's vision (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). The management of strategy is concerned with ensuring that selected strategies are implemented. Strategic leaders develop the most appropriate strategy, and structure support for successful performance in the firm, by identifying strategies for the various resource areas and managing change strategically (Johnson, Scholes, &Whittington, 2008). However, other researchers, such as Barca (2002), as cited in Kiziloglu and Serinkan (2015), contented that firms strive to gain a competitive advantage in order to realise their goals, and that the ways to acquire such competitive advantage and make it continuous is not to have a strategy, but to employ strategic management.

Furthermore, prominent research on strategy formulation by Mintzberg and Waters (1986) culminated in the following eight major types of strategies which can be employed by firms:

- Planned: These are deliberate strategies formulated by the top leadership of the firm which is sustained by the existence of formal control systems within predictable environments;
- Entrepreneurial: These are flexible strategies, which originate from the vision of the firm's founder who controls the firm, and such strategies are deliberate, but in other instances they can be emergent;

- Ideological: These are deliberate strategies which originate from the shared beliefs of organisational members which are controlled through socialisation processes, in which a firm is viewed as proactive to its environment;
- Umbrella: Strategies which originate from leadership constraints, leaders are not in full control of the organisation, they set parameters within which others can act, such strategies could be partly emergent, partly deliberate or deliberately emergent;
- Process: Strategies emanate from the processes, leaders control some aspects of strategy such as the firm's structure, and such strategies are partly deliberate, and partly emergent;
- Unconnected: Strategies emanate from enclaves: one part of the organisation which possess some discretion because it has loose ties with other units, and is able to realise its own pattern of strategy within the broader context of the general firm strategy;
- Consensus: These strategies originate from a general consensus of the diverse actors of the firm, such strategies are emergent;
- Imposed: The environment imposes the patterns of action that the firm can take, and in many cases, such strategies are emergent in nature.

In a study of 184 small firms in the USA, Lussier *et al.* (2001:29) investigated the strategies used by small firms and found out that the most common were: "work to create competitive advantage," "maintain innovation," "lower the costs of developing and/or maintaining one's venture," "defend product/service as it is now," and "create a first mover advantage." Hudson *et al*., (2001) posited that most SMEs have informal strategies that emanate from the owner-manager, compared to large firms that have formal strategies in place for different organisational conditions.

Frantz *et al.* (2017), posited that, due to the rapidly changing business environment, SMEs need to be adaptable to the environment and formulate their own strategies that lead to the attainment of their firms' objectives. Therefore, strategy addresses the link between the internal operations of the business and its external environment (Porth, 2002). One of the major objectives of

developing strategies is to attract and retain customers, in order to realise the firm's financial objectives, and ultimately, the firm's vision and mission (Mainardes et al., 2014).

To conclude, strategies can either be deliberate, that is, intended strategies or they can be emergent. Strategic leaders need to strike a balance between the two, directing the firm's operations towards the attainment of its intended objectives while at the same time responding to the dictates of the environment. Strategy formulation is therefore based on the intentions and choices of the strategic leader in a specific situation.

2.7. Theoretical framework

Globalisation has brought about complex competitive challenges for organisations, to such an extent that strategic leaders must position their organisations and make them adaptable to such global challenges. In order to withstand these competitive pressures, strategic leaders need to craft strategies that insulate their organisations against competition and other external variables that may negatively impact the organisation's operations. The present study was anchored in the strategic leadership theory and the strategic leadership framework was informed by the work of Ireland and Hitt (2005) and Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson, (2009), which has gained support from various researchers, as evidenced in the discussion that follows. Strategic leadership theory was relevant for this study, as it is concerned with how top leadership of SMEs influence strategic decisions, such as those that lead to the effective implementation of strategy in their SMEs.

In the search for strategic leadership effectiveness, Ireland and Hitt (2005) and Bass (2007) suggested the configuration of six components of strategic leadership: 1) determining the firm's purpose or vision, 2) exploiting and maintaining core competencies, 3) developing human capital, 4) sustaining an effective organisational culture, 5) emphasizing ethical practices and, 6) the establishment of balanced organisational controls. However, further research by Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2009) categorised *exploiting and maintaining core competencies* under *effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio* thereby reducing the number of components to

five. Figure 2.1 highlights the framework for the study which shows the critical components of strategic leadership as propounded by Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2009:350).

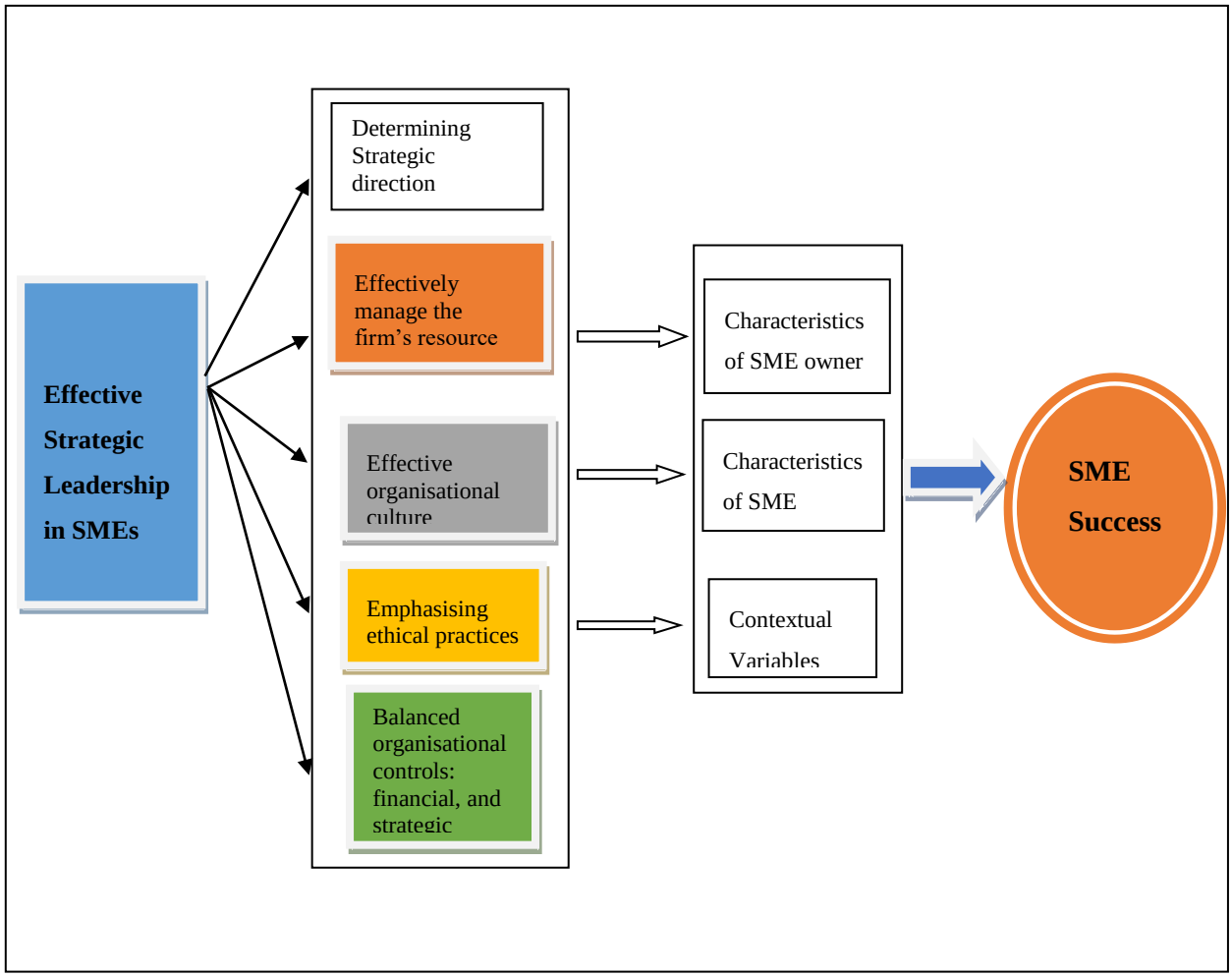


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework

Sources: Adapted from: Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2009:350); Indarti and Langenberg (2004:3)

Each of the components identified in the framework above is discussed in detail below:

2.7.1. Determining the firm's purpose or vision

The responsibility of formulating the organisation's vision lies with the strategic leader. The development of a mission statement has been argued to be the first strategic decision that small businesses need to take. Without a concrete statement of organisational mission, it would be difficult to set and communicate clear goals and strategies (Alavi & Karami, 2009; Toftoy & Chatterjee, 2004). A vision refers to what the organisation envisages to be in future, therefore, it is futuristic. The organisation should be positioned well within its broader environmental context to attain a competitive advantage, taking cognisance of the firm's competencies and resource capabilities. Strategic leaders should formulate a strong vision and mission that also articulates the reason for the existence of the firm.

The mission of the organisation answers questions such as: What is our core business? Who are our customers? What services/ products should we provide? In coming up with the vision and mission of the organisation, the strategic leader should have a bird's eye view and pursue a holistic and broad organisational perspective. Such a vision and mission will ultimately empower organisational members to execute the strategies in line with the vision of the organisation (Davies & Davies, 2010; Hagen, Vaicys & Hassan, 2011; Hitt & Ireland, 1999; Slawinski, 2007). Research studies by Alavi and Karami (2009), in 150 SMEs in the UK, found out that owner-managers believed that a mission statement was necessary for promoting shared expectations between the owner-manager and all employees. In this regard, the researchers recommended that SME owner-managers should involve both managerial and non-managerial employees in the formulation of the mission statement.

Setting the vision of the organisation, making strategic decisions, and providing direction to the organisation have been identified as some of the roles played by strategic leaders in organisations (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000; Hart & Quinn, 1993; House & Aditya, 1997). In setting the vision of the organisation, strategic leaders promote organisational learning and innovation in subordinates and reward them for taking part in setting the vision and gaining their commitment to the organisation (Boal & Schultz, 2007).

However, other scholars, such as Quong and Walker (2010), argue that there is more to strategic leadership than just having a vision about an ideal future. It is about acknowledging the complex and unpredictable nature of the future and devising strategies to prepare for the unexpected, rather than just planning for the known. The function of strategies is to translate the purpose and vision of the organisation into reality (Davies & Davies, 2010), and such strategies should result in the success of the organisation.

The importance of vision statements is well articulated by Ireland and Hitt (2005), who noted that a survey of 1 450 executives from 12 global corporations found that the ability to articulate a clear vision, values, and strategy for their firm was the most important of 21 competencies considered to be crucial skills for global leaders to possess in the future. Followers should act on the vision, that underpins the strategy of the firm, and the strategic leader uses various techniques to gain commitment and ensure performance through legitimate authority, goal setting and rewarding, punishing, organisational restructuring, and team building (Kantabutra & Avery, 2010). Furthermore, research by Kantabutra (2008) confirmed that vision statements should portray the following characteristics: consciousness, clarity, stability, future orientation, challenge, ability to inspire and abstractness.

Researchers such as Baum *et al.* (1998) found some positive relationships between vision characteristics that are challenging, future oriented, aspiring, clear, stable, contents of the vision, and organisational performance in entrepreneurial firms (Kantabutra & Gayle, 2010). In light of the above, it is imperative that strategic leaders set unique mission and vision statements. For an SME to be successful, the manager of the SME must have a vision of the future development of the enterprise; preferably in writing. Such a vision provides direction and enhances commitment (David & David, 2017; Vrchota & Rehor, 2017).

A vision statement should cascade down the organisational hierarchy through effective communication channels, to enhance commitment towards the implementation of organisational strategies. This view is held by Boal and Hooijberg, (2000); Brubaker (2005), and Kantabutra

and Avery (2010), who pointed out that strategic leaders should create and communicate their visions in such a way that their followers feel new energy and a shared responsibility as well as shared accountability. Organisational members should share the same vision which will act as a guide in the behaviours of such members. Lo *et al.*, (2016) in their research on Malaysian owner-managed SMEs found out that the financial performance of the SME could be improved if top management focused on the communication of vision and mission statements across the wide spectrum of organisational units. Determining the strategic direction of the organisation is not just a way of projecting what the future holds for the organisation, but also involves the setting of guidelines and frameworks for reaching the intended position, which also provides direction for employees to increase their level of performance (Davies & Davies, 2005; Turkyilmaz et al., 2010).

Determining the strategic direction of the firm results in employees exerting their personal efforts, which brings about commitment in becoming the best or to remain the best (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989). The organisation's vision sets out an organisation's long-term goals and aspirations clearly and concisely; it defines the direction of the organisation and articulates how the organisation should be perceived by others in the market (David & David, 2017; Frantz, 2017). In this regard, Frantz *et al.* (2017) posited that research confirms that very few SMEs adopt vision and mission statements. This view is also supported by Ates *et al*. (2013) who investigated 37 European SMEs, through 232 semi-structured and face-to-face interviews with owner-managers and found out that SMEs experienced challenges in the development of effective mission, vision and values, and most of them never had formalised strategies.

2.7.2. Effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio

2.7.2.1. Exploiting and maintaining the core competencies of the firm

Core competencies refer to the resources and capabilities that give a firm an edge over its rivals, and they ensure delivery of a unique value to customers (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Rigby, 2015). Strategic leaders should not only focus on the short term and neglect core competencies in the

face of competition and the ever- changing, complex, and turbulent environments, since this may lead to organisational failure (Rowe & Nejad, 2009). A firm which possesses superior competencies in relation to competitors is said to have a distinctive competence. Strategic leaders should be acquainted with their resource capabilities, and source competencies that are inimitable and rare which will act as a source of competitive advantage.

In addition, strategic leaders should also be able to develop, exploit, and maintain the core competencies, which will be linked even more positively and significantly with the firm's success (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Slawinski, 2007). Competencies could be related to customer service, marketing, quality, innovation, flexibility, strategic customer targeting and superior Internet presence.

2.7.2.2. The development of human, financial and social capital

The firm's resources consist of human, financial, and social capital. All three types of resources are critical to the success of the organisation (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2009). People are also an important asset in any organisation, it is people who can make a difference, and as such they should be treated as assets, rather than costs that should be minimised. As a critical resource to the organisation, human capital represents the knowledge, abilities, skills, competencies and capabilities which are important to innovation and the creation of core competencies (Coleman, 1988; Oxford Economics, 2017; Rowe & Nejad, 2009). Human capital is usually reflected in a person's education, experience, training, and specific skills which are clearly identifiable. To boost their competitiveness, SMEs need to attract top talent (Frantz et al., 2017; Hitt, Bierman, Shimizu, & Kochhar, 2001; Lampadarios, 2017; Oxford Economics, 2017). Research by Hitt, *et al.*, (2001) and Lampadarios (2017), confirmed that firms that invest heavily in human capital, experience superior performance levels. Furthermore, research by Lampadarios (2017) on 118 owner- managers in the UK chemical distribution industry found that human capital is one of the most important resources in SMEs.

Since employees are pivotal to the success of the firm, strategic leaders should invest in them through training and mentorship programmes (Slawinski, 2007). Employees can acquire new skills, improve their performance, as well as reduce their rate of errors in discharging their duties through training. Training also bridges some deficiencies in performance in instances where employees lack the requisite skills in performing their assigned tasks. Through the expansion of the knowledge base of employees, effective teams and groups could emerge in organisations, resulting in the success of such organisations. Furthermore, Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2009) argued that effective training and development programmes help strategic leaders improve skills that are crucial in executing the daily tasks which are associated with effective strategic leadership practices, such as the determination of the firm's strategic direction, and the exploitation and maintenance of the firm's core competencies.

Social capital refers to internal and external relationships that exist in organisations, with the aim of providing value to customers and shareholders. In this regard, co-ordination in organisations among the various units and departments becomes critical. External social capital has also been identified as becoming increasingly critical to a firm's success (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2009). Firms need to integrate backwards in order to access and have control over inputs and resources, and integrate forward in order to control markets, especially in entrepreneurial firms.

In light of the preceding, one can conclusively argue that human capital is one of the critical resources that organisations should develop and nurture. This view is confirmed by Ireland and Hitt (2005) who posited that strategic leaders are those who value the skills, capabilities and efforts of organisational members as critical resources upon which core competencies are built, and through whom competitive advantages are successfully sustained.

2.7.3. The sustenance of an effective organisational culture

The culture of the organisation is composed of a set of ideologies, symbols, and core values that are shared throughout the firm and influence the way in which a firm conducts its business activities (Barney, 1996; Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2009; Ireland & Hitt, 2005). Competitive

advantages can be built on culture since the way an organisation conducts business is largely influenced by culture. Barney (1996) posits that in-order for culture to have a sustained competitive advantage, the culture must satisfy three conditions. Firstly, the culture must be valuable in terms of the firm's processes which results in higher sales and lower costs. Secondly, the culture must be rare, in terms of its characteristics which are unique; and finally, the culture should be perfectly imitable, if competitors try to copy, the result could be a reputational disadvantage to them. Furthermore, strategic leaders should be able to shape the organisation's values and symbols in ways that enable the firm to outperform its rivals (Slawinski, 2007).

In order to implement new strategies, changing circumstances within the operating environment may warrant that changes be affected to the existing cultural values. Whatever the reasons for change are, the development and adoption of a new culture requires seamless communication and dexterity in problem solving, as well as selecting the right people, with the right skills and competencies to partake in the change process, and to, ultimately, reward them for their efforts (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2009). Strategic leaders should also develop an organisational culture that inculcates an entrepreneurial spirit, which can be a seedbed for innovation and competitiveness (Arham, 2014; Hagen, Hassan, & Amin, 1998). This view is also shared by Oxford Economics (2017) with researchers noting that from a survey of 3 200 executives from 15 SMEs across the globe, they found that 61% of the respondents encouraged their staff to contribute to innovation. The researchers concluded that the creation of a culture which is responsive and innovative across the functional units of the firm is crucial to the success of SMEs.

2.7.4. Emphasising ethical practices

Ethical practices relate to the individual's moral judgement about right and wrong. In an organisation, decisions may be made by an individual or a group, depending on the culture of that organisation. Top managers who uphold honesty, can be trusted and exhibit integrity in their decision-making processes, are able to motivate their employees and create an organisational culture that encourages the use of ethical practices daily in discharging their assigned organisational activities (Slawinski, 2007).

Firms which are ethical cultivate an enabling environment in which people at all organisational levels act ethically, in the implementation of strategies. Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2009), recommend the following actions to develop an ethical organisational culture:

- The establishment and communication of specific goals that outline the firm's ethical standards;
- The firm's code of conduct should be revised and updated frequently when the need arises;
- Information pertaining to the firm's code of conduct should be communicated continuously to all stakeholders so that they are aware of the firm's ethical standards; and
- The development and implementation of the methods and procedures that are used in the attainment of the firm's ethical standards.

2.7.5. Establishment of balanced organisational controls

Controls influence and guide work to achieve performance objectives, and these controls can be used as the basis for the implementation of strategies, as well as the corrective actions to be taken if there are variances or deviations from the norm (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2009; Ireland & Hitt, 2005). Basically, there are two types of internal controls, namely strategic and financial controls. Strategic controls are executed through the exchange of information that help in the development of strategies, while on the other hand financial controls are achieved through setting objective criteria which encompass the setting of performance targets (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Slawinski, 2007).

Research studies by Hagen, Hassan and Amin (1998) confirmed that the determination of strategic direction, the exploitation of core competencies, the development of human capital, the sustenance of an effective corporate culture, the emphasis on ethical practices, and the establishment of strategic controls were critical components for the successful execution of strategic leadership.

2.8. Success factors for SMEs

The lenses we use to understand company behaviour influences how performance is defined. Success can mean different things to different people. There has been widespread debate regarding the factors which are critical for the success of SMEs. SMEs, like any other business, operate within the parameters of certain environments which influence what the business may, or may not do. As such, SME owner-managers must respond to the challenges posed by the ever-changing business environment. Christen *et al.*, (2013) argued that a company's success or failure depends, to a greater extend, on the decisions and capabilities of the entrepreneur. Ng, Kee and Ramayah (2016) and Rogoff *et al.,* (2004) argued that defining success and performance can be problematic, particularly in small businesses considering the fact that various definitions of success exist. Success factors also vary from country to country, and industry to industry. Success in business varies from one individual to the other and may be related to the degree to which objectives are met or exceeded. The separation of the concept of success from performance has been a daunting task for researchers mainly because success can be one of the major constituents of performance (Simpson, Padmore, & Newman, 2012).

In identifying critical success factors, the focus is on the strengths, resources, and capabilities of a company that will lead to the development of skills in deliberately chosen areas (Schuh, Riesener, & Arnoscht, 2012). Table 2.2 shows the various definitions of critical success factors for business as argued by various authors.

Table 2.2 Definitions of Business Success for SMEs

Author	Definition of business success
Yuchtman & Seashore (1967)	Success is defined in terms of the ability of the firm to acquire and maintain the physical, financial and human resources that are crucial for its survival.
Rockart (1979)	Areas, if satisfactory, that will ensure successful competitive performance for the organisation.
Jennings & Beaver (1997)	Success can be defined as the sustained satisfaction of the stakeholder; success can no longer be treated at par with average firm

	performance.
Mavondo (1999)	Business success can be measured in terms of sales generated by the firm.
Wasilczuk (2000)	Success is defined in terms of sustaining business operations for a longer time and the use of financial measures which include profitability, sales and market share.
Masuo *et al.* (2001)	Business success encompasses both economic or financial parameters, which include return on assets, sales, profits, and survival rates; and other factors, which include personal development, customer satisfaction, and personal achievement.
Beaver (2002)	"The ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for themselves and their employees, by maintaining the optimum level of activity with which they can cope." (p.180)
Paige & Littrell (2002)	Small business success is defined in terms of autonomy and independence, being in charge of your own destiny, and being one's own boss; extrinsic rewards include increased personal income, and the accumulation of wealth.
Lonnqvist (2002); Williams (1998)	Organisations have attributed success only to tangible success factors, that is, the hard-and-fast factors; yet, they should also consider intangible success factors that include soft factors.
Brooksbank *et al.* (2003)	Success is equated with the firm's outstanding performance.
Walker & Brown (2004)	Since the business is intertwined with the owner, the success of the owner is often equated to business success, but for some, non-financial lifestyle criteria are more important.
Ahmad, Wilson, & Kummerow (2011)	The success of the firm is defined as an achievement realised in both financial and non-financial performance.
Chong (2012)	Success can be defined with both traditional criteria, such as profit and growth, coupled with intrinsic factors that include personal satisfaction, and the owner's sense of achievement.

Simpson, Padmore, & Newman (2012)	Success factors and performance may be defined not only in terms of maximizing financial performance of the business, but also according to the satisfaction of the needs and wants of the owner-managers.
Insah, Mumuni, & Bangiyel (2013)	Success occurs when business leaders determine they have met or exceeded their goals, earned profits sufficient to cover costs, and increased the size, scale, or market shares of their business.
Ngwangwama, Ungerer, & Morrison (2013)	Business success mainly focuses on the attainment of goals and objectives of a firm.
Marom & Lusier (2014);	Business success can be characterised as the ability of the firm to create acceptable actions and results.

In view of the above, it should be noted that defining success from a growth and financial perspective can be problematic in a number of ways. Firstly, business owners are generally reluctant to provide financial data on their businesses and privately held companies and are often unwilling to release sensitive data such as net income or return on investment (Aziz, Abdullah & Tajudin, 2013; Fiorito & La Forge, 1986; Garengo, Biazzo & Bititci, 2005). Secondly, defining success in terms of profitability can be a challenge in the context of SMEs in instances where a range of business goals may be pursued (Jarvis et al., 2000; Jennings & Beaver, 1997).

In addition, the use of financial accounting measures has a limitation, in that the measures are not able to tap the essence of a firm's performance in areas such as customer service, operational efficiency, and innovation (Wieder, Booth, Matolcsy, & Ossimitz, 2006). Since accessing financial information through owner- managers of SMEs can be an uphill task, this research adopted Beaver's (2002) definition of success that is, the ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for owner-managers and their employees by maintaining the optimum level of activity with which they can cope, thus focusing on non- financial areas. Researchers such as Mohamad Radzi *et al.* (2017) also made use of non-financial measures in defining business success in SMEs, mainly due to limited small business financial data, coupled with the impossibility of quantifying the respondent's performance using financial accounting measures.

Having defined success, it is crucial to analyse the factors that influence business success. As already noted, SMEs play a critical role in the economic development of any country. Therefore, the identification of success factors is imperative, especially to policy makers and the SME owner- managers. Research by Christen *et al.* (2013), on more than 2 000 Swiss SMEs, identified nine business success factors namely: infrastructure, resources and environment, regulatory framework conditions, economic environment, international ties, values and society, research environment, employees and qualifications and financing terms and conditions. Furthermore, research by Kemayel (2015) in Lebanon also confirmed the factors that influence SME business success namely: SME characteristics, manager characteristics, and ways of doing business (internal factors). External factors included market share, suppliers, customers, competitors, and the national environment. There has been tremendous research in this area, and various factors have been identified as influencing business success. These factors are shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Success Factors for business

Author(s)	Success Factors
Yusuf (1995); Benzing, Chu & Szabo (2005); Hung Manh, Benzing, & MCgee (2007); Chawla, Khanna & Jin (2010)	Environmental conditions, coupled with sound management skills are crucial for the success of business.
UK Department of Trade and Industry (2001)	Relationships, the knowledge, leadership, communication, a firm's cultural values, reputation and trust, employee skills and competencies, as well as processes and systems.
Lonnqvist (2004)	Tangible and physical: economic growth, profitability, and liquidity. Non-financial: quality of products, productivity, goodwill, customer satisfaction, customer retention, innovation, and personal satisfaction.
Indarti & Langenberg (2004)	Entrepreneur characteristics: Age of entrepreneur, work experience, education. SME characteristics: length of time in operation, size of enterprise and source of capital. Contextual variables: Marketing,

	technology, access to capital, support of government as well as business plan.
Temtime & Pansiri (2004)	"Marketing of services/product, marketing research information, policy on pricing and strategy, business plan and trained sales staff." (p.69)
Maes, Sels & Roodhooft (2005)	Small business success can be defined in terms of both financial and non-financial criteria.
Rose, *et al.* (2006); Butler (2008)	Government support programmes to SMEs.
Anwar & Andaleeb (2007); Coy, *et al.* (2007)	Efficient management practices, productivity of labour and efficient financial management; hard work, good customer service and product quality.
Cartsson (2008)	Technology is positively correlated with the success of the business.
Gorgievski, Ascalon & Stephan (2011)	Personal satisfaction of the entrepreneur, profitability, stakeholders' satisfaction, balance between work and private life, innovation, firm's survival/continuity in business, firm's social responsibility, societal recognition and business growth.
Chittithaworn, *et al.* (2011)	SME characteristics, competencies of management, differentiated products/ services, customers and market, the way business is conducted and cooperation, resources and availability of finance, firm's strategy, and business environment(external).
Jasra, *et al.* (2011)	Possession of financial resources, marketing strategy, technological resource capabilities, support of government, business plan and entrepreneur's skills.
Peake & Marshall (2011)	The most commonly used performance indicators for small business success include earnings, employment levels of the firm and growth, (growth is defined in terms of profit, earnings or number of employees).
Saleem (2012)	Age, education, experience, skills, investment, business profile, entrepreneurial experience, and culture.
Ng & Kee (2013)	Leadership style, reputation and image of the firm, ability of the firm to

	innovate, and competence of the entrepreneur.
Christen, *et al*. (2013)	Infrastructure, resources and environment, regulatory framework conditions, economic environment, international ties, values and society, research environment, employees and qualifications and financing terms and conditions.
Abu Zarim (2014)	Strong financial control, continuous improvements, product safety and quality assurance, hard work and team work, and challenge takers/ risk averse.
Ha, *et al.* (2014)	Overall entrepreneurial business, the entrepreneur's health and brain, the entrepreneur's investment, profit and stability and the entrepreneur's reputation, image and branding.
Schmidpeter & Weidinger (2014)	Business success can be measured by survival, profits, sales growth, happiness, number of personnel employed and return on investment.
Kemayel (2015)	SME characteristics, manager characteristics, and ways of doing business (internal factors). External factors included market share, suppliers, customers, and competitors.
Pinz & Helmig (2015)	Business success is measured in terms of an increase in employment and revenues.
Lampadarios (2015; 2017)	SME success factors are the entrepreneurial factors; factors relating to the firm, and factors relating to the external environment of the business.
Lo *et al.*, (2016)	Success factors in SMEs include top management support, customer focus, employee orientation, technology orientation, and entrepreneurial orientation.
Eschker *et al.* (2017)	Entrepreneurial success is defined based on profitability and non-financial measures, which include an increase in the number of employees and opening new branches.
Oxford Economics (2017)	Responding to uncertainty by developing effective strategies that build competitive strengths through agility, applying technology, accelerated innovation and attracting and retaining talent.

Ng & Kee (2018)	Leadership, innovation, marketing, competitiveness, strategy, competence, human resource, reputation, organisational culture and networking.

Source: Researcher's own compilation

From the review of related literature above and based on the characterisation of business success factors by Indarti and Langenberg (2004), which has gained acceptance among a number of research scholars, the most prominent success factors are highlighted in Figure 2.2.

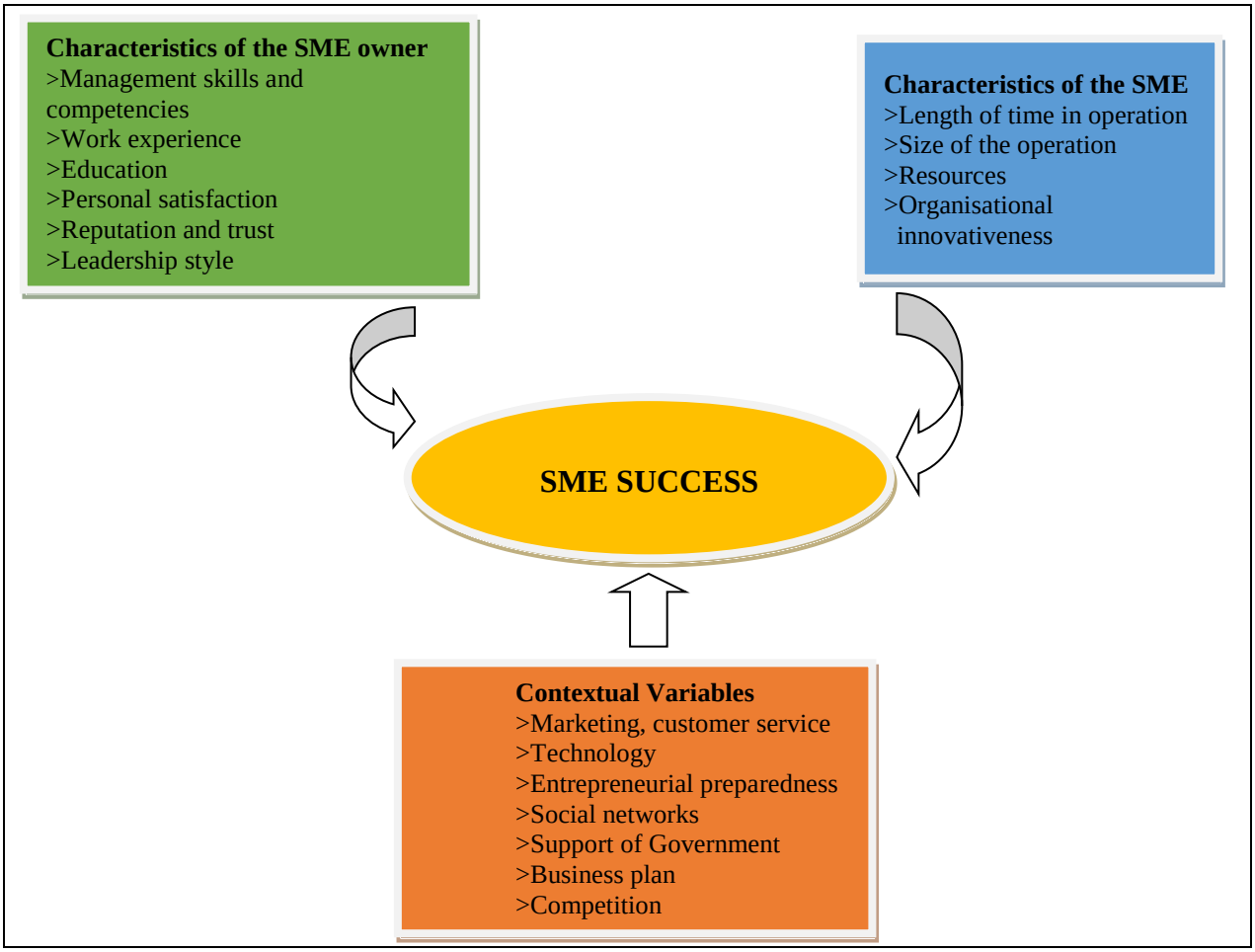


Figure 2.2 Business Success Factors

Sources: Researcher's own compilation, adapted from: Indarti and Langenberg (2004:3); Lampadarios (2015).

The present study used the three major categorisations of business success factors highlighted in Figure 2.3. These factors are discussed below:

2.8.1.1. Characteristics of the SME owner-manager

The characteristics are the demographic variables and the values of owner- managers (Gadenne, 1998; Visser, De Conning, & Smith, 2005; Zafir & Fazilah, 2007). Numerous studies have shown a significant positive correlation between the entrepreneur's characteristics and performance, since the owners are involved in all the decisions in the organisation (Benzing, Chu, & Kara, 2009; Chittithaworn et al., 2011; Kotey & Meredith, 1997; McClelland, 1987; Ng & Kee, 2013; Mohamad Radzi et al., 2017; Rahman, 2001). The owner-manager's leadership style, image, reputation and competence could enhance the success of the firm (Ng & Kee, 2013). Entrepreneurs older than 25 years have been found to be more successful than those under the age of 25. Generally, age, gender, education, personal satisfaction and experience have also been found to have some positive influence on business success (Indarti & Langenberg, 2004; Lampadarios, 2015; Lonnqvist, 2004; Saleem, 2012). Furthermore, owner- managers have indicated that success factors include personal achievement, recognition at work, and the feeling of performing the job well, job satisfaction, and the personal satisfaction of operating a business (Greenbank, 2001; Sturges, 1999; Walker et al., 1999).

2.8.1.2. Characteristics of the SME

The length of time that an SME has been in operation, the size of the operation, possession of resources, as well as organisational innovativeness leads to business success. Organisations that have been in operation for a longer period have been found to be more successful compared to those that have been in operation for a shorter period (Islam, Khan, & Obaidullah, 2011; Kristiansen, Furuholt, & Wahid, 2003). The size of the SME was established as one of the business success factors as confirmed by Ha *et al.*, (2014) in which they found out that entrepreneurial firms in Thailand that had 51- 200 employees had higher levels of success than SME firms with less than 50 employees.

Enterprises that possess superior resources in terms of human, material, and capital resources, coupled with innovative products have been found to be successful. This view is supported by various researchers, including Arham (2014); Chittithaworn *et al.,* (2011); Gorgievski, Ascalon and Stephan (2011); Ha *et al.,* (2014); Jasra *et al.,* (2011); Lampadarios (2015); and Ng and Kee, (2013). Studies have confirmed that innovation is a key factor for the survival, growth, and development of SMEs (Acs & Audretsch, 1990). On the contrary, other researchers such as Su, Tsang and Peng (2009) believe that innovation does not necessarily translate into improved firm performance and profitability.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Oxford Economics (2017), through surveys on 3 200 SME owner- managers and executives in 15 countries around the globe, the researchers found that successful SMEs were those that were agile; applied technology; accelerated innovation and attracted and retained talent. SMEs that did not innovate by offering new products and services were viewed as doomed. The finding on technology was confirmed by Ng and Kee (2018) who conducted research on SME success factors in Malaysia and concluded that product and process innovativeness had a significant influence on both financial and non-financial performance of SMEs.

2.8.1.3. Contextual variables

Greenbank (2001), as cited in Simpson, Padmore, and Newman (2010), asserted that employees, customers, and the social context of the owner invariably have an impact on the success of a business. Studies by Indarti and Langenberg (2004); Rose *et al.,* (2006); Butler, (2008); Jasra *et al.,* (2011) and Uddin and Bose (2013) confirmed that the business plan, distribution channels for a firm's products, and the support of government were statistically significant in the determination of SMEs success. Many countries have government ministries and agencies that support SMEs. For instance, in Pakistan there is an SME Business Support Fund which is a company owned by the Ministry of Finance (Jasra et al., 2011); in Indonesia, the government through the Ministry of Cooperative and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises had financial programmes dedicated to SMEs (Indarti & Langenberg, 2004).

In Turkey, government support for SMEs is available through the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organisation as well as the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey (Ensari & Karabay, 2014). Malaysia supports SMEs through the Small and Medium Enterprise Corporation Malaysia and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, which provides the necessary funding (Chong, 2012). In addition, Zimbabwe also provides funding to SMEs through the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development as well as the SEDCO. However, some researchers found no direct relationship between the success of small businesses and the support they got from the government. In fact, those firms that did not receive support from government tended to perform better than those that received government assistance, due to other factors, such as technology, research efforts, and involvement of top- management (Kirpalani & Macintosh, 1980; Mambula, 2004).

Research by Oxford Economics (2017) revealed that many countries are recognising the importance of SMEs and are supporting them through the following initiatives:

- Improving the business environment, including regulations, access to funding, harmonising standards, trade agreements, and reviewing employment legislation;
- Developing an industrial policy in support of SMEs, for instance, providing tax incentives, encouraging particular sectors, or public-sector procurement that favours SMEs;
- Supporting SMEs' innovation efforts, by providing funding, competitions, or cultivating innovation partnerships between SMEs and large businesses; and
- Providing institutional support and guidance, for example, advice and financing to support exporters.

Technology has also been noted to be a key success factor for businesses as the type of technology that an organisation uses in its production systems and processes has an impact on the quality of the product. An organisation possessing strength in technology can be a source of

competitive advantage. This view is supported by various researchers, such as Cartsson (2008), Indarti and Langenberg (2004), Jasra *et al.*, (2011) and Lampadarios (2015).

2.9. Conclusion

This chapter explored the historical development of strategic leadership and the theoretical framework for the study. Key distinctions were made between leadership in general and strategic leadership. Leadership as a role can be played by anyone within the organisation occupying a position of authority at any level of the organisation. Strategic leadership is primarily concerned with those leaders who are situated at the top of the organisation. Strategic leadership as a position influences the outcomes of organisational performance. The success of SMEs is highly dependent on the calibre of the strategic leader, that is, the owner- manager since he/she is responsible for setting the SME's vision, mission, and objectives as well as the strategies to be employed in order to attain the organisation's objectives.

Defining business success has not been an easy task since different definitions exist in different countries and industries. In this regard, success can be contextualised based on the parameters that are used in measuring it; for instance, financial and non-financial measures. Key success factors for SME were identified, which were a combination of characteristics of the SME owner, characteristics of the SME, and contextual variables. The characteristics of the SME owner included work experience, education and management skills and competencies; characteristics of the SME encompassed length of time in operation, size of operation and resources. Lastly, contextual variables were constituted by social networks, technology, entrepreneurial preparedness and the support of Government. A careful blending of these factors can lead to the success of SMEs.

Chapter 3 presents the research methodology and methods used for the study in addressing the research problem. The distinction between research methodology and methods is also provided in the chapter. Furthermore, Chapter 3 also articulates the research philosophy in which the study is underpinned.

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology and methods that were used in answering the research questions. It further discusses the specific research philosophy, research approaches, research design, study population, sampling, data sources, collection process and methods (instruments), data analysis methods and ethical considerations. The research design and process of this study are elaborated on in the following sub-sections.

3.2. Research Philosophy

Research philosophy relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of the knowledge that informs our research (Creswell, 2013; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2011). A researcher needs to understand his/her philosophy underpinning the research. The research philosophy that one adopts contains critical assumptions about the way in which the researcher views the world. Such assumptions will act as the basis for the research strategy and the selected method (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2011). There are four research philosophies: positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism. Table 3.1 shows a comparative analysis of these philosophies as argued by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, (2011: 119):

Table 3.1 Comparison of four research philosophies in management research

	Positivism	**Realism**	**Interpretivism**	**Pragmatism**
Ontology: Researcher's view of the nature of reality	External and independent of social actors	Objective, exists independently of human thoughts and beliefs or knowledge of their existence	Socially constructed, subjective, may change	External, multiple, view chosen to best enable answering the research question
Epistemology: The researcher's view regarding what constitutes acceptable knowledge.	Focus on causality and law- like generalisations, reducing phenomena to simplest elements.	Observable phenomena provide credible data, facts.	Subjective meanings and social phenomena; focus is on the details of a situation.	Either or both observable phenomena and subjective meanings can provide acceptable knowledge, depending on the research question.
Axiology: The researcher's view of the role of values in research	The researcher is independent of the data and maintains an objective stance.	The researcher is biased by world views, cultural experiences and upbringing.	The researcher is part of what is being researched, cannot be separated and so will be subjective.	The researcher adopts both objective and subjective points of view.
Data collection techniques most often used	Highly structured, large samples, quantitative, but can use qualitative.	Methods chosen must fit the subject matter, quantitative or qualitative.	Small samples, in-depth investigations, qualitative.	Mixed or multiple method designs, quantitative and qualitative.

Source: Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, (2011: 119)

The present research was anchored in pragmatism as the researcher was of the view that both observable phenomena and subjective meanings could provide acceptable knowledge, (epistemology) (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2011). Acceptable knowledge refers to knowledge that is based on credible sources of evidence which yields an acceptable outcome in research. Pragmatism draws on employing what works using different

approaches and giving particular emphasis to the importance of the research problem and questions, and the researcher needs to use his intuition and judgement in a particular situation or setting (Creswell, Klassen, Plano Clark, & Smith, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The researcher was of the view that he could design an acceptable framework of strategic leadership that could be implemented by SMEs; hence, the choice of selecting pragmatism as a research philosophy. Pragmatism focuses on the outcomes of the inquiry, and it also offers a way for selecting methodological mixes that could help researchers better answer their underlying research questions (Creswell, 2003; 2013; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Shannon-Baker, 2016). Pragmatism is a philosophical framework that is not committed to one specific philosophy and reality, as is the case with positivism and interpretivism; hence, researchers using this worldview are at liberty to apply various methods in the collection and analysis of data (Venkatesh et al., 2016).

Regarding ontology, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2011) postulated that external multiple views can be chosen to best answer the research question. The present research was conducted against the known ontology of strategic leadership. In addition, regarding the researcher's view of the roles of values in research (axiology), such values play a large role in the interpretation of results, such that the researcher adopts both objective and subjective points of view. The data collection techniques most often used are mixed or multiple methods designs, that is quantitative and qualitative, both were used in the present study. Researchers believe pragmatism provides a basis for using mixed- methods approaches as the other option open to social researchers, if they decide that neither quantitative nor qualitative research alone will provide adequate findings for the particular study they have in mind (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007); Johnson *et al., (*2007) as cited in Denscombe (2008). Pragmatism allows the researcher to investigate or study what is of interest to him/her and make use of the results in a manner that culminates in positive consequences within the value system (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In view of the above, one can argue that pragmatism is a philosophy that offers a practical approach in solving a particular problem.

The main aim of the present research was to generate a framework of strategic leadership that could effectively manage strategic implementation of SMEs. Therefore, pragmatism was the ideal research philosophy to address the research question of this study. Philosophically, most of mixed-method research studies makes use of the pragmatic method and the system of philosophy, and researchers are free to choose the methods and procedures of research that best meet their goals and needs (Cameron, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Jensen, 2012; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Morgan, 2007).

3.3. Research Approaches

A research approach is a plan and procedure for a research study which starts with the assumptions, data collection, analysis, and culminates in interpretations. Basically, a research approach is directly related to one's philosophical underpinning, the research design and methods to be used. Researchers differ in their opinions regarding the number of research approaches that can be used in undertaking research. Some researchers argue that there are two major approaches in research: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research is a deductive approach, and qualitative is an inductive approach. In the latter, the researcher would collect data in the participants' setting, and develop theory as a result of the data analysis, building from particulars to general themes (inductive approach) (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Kisely & Kendall, 2011; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2011).The present study utilised a quantitative approach in developing a strategic leadership framework. Qualitative data were gathered first through semi-structured interviews in order to generate new perspectives on strategic leadership and strategy implementation in SMEs.

Creswell (2014) argued that there are three research approaches, namely qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The present study employed methodological triangulation; both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used. Mixed- method research involves the researcher mixing, integrating, or combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, or concepts into a single study that can overcome the potential bias of a

single-method approach (Creswell, 2014; Creswell et al., 2011; Collis & Hussey, 2003; Fassinger & Morrow, 2013; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Panda & Gupta, 2013; Plano Clark, 2013; Shannon-Baker, 2016; Venkatesh et al., 2016). In addition, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative data provides a more complete understanding of the research problem than either approach by itself (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The integration of the two approaches normally takes place in the research philosophy or theoretical framework, data collection and analysis and/or discussion of results and conclusions (Shannon-Baker, 2016).

The mixed-methods approach was chosen based on the arguments offered by the following researchers: Bryman (2006); Greene, *et al.*, (1989), Plano Clark (2010); Venkatesh, Brown and Balla (2013) that will enable the researcher to:

- develop a better understanding of the topic, in this instance, strategic leadership;
- describe both process and outcomes;
- obtain greater validity through triangulation of different approaches, that is, quantitative and qualitative;
- increase the credibility and/or utility of findings;
- compensate for the shortcomings of one method by making use of the other;
- secure diverse viewpoints of the same experiences; and
- generate and test theory/hypothesis through inductive and deductive approaches.

Graff (2011) concurred with the assertions of Bryman (2006), Greene *et al.*, (1989), and Plano Clark (2010) that mixed- methods research offers a practical approach to addressing research problems and questions and has the potential to increased applicability of the study, because problems and questions are examined in different ways. Results generated from mixed- methods studies are superior to mono-method studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, a

limitation of the mixed- method approach is that data collection and analysis is time- consuming and expensive, especially in instances where concurrency is used. Other weaknesses of using the mixed- method approach include the fact that it can be challenging and demanding for a researcher, especially when there is concurrency in the two designs; it requires that the researcher learns and articulates the various methods and to combine them with expertise and proficiency, and come to the defence of such multiple methods (Caruth, 2013).

3.4. Research Design

Research design is the blueprint for fulfilling research objectives and answering research questions. In other words, it is a master plan which details the methods and procedures that are involved in the collection and analysis of the information needed (Adams et al., 2007; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) opined that a research design is the procedure for the collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting data in research studies and it is imperative that a researcher understands his/her design since this will aid him/her in making decisions on the methods to use. On the other hand, Creswell (2014) posited that research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed- methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design. Within the mixed method approach, the research design could be convergent, explanatory sequential, exploratory sequential, or transformative, embedded, or multiphase. Figure 3.1 shows the research design process of the study.

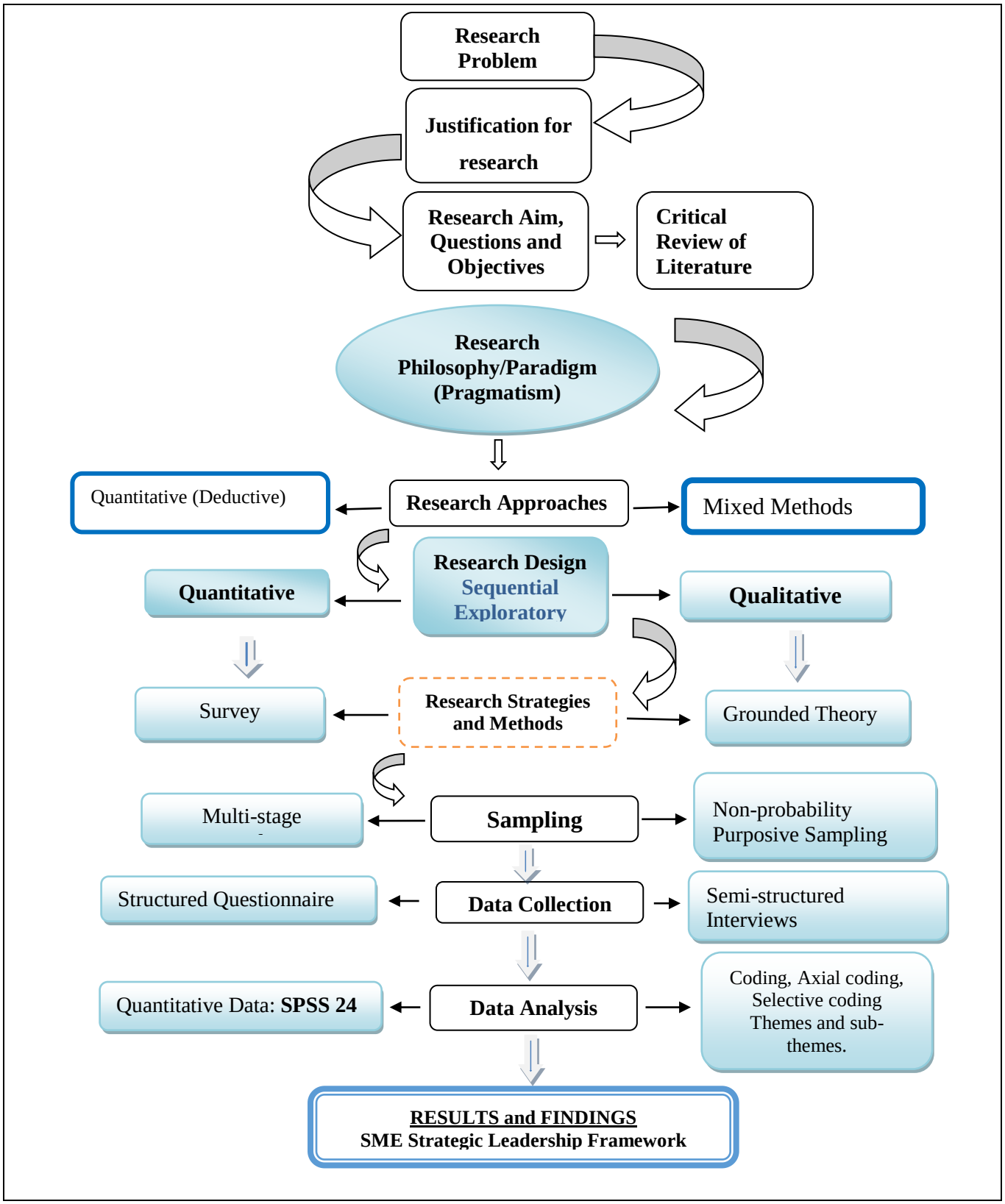


Figure 3.1 Research Design flow process
Source: Researcher's own design

This research adopted Creswell's (2014) view of research design, and as such, was based on sequential exploratory design, where the quantitative strand is dependent on QUAL (QUAL priority) in order to provide a detailed analysis of the problem at hand (Creswell, 2003; Fetters, Curry & Creswell, 2013; Onwuegbuzie, Bustamante & Nelson, 2010; Plano Clark, 2013). In sequential exploratory design, the QUAL findings are used to inform the quantitative variables, and research questions (QUAL → quan). In sequential exploratory design, the researcher conducts the second phase, which is the collection of quantitative data, in order to test or generalise the initial findings. The researcher then makes and interprets how the results from the quantitative phase build on the initial phase of qualitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

With regard to the timing of qualitative and quantitative strands, the present study adopted sequential timing, the strands were implemented in two different phases, in which quantitative data collection and analysis was performed after the collection and analysis of qualitative data. The researcher drew final conclusions based on the data from both phases. Furthermore, in this research, qualitative data were collected first, and the results were used to design the questionnaire, and explore, and verify the major themes that arose from the qualitative data. In this regard, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), argued that the second phase of the study is carried out to further explain or confirm the findings from the first phase.

Plano Clark (2013) also asserted that the major reason for using sequential exploratory design is to qualitatively characterise a construct to inform the identification of a variable and/or development of an instrument for a QUAN study. Analysis for integration will begin well after the data collection process has proceeded or has been completed. The two forms of data were analysed separately, and then merged, in order to draw conclusions (Fetters, Curry & Creswell, 2013.)

In the present study, integration of data was done by connecting from QUAL results to quan data collection, that is: **Qual strand** → Connect to next phase **Quan strand** → Connect two sets

of results and draw conclusion. Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire with a series of scales, after the collection of qualitative data first, using similar questions (Castro et al., 2010). Figure 3.2 highlights the sequential exploratory design followed in this research.

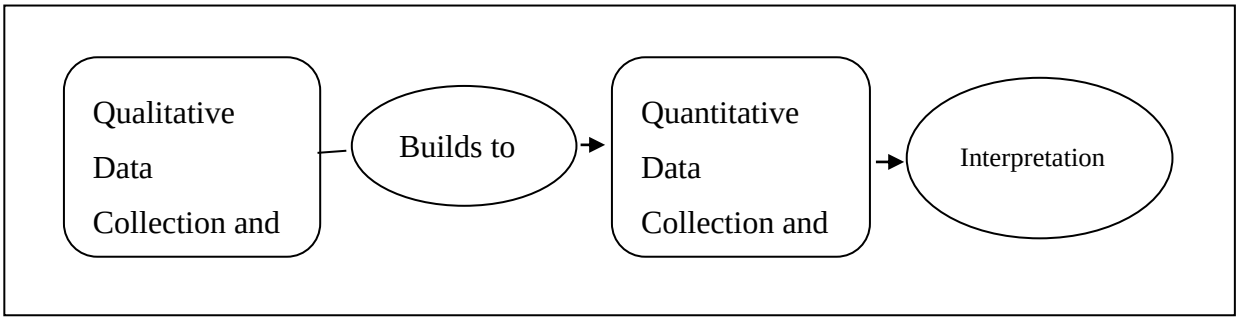


Figure 3.2 Sequential exploratory design

Source: Creswell & Plano Clark, (2011: 69)

The research questions for this study were addressed as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Research design and research type

	Research Question	**Type of Research**	**Data gathering method**
1	What are the factors in a strategic leadership framework that lead to success beyond the critical time line of three years, that if implemented will lead to the success of manufacturing and engineering SMEs in a developing country context?	Quantitative/ Qualitative	Questionnaire Semi-structured interview
2	Does strategic leadership play a role in the implementation of strategies in SMEs?	Quantitative/Qualitative	Questionnaire Semi-structured interview
3	How do strategic leaders view the strategies they use to manage	Qualitative	Semi-structured interviews

	manufacturing and engineering SMEs?		
4	What are the challenges/barriers faced by strategic leaders in implementing strategy and why do they face these challenges?	Qualitative	Semi-structured interviews
5	What are the enablers of effective strategic leadership in strategy implementation in manufacturing and engineering SMEs in Zimbabwe?	Qualitative	Semi-structured interviews
6	What are the success factors for manufacturing and engineering SMEs' sustainable performance?	Qualitative	Semi-structured interviews

The following sections detail the population and sampling, research strategies, sampling methods, and data analysis for both the qualitative and quantitative phases. A clear delineation of qualitative and quantitative data is provided in different sections, in order to provide clarity regarding how the research problem will be addressed starting with the first part (qualitative) in Section 3.5.

3.5. Qualitative research strategies and methods

Methodology refers to the way in which a researcher approaches problems and seek answers (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault, 2015). Methods refer to the tools that are used for gathering data, which are an integral component of methodology (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2011).

3.5.1. Population and sampling

A population consists of all the items, objects, or individuals about which a researcher wants to draw a conclusion (Levine et al., 2011; Singh, 2007). The population of the present study included all owner- managers or the strategic leaders of the 207 manufacturing and engineering SMEs. A sample is the portion of a population selected for analysis (Levin et al., 2011). The SMEAZ (2014), pointed out that the manufacturing and engineering sector has 207 registered

firms, hence, for the present research, the population consisted of all 207 registered firms categorised as follows: Industrial Supplies (60), Light Engineering (29), Machinery and Tools (27), Carpentry (33), and Metal Engineering (58).

This study employed an open population (census), where all the 207 firms were taken to constitute the population, in order to generate rich and quality data. With regard to semi-structured interviews, a purposive sampling method was used to select a possible number of participants as the number of participants in qualitative research depends on the occurrence of data saturation. Bryman and Bell (2014) posited that purposive sampling requires the researcher to select people or sites who can best help him or her to understand the phenomenon. Interviewees were chosen from the identified five business lines within the Harare Metropolitan Province, since that was where most of the registered SMEs were located. Table 3.3 shows the procedures for sampling interviewees.

Table 3.3 Semi-structured interviewing, purposive sampling procedure

Business Line	**Total number of SMEs**	**SMEs located in Harare**	
Carpentry	33	24	
Metal Engineering	58	50	
Machinery and Tools	27	27	
Light Engineering	29	28	
Industrial Supplies	60	57	
Total	**207**	**186**	
Saturation			**?**

3.5.2. Qualitative research strategy

Qualitative research strategies that can be employed include ethnography, which focuses on human behaviour in a cultural context; phenomenology, which highlights the meaning of lived experiences from the participant's perspective and grounded theory (Jackson & Verberg, 2006). In the present research study, the grounded theory principles of coding were utilised in exploring in depth what strategic leadership in SMEs entails. By utilising the principles of grounded theory coding, the researcher could direct and streamline the collection of data whilst conducting an original analysis of the data (Charmaz, 2014).

A brief background of grounded theory is provided in order to relate the general tenets of the theory to explain what was done by the researcher. Grounded theory can be defined as the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research, with the aim of generating or discovering a theory of actions, or processes, through interrelating categories of information, based on data collected from individuals (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Creswell, 2013). The data are continuously subject to interrogation, until the theory emerges (Charmaz, 2006). In the present study, the researcher did not start with a hypothesis or theory, but with data collection in the setting, and concurrently analysed the data, a process which is also supported by Strauss and Corbin (1990).

Grounded theory has been extensively researched since the 1960s as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Seminal Grounded Theory texts

Year	Author(s)	Title
1967	Glaser and Strauss	The discovery of grounded theory
1978	Glaser	Theoretical sensitivity
1987	Strauss	Qualitative analysis for social scientists
1990	Strauss and	Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and

	Corbin	techniques
1992	Glaser	Basics of grounded theory analysis
1994	Strauss and Corbin	"Grounded theory methodology: An overview" in Handbook of qualitative research (1st ed)
1995	Charmaz	"Grounded theory" in *Rethinking methods in psychology*
1998	Strauss and Corbin	*Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques* (2nd ed)
2000	Charmaz	"Grounded theory: objectivist and constructivist methods" in *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed)
2005	Clarke	*Situational analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn*
2006	Charmaz	*Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis.*

Source: Birks, and Mills, (2011:3)

Glaser and Strauss, the major proponents of grounded theory, have been cited as the first generation of grounded theorists (Birks & Mills, 2011), and have shared different perspectives on grounded theory which resulted in two schools for grounded theory: The Glaserian school and the Straussian school (Stern, 1994). Table 3.5 highlights the differences in approach between the two schools.

Table 3.5 Glaserian and Straussian Schools of Grounded Theory

'GLASERIAN'	**'STRAUSSIAN'**
Starting from scratch, with nothing in mind	Having a general idea of where to begin
Emerging theory	Forcing the theory
Development of a conceptual theory	Conceptual description (descriptions of situations)
Theoretical sensitivity (the ability to perceive variables and relationships)	Theoretical sensitivity is situated in the methods and tools
It is the data in which the theory is grounded	The observer interprets the theory
It is through the grounding of the data that the credibility of the theory is derived	The rigour of the method lends the credibility of the theory
The identification of a basic social process should be undertaken.	There is no need for basic social processes to be identified
The researcher is not active.	The researcher is not passive, but is actively involved in the process
The theory is revealed in the data	Revelation of the theory is evident in the structured data
Coding is not rigorously done, there is constant comparison of one incident to the other incident, with neutral questions and categories and properties evolving.	Coding is defined by technique and is more rigorous. Labels are carefully crafted at the time. Codes are derived from an analysis which consists of data word-by-word
There are two coding phases or types: simple (group the data) and substantive (open or selective, to produce categories and properties)	Three types of coding are: open, axial (process of relating codes to each other) and selective (choosing a core category and relating other categories to that).
Some regard it as the only 'true' grounded theory method	Some regard it as a form of qualitative data analysis.

Source: Onions, (2006), cited in Jones, and Alony, (2011: 99-100)

This study was tilted towards the views of Strauss, which appear to be evolutionary, as compared to Glaser's traditional viewpoints. However, this does not negate some important points raised by Glaser, which among others, include: that the theory is grounded in the data; the theory should emerge from the data; and the data reveals the theory. While I, as researcher, was conducting the interviews, I also took into account Glaser's important considerations. Strauss's approach had more intuitive appeal in this research in the following ways:

- As a researcher, I had a general idea regarding the concepts related to strategic leadership as opposed to beginning with nothing in mind.
- While I was interviewing participants, I took notes, and asked probing questions while recording the interviews.
- The credibility of the theory came from the rigour of the data collection methods, I used mainly the semi-structured interviews, where participants were asked open-ended and probing questions.
- Coding in this research was rigorously done, starting with analysing the transcribed interviews, sentence by sentence.
- Three phases of coding were performed, namely open, axial and selective.

From the preceding information, this research was based on a combination of the two approaches (Straussian and Glaserian) since they were both relevant to the field under study. In this regard, Birks and Mills (2011) asserted that few things are ever black and white, crucially in research that needs to be interpreted, and much can be gained from the contributions of diverse grounded theorists.

The process of grounded theory is shown diagrammatically in Figure 3.3.

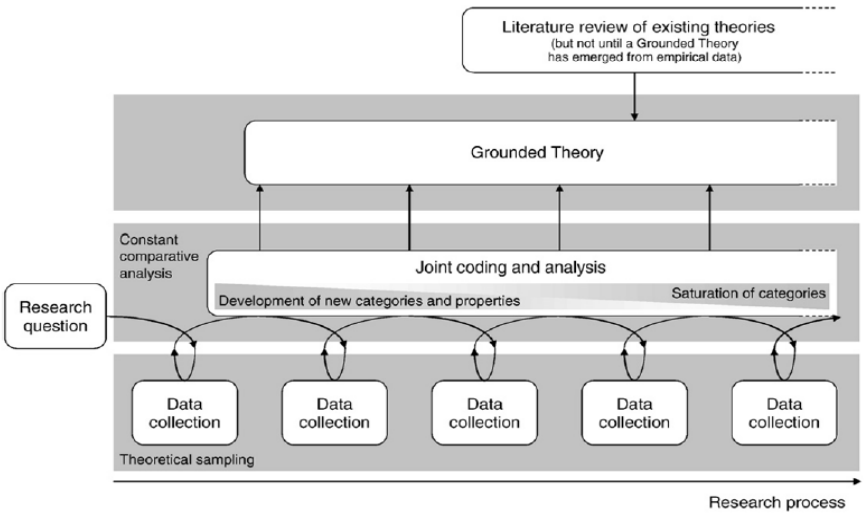


Figure 3.3 Grounded Theory process

Source: Wagner, Lukassen, and Mahlendorf, (2010).

Creswell (2013) proffered several characteristics of grounded theory:

- A grounded theory study has some action that the researcher is attempting to explain and in the present research grounded theory offered explanations regarding what strategic leadership is about.
- I also sought to develop a theory of a process or an action. A theory is an explanation or an understanding that the researcher develops. In this regard, I was of the view that I would gain a deeper understanding of strategic leadership and, ultimately develop a strategic leadership framework.
- Memoing is part of developing the theory; the researcher writes down ideas as data are collected and analysed. Birks and Mills (2011) stated that memos are records that are written to reflect the researcher's thought processes during the undertaking of a grounded theory study, and these memos are compiled from the commencement of planning a study until its completion.
- The primary form of data collection is often interviewing, in which the researcher is constantly comparing data gathered from participants with ideas about the emerging theory. In the present study, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews.

Grounded theory principles offer researchers numerous benefits. Myers (2009), cited in Hussein *et al.,* (2014), posited that grounded theory has an intuitive appeal for new researchers because it allows them to become deeply involved and immersed in the data. The present research was based on the philosophy of pragmatism; therefore, grounded theory was very useful in answering questions on pragmatic issues.

The second benefit of using grounded theory as argued by Hussein *et al.* (2014), is that of fostering creativity, by encouraging the investigator to move through a variety of processes of discovery in which themes naturally emerge from the data through processes of induction. Thirdly, grounded theory offers a systematic approach to data analysis. Other qualitative research methods lead to difficulty in application and interpretation since they frequently depend on the use of broad principles rather than the systematic approach, (Myers, 2009). This systematic approach to data analysis aids in the rigour and trustworthiness of the theory that emerges (Hussein et al., 2014).

Lastly, the collection of rich data in using grounded theory principles is another advantage. The substantial and the richness of the data provides a researcher with a firm background to make a thorough analysis of the data, in addition to aiding the researcher to go beyond the surface of the participants' natural settings (Charmaz, 2006). The techniques used to collect data in grounded theory studies are questionnaires and interviews (Hinkelmann & Witschel, 2013).

Hussein *et al.,* (2014) noted the following limitations of grounded theory:

- It is an exhaustive process: The process of abstracting concepts is quite challenging. Inexperienced researchers may become immersed in the process of coding that they lose track of attaining the task of enumerating the main themes and ideas that are embedded in the data.
- There are multiple approaches to grounded theory: The original authors of grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss showed conceptual differences in their understanding of generating theory as mentioned before. In the view of Glaser, theory can be subject to further interrogation and

verification by gathering new data since it is still developing. On the contrary, Strauss is of the opinion that theory can be used in practice without the need for further verification, as verification is done during the process of generating the data (Hallberg, 2006).

- There is a high potential for methodological error. Researchers may use only one source of data, for example interviews. Therefore, Glaser (1992) recommended the employment of both interviews and observations in collecting data.

In summary, applying grounded theory principles provide the researcher with greater autonomy in the exploration of a particularised research area, which allows the emergence of issues, that fits with different types of researchers (Bryant, 2002; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Martin & Turner, 1986). Grounded theory is useful in providing a multiplicity of perspectives into areas that are under-researched by investigators (Jones & Alony, 2011).

3.5.4. The process and principles of grounded theory

In this study, I used the principles and process of grounded theory, and not "grounded theory" as discussed in literature as a research theory. The reason for this was the fact that there has been a lot of critique of how 'grounded theory' is and should be used, as mentioned in the previous section, however the principles of especially data coding, can be borrowed in research as was done in this study.

3.5.4.1. Data collection and research questions

Data collection normally starts in the form of interviewing, using open ended questions. The researcher presumes that he or she may know little about the meanings that drive the actions of the participants (Jones & Alony, 2011; Sbaraini, Carter, Evans, & Blinkhorn, 2011).

3.5.4.2. Coding

After the researcher has collected and transcribed all the data, he/she begins the process of coding. Coding is at the heart of grounded theory and it is usually through this process that the conceptual abstraction of data and its reintegration as theory takes place. Data are combined

according to themes, topics, phrases, categories and ideas are inductively generated (Gibbs & Taylor, 2010; Holton, 2010; Sbaraini, et al., 2011). The researcher initially starts with open coding, followed by axial and then selective coding.

3.5.4.2.1. Open coding

This is the first step of data analysis where raw data, important words, or groups of words are labelled. *In vivo* codes are when important words or group of words (usually verbatim words from participants) are themselves used as a label, generating categories of similar phenomena (Birks & Mills, 2011; Jones & Alony, 2011). At this stage, the researcher asks a number of questions, among them: 'What is this data a study of?', 'What category does this incident indicate?', 'What is actually happening in the data?', and 'What is the main concern being faced by the participants?' (Glaser, 1998: 140).

3.5.4.2.2. Axial coding

This is the second step in the coding process and entails making connections between categories. In axial coding, categories are related to their subcategories, and the relationships are tested against data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Axial coding entails the continuation of asking questions and making comparisons, and the inductive and deductive thinking process of relating sub categories to a category (Strauss & Corbin, 2008).

3.5.4.2.3. Constant comparison

Constant comparison is done simultaneously, coding and analysing the data. The rationale of constant comparison is to verify if the data support and continue to support the categories that are emerging and generate the theory, using explicit coding and the specified procedures (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Holton, 2010).

3.5.4.2.4. Memoing

The writing of memos is central to grounded theory. The researcher records his or her critical thinking about what will be happening during interactions with participants from the beginning

of the research right until the end. Memo writing should continue until the very end of the project (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). If the researcher neglects memoing stage and proceeds to sorting or writing up results after coding, the researcher has not used grounded theory (Glaser, 1978). While the researcher is coding and analysing the data, he or she should also write memos, and these normally guide the researcher in further data collection, coding, and analysis (Holton, 2010). The process of constant comparison is sustained only until core categories emerge from the data, and reports indicate that there is evidence of no significant, new phenomena (Jones & Alony, 2011).

3.5.4.2.5. Theoretical sampling

The purpose of theoretical sampling is to get more information in order to saturate categories still being developed. Interview questions can be altered in order to get the required information from new participants. In this regard, the researcher will decide on the type of data to be collected, as well as who should provide the required information.

3.5.4.2.6. Selective coding

Selective coding is performed when it becomes apparent that core categories are emerging, that allow the researcher to sift and code data deemed to be relevant to the emerging concepts and involves writing the final themes of the data set (Charmarz, 2014; Jones & Alony, 2011).

3.5.4.2.7. Theoretical saturation

In qualitative researches, ‘saturation’ is achieved when a researcher is not obtaining new information from participants; theoretical saturation is an important aspect of grounded theory study (Ando et al., 2014; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Saturation is important in any study, whether using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods (Fusch & Ness, 2015, Morse, 2015).

3.6. Qualitative data collection methods

Both secondary and primary data were used in the present study. Secondary data were obtained by reviewing literature on strategic leadership and implementation. Primary data were the responses from selected owner- managers of SMEs in semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conducted first, and the results were used to design a questionnaire to gather data that confirm, verify, and corroborate the findings from the qualitative research.

3.6.1. Semi - structured Interviews

An interview is defined as a method of data collection in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions of another person (a participant): interviews are conducted in various ways which include face to face, or by telephone, or videophone - but face- to- face interviews are the most desirable method (Polit & Beck, 2006; Woods, 2011). Qualitative research (using grounded theory and thematic analysis) generally uses semi-structured interviews (Woods, 2011). Since the present research employed grounded theory, I used face-to-face semi-structured interviews where I used a list of the questions related to key areas of interest, but the order of the questions could be varied during the interviews.

Semi-structured interviews are used when more useful information can be obtained from focused yet conversational two-way communication with participants. The interviews are guided by pre-set themes, and probing questions can be used (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Pathak & Intratat, 2012). Each interview will vary according to what was said by interviewees and how the interviewer used follow-up questions to elicit further description (Roulston, 2010). In the present study, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data on the role of strategic leadership in strategy implementation, enablers of strategic leadership, and the challenges faced by strategic leaders in implementing strategy in the SMEs under study.

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews offer the following benefits (Abawi, 2013; Adam & Cox, 2008; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Phellas, Bloch, & Seale, 2011; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008; Sociological Research Skills, 2015; Roulston, 2010; Woods, 2011; Zohrabi, 2013):

- Positive rapport between interviewer and interviewee, - it is more personal, which allows a higher response rate since there is greater interaction;
- Much more detailed and complete information on a topic, with greater understanding as compared to a questionnaire- interviewees may disclose important and often hidden facets of human and organisational behaviour;
- Complex questions and issues can be discussed and clarified, - the interviewer can probe areas suggested by the interviewee's answers;
- More control over the order and flow of questions, - the interviewer can vary the way in which questions are asked, in order to focus on specific themes at a time;
- High validity: - Interviewees are able to talk about something in detail and depth. The meanings behind an action may be revealed, as the interviewees are able to speak freely with little direction from the interviewer;
- Standardisation of at least some of the questions increases reliability of the data;
- It is easy to record interviews (using video -/- audio tapes), which increases the data's trustworthiness, according to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of transferability;
- It is generally the most effective, flexible, and convenient means of gathering information, and
- The interviewer can control the context and the environment in which the interview takes place, thus ensuring that the interview takes place in an appropriate setting that is conducive to truthful responses.

I was however mindful of the limitations of a semi-structured interview as proffered by Abawi, (2013), Bryman (2008), Roulston (2010), Woods (2011), and Sociological Research Skills (2015):

- Success depends on the skill of the interviewer who must have highly developed listening skills to be able to ascertain whether the research topics are being addressed by the interviewee;
- It is time consuming;

- The interviewer may give out unconscious signals/ or cues that may guide participant to give answers he or she thinks are expected by the interviewer;
- There is a high risk of bias due to fatigue, and as a result of becoming too emotionally involved in the interview;
- The findings may not be generalisable: due to the personal nature of interviews, and the relatively small sample sizes, the findings may not be generalisable, because participants may effectively be answering different questions.

In view of the above, I acquired communication skills and listening skills in previous research which culminated in journal publications. In addressing the issue of bias, in data collection, interpretation and analysis, I was mindful of performing the process as impartially as possible. In addition, I tried to remain as non- judgmental, and reported the findings honestly and with corroborating evidence as suggested by Zohrabi, (2013).

I have previous experience in interviewing participants, and as such, was not tempted to ask leading questions. I guarded against bias, as it could have negatively influenced the research findings. I carefully planned for the interviews, and then crafted an interview guide. In order to ensure that the interview guide was valid and reliable, I developed the interview guide by taking cognisance of the richness of relevant literature on strategic leadership that provided the theoretical foundation of the study (Creswell 2014). The interview guide (See Appendix 4) assisted me in the interviewing process and procedures, before, during, and after the interviews as well as the way in which I asked questions. The Interview guide included the purpose of the study as well as the interviewing questions. Interviewing requires great skills in asking questions, listening to the interviewees' responses, recording the responses, and finally, interpreting meaning.

The interviews were conducted in the Harare Metropolitan Province, with participants from both small and medium enterprises who possessed information that I deemed valuable, chosen through a purposive stratified sampling strategy. The number of participants depended on data saturation. In total, 12 participants were interviewed over a period of five days. Consent was sought from the participants to record the interviews. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) postulated that the use of mechanically recorded data is a strategy used to increase validity in qualitative research.

The owner- managers were identified, and appointments to meet them at their business premises were made telephonically. Contact details and the location of the owner-managers were available on the SMEAZ website. Figure 3.4 shows the locations of the participants, where the interviews were conducted, which were mostly in the industrial areas of Harare: Willowvale, Graniteside, Southerton, Workington, Ardbennie, Bluff Hill Industrial Park; and one SME was located on the outskirts of the city centre.

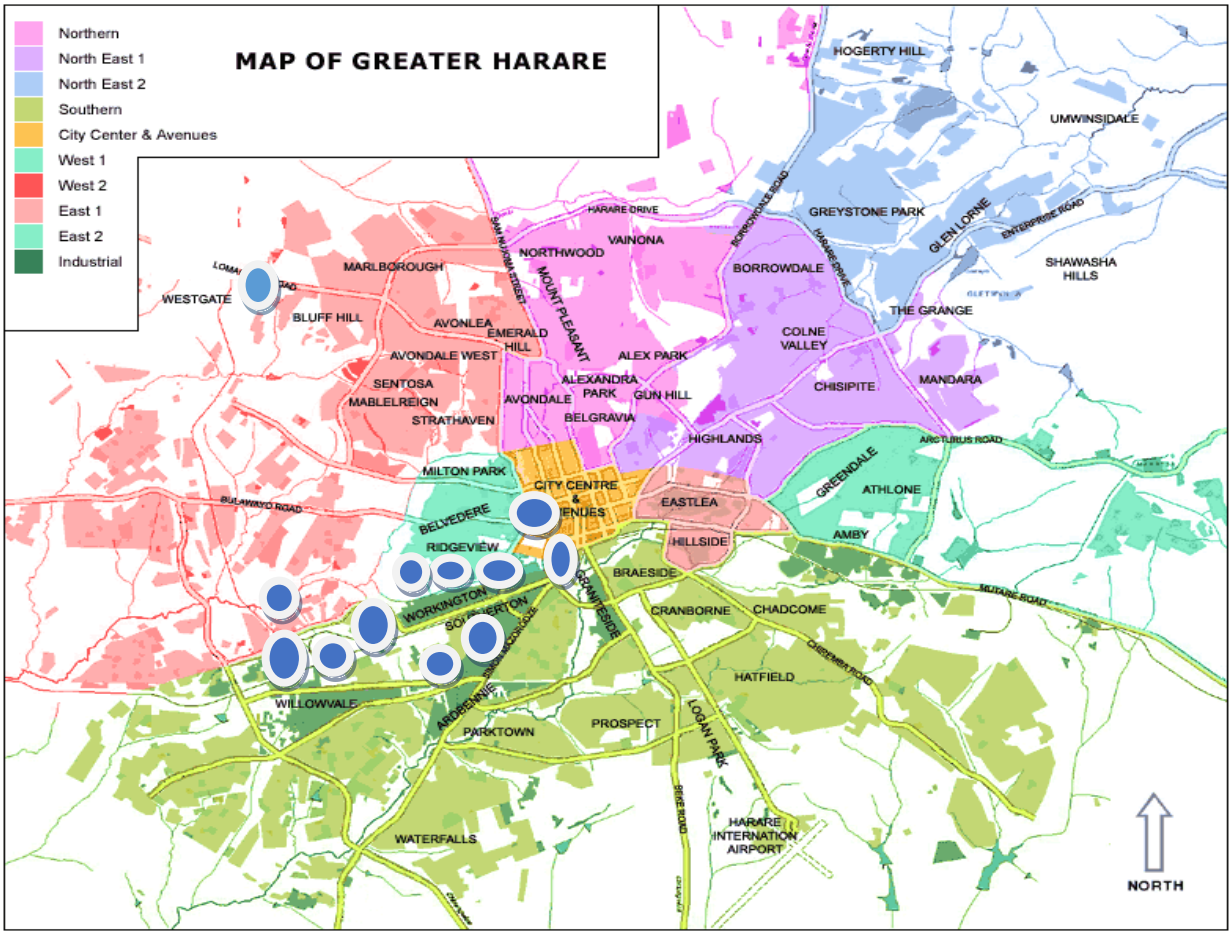


Figure 3.4 Location of Interviewees

Legend

Location of interviewees

Source: Google Maps (2017): Map of Greater Harare

The interviews aimed to explore whether owner- managers practised strategic leadership, based on five major components, namely: establishing strategic direction; effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio; sustaining an effective organisational culture; emphasising ethical practices and establishing balanced organisational controls. The interviews also sought information on secondary objectives, namely the role of strategic leaders, challenges they face, enablers of strategic leadership, and key success factors. I used an interview guide in interviewing, and probing participants (see Appendix 4) and took notes, in order to increase data trustworthiness.

3.7. Ethical conduct and research rigor

3.7.1. Data trustworthiness

In order to ensure trustworthiness of the data gathered in the semi-structured interviews, I utilised Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria:

- Credibility: In order to generate honesty in the responses of the participants, I approached each participant separately to give them an opportunity to refuse participating in the study if they so wished so as to remain with those who were willing to participate freely. The interview guide was pilot tested on four owner-managers, to test questions, that is, how the participants understood the questions and how they were likely to respond in practice;
- Dependability: The data were coded for easy analysis, and peers were requested to examine the data;
- Confirmability: The qualitative data were analysed first, and thereafter corroborated by analysis of the quantitative data (sequential exploratory design).

3.8. Qualitative data analysis

The qualitative data were analysed primarily through inductive, descriptive, and thematic analyses. Thematic content analysis is a process of analysing transcripts, to identify themes in the data and then grouping together examples of those themes (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure, &

Chadwick, 2008). Inductive analysis is the most prominent approach in the analysis of qualitative data. Table 3.6 shows the data analysis plan of the present study:

Table 3.6 Qualitative Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative Data	
Data collection method	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants from both small and medium enterprises.
Data recording	Interviews were conducted before administering the questionnaires. Permission was sought from the interviewees to record the responses. Data were later transcribed.
Verification and evaluation of data	The recorded responses were compared with the notes, in order to verify the data.
Approaches, methods and techniques to be used for analysis	The data were organised in accordance with the five main research areas. Emerging themes (using grounded theory) and the categories were captured during the interviewing process.
Approaches, methods and techniques used to code and further analyse the data.	Themes and categories were clearly labelled. Important points were compiled in the process of sorting out the data. Data analysis is dependent on the coding process, which is a process that entails the fracturing of data down into smaller components, labelling the components- and making a comparison of data with data to comprehend and explain variation in the data. The codes are then combined, and related to one another, and are referred to as *categories* or *concepts*. Categories were considered saturated when new data returned codes that only fit in established categories, with no new data emerging. Memos were written regarding events and categories, and relationships between categories.

Sources: Leedy, and Ormrod, (2005); Bryant, and Charmaz, (Eds.) (2007)

3.9. Quantitative data research strategies and methods

This section presents the population, sampling, data collection and data analysis for quantitative data, which was done after carrying out the qualitative data analysis.

3.9.1. Population and sampling method

This study employed an open population (census), where all the 207 firms were taken to constitute the population. The sampling units were all the owner- managers or the strategic leaders in the 207 firms. The population was divided into two major groups, that is, SMEs which had been in operation for fewer than three years and those that had been in operation for more than three years. In addition, the SMEs were classified according to the number of employees: 10-50 employees (small enterprises) and 51-100 (medium enterprises).

3.9.2. Sample size

The planned sample size was 207. Sampling of the SMEs was done in multiple stages. Firstly, all 207 organizations in the five business lines were identified. Secondly, SMEs were classified in terms of number of employees, in line with GoZ's (2012) definition, that is, small enterprises: 10-50 employees and medium enterprises: 51-100 employees. Organisations with fewer than ten employees were not considered since they were deemed micro enterprises and therefore did not qualify as a small or medium enterprise for this study. Businesses with more than 100 employees were excluded in line with the above-mentioned criteria. Thirdly, enterprises were classified according to years of operation, that is, enterprises which had been in operation for fewer than three years, and those that had been in operation for three years or more. SMEs that had been in operation for fewer than three years were then excluded because I considered this period too short to gauge the implementation of strategies in such SMES.

Stage 4 is when all businesses which had been in operation for at least 3 years were considered since it is possible to gauge the results of strategy implementation. Owner-managers were identified as possible respondents for the structured questionnaires (to collect quantitative data). Table 3.7 shows the sampling procedures followed:

Table 3.7 Multi-stage Sampling Method

Stage 1	Census	Identified 207 organisations in five different business lines: industrial supplies, light engineering, machinery and tools, carpentry and metal engineering.
Stage 2		Classified 207 organisations in terms of number of employees as defined by GoZ (2012), small enterprises: 10- 50 employees; medium enterprises: 51-100 employees.
Stage 3		Classified organisations in terms of years of operation, those that had been in operation for these two periods: a) 1<3 years b) 3 years or longer.
Stage 4 Quantitative phase (questionnaire)	Purposive sampling (non-probability).	Considered all organisations that had been in operation for at least three years and identified the owner- managers who were the respondents.

3.9.3. Quantitative research strategy

This research employed the survey strategy (census) as it is most frequently used to answer 'Who?', 'What?', 'Where?', 'How much?' and 'How many?' questions. In addition, the goal of using the survey strategy is to find patterns in data through the collection of data from a large group of objects, and evaluate the data using statistical methods. Since I was interested in examining the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategy, who was involved in the implementation process, as well as how the strategies were implemented, the survey strategy was ideal.

TNS Employee Insights (2011), and Statistics Canada (2013), pointed out the following advantages of census surveys:

- Opportunity to participate for everyone: one of the major advantages of a census survey is that all employees are afforded the same opportunity of participation. In this research all 207

businesses were considered to participate in the survey, in order to gather as much information as possible.

- The reduction of accuracy concerns: Representative results can be obtained through sample surveys, when they are conducted properly, however, census surveys tend to enhance feelings of security that surround the accuracy of the results. There is no sampling variability attributed to the statistics because it is calculated using data from the entire population.
- Better demographic data is obtained: One of the greatest benefits of conducting surveys is the ability to collect better demographic data across the population, which facilitates action which is more effective once the survey results are availed.
- Detail: detailed information about small sub-groups of the population can be gathered.

On the other hand, TNS Employee Insights (2011), and Statistics Canada (2013) postulate that census surveys have the following disadvantages:

- Higher cost and more time consuming: The costs of printing, distribution and data collection all increase with a census survey due to the huge quantities of data involved and the corresponding labour which is required in the process.
- Time consuming in the administration of the survey: including the target population of interest in a survey process which tends to require more administration time.
- Response burden: information needs to be received from every member of the target population.

3.9.4. Quantitative data collection methods

3.9.4.1. Structured questionnaire and instrument

Self-completed questionnaires offer the following benefits as posited by various authors namely: Abawi, (2013); Harris and Brown, (2010); Kirklees, (2006); Phellas, Bloch, and Seale, (2011); Sociological Research Skills, (2015); and the University of Strathclyde, (2013):

- They are cheap to administer. The only costs are those associated with printing or designing the questionnaires as well as postage.
- Using questionnaires to collect data is a relatively easy, efficient and quick way of gathering such information, with relatively good response rates.
- Generally, the perception with questionnaires is such that they are viewed as being more objective tools in data collection that can produce generalisable and statistically significant results since large sample sizes are utilised.
- Using self- completion questionnaires reduces biasing error caused by the characteristics of the interviewer and the variability in interviewer's skills.
- A questionnaire is easy to standardise since every respondent is asked the same question in the same way. The researcher therefore can be sure that everyone in the sample answers exactly the same questions, which makes this a very reliable method of research.
- The absence of an interviewer provides greater anonymity of the respondent such that when the topic of the research is sensitive it can increase the reliability of the responses. In this regard questionnaires preserve some form of confidentiality.

On the other hand, I was aware of the limitations of questionnaires as posited by the following researchers: Abawi (2013); Harris and Brown (2010); Kirklees (2006); Phellas, Bloch and Seale, (2011); Sociological Research Skills (2015); and the University of Strathclyde (2013):

- Biased questionnaire design and wording, hence the questionnaire may not have objective questions which may mislead respondents.
- Questionnaires have to be short and the questions must be simple as there is no opportunity to probe or clarify misunderstandings.
- There is no control over who completes the questionnaire. A questionnaire which was supposed to be completed by a manager may be handed over to the personal assistant to fill it in.
- Where the researcher is not present, it's always difficult to know whether or not a respondent has understood the question properly.
- Response rates tend to be low and it is difficult to know the characteristics of those who have not filled in the survey and how their non-response will affect the findings.

In mitigating some of the limitations of questionnaires highlighted above, after designing the questionnaire, opinions were sought from colleagues (experts) who had experience and expertise in the field of strategic leadership so that they could give their input on the structure and content of the questionnaire. The issue of low response rates was addressed by making follow up calls every week and personally collecting the completed questionnaires from the respondents.

A questionnaire using a six- point Likert- type scale was designed to address all the quantifiable research questions and research objectives of the study. A structured questionnaire is a set of questions for gathering information from individuals and can also be described as a collection of formalised questions, drawn up with the research problem in mind used for obtaining information from the respondents in order to generate possible solutions to the research problem (CDC, 2008; Kumar, 2011). A structured questionnaire can also be used to investigate attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, feelings, opinions, knowledge and some aspects of behaviour; questionnaires attempt to measure or quantify these attributes (University of Strathclyde, 2013).

In a structured questionnaire, respondents select a response from predetermined answers, on the Likert scales, and these data are typically analysed quantitatively (Harris & Brown, 2010). I designed a structured questionnaire containing 123 items. The questionnaire items were based on the themes that had emerged from the qualitative phase of the study (discussed in Chapter 4). After subjecting the measuring instruments to factor analyses, 79 items were retained.

The range of the questionnaire's six- point Likert scale was as follows: *1= Strongly disagree; 2= Slightly disagree; 3= Disagree; 4=Slightly agree; 5=Agree and 6= Strongly agree.* Odd-numbered Likert scales have a major limitation in that they normally have a mid-point which could be labelled: No opinion; Unsure; Do not know or Neutral. The mid-point can be confusing to respondents which may also introduce measurement error, especially when a survey question is unclear (Losby & Wetmore, 2012). The structured questionnaire (see Appendix 3) had three main sections:

Section A: Biographic Data: This section consisted of five items that sought respondents' information on demographic variables such as age, work designation, and the owner-managers' work experience which was confirmed in literature as having an impact on the success of SMEs. Work designation was important in highlighting whether respondents were owner-managers or co-owners as this was relevant to this study. Demographic data can be used to correlate responses among different groups of participants (Husain & Xiao, 2016).

Section B: Company profile: This section consisted of six items related to the company's predominant industry, years of existence, number of employees, annual turnover, ownership structure and location. The number of years of existence has been confirmed in literature as one of the key success factors for SMEs; the number of employees was relevant in distinguishing small enterprises from medium enterprises as was the annual turnover of the SMEs.

Section C: Components of a strategic leadership framework. Section C was further broken down into ten sub- sections which represented the main themes that had emerged from the literature reviewed and the qualitative data. The themes identified were: *Strategic direction; organisational culture and ethics; organisational resource portfolio; Strategic and control systems; Strategic leadership enablers; Strategic implementation; Organisational challenges; Organisational success factors; Strategy management and the Role of government.* However, it should be noted that although the theme of *Role of government* emerged from the findings, the responses were captured in the last part of the questionnaire under *Organisational success factors*. Some of the recommendations on what the government should do in enhancing the operations of SMEs were considered success factors for the SMEs.

In light of the above, the structured questionnaire had the following sub –sections:

- *Strategic leadership practice*: This part of the questionnaire consisted of 38 items and measured the following factors: Strategic Direction (twelve items), Systems and Control (seven items), Strategic Implementation (ten items) and Strategy Management (nine items).

- *Organisational culture and ethics*: This part of the questionnaire consisted of the combined items of Organisational culture elements (seven items) and Ethics (eleven items).
- *Leadership enablers*: This part of the questionnaire consisted of six items.
- *Organisational success factors*: This part of the questionnaire consisted of eleven items.

3.9.4.2. Pilot study

Pilot testing the questionnaire is important to ensure a common understanding by the researcher and the respondents regarding the terms used in the questionnaire. A pilot study is normally a limited study that aids design of a further confirmatory study that has specific hypotheses, objectives and a methodology. *Pilot work* refers to any background research to inform future research while a pilot trial is an independent study, and includes a randomisation procedure (Arnold, et al. 2009).

Pilot studies are crucial, for a variety of reasons, confirmed by a number of researchers, such as Arain, *et al.*, (2010); Burns and Bush (2014); Kim (2011); Lancaster *et al.*, (2004); Leon, Davis & Kraemer (2011); Wray (2015); and Yin (2009). The aim of a pilot study is to test research methods; pre-empt challenges ahead; examine the feasibility of the approach that is intended to be used in a larger study; test data collection forms or questionnaires; test the randomisation procedure and select the most appropriate primary outcome measure(s). Any problems relating to the content, wording, layout, length, instructions, or the coding can be uncovered in the pilot study, and should be amended accordingly (University of Strathclyde, 2013).

However, pilot studies should be used with caution (especially the interpretation of results), since they also have limitations. McGrath (2013) posited that as pilot studies involve small samples, they can be used to generate some belief that there will be a trend toward a certain level of significance that resultantly provides support for studies on a larger scale. However, even if there could be some significance in the pilot study, researchers should be prepared for different results emanating from a larger study. This view is confirmed by Kraemer, Mintz, Noda, Tinklenberg

and Yesavage (2006) and Leon *et al.,* (2011) who postulated that a pilot study does not provide a meaningful effect size estimate for planning subsequent studies, due to the imprecision inherent in data from small samples.

In view of the preceding information, in the present research, the structured questionnaire was pilot- tested on 30 purposively selected owner-managers and co-managers from both small and medium enterprises located in the Harare Metropolitan Province since this was where the majority of the SMEs were located. Distribution of the questionnaires for the pilot test was done a week before the full administration of the final questionnaires on a large scale in all five identified geographical locations in Zimbabwe. The pilot test was done in order to detect any problems related to the instructions, content, wording and length of the questionnaire. Pilot-testing was mainly conducted to confirm the content validity of the questionnaire. The pilot study was undertaken only to the extent of checking the technical correctness of the questionnaire and establish areas of difficulty experienced by the respondents. No problems were encountered, and the questionnaire was subsequently distributed to respondents on a wider scale.

3.9.4.3. Administering the questionnaire

The structured questionnaire was self- completed by the sample group. It was delivered by hand, by the researcher to each respondent who had consented to participate, and was collected later, for instance, within a week. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the owner- managers of SMEs at their business premises. Appointments were made telephonically in advance by the researcher to meet the owner-managers, while in few instances the researcher relied on cold calling, which was generally successful, as the majority of the owner-managers were available at their business premises. I explained the rationale of the research, the expected outcomes, and the ethical issues associated with participating in the research to the owner-managers.

A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed to owner-managers and co-managers of SMEs in the five provincial areas of Zimbabwe, namely, Harare Metropolitan Province, Bulawayo

Metropolitan Province, Midlands Province, and Mashonaland West and East Provinces. The distribution is highlighted in Figure 3.5.

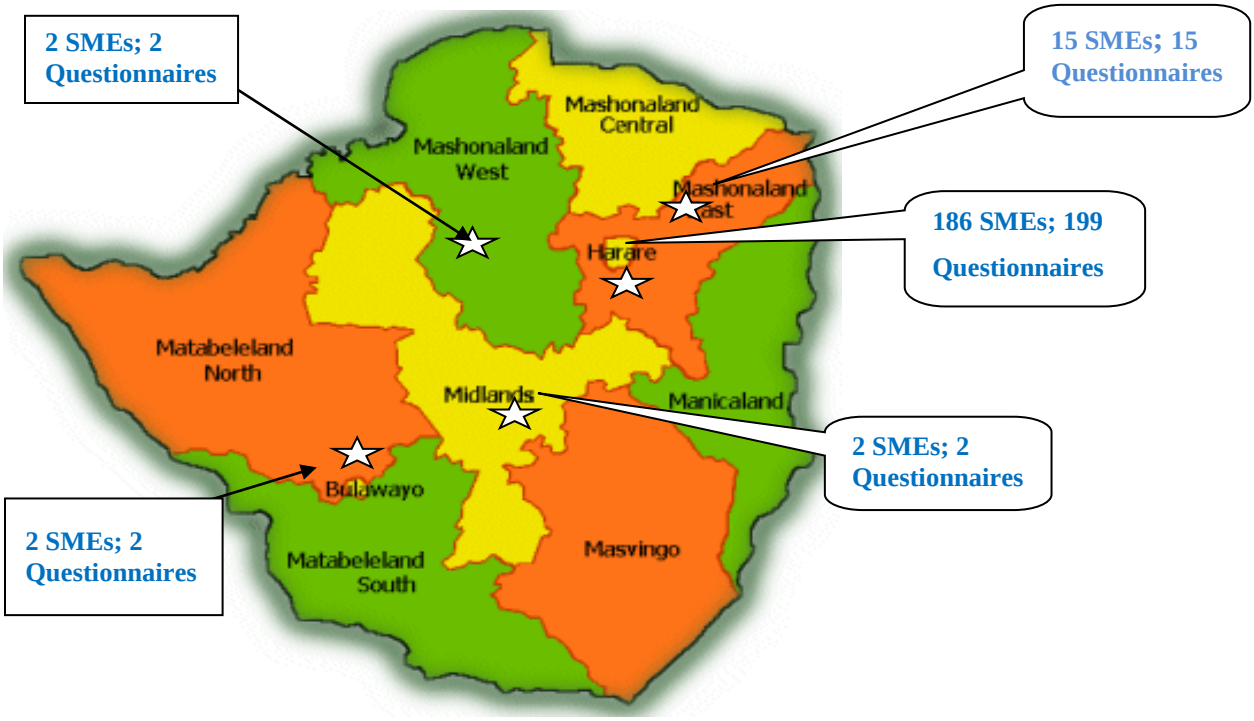


Figure 3.5 Distribution of Questionnaire to registered SMEs in Zimbabwe's ten Provinces

Source: Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Zimbabwe (SMEAZ, 2014)

In line with the quantitative data collection and analysis procedures outlined earlier, I established from the database of SMEs available on the SMEAZ website, that there was one enterprise employing more than 100 employees, which I excluded per the participation criteria for the study. Four were micro-enterprises (employing two to three employees, which were also not classified as SMEs); five SMEs had closed; and one of the SMEs was duplicated on the database. It was a daunting task to locate some of the SMEs, as some of the addresses provided in the online database were outdated. I sought the assistance of other SME owner-managers to locate those SMEs that had moved from their original location. Quite a number of SMEs had relocated to different operating areas, for instance there were some SMEs which relocated ten kilometres or more from the western part of Harare to other outlying areas in the eastern and southern areas of the capital.

Of the 220 questionnaires distributed, four were incomplete and therefore unusable, and 32 were not returned. A total of 173 were complete, and usable for statistical analysis which represented a response rate of 78.64%. In light of this, findings from this study offer a reliable representation of the SMEs operating in the Zimbabwean engineering and manufacturing sector.

In line with the NWU ethical guidelines, all ethical standards were upheld in executing this study. Respondents had to sign the Informed Consent Forms (see Appendix 3) before completing the questionnaire. The discussion which follow presents the method of analysis of results of the quantitative data.

3.9.5. Quantitative data analysis

Data were analysed with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, (SPSS), Version 24 (2015). Exploratory factor analyses were used to determine the underlying factor structure. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, and kurtosis) were performed. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to determine the relationships between the variables. A cut-off point of 0.30 (medium effect), Cohen (1988) were set for practical significance of the correlation coefficients. Table 3.8 shows the process of the quantitative data analysis:

Table 3.8 Quantitative Data Analysis Process

Quantitative Data Analysis	
Data recording, verification, and evaluation	Responses to the questionnaire were recorded for further processing by a statistical analyst.
Approaches, methods and techniques used for	SPSS Version 24.0.0.0 was used to analyse data.

analysis	
Approaches, methods and techniques to code and further analyse the data.	Data were coded, analysed and summarised using SPSS. The analysis focused on the five main research areas: the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategy; enablers of strategic leadership; views of strategic leaders on the use of current strategies; and the challenges faced by strategic leaders in implementing strategy. Measures of the central tendency were calculated as well as descriptive and inferential statistics.

Source: Leedy, and Ormrod, (2005)

3.9.6. General ethical considerations and research rigour

Ethical considerations are applicable in all the stages of the research process, from the planning stage, formulation of the research topic to the reporting of findings which have to be done in a moral and responsible way. Research ethics have been defined as referring to the question of how researchers formulate and clarify the research topic, how the research is designed, having access, the collection of data, the processing and storage of data, data analysis and reporting the findings in a responsible manner (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2011). I at all times upheld the prescriptions of the North- West University's Guidelines for Ethical Research with regard to carrying out research which involve human subjects. I sought ethical clearance from NWU through the Faculty Research Ethics Committee before commencing with the study (See Appendix 7.)

In carrying out this study, I upheld the general ethical principles that include: consent; privacy of the participants, who voluntarily participated in the study and had the liberty of withdrawing from the process at any given time they so wished; maintenance of confidentiality of the data provided by the respondents; and their anonymity and the behaviour and objectivity of the researcher (Caruth, 2013; Connelly, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Hardicre, 2014; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2011). The ethical issues raised above are discussed below:

- Informed Consent: Participants and respondents were informed of the rationale for the study; that participating in the study was purely voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any point, without negative consequences. Before participating, they had to sign an Informed Consent Form. I considered the fact that they should have the competence to consent (Beauchamp & Childress, 2009; Connelly, 2014).
- With regard to semi-structured interviews, I obtained written consent from participants after they had been informed about the purpose and scope of study, types of questions likely to be asked, and the use to which the result will be put (Paoletti, 2014). Ethically valid consent is important not only to prevent harmful exploitation, but also enable the development of a trusting researcher/respondent relationship, as well as respondent autonomy (Moore & McSherry, 2013).
- Recruitment: No respondent or participant was coerced or unduly influenced to participate and were assured that there would be no adverse effect due to participation or non-participation (Connelly, 2014; Greaney et al., 2012). I did not also use any form of deception in securing the consent of respondents and participants.
- Confidentiality/privacy and anonymity: Confidentiality is related to specific information, and the duty of confidentiality arises in the context of a particular agreement, such as that between the interviewer and interviewee (Moore & McSherry, 2013). I guaranteed confidentiality/privacy and anonymity of both participants. The questionnaires did not request the names of the respondents hence, data was aggregated and could not be attributed to specific respondents; and in the case of interviews, and privacy of participants was respected by the non-disclosure of their names, addresses and other personal information. Furthermore, I assured participants that information gathered would be treated purely for academic purposes. All were assured that no harm would come to them for participating in the study.
- Behaviour and objectivity of researcher: Ethical issues arise in data analysis and reporting. A researcher may side with certain participants, discloses only positive data, and falsify evidence, data, findings, and conclusions (Creswell, 2012; Lincoln, 2009). In this study, I reported different perspectives with honesty, without fabricating, or falsifying evidence.

3.9.6.1 Data Trustworthiness: Qualitative Data

To ensure trustworthiness of the data, the following steps were taken (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

3.9.6.1.1 Credibility

- Participants consented to being interviewed voluntarily. I advised them that they could opt out of the study at any stage. Therefore, the interviewees offered the information voluntarily, and as such it can be considered credible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton 2004).
- Shenton (2004) posited that in order to increase credibility, the researcher could make use of iterative questioning to unearth lies. In this study, I relied much on probing questions as a way of exploring issues in depth, in order to confirm information critical to the study.
- Methodological triangulation: Trustworthiness can be increased through triangulation, which is the use of multiple methods of data collection. In this study, the researcher started with qualitative data collection and analysis, which was followed by the collection of quantitative data in Chapter 5.

3.9.6.1.2 Transferability

- Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be replicated in different settings. In most instances, it is the reader who decides whether the findings are transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004).
- In this study, I adopted some of the key points raised by Shenton (2004) which could enhance transferability. These included providing information on the number and location of participating organisations; the number of participants who were interviewed (in this instance, 12); the data collection methods used (semi-structured interviews); the number of data collection sessions (one) and the duration of the data collection period (five days) (see Table 4.1). Lincoln and Guba (1985: 316) pointed out that "It is....*not* the naturalist's task to provide an *index* of transferability; it *is* his or her responsibility to provide the *data base* that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers." In light of this

statement, I am of the view that, in the present study, readers can make transferability judgements based on the information provided.

3.9.6.1.3 Dependability

- Dependability deals with the replication of findings in the same context using the same subjects (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Two issues related to triangulation are: a dependability audit and an audit process. These focus on how the data were collected and kept, as well as the accuracy of the data. In light of the above, I took the following steps:
- All the interviews were recorded on a computer tablet with the signed consent of all the participants. This process ensured that no data were lost, starting with data capturing, progressing to data analysis.
- The recorded interviews were fully transcribed in a Microsoft formatted document, and the recorded interviews were played back several times to ensure that all data were correctly captured.
- Field notes were used to complement what was recorded on the tablet to ensure exhaustiveness in the data captured
- During the analysis of data, detailed records were kept by the researcher, which made it easier to refer to the data in the subsequent stages of the research process. In this regard, documentation increased the internal validity of the data.
- Constant comparison was done in the coding process, especially during open coding and axial coding, to ensure that all the data categories had been incorporated.

3.9.6.1.4 Confirmability

- Confirmability is the extent to which the findings are influenced by biases of the researcher. As argued by Lincoln and Guba (1985), triangulation and the establishment of an audit trail can be used to enhance confirmability. Shenton (2004) also concurred with Lincoln and Guba (1985) in stating that triangulation reduces the personal bias of the researcher as multiple methods are used in data collection.

- An audit trail has been provided in this research in the form of a diagram (data- oriented approach), (Figure 4.1) - which depicts the grounded theory process and analysis of data. The data are stored in various forms including the 12 recorded interviews (on a disk) and my field notes.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) further propose that a researcher should keep a reflexive journal on important information about himself/herself as well as the methods used. After each interview, I wrote memos to capture the salient points that were emerging from the data. These memos encouraged reflexivity, reducing personal bias, in all the stages of grounded theory process, (Conrad, Nuemann, Haworth & Scott, 1993).

3.9.7 Quantitative ethical considerations and research rigour

3.9.7.1 Reliability

Reliability signifies the issue of consistency of measurement over time, that is, the ability of a measurement instrument to measure the same thing each time it is used, and yielding consistent results (Drost, 2011; Singh, 2007; Thanasegaran, 2009; Zohrabi, 2013). In the present research, the important factors involved in assessing reliability were:

- Internal consistency reliability- which refers to whether the indicators that make up the scale or index are consistent. The Cronbach coefficient is commonly used in assessing internal consistence reliability. Cronbach's alpha measures inter-item reliability or the degree of internal consistency between variables which measure the same concept, that is, the degree to which different items measuring the same variable generates results that are consistent (Thanasegaran, 2009). The acceptable reliability estimates range between 0.70 and 0.80. In order to assess internal consistency reliability for this study, the Cronbach alpha of all the items that probed the same theme were taken for example, *Enablers of strategic leadership* were calculated and compared to the acceptable ranges.

- Inter-rater reliability: used to assess the degree to which different raters give consistent estimates of the same phenomenon. Six respondents were given the questionnaire in order for them to give their opinions on the structure and coverage of the key research areas.

3.9.7.2 Validity

Validity refers to the technical soundness of the study (Creswell, 2009). It also refers to the degree and magnitude to which one can make legitimate inferences from the operationalisations in a study to the theoretical constructs on which those operationalisations were based (Trochim, 2006, as cited in Agarwal, 2011). The following validity measures were performed in this study:

- Construct validity- assesses whether a measure of a concept really measures that concept, that is, the level to which the concept measures what it was designed to measure (Singh, 2007). Items in the questionnaire required exact responses and the responses from small enterprises were compared with those from medium enterprises.
- External validity- Is concerned with generalisations, that is, the degree to which generalisations can be made to populations, based on the results of the study, settings and measurement variables (Yin, 2009). Because of the nature of individuals and organisations, it is not unreasonable to expect that some findings may be transferrable to other organisations (Farrelly, 2013). The results and conclusions of the present research may not be generalisable to other sectors of the economy other than SMEs.

3.9.7.3 Researcher's reflection of the grounded theory process and analysis

In the process of utilising the principles of grounded theory process and analysis, I noted the following reflections:

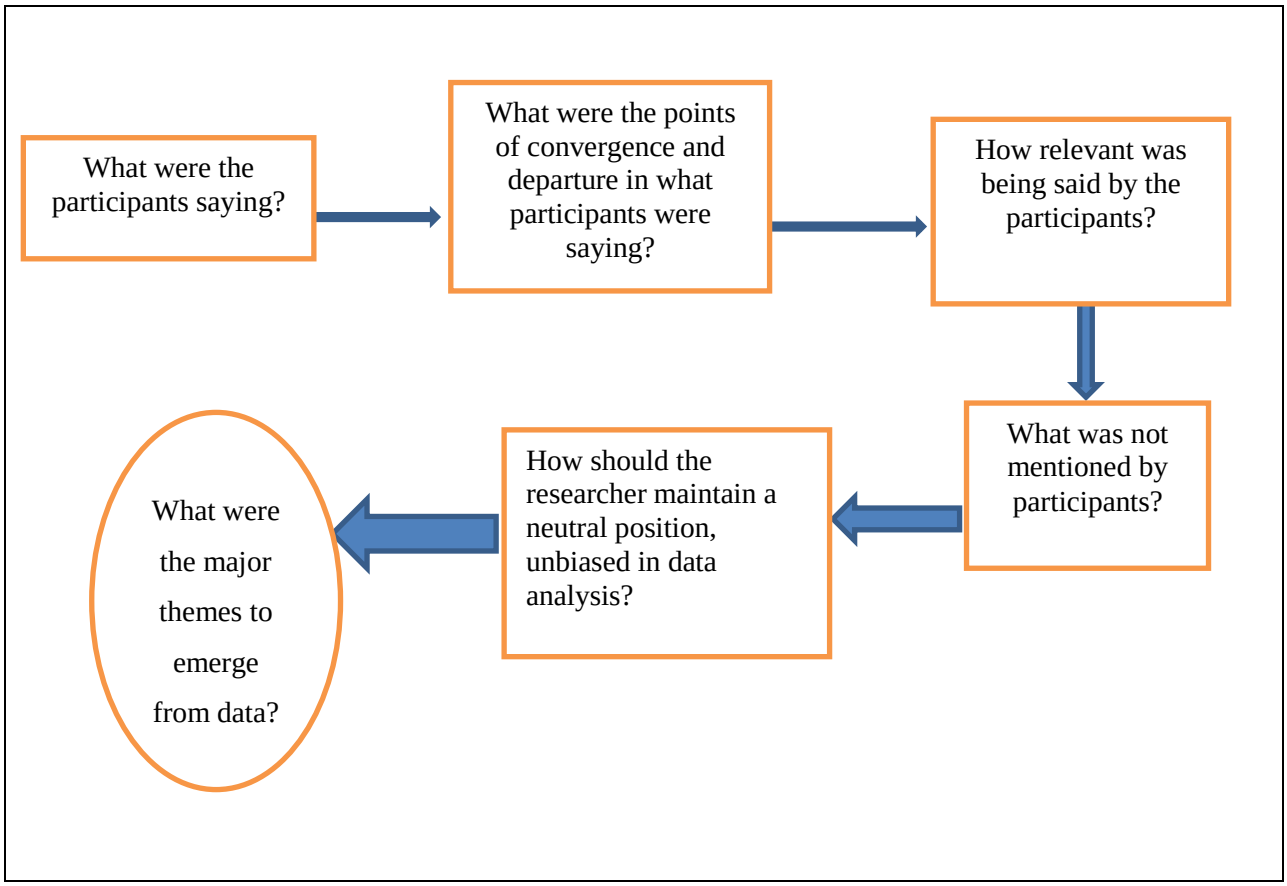


Figure 3.6 Researcher's reflections of the Grounded Theory process and analysis

Source: Researcher's own compilation

My reflections shown in Figure 3.6 assisted me in coding the data, focusing on key areas mentioned by participants, and taking cognisance of the personal bias which could creep into the data analysis. Data trustworthiness became critical in this regard, core themes and sub themes that emerged from the data are reported in the next chapter.

3.9.8 Conclusion

This chapter explained in detail the research design that was used to address the research questions for the study. Justification of the use of mixed methods embedded in a pragmatist philosophy was articulated, and the ethical considerations were discussed. The next chapter, Chapter 4, reports the findings from qualitative data, discussing the themes that emerged during the use of grounded theory.

CHAPTER 4 : QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter the qualitative data analysis and findings are presented. In Chapter 3 it was mentioned that this study has a sequential exploratory design in which qualitative data were collected first and then analysed, before commencement to the quantitative part of the study. Results from this qualitative data analysis formed the basis upon which the questionnaire for quantitative data collection was designed as highlighted in Figure 3.2. The collection of qualitative data from the interviewed owner - managers provided a rich and deep view into the area of strategic leadership.

The findings in this chapter are presented against the backdrop of an economy that has been experiencing a myriad of challenges since 2000. Zimbabwe continues to suffer from declining growth and serious macroeconomic challenges. The country adopted the multi-currency regime in 2009, officially dollarizing the economy. The past decade of hyperinflation and weak economic management has undoubtedly eroded a significant share of Zimbabwe's physical and human capital (The World Bank, 2013). The World Bank (2017) further highlights that Zimbabwe achieved high economic growth between 2009 and 2012. Thereafter, economic growth has fallen and continues to face low credit for businesses and consumers, severe cash shortages in banks and the poverty levels have also increased. The economy continues unabated to face structural challenges from high informality, company closures, weak domestic demand, high public debt, weak investor confidence, corruption, and a challenging political environment (Africa Development Bank, 2016; Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries, 2014).

The preceding information is a pointer to a very challenging business environment which SMEs find themselves trapped in. While company closures have been endemic, some SMEs have managed to weather the storm and remain operational. However, interviewing SME owner-managers at their company premises during these difficult times was an eye-opener for me since I could witness how the owner-managers were preoccupied with survival on a daily basis.

4.2. Participants and interview process

The findings in this chapter are based on a sample group of 12 participants' semi-structured interviews, which were conducted between 2 November and 6 November 2015 in Harare, Zimbabwe with owner-managers and co-managers of various SMEs. The interviewees were located in Harare's industrial areas of Ardbennie, Graniteside, Southerton, Workington and Willowvale. The researcher purposively selected the participants who met the criteria for an SME, in terms of numbers (minimum of ten employees up to a maximum of 100), and turnover not exceeding US$ 830 000 per annum, and the SMEs had to have been in operation for at least three years, as outlined in Chapter 3. Table 4.1 shows the demographics of participants.

Table 4.1 List of Participants and their Demographics

Participant number	Gender	Age: years	Work Experience (years)	Job Level
1	Male	31-35	Fewer than 5	Owner-manager
2	Male	41-50	More than 10	Owner-manager
3	Male	41-50	More than 10	Owner-manager
4	Male	36-40	More than 10	Co-owner
5	Male	31-35	5 to 10	Owner-manager
6	Male	36-40	More than 10	Owner-manager
7	Male	More than 50	More than 10	Owner-manager
8	Male	More than 50	More than 10	Owner-manager
9	Female	More than 50	More than 10	Co-owner
10	Female	31-35	5 to 10	Owner-manager
11	Male	41-50	More than 10	Co-owner
12 **Saturation**	Female	31-35	5 to 10	Co-owner

Table 4.1 reflects that 75% of the participants were men, which indicates that the SME sector is still a male- dominated area. It is also worth noting that 50% of the participants were aged below 40 years with the lower limit at 31 years, which shows that the manufacturing SME sector caters

for both young upcoming entrepreneurs and older entrepreneurs. In terms of work experience in their business, most of the participants (eight of the 12) had managed their SMEs for more than ten years.

Before interviewing the participants, I explained the purpose of the research, the aims as well as the expected outcomes of the research. I sought the consent of participants to record the interviews on a computer tablet, as well as to use the data from interviews for academic purposes, before commencing with the interviews. By the twelfth interview, data saturation was evident, that corresponds with previous authors.

Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) concluded that data saturation occurs at 12 interviews, while Thomson (2002) stated that theoretical saturation occurs between ten and 30 interviews. A study by Ando, Cousins and Young (2014), based on 39 in-depth interviews in North West England, UK, confirmed the occurrence of data saturation at 12 interviews, indicating the feasibility of undertaking thematic analysis. Generally, reaching saturation differs from one study to the other, which is confirmed by Fusch and Ness (2015). In the present study, all 12 interviews were transcribed; and are available on the disk included as an attachment to the document. An example of a transcript is shown in Figure 4.1.

The enterprise was situated in the Willowvale industrial area of Harare and had been in existence for 17 years manufacturing furniture. The responses of the interviewee with regard to direction setting (operational planning, strategic planning) are shown in the screenshot of the transcript below.

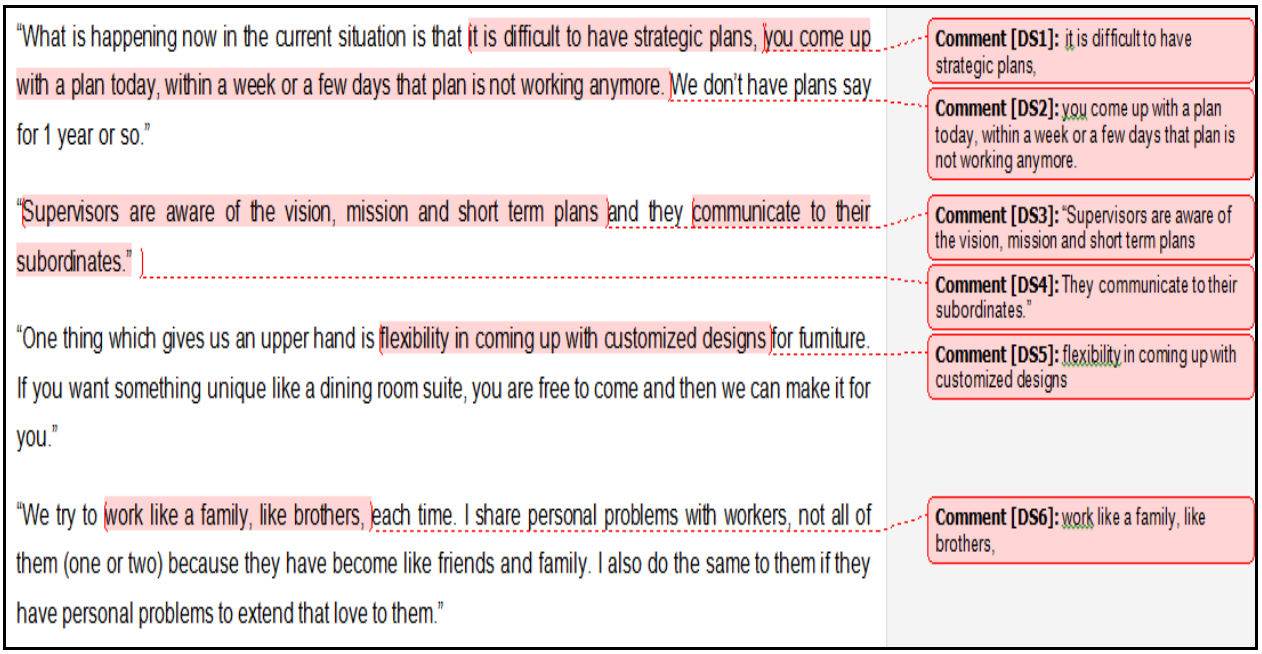


Figure 4.1 Example of a Transcript, Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4years' working experience, Top manager

Source: Researcher's own compilation

4.3. Data analysis using the grounded theory process

Having collected the information that addressed the main research question, *"What are the factors in a strategic leadership framework that lead to success beyond the critical time line of three years that, if implemented, will lead to the success of manufacturing and engineering SMEs in a developing country context?"* I transcribed the 12 interviews into a Microsoft word document. Additional data that were transcribed focused on secondary objectives, namely the role of strategic leaders, challenges they face, enablers of strategic leadership and the identification of key success factors. The recorded interviews were played several times in order to ensure trustworthiness of the data by having captured the participants' responses accurately and verbatim. There was constant comparison between the field notes and the transcribed data. Data analysis commenced when the first data were collected. Figure 4.2 shows the grounded theory process and analysis that was followed, with descriptions offered at each of the stages.

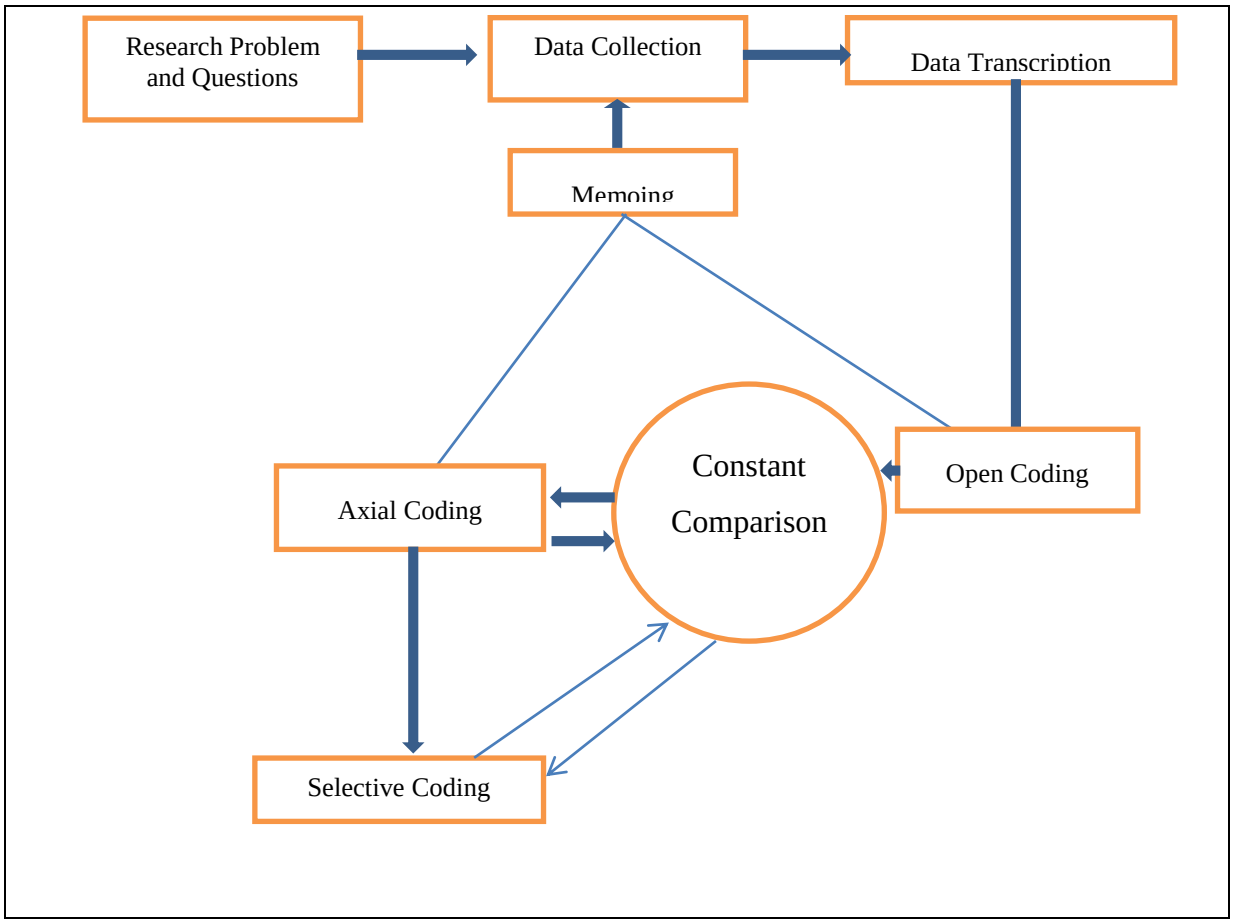


Figure 4.2 Grounded Theory process and analysis

Source: Researcher's own compilation

Memoing was also done during and after data collection as well as during the coding process. The memoing process was done per the recommendations of Corbin and Strauss (1990), that memoing should be done from the beginning of the research until the final write- up. Memoing assisted me in refining my approach to asking questions during data collection, taking into consideration the general trend of the interviews, as well as the major issues that were emerging. Figure 4.3.and Figure 4.4 shows some of these memos.

Memo 1: P1 Planning, 3 November 2015

Strategic planning is very difficult to undertake given the prevailing situation on the economic front. "What is happening now in the current situation is that it is difficult to have strategic plans, you come up with a plan today, within a week or a few days that plan is not working anymore." (Field Interview, P01).Challenges in the operating environment makes planning difficult. Forecasting becomes an insurmountable task since the future is very uncertain. The economy is in bad shape which makes planning an uphill task. However, Supervisors are aware of the vision, mission and short term plans of the organisation who will then communicate to their subordinates.

Figure 4.3 Memoing: Direction Setting (Strategic and operational planning)

Source: Researcher's own compilation

Memo 28: P4 Organisational Culture 3 November 2015

This organisation's culture is premised on innovation, "....coming up with new products all the time." (Field Interview, P04). In trust building, everyone is involved in the decision making processes. Ethical standards are communicated to the employees and leaders practice what they say, "...we have to walk the talk." (Field Interview, P04). The leader is transparent in everything that he does and this helps in eliminating any forms of suspicions within the organisation's day to day affairs.

Figure 4.4 Memoing: Organisational Culture

Source: Researcher's own compilation

4.4. Data Coding

4.4.1. Open Coding

The first stage in the coding process was open coding. At this stage, I identified the major words used, that related to the same area and coded these accordingly. In this regard, I adopted Birk's and Mills' (2011) procedure, whereby groups of words are taken verbatim to reflect what the interviewees were saying. Sentence –by- sentence coding was used in order to not miss key areas that participants were emphasising on. Furthermore, all the transcribed data were open coded. Figure 4.5 provides an example of the open codes performed.

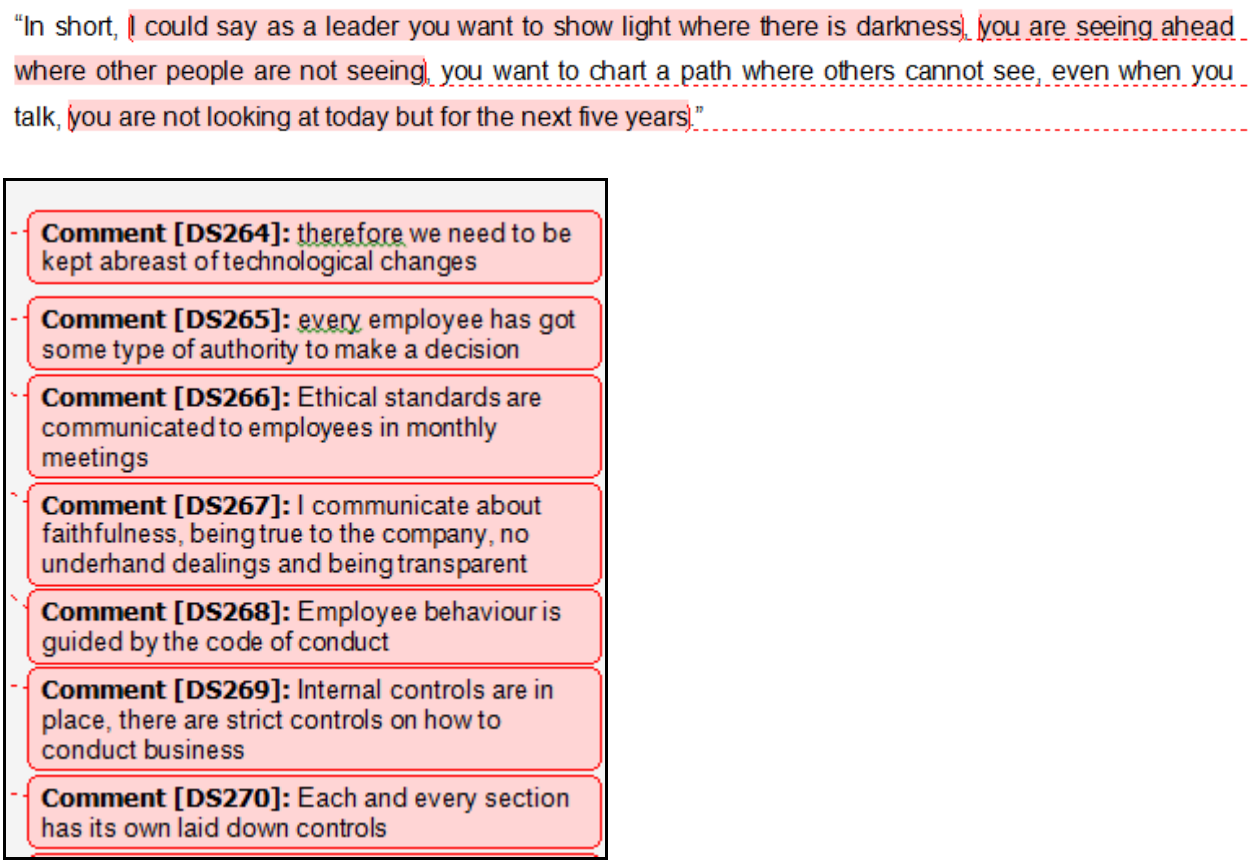
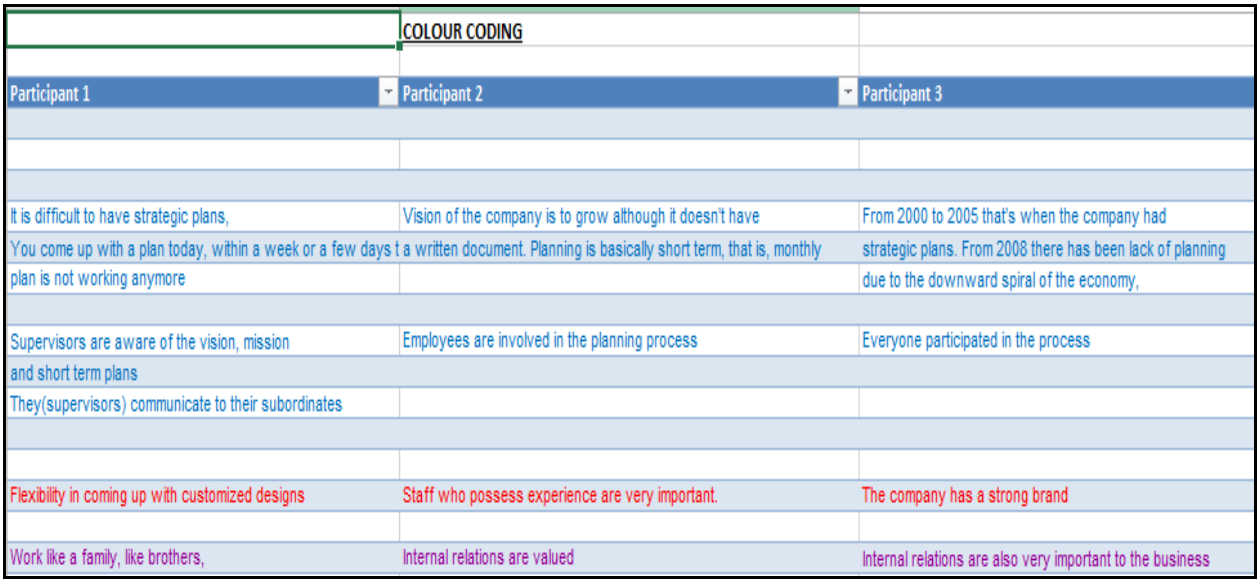


Figure 4.5 In-vivo codes and important words

Source: Researcher's own compilation

In addition to the use of *in-vivo* words, I also used different colours to highlight the different areas being probed; for instance, the colour blue was used for the theme *Direction setting*(strategic planning/operational planning) as shown in Figure 4.6 below.



	COLOUR CODING	
Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3
It is difficult to have strategic plans,	Vision of the company is to grow although it doesn't have	From 2000 to 2005 that's when the company had
You come up with a plan today, within a week or a few days t	a written document. Planning is basically short term, that is, monthly	strategic plans. From 2008 there has been lack of planning
plan is not working anymore		due to the downward spiral of the economy,
Supervisors are aware of the vision, mission	Employees are involved in the planning process	Everyone participated in the process
and short term plans		
They(supervisors) communicate to their subordinates		
Flexibility in coming up with customized designs	Staff who possess experience are very important.	The company has a strong brand
Work like a family, like brothers,	Internal relations are valued	Internal relations are also very important to the business

Figure 4.6 Coding using important words

Source: Researcher's own compilation

4.4.2. Axial coding

After all the data had been open coded, the next step was to relate codes that focused on the same area, using a different colour for each area. I adopted Onion's (2006) procedure of axial coding, which is relating codes to each other. There was constant comparison of data during open and axial coding, in order to ensure that core categories emerged from the data. For instance, green was used to identify the role of strategic leaders in SMEs. Figure 4.7 shows an example of axial coding.

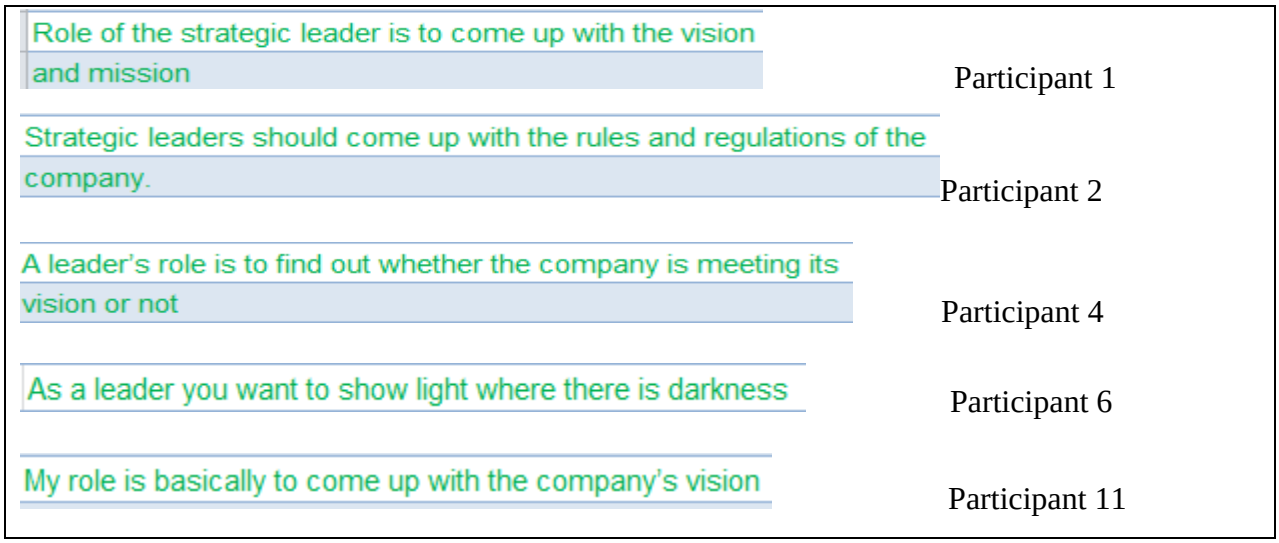


Figure 4.7 Axial coding: Role of Strategic leaders in SMEs

Source: Researcher's own compilation

Concluding from the statements above, it became apparent that the sub-theme emerging was that of *Strategic planning* which is concerned with the formulation of *vision and mission* statements. Theoretical saturation occurred at 12 interviews, when no new information was being provided by the participants.

4.4.3. Selective Coding

This research adopted the process outlined by Onions (2006) whereby, in selective coding, core categories must be selected, and other categories related to these. Final themes are written from the data sets at this stage of the coding process (Charmaz, 2014). The core categories in the present research constituted the major themes which emerged from the data while sub-themes were treated as the other categories. For instance, one of the core categories to emerge from the data was *Organisational resource portfolio* and other categories/sub themes to emerge were: *Flexibility, Strong brand, Capital and Human resources.* In the table below, data in the first box to the left reflects axial coding, the middle box shows sub- themes (other categories), and the last box to the right indicates the core category, in this instance, *Organisational resource portfolio*. Table 4.2 shows axial coding as well as selective coding for *Organisational resource portfolio*.

Table 4.2 Axial and Selective Coding for Organisational resource portfolio

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub Category/Sub Themes	**Core Theme**
Flexibility in coming up with customised designs	**Flexibility**	
The company has a strong brand	**Strong brand**	
Capital is very important to the business to purchase machinery Capital is the backbone of the business High voltage material In terms of machinery/equipment, we are better than our competitors	**Capital**	**Organisational Resource Portfolio**
Experienced staff are important We believe in skills Employees are the number one resource Employees normally attend short courses.	**Human resources**	

Source: Researcher's own compilation

4.5. Findings from qualitative data analysis

The findings of the qualitative study relate to five main areas that strategic leaders in an SME should consider namely:

- Establishing strategic direction (setting the vision);
- The effective management of the firm's resource portfolio;
- The sustenance of an effective organisational culture;
- Emphasising sound ethical practices; and
- The establishment of balanced organisational controls.

The inductive approach was used in analysing qualitative data. The method of analysis was that of thematic content analysis which was discussed in the previous chapter. Sub-themes and

themes related to the same area were grouped together for ease of analysis. Each of the five areas is discussed below.

4.5.1. Establishing strategic direction (setting the vision)

The most important consideration that emerged from the data as voiced by the participants, as strategic leaders in SMEs, was that of *Setting the vision and mission* of the organisation. Five of the 12 participants confirmed that they had a vision and mission in place in their SMES, whilst others had strategic plans in place. Operational and strategic planning were also undertaken in various SMEs, and the strategic leaders communicated the mission and vision statements to employees, and also involved them in setting the vision. The setting of vision and mission statements was confirmed in these statements:

"There is no way we can run the business without a vision and plan." (Participant 12: Female, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' work experience, Top manager).

In buttressing the abovementioned point, other participants concurred:
"*We do have a vision and mission in place"* (Participant 11: Male, 41-50 years age group, 13 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Strategic plans (5 years plus) are in place." (Participant 8: Male, 50+ years' age group, 17 10 years' work experience, Top manager).

"We do have a vision and mission for the organisation." (Participant 6: Male, 36-40 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Vision, mission and values are written down and are available within the organisation. These are also available in the company profile." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

Noteworthy is the fact that the majority of the participants did not have any strategy in place whilst others were constrained in their planning by environmental challenges. To sum up, Table

4.3 shows the core theme *(Strategic direction)* and sub themes (*Strategic planning, Operational planning, Teamwork and Environmental constraints)* which emerged from the data:

Table 4.3 Core themes and sub themes on Direction setting

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub-themes	**Core theme**
We do have a vision and mission for the organisation. Long term plans are available Strategic plans (5 years plus) are in place There is no way we can run the business without vision and plans	**Strategic planning**	**Strategic direction**
Monthly plans are available Short term plans are available Goals are normally quarterly, yearly Yearly plans are split into quarterly plans	**Operational planning**	
Employees are involved in the planning process We discuss these in regular meetings and come up with strategies.	**Teamwork**	
You come up with a plan today, within a week or a few days that plan is not working anymore. From 2008 there has been lack of planning due to the downward spiral of the economy. Environment makes long term planning difficult.	**Environmental constraints in planning**	

4.5.2. Effectively managing the enterprise's resource portfolio

Participants' views were sought with regard to management of the enterprise's resources. The possession of capital emerged as the enterprise's major competency, while the sub- themes were related to flexibility, the brand of the SME, as well as the possession of machinery/equipment vis-a- vis competitors. The enterprise's resource portfolio is highlighted in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Core themes and themes on the Management of the firm's resources

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub-themes	**Core theme**
Flexibility in coming up with customised designs	**Flexibility**	**Organisational resource portfolio**
The company has a strong brand	**Strong brand**	
Capital is very important to the business to purchase machinery Capital is the backbone of the business High voltage material In terms of machinery/equipment, we are better than our competitors	**Capital**	
Experienced staff are important We believe in skills Employees are the number one resource Employees normally attend short courses.	**Human resources**	

4.5.3. The sustenance of an effective organisational culture and emphasis on sound ethical practices

The researcher also sought the responses of participants with regard to sustaining an effective organisational culture and emphasising ethical practices. From the research findings, it became apparent that ethical practices could also be grouped under the core theme *Organisational culture.* Seven sub- themes emerged from the data namely: *Teamwork, Transparency, Norms of behaviour, Decision making, Trust and integrity*, and *Communication.*

A number of participants valued teamwork in their SMEs. These participants were aware of the fact that they could not achieve the goals of the organisation on their own, without the supportive role of employees. The importance of teamwork was evident in the following statements:

"We try to work like a family, like brothers, each time. I share personal problems with workers, not all of them (one or two) because they have become like friends and family. I also do the same to them if they have personal problems to extend that love to them." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' work experience, Top manager).

"We rely on teamwork." (Participant 2: Male, 41-50 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"We work like team building." (Participant 12: Female, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Internal relations are also very important to the business." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

"There is commitment on the part of employees." (Participant 10: Female, 31-35 years age group, 7 years' work experience, Top manager).

Decision-making was also one of the sub- themes emerging from the data. Although decision making can be a part of ethical practices, such decisions are also based on the cultural practices of the organisation. Participants had varied opinions, with some pointing out that, as owner-managers they made strategic decisions only while other managers made decisions depending on their level in the organisation. In other instances, employees would also be involved in the

decision-making processes. The following statements highlight areas where strategic leaders made key decisions in their SMEs:

"There are some decisions that I do make myself. As much as we are a family, there are some decisions that I make alone. They have to understand that I am the leader. There are other critical areas where I make decisions on my own. For example, if we are tight on cash, I just approach the bank I don't need to consult them, even in cases of financing orders and purchasing material." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' work experience, Top manager).

"You see the problem with SMEs is that power is normally concentrated in one individual and sometimes the issue of corporate governance is compromised." (Participant 3: Male, 41-50 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Majority of decisions are made by us, the owners but we also involve workers." (Participant 5: Male, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' work experience, Top manager).

"At times I override the decisions of workers based on my experience but I always listen to them." (Participant 7: Male, 50+ years' age group, 16 years' work experience, Top manager).

"I make strategic decisions..." (Participant 11: Male, 41-50 years age group, 13 years' work experience, Top manager).

"As Directors, we make strategic decisions." (Participant 12: Female, 31-35 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

In order to increase commitment to the organisation and engender trust, some strategic leaders also involved other managers and employees in decision-making. These sentiments are exemplified in the following statements:

"... middle and lower level managers also make decisions." (Participant 11: Male, 41-50 years age group, 13 years' work experience, Top manager).

"We jointly make decisions." (Participant 9: Female, 50+ years' age group, 19 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Each and every employee has got his or her level of decision making. Each and every one has some type of authority depending on their level." (Participant 8: Male, 50+ years' age group, 17 10 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Decisions are made by teams and groups." (Participant 6: Male, 36-40 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Everyone is involved in making decisions in order to build trust." (Participant 4, Male, 36-40 years age group, 7 years' work experience, Top manager).

The sub- themes and core themes that emerged from the data are depicted in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Core theme and sub themes on Organisational Culture and Ethics

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub-themes	**Core theme**
We work like a family, like brothers We rely on teamwork We work like team building Employees are committed in discharging their duties. Internal relations are also very important to the business.	**Teamwork**	**Organisational culture and ethics**
The leader upholds transparency No underhand dealings, being transparent	**Transparency**	
A culture of benchmarking You cannot change without copying A learning organisation and in the process surpass competitors	**Learning**	
We do what we say I lead by example No one is above the laws, rules and regulations of the organisation.	**Norms of behaviour**	
I make strategic decisions myself We jointly make decisions Power is normally concentrated in one individual. There are other critical areas where I make decisions myself Everyone is involved in making decisions to build trust	**Decision making**	
Sticking to payment dates In terms of trust, as owner-managers, we have to be exemplary.		

There is trust and integrity in the organisation Here we normally work on trust We stick to the promises that we make to customers	**Trust and integrity**	
We communicate ethical standards like trust and honesty to employees I communicate about faithfulness, true to the company. We emphasise communicating ethical standards to our employees	**Communication**	

4.5.4. The establishment of balanced organisational controls

Establishing balanced organisational controls was the last major component to be investigated by the researcher to make a determination regarding whether such controls were present in SMEs. Strategic leaders should ensure that effective control systems are in place in a bid to reduce the level of deviations between planned and actual performance. The two main types of internal controls identified were strategic, which were accomplished through information exchanges, and financial controls, which were achieved through the setting of performance targets (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Slawinski, 2007).

All the participants concurred that having control systems in place was critical to the organisation in a variety of ways, including the safeguarding of company assets, measuring employee performance, and rewarding employees. These opinions are summarised in the following statements:

"*Internal controls are available, everything is recorded."* (Participant 5: Male, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' work experience, Top manager).

"*We do have systems in place there is an internal audit department.*" (Participant 6: Male, 36-40 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Internal controls are in place, there are strict controls on how to conduct business. Each and every section has its own laid down controls." (Participant 8: Male, 50+ years' age group, 17 years' work experience, Top manager).

"The organisation has a Quality Management System (ISO 9002) which has built- in control systems. Controls are important without them we could be operating in darkness." (Participant 11: Male, 41-50 years age group, 13 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Systems and procedures are written." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

Employee performance was managed either through individual targets, or group performance targets. In instances where targets were not met the concerned individuals, groups or Supervisors had to give an explanation for the variance. The following are some of the statements that confirmed the setting of performance targets:

"Employee performance is managed through performance targets. If targets are not met, the supervisor is taken to task." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Employee performance is managed through individual performance targets. If employees do not meet set targets they will have to explain the reasons." (Participant 2: Male, 41-50 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Employees have performance targets. End of every week performance is evaluated." (Participant 6: Male, 36-40 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"There are group targets to be met as well as individual incentives." (Participant 7: Male, more than 51 years old, 16 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Performance targets are set for individuals." (Participant 8: Male, 50+ years' age group, 17 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Performance targets are set for the sales team." (Participant 12: Female, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' work experience, Top manager).

Regarding strategic controls, the majority of the strategic leaders confirmed that they normally communicated information to employees through formal weekly meetings. Such exchanges of information would then be used to develop strategies. The strategic leaders' statements, below, confirmed the exchange of such information:

"Information is exchanged through weekly meetings." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Exchange of information within the organisation is normally through formal meetings." (Participant 2: Male, 41-50 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Information is exchanged in weekly management meetings." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Information is disseminated in the organisation through formal meetings." (Participant 12: Female, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' work experience, Top manager).

From the foregoing, the emergence of the core theme of *Strategic and control systems* is highlighted in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Core theme and sub themes of Balanced organisational controls

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub-themes	**Core theme**
Rules and code of conduct available Employee behaviour guided by code of conduct Performance targets are set for individuals/groups Performance reviews for key managers	**Internal controls**	**Strategic and control systems**
I hold regular(weekly/monthly) meetings with employees in order to exchange information to improve the business Information management in formal meetings I use the information I get from meetings to come up with organisational strategies	**Information management**	
I ensure that strategic and financial controls are in place in order to put strategies into action	**Strategic controls**	

4.5.6. Strategic Leadership Enablers

One of the secondary objectives of this study was to examine strategic leadership enablers that made strategic leaders successful in executing strategies in various SMEs. Responses of participants revealed that the major enablers were entrepreneurial skills, employees' skills, innovation, and product development. The statements below illustrate these enablers:

"Exposure: go out more into the market and find out what the customers want with the limited resources that the company has and come up with new products. At times we can keep on going with the products which customers may not afford." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Leaders should always sharpen their skills, we need to be studying, come up with new ideas, new technologies and be innovative in coming up with new products." (Participant 3: Male, 41-50 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

"There is need for product development after conducting a market analysis, owners need to know what is happening in their industry." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years' age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

'Come up with new designs for fireplaces every three months. Also come up with new products on the market." (Participant 5: Male, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Being innovative in the way you do things, come up with new products, you might be writing quotations manually whilst others are computerised." (Participant 10: Female, 31-45 years age group, 7 years' work experience, Top manager).

Table 4.7 highlights the sub-themes and the core theme that emerged from the data.

Table 4.7 Strategic Leadership enablers

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub-themes	**Core theme**
A culture of being innovative We always improve the way we do things We believe in something that is unique, innovation Company is always coming with new products A culture of coming up with new products We have quite a strong research-oriented culture A culture of coming up with new boilers I view employees as key to innovation I value the knowledge and skills base of employees I always initiate new products in my organisation in order to remain competitive I encourage innovation which is key to my organisation providing customers with value	**Innovation and product development** **Employee skills** **Entrepreneurial skills**	**Strategic leadership enablers**

4.5.7. Role of strategic leaders in strategy implementation

A secondary objective of the present study was to establish the role of strategic leaders in strategy implementation. The role of strategic leaders in SMEs has been widely perceived as that of strategist, setting the vision and mission of the organisation, and providing leadership to the organisation. As such, the role of strategic leaders was categorised under the core theme of *Strategic implementation* which emerged from the data. The statements that follow affirmed the strategic leaders' views of their role in the SMEs:

"The role of the strategic leader is to come up with the vision and mission of the organisation." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Strategic leaders should come up with the rules and regulations of the company." (Participant 2: Male, 41-50 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"As a leader you want to show light where there is darkness. You are seeing ahead where other people are not seeing. You are not looking at today but for the next five years. Come up with the company vision chart a path for 5years or so." (Participant 6: Male, 36-40 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"My role is basically to come up with the company's vision, then how, in terms of the strategies needed to achieve the vision and hiring key managers to the organisation." (Participant 11: Male, 41-50 years age group, 13 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Take the lead of your plans and organise employees in giving them responsibilities. Lead employees in constructing the boosters for one of the country's leading cellular providers. I came up with that idea, so I need to delegate responsibility which motivates the employees." (Participant 10: Female, 31-35 years age group, 7 years' work experience, Top manager).

"My role is basically to come up with the company's vision, after visualizing, that is in terms of the direction that the company should take, then how, in terms of the strategies needed to achieve the vision, how do I get there? The how part, I also play a part in terms of coming up with the right strategies. I am heavily involved in making sure that the right skills are available for the right part. So as the leader I am involved in every aspect of strategy from implementation to monitoring, of course I won't be involved at operational level as such, but I am still at strategic level looking at how things are going down there." (Participant 11: Male, 41-50 years age group, 13 years' working experience, Top manager).

To summarise, the findings revealed that the role of strategic leaders in SMEs is to formulate the vision and mission of the firm; set company rules and regulations; provide leadership; hire and organise employees; and implement and monitor strategies. Table 4.8 depicts the sub-themes and core theme that emerged from the data.

Table 4.8 Strategic Implementation factors

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub-themes	**Core theme**
Formulate company rules and regulations Leader should come up with the company's vision and mission A leader should monitor, evaluate, and follow up. Leading in constructing boosters Owner-manager should be a coach Organise employees Role of leader is to command Hiring key managers	**Strategic formulation, implementation, and control**	**Strategic implementation**
Leader should obtain funds for the business	**Source business funding**	

4.5.8. Strategy Management

This research also sought the views of strategic leaders regarding the strategies they used in managing their SMEs, as well as the effectiveness of such strategies in achieving the set goals and objectives. The strategic leaders had the following to say:

"Our current strategies are working: 80% of the goals are achieved through the use of current strategies, given the funding challenge. It also comes with the issue of funding, so we just try to survive within our means. Supervisors are committed to the attainment of the goals of the

organisation, but other employees need to be motivated a bit. The company introduced a production bonus to be awarded to employees so that they feel motivated if they met their targets. Competitor actions are considered only to the extent of product deliveries at various retail shops since it is difficult to determine how competitors plan." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Current strategies are working: 60-70% of the goals are achieved through the use of current strategies. Employees are committed in discharging their duties since they are always exerting maximum effort in performing the assigned tasks. As for competitors, I take into account areas where we will be failing and then try to make improvements in our production processes." (Participant 2: Male, 41-50 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Current strategies are working since the company is still operational, other companies have closed shop. That's why we have been afloat all this time. People need to be rewarded for everything they do. Due to the weak environment, there is no commitment on the part of employees. We take competitor actions into consideration to a large extent, especially price, that's our main guard. You have to continually analyse the operating environment. I am also a strategist." (Participant 3: Male, 41-50 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Current strategies are not effective as expected since the economy is not performing. There are inconsistent government policies which are always changing, in the middle of doing something the policies could be changed and everything goes out of control. Employees are committed to their work but government inconsistencies cause demotivation. We take into account what competitors are doing in terms of price, quality, market coverage and the performance of such competitors." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11years' work experience, Top manager).

It was also evident that four of the strategic leaders did not have strategic plans to mitigate the effect of the harsh economic conditions, and as such, they relied on strategies of survival (unplanned strategies), such as flexibility; reliance on brand name; focus on quality; non-committal to a specific product line; negotiated pricing; cost containment and management and transparency which are exemplified in the statements below.

a) Flexibility: *"We are open to everyone. You can come up with your own design, you can come and change something that we have, if you want something unique"* (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' working experience, Top manager). In this regard, SME owner managers relied on customisation as a strategy in order to survive.
b) Reliance on brand name: *"We have managed to build a strong brand over the years which customers are loyal to because of our performance over the years."* (Participant 3: Male, 41-50 years age group, 11 years' working experience, Top Manager).
c) Focus on quality: Some of the SME managers relied on the information they got from their salespersons and then focused on supplying quality products in order to remain competitive. *"As you might be aware, our country has been invaded by so many suppliers from the Far East, and some of them bring substandard products but we have managed to keep abreast because of the quality products that we maintain."* (Participant 8: Male, 50+ years' age group, 17 years' work experience, Top manager).
d) No specific product line: Some SME owner- managers adapted their operations according to current customer needs as exemplified in the following statement: *"We sell pumps, make boilers for small scale farmers, hot water boilers for chickens, different things come up at different times and different people want different things for different industries."* (Participant 9: Female, 50+ years' age group, 19 years' working experience, Top manager).

   These SMEs do not have a product strategy, they do not commit to a specific product line.

e) Negotiate price: Whilst some of the owner-managers remained competitive by under-pricing their products, others did not have a fixed price for their products. They negotiated with

customers. It was quite evident that a specific type of product could be sold to different customers at varying prices.

f) Cost containment and management: In managing costs, some of the SMEs did not stock products in warehouses. Instead, they would act like intermediaries, confirming orders with customers and then approaching suppliers with these orders. In the process, holding costs and insurance costs would be greatly reduced.

g) Transparency: Some SMEs relied on transparency in their daily activities. *"We emphasise on faithfulness to the company, being true to our products, no underhand dealings. In fact, that is one the things that has made us to stand to this day. We never wanted to deal with our customers or anyone outside the organisation in an unfaithful manner. In everything that we do is above board."* (Participant 8: Male, more than 50 years old, 17 years' working experience, Top manager).

Based on the opinions of the strategic leaders above, Table 4. 9 shows the core theme and sub-themes and themes that emerged from the data:

Table 4.9 Core theme and sub themes of Strategy Management

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub- themes	**Core theme**
Current strategies are working, achieving 60 to 70% of our goals I can say we are achieving our goals We have managed to stay afloat because of our strategies, other companies have closed. It is difficult to plan ahead Goals and objectives set have mostly been met	**Planned strategies**	**Strategy management**
We rely on our company brand name Flexibility regarding customised designs We rely on product quality We don't have a fixed price, we negotiate Transparency in our business We don't have a specific product line We don't stock some of the product, we are intermediaries, we reduce storage costs	**Unplanned strategies**	
Our employees are committed	**Committed employees**	
We do consider competitors' actions especially in terms of price, quality, and performance	**Competitors**	
Current strategies are not working due to the harsh economic environment The times are difficult now When planning, we take into account the environment	**Environment**	

4.5.9. Challenges faced by strategic leaders

One of the secondary objectives of the research was to investigate the challenges that strategic leaders faced in executing strategies. The main theme that emerged was *Organisational challenges* with the associated sub- theme of '*Major challenges'*. *Finance* was identified as a major challenge facing SMEs, and this was articulated by the majority of the strategic leaders:

"Financial resources are a major challenge due to the liquidity crunch. Debtors are paying us after a very long period of time." (Participant 2: Male, 41-50 years age group, 12 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Major challenge is lack of financial resources. Buyers now dominate the market and dictate the terms of payment, for example they pay after 3 or 6 months yet the company has to pay monthly wages and Pay As You Earn (PAYE)." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11 years' work experience, Top manager).

"Major challenge is inadequate financial resources. Banks need collateral or title deeds which we do not have. Without capital, you can not advertise." (Participant 5: Male, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Lack of finance is the major challenge, we do not have working capital." (Participant 6: Male, 36-40 years age group, 12 years' working experience, Top manager).

"The major challenge we face is financial constraints, there are many orders which cannot be financed. In terms of credit terms, the ideal one would be to grant customers a 30-day credit period but customers dictate to have 90-120 day credit period." (Participant 10: Female, 31-35 years age group, 7 years' working experience, Top manager).

"It is difficult to get funding from our banks, hence we are losing some of our customers." (Participant 12: Female, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' working experience, Top manager).

Table 4.9 below shows the major organisational challenges as posited by participants.

Table 4.10 Core theme and sub themes of Organisational Challenges

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub themes	**Core theme**
Our main challenge is finance. Lack of finance is the major challenge The major challenge we face is financial constraints. Financial resources are a major constraint There are also various small organisations coming up with cheap quality products, hence competition. Our biggest challenge is the dwindling customer base. Harsh operating environment Highly regulated industry Slow movement of product Customers not making payments on time. Redundant stocks since customers who used to buy are no longer there.	**Major challenges**	**Organisational challenges**

4.5.10. SME success

Participants were also asked to define success in their own words. Success can be described in various ways, I wanted to have an appreciation of whether the SMEs had been successful in the previous five years based on their own definitions of success. The rationale was also for them to identify the factors that were critical to the success of their SMEs. Some of the views of strategic leaders with regard to success were:

"Success is defined in terms of the company owning its premises, thereby cutting on rentals, and purchase modern machinery." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Success can be defined in terms of meeting the company's set targets and having the ability of paying workers on time. In other companies, workers can go for three months without being paid." (Participant 2: Male, 41-50 age group, 12 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Success is defined in terms of customer satisfaction and customer maintenance." (Participant 3: Male, 41-50 age group, 11 years' working experience, Top manager).

"If we manage to achieve what we will have planned in our business plan, then we are successful." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11 years' working experience, Top manager).

"To me success is managing to stay afloat especially in the current situation. We have managed to get our decent salaries, we have managed to pay up our rentals, we have managed to pay up our creditors well on time, and to me that is success. Our workers get their salaries on time." (Participant 8: Male, 50+ years' age group, 17 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Success can be defined as being in business for a very long time." (Participant 10: Female, 31-35 years age group, 7 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Success can be defined in the following way: The prime objective is to be profitable." (Participant 11: Male, 41-50 years age group, 13 years' working experience, Top manager).

4.5.11. SME Success factors

Participants were asked to outline success factors for SMEs, and the following factors were identified: Knowledge management, Technology, Entrepreneurial skills and pursuing a Growth orientation, (in the Southern African Development Community, (SADC). On the issue of knowledge management, some strategic leaders made the following remarks:

"Have the right people for the job." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' working experience, Top manager).

"The entrepreneur should also be competent in his area of operation." (Participant 3: Male, 41-50 years age group, 11 years' working experience, Top manager).

Success factors were coded as shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Core theme and sub themes on SME Success Factors

AXIAL CODING	SELECTIVE CODING	
	Sub-themes	**Core theme**
Acquisition of raw materials Own premises Meeting the company's set targets Customer satisfaction Being in business for a long time Managing to stay afloat Low labour turnover Acquisition of machinery Getting decent salaries Being able to pay decent salaries at the end of the month Pay creditors on time Business growth Profitability Regional expansion	**Own definition of success**	**Organisational success factors**
Skilled personnel The owner should possess entrepreneurial skills Modern technology is crucial Company's years of existence Expanding into the region Specialisation There is need to have proper planning in place Customer satisfaction Streamline operations Knowledge management If we get adequate funding for expanding then we can succeed. New products	**Success factors**	

4.5.12. Government support

Another key success factor was *Government support*. The responses that were provided by the strategic leaders indicated that government had a bigger role to play in capacitating the operations of SMEs, since it had the overall responsibility of making sure that an enabling, conducive business environment is created for SMEs. Government has the capacity to enact legislation that is favourable to business, especially regarding funding and the control of sub-standard imports. Below are some of the views of strategic leaders with regard to the role of government:

"Government should tighten screws on imports." (Participant 1: Male, 31-35 years age group, 4 years' working experience, Top manager).

"We imported our gear cutting machine from the USA and we didn't pay duty on it, we only paid VAT, that's where we got government's support since they said it was for manufacturing purposes." (Participant 12: Female, 31-35 years age group, 6 years' working experience, Top manager),

"Government should enact favourable policies for business to operate." (Participant 3: Male, 41-50 years age group, 11 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Government should help in different ways, for example contracts should be given to locals. Government should also create an enabling environment so that we can buy machinery to produce quality products and the policies should also be consistent and reduce interest rates." (Participant 4: Male, 36-40 years age group, 11 years' working experience, Top manager).

"Government should introduce a bill which seeks to reduce duty on raw material importation." (Participant 6: Male, 36-40 years age group, 12 years' working experience, Top manager).

Table 4.11 shows the coding process that was done in light of the role played by government. The core theme that emerged from the data was the '*Role of government'* while the sub category was '*Recommendations'*, that is, in terms of what government could actually to enhance SME operations.

Table 4.12 Core theme and sub themes on the Role of Government

AXIAL CODING	**SELECTIVE CODING**	
	Sub-themes	**Core Theme**
Create a conducive environment for business Control imports Award contracts to local SMEs Set up a bank for SMEs Make funds available to SMEs- through Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises Offer tax rebates on acquisition of machinery Reduce duty on manufacturing equipment Facilitate partnerships with foreign companies Ministry of Youth should empower local companies.	**Recommendations**	**Role of Government**

4.6. Summary of sub-themes and core themes that emerged from the qualitative data

Table 4.13 encapsulates the findings on the sub-themes and ten core themes which emerged from data using the principles of grounded theory.

Table 4.13 Research Findings: Core themes and Sub themes from Qualitative data

Sub themes	Core theme
Strategic planning	
Operational planning	**Strategic direction**
Environmental constraints in planning	
Teamwork	
Transparency	
Decision- making	**Organisational culture and ethics**
Trust and integrity	
Norms of behaviour	
Communication	
Flexibility	
Capital	Organisational resource portfolio
Human resources	
Internal controls	
Information management	**Strategic and control systems**
Financial and strategic controls	

Product development	
Employee innovation, skills	**Strategic leadership enablers**
Entrepreneurial skills	
Market share growth	
Business adaptation to the environment	
Formulate vision and mission	
Formulate company rules and regulations	
Provide leadership	**Strategic implementation**
Hire and organise employees	
Monitor strategies	
Source funds for the business	
Major challenges	**Organisational challenges**
Success factors	**Organisational success factors**
Recommendations	**Role of Government**
Competitors	
Environment	

Committed employees	
Strategies- planned	**Strategy management**
Strategies- unplanned:	
Brand name	
Flexibility- customisation/ made to order	
Product quality	
No specific product line	
Negotiated pricing	
Cost containment and management	
Transparency- no underhand dealings	

Source: Researcher's own compilation

4.7. Conclusion

Chapter 4 explored grounded theory in terms of its constituents, and the processes and procedures of coding data from open coding to selective coding. I explained in detail how I performed the qualitative data analysis based on the principles of grounded theory. Findings from the qualitative data were presented and analysed in terms of the existing literature on the major components of strategic leadership. Ten themes emerged from the data. The four core themes that emerged from the data regarding the major components of strategic leadership were *Strategic direction* (strategic and operational planning); *Establishing organisational competences*; *Establishing an effective organisational culture and ethical practices*; and *Strategic control systems*.

Regarding the secondary objectives of the study, the six major themes that emerged from the data were: *Strategic leadership enablers; Strategic implementation; Organisational challenges; Organisational success factors; Role of Government* (in creating a sound and conducive business environment) and *Strategy management* (which included the *Planned strategies,* and *Unplanned strategies*). Chapter 4 was central to the research in that the findings from qualitative data were used to compile a questionnaire in order to corroborate the findings from the quantitative phase of the research.

Chapter 5 discusses the quantitative data collection, analysis, and results. The questionnaire items sought to corroborate the main themes that emerged from the qualitative data which relate to the major components of strategic leadership namely: *Strategic direction* (strategic and operational planning); *Establishing organisational competences*; *Establishing an effective organisational culture and ethics* and *Strategic control systems*.

Results from Chapter 4 and 5 will be merged to formulate a strategic leadership framework for SMEs, which is the main aim of the present research.

CHAPTER 5 : QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the quantitative data. This empirical study was anchored on a sequential exploratory design hence quantitative results are presented in this chapter since Chapter 4 focused on qualitative findings. The objective of conducting quantitative data collection was to confirm, and if possible, expand on the findings from the qualitative phase of the study. The chapter is organised into three parts, firstly, demographic characteristics are presented (age, gender, educational background, work designation, work experience, the SME's predominant industry and years of experience). Secondly, reporting of the factor analyses are conducted on the different sections of the measuring instruments- strategic leadership practices, organisational culture, leadership enablers, leadership challenges, and organisational success factors. The last part of the chapter focuses on the testing of the hypotheses.

5.2. Results

5.2.1. Demographic characteristics of the sample

5.2.1.1. Biographical data

The demographic variables under consideration in the study were age, gender, education, work designation and work experience. Table 5.1 depicts the age distribution of the respondents.

Frequency distribution of the respondents' age (in years)

Table 5.1 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' age (years)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	25 – 30	3	1.7	1.7	1.7
	31 – 35	15	8.7	8.7	10.5
	36 – 40	61	35.3	35.5	45.9
	41 – 50	66	38.2	38.4	84.3
	50+	27	15.6	15.7	100.0
	Total	172	99.4	100.0	
Missing	99.00	1	.6		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

The results in Table 5.1 indicates that 82.6 % of the respondents were within the range of 31-50 years which is the middle age group.

5.2.1.2. Frequency distribution of the respondents' gender

The frequency distribution of the respondents' gender is highlighted in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	133	76.9	80.1	80.1
	Female	33	19.1	19.9	100.0
	Total	166	96.0	100.0	
Missing	99.00	7	4.0		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

In terms of gender, men constituted 80.1% of the SME owner- managers, which reflects that manufacturing and engineering SMEs are dominated by men.

5.2.1.3. Frequency distribution of the respondents' educational background

The other biographical data considered was the educational levels of the owner-managers; the results are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' Educational background

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undergraduate Diploma	82	47.4	48.5	48.5
	Bachelor's Degree	71	41.0	42.0	90.5
	Master's Degree	15	8.7	8.9	99.4
	Others	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	169	97.7	100.0	
Missing	99.00	4	2.3		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

Table 5.3 shows that 48.5% of the owner managers had an undergraduate diploma while those who had a bachelor's degree constituted 42%. Masters and PhD holders collectively constituted a mere 9.5% of the sample. Results in Table 5.3 also indicate that the SME sector is dominated by University graduates, as evidenced by 51.5% of the respondents, who possessed at least a degree.

5.2.1.4. Frequency distribution of the respondents' work designation

Respondent's work designation was also considered, as highlighted in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' Work designation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Owner-manager	127	73.4	74.3	74.3
	Co-owner	44	25.4	25.7	100.0
	Total	171	98.8	100.0	
Missing	99.00	2	1.2		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

The majority of the respondents (74.3%) were owner-managers of their respective SMEs which made them qualified to respond to the questionnaire since they were the supposed strategic leaders who had full control of the management and ownership, and ultimately were responsible for providing the organisation's strategic direction. This adds significant validity to the findings, in the sense that respondents were able to answer the majority of the questions in the survey with authority.

5.2.1.5. Frequency distribution of work experience

The last demographic variable to be considered was the work experience of the respondents which is depicted in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Frequency distribution of the Respondents' Work experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fewer than 5years	59	34.1	34.7	34.7
	5 – 10years	59	34.1	34.7	69.4
	More than 10 years	52	30.1	30.6	100.0
	Total	170	98.3	100.0	
Missing	99.00	3	1.7		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

Owner-managers who had worked for fewer than five years and up to ten years constituted 69.4% of the sample, which showed that their work experience was sufficient that they may have opinions on strategic leadership, since the outcomes of strategies can be quite evident within five years. The remainder of the respondents had worked for more than ten years.

Company profile was considered and the variables taken into account were the SME's predominant industry, years of existence, number of employees, company's annual turnover, ownership structure, and company location. Each of these variables is discussed below.

5.2.1.6. SMEs predominant industry

Table 5.6 shows the various industries in which the SMEs were predominantly operating.

Table 5.6 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Predominant industry

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Metal engineering	63	36.4	36.6	36.6
	Industrial supplies	40	23.1	23.3	59.9
	Light engineering	23	13.3	13.4	73.3
	Machinery and tools	20	11.6	11.6	84.9
	Carpentry	26	15.0	15.1	100.0
	Total	172	99.4	100.0	
Missing	99.00	1	.6		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

SMEs' predominant industries were spread across the five sectors namely metal engineering, industrial supplies, light engineering, machinery and tools and carpentry. There was no single sector in which the majority of the SMEs were concentrated. Of the SMEs, 36.6% were predominantly in metal engineering, 23.3% in industrial supplies, and 15.1% in carpentry, with the remaining in light engineering, and machinery and tools. The SMEs years of existence are shown in Table 5.7.

5.2.1.7. Frequency distribution of SMEs' years in existence

Table 5.7 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Years of existence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3 - 5 years	34	19.7	19.8	19.8
	6 - 9 years	56	32.4	32.6	52.3
	10 years and above	82	47.4	47.7	100.0
	Total	172	99.4	100.0	
Missing	99.00	1	.6		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

A total of 80.3% of the SMEs had been in existence for more than six years indicating that they were relevant in the assessment of the role of strategic leadership in SMEs. These SMEs managed to sustain themselves over a longer period of time. Interestingly, almost half (47.7%) of the SMEs had been in operation for more than ten years. The number of employees for the various SMEs are indicated in Table 5.8.

5.2.1.8. Frequency distribution of number of employees

Table 5.8 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Number of employees

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10-50	168	97.1	97.7	97.7
	51-100	4	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	172	99.4	100.0	
Missing	99.00	1	.6		
Total		**173**	**100.0**		

Small enterprises constituted 97.7% of the SMEs while the remainder were medium enterprises. These two categories of SMEs were relevant for the study based on the numbers which define small and medium enterprises, that is, between 10 and 100 employees. Furthermore, SMEs company turnover was assessed which is highlighted in Table 5.9.

5.2.1.9. Frequency Distribution of Company's Annual Turnover

Table 5.9 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' Annual turnover

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below US$300 000	148	85.5	85.5	85.5
	US$300 000 to less than US$500 000	17	9.8	9.8	95.4
	US$500 000 to less than US$700 000	4	2.3	2.3	97.7
	US$700 000 to less than US$900 000	3	1.7	1.7	99.4
	US$900 000 or more	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	**173**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

A total of 85.5% of the SMEs had recorded a turnover of below US$300 000 per annum while 9.8 % recorded an annual turnover ranging between US$300 000 and US$500 000.

5.2.1.10. Frequency distribution of ownership

The ownership structure of the SMEs was also analysed, results are shown in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' ownership structure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Locally owned	155	89.6	89.6	89.6
	Locally owned partnership	18	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	**173**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

All the SMEs were locally owned, indicating the fact that the manufacturing and engineering sector is dominated by locals without any foreign shareholding. The last variable under *Company profile* was the location of the SMEs which is discussed below.

5.2.1.11. Frequency distribution of company location

Table 5.11 Frequency distribution of the SMEs' location

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Harare Metropolitan	159	91.9	91.9	91.9
	Mashonaland West	1	.6	.6	92.5
	Midlands	2	1.2	1.2	93.6
	Mashonaland East	11	6.4	6.4	100.0
	Total	**173**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Harare Metropolitan Province had the highest number of registered SMEs, at 91.9%. Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, in fifth place, had two registered SMEs of which one closed at the end of 2015 and there was no response from the other SME owner- manager.

5.3. Results: Factor Analysis

This section reports on the factor analyses of the different sections of the measuring instruments as described in the previous sections: Strategic direction; Resource portfolio, Organisational culture, Ethical practices; Strategic control systems; Strategic implementation; Strategy management; Leadership challenges; Leadership enablers and Success factors. In line with theory and the qualitative findings reported in Chapter 4, the following combinations were made between the sections of the questionnaire:

- Strategic leadership practice: consisting of Strategic direction, Strategic control systems, Strategic implementation and Strategy management;
- Organisational culture consisting of Organisational culture elements and Leadership ethics;
- Leadership enablers consisting of Organisational enabling elements and Resources

- Leadership Challenges
- Organisational Success Factors

The measurements were first subjected to a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test of sample adequacy and sphericity for factor analyses. The KMO are expected to exceed the value of KMO ≥ 0.06 (Hair, Anderson, Babin, Tatham, & Black, 2006) in order for further factor analyses to be executed.

5.3.1. Factor Analyses: Strategic leadership practices

The KMO for the combined four sections of the Strategic Leadership Practices section of the questionnaire showed an acceptable value of 0,832 according to guidelines of Hair *et al*, (2010). An exploratory factor analyses using the principal components extraction method was done on the four categories of Strategic Leadership Practices, that is, Strategic direction (12 items), Systems and control (7 items), Strategic implementation (10 items) and Strategy management (9 items). The initial factor analyses showed that four factors could be extracted. A subsequent principal components analyses were done using varimax rotation to specify the four factors. The results showed four underlying factors that explained 51,596% of the total variance. Three items were deleted because of problematic loadings. The four factors were labelled as follows: *Strategic direction* (Factor 1), *Strategy management* (Factor 2), *Strategic implementation* (Factor 3) and *Systems and control* (Factor 4). The rotated component matrix is reported in Table 5.12 below. All items showed acceptable loadings of above 0.40 (Field, 2009).

Table 5.12 Rotated Component Matrix of Strategic Leadership Practices questionnaire

	Component			
	Strategic direction	**Strategy management**	**Strategic implementation**	**Systems and control**
SLP1	**0,838**	0,056	0,131	0,168
SLP2	**0,758**	-0,114	0,124	0,256
SLP3	**0,856**	0,175	0,073	0,096
SLP4	**0,699**	0,141	0,228	0,120
SLP5	**0,457**	0,297	-0,066	-0,214
SLP6	**0,579**	0,317	-0,160	-0,019
SLP7	**0,823**	0,244	0,061	-0,013
SLP8	**0,693**	0,013	0,122	0,144
SLP9	**0,865**	0,126	0,088	-0,090
SLP10	**0,809**	0,220	0,033	-0,210
SLP11	**0,573**	0,480	-0,119	-0,330
SLP12	-0,140	-0,106	0,322	**0,522**
SLP13	-0,059	0,136	0,039	**0,676**
SLP14	0,052	0,116	0,063	**0,713**
SLP15	0,210	0,168	0,024	**0,700**
SLP16	-0,016	0,174	0,171	**0,587**
SLP17	0,008	-0,084	0,263	**0,541**
SLP18	-0,144	0,007	**0,584**	-0,048
SLP19	0,207	0,004	**0,615**	0,330
SLP20	0,162	0,027	**0,609**	0,351
SLP21	0,143	0,211	**0,518**	0,424
SLP22	-0,030	0,145	**0,445**	0,142
SLP23	0,194	0,254	**0,450**	0,231
SLP24	0,201	0,162	**0,586**	0,174
SLP25	0,179	0,182	**0,623**	0,087
SLP26	-0,009	0,122	**0,639**	-0,054
SLP27	0,072	**0,533**	0,217	0,073
SLP28	0,146	**0,551**	0,419	0,115
SLP29	0,076	**0,562**	0,163	0,347
SLP30	0,506	**0,500**	0,125	-0,028
SLP31	0,436	**0,523**	0,229	-0,079

SLP32	0,412	**0,657**	0,129	0,022
SLP33	0,033	**0,600**	0,243	0,207
SLP34	0,107	**0,525**	0,051	0,178
SLP34	0,383	**0,550**	-0,167	-0,391

A subsequent second-order factor analysis was done on the four factors of the Strategic Leadership questionnaire. The *Strategic control systems* factor showed problematic loadings and was omitted from further analyses. A subsequent factor analysis was done specifying three factors. The results showed one underlying factor that explained 61,946% of the variance. The factor was labelled *Strategic Leadership practices.*

5.3.2. Descriptive Statistics of the Strategic leadership questionnaire

The descriptive statistics of the strategic leadership questionnaire are reported below:

Table 5.13 Descriptive Statistics of the Strategic Leadership Practice questionnaire

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Strategic direction	4,3400	0,89733	-0,764	0,105	0,920
Strategic implementation	5,0712	0,45509	-0,449	0,930	0,826
Strategy management	4,7640	0,58471	-0,055	-0,544	0,783

The results in Table 5.13 show acceptable to a high level of reliabilities according to the guideline of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ (Field, 2009). Furthermore, Bryman and Bell (2011) argued that the figure 0.8 is typically employed as a rule of thumb to denote an acceptable level of internal reliability, while other researchers put the acceptable ranges of alpha from 0.70 to 0.95(Bland & Altman, 1997; DeVellis, 2003; Nunnaly & Bernstein, 1994; Tavakol, 2011).The results in Table 5.13 further show that the participants, overall were in agreement that their companies had strategic direction, and that they could implement and manage strategies.

5.3.3. Item Statistics Analyses

5.3.3.1. Item statistics analyses for the Strategic direction factor

Table 5.14 Item Statistics Analyses of the Strategic Direction factor

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My company has a mission statement that indicates the current business we are in	4,0694	6	18	25	54	49	21
My first task in setting the strategic direction of my SME is to set the vision and mission of the organisation	4,4566	1	7	14	58	76	17
I communicate the mission statement of my SME to all employees	4.2254	2	22	13	58	54	24
I have a business strategy in place	4.5523	1	8	10	52	78	23
My organisation operates more on monthly plans	4.0651	2	27	16	58	45	21
My organisation has a yearly(annual plan)	4.1637	5	24	11	46	68	17
I communicate the vision of my organisation to all employees	4.4734	0	21	8	36	78	26
The setting of a vision is important to my organization	4.8187	0	4	4	45	84	34
One of the values contained in the vision is honesty	4.7151	0	10	13	29	84	36
One of the values contained in the vision is integrity	4.7024	0	11	14	34	64	45
I involve employees in setting the mission and vision	4.0714	9	38	4	28	59	30

A mean well above 4.00 for all the question items above indicated that the majority of strategic leaders in the various SMEs, were to a great extent, in agreement in terms of their responses on the various areas related to the establishment of strategic direction in SMEs. There was little variability how these strategic leaders responded to all the items related to strategic direction.

With regard to setting the vision and mission, the majority of the respondents affirmed that, in setting the direction of their SMEs, they first set the mission, which showed a high mean value of

4.4566. Communicating the mission to employees was another priority, as well as the vision statement, evidenced by a high mean score of 4.4734. The setting of a vision was viewed as very important by many of the strategic leaders, with a high mean value of 4.8187, compared to all the other variables under consideration (see Table 5.14.)

The present research also sought to establish whether strategic leaders had some kind of plan or business plan in place. The majority of the respondents confirmed that they had such plans in place, as indicated in the highest mean score of 4.5523. Strategic leaders were also asked whether they operated mostly on monthly plans or not, and the majority stated that they operated mostly on monthly plans, even though they had annual plans in place as confirmed by a mean score of 4.1637.

Strategic leaders were also asked whether honesty was one of the values contained in their vision statements and many of the respondents indicated that they did, hence, a relatively high mean value of 4.7151. In addition, integrity was also found to be a value contained in the vision statements, as shown by a high mean value of 4.7024. In setting the vision and mission statement, some of the strategic leaders involved their employees, shown in the moderate mean value of 4.0714.

5.3.3.2. Item descriptive statistics for the Strategy management factor

Strategic leaders were also asked their views with regard to the strategies they used in their organisation as part of the strategic management process. Table 5.15 highlights the diverse views of the strategic leaders regarding the strategy management factor.

Table 5.15 Item Descriptive Statistics for the Strategy Management factor

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My organisation achieves its objectives because we have clear plans of action set by me	4.8198	0	2	2	48	93	27
The plans of action I set are being fully implemented by employees	4.7849	0	2	2	61	73	34
I have employees who are committed in executing the organisation's plans of action	5.0175	0	1	4	22	108	36
I always communicate current plans of action to employees	4.7791	0	8	5	40	83	36
I adjust my organisation's plans of action to be in line with the competition in our market	4.8647	0	1	5	48	78	38
My current plans of action are effective in realising the organisation's objectives	4.7791	0	1	4	57	80	30
My organisation satisfies customer needs due to clearly defined plans of action	4.9942	0	1	3	31	98	39
My organisation competes effectively using current plans of action	4.9070	0	5	4	31	94	38
Changes in the operating environment have not impacted negatively my organisation's plans of action	3.8953	26	29	12	10	60	35

Table 5.15 indicates that the strategic leaders' current strategies were somehow effective, as confirmed by the majority of the items above which all had mean values above 4.7. The majority of the strategic leaders indicated that their SMEs were achieving their objectives as a result of the clear plans of action they set, as reflected by the high mean value of 4.8198, while a similar number of strategic leaders believed that the plans of action they set were fully implemented by employees (mean value of 4.7849).

Employees were found to be committed in executing the SMEs' plans of action in the view of the majority of strategic leaders as indicated by the exceptionally high mean value of 5.0175. In addition, strategic leaders communicated their current plans of action to employees within the organisation (mean of 4.7791). Competition was indicated to have an influence on SMEs'

strategies, as the strategic leaders had to adjust their plans of action to be in line with competition, as confirmed by the majority of the strategic leaders, with a high mean value of 4.8647. Many of the SMEs were achieving their objectives through the use of current plans of action, as indicated by the majority of the respondents.

Strategic leaders were also asked whether their current plans of action were effective in realising their SMEs' objectives, and a high mean value of 4.7791 showed that these leaders did confirm that their plans of action were effective. In addition, these SMEs were also able to withstand competitive pressures within the operating environment as a result of using current plans of action as evidenced by a high mean value of 4.9070. However, changes in the operating environment impacted negatively, but to a lesser extent, on the organisation's plans of action, as exhibited by a low mean value of 3.8953.

5.3.3.3. Item descriptive statistics for Strategic implementation factor

The role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategies was also investigated by the researcher and Table 5.16 summarises the results of the survey.

Table 5.16 Item Descriptive Statistics for the Strategic Implementation factor

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I influence the implementation of strategies in my organisation	4.9538	0	1	5	26	110	31
I balance operational and strategic issues of the organisation, hence deliver strategic action	5.0058	1	0	1	38	87	45
I implement plans of action which enhances the long -term survival of my SME	5.0809	1	1	0	22	106	43
I provide strategic information to employees which contributes to successful implementation of strategies	5.0636	1	1	0	30	93	48
My ability to put strategies into action contributes to my organisation's superior performance	5.0636	0	1	1	29	97	45

My ability to communicate plans and actions enables the implementation of strategies	5.0462	0	0	2	33	93	45
I actively implement strategies by ensuring resource availability	5.1337	0	0	1	21	104	46
I monitor strategy achievement in my SME	5.1570	0	1	1	12	114	44
I take action in directing strategy implementation when undertaking projects	5.1792	0	0	3	18	97	55

The high mean values, all above 5.00, for all the question items in Table 5.16 indicated that the strategic leaders were responsible for guiding the implementation of strategies in their SMEs. They made use of effective communication, and also made available the requisite human and financial resources that were critical in the strategy implementation process.

A high mean value of 4.9538 showed that strategic leaders were of the opinion that they influenced the implementation of strategies in their SMEs. In a bid to deliver strategic action, the majority of the strategic leaders balanced operational and strategic issues, whilst a significant number of the respondents confirmed that they implemented plans of action that enhanced the long- term survival of their SMEs (a mean value of 5.0809).

Furthermore, many of the strategic leaders indicated that they provided strategic information to employees that contributed to the successful implementation of strategies in their SMEs as shown by an exceptionally high mean value of 5.0636. In addition, a similar number of the strategic leaders were of the view that their ability to put strategies into action contributed to their organisations' superior performance (a mean value of 5.0636).

An exceptionally high mean value of 5.1337 indicated that in the implementation of strategies, almost all the strategic leaders made sure that resources were available for the implementation process. Furthermore, 98.2% of the strategic leaders made sure that they monitored the success

of their strategies. Lastly, many of the strategic leaders took action in directing the strategic implementation process when undertaking projects (a mean value of 5.1570).

5.3.4. Factor Analysis: Organisational culture

The next section reports on the results of the factor analyses of the combined Organisational Culture Elements section (7 items) and Ethics section (11 items) of the questionnaire. Combined, the sections obtained an acceptable KMO of 0,800 (see Hair et al., 2010). An exploratory factor analyses using the principal components extraction method showed that two factors could be distinguished. A subsequent principal components analyses were done using varimax rotation to specify the two factors. The results showed four underlying factors that explained 49, 77% of the total variance. Four items were deleted because of problematic loadings. The two factors were labelled as follows: *Ethics* (Factor 1) and *Organisational Culture* (Factor 2). The rotated component matrix for the two factors are displayed in Table 5.17, below. All items showed acceptable loadings of above 0.40 (Field, 2009).

Table 5.17 Rotated Component Matrix Organisational Culture section of the questionnaire

	Component	
	Ethics	Culture
OCQ2	.220	**.679**
OCQ3	.092	**.798**
OCQ4	.042	**.850**
OCQ5	.099	**.806**
OCQ6	**.648**	.191
OCQ7	**.615**	.239
OCQ8	**.616**	.135

OCQ9	**.600**	.307
OCQ10	**.621**	.018
OCQ11	**.644**	.079
OCQ12	**.636**	.038
OCQ13	**.690**	-.043

A subsequent second-order factor analysis was performed on the two factors using principal components analyses. The results showed one underlying factor that explained 70,531% of the variance. The factor was labelled *Organisational Culture.*

5.3.4.1. Descriptive statistics of the Organisational culture section of the questionnaire

The descriptive statistics and reliabilities of the two factors are reported in Table 5.18 below.

Table 5.18 Descriptive Statistics and Reliabilities of the Organisational Culture section

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Culture	4,8270	0,70883	-0,250	-0,659	0.803
Ethics	5,0973	0,46618	-0,321	0,041	0,798

The results in Table 5.18 show acceptable to a high level of reliabilities according to the guideline of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ (Field, 2009). The respondents in general agreed that they had sound ethical and cultural practices, given the range of means: from 4.8270 to 5.0973.

5.3.4.2. Item descriptive statistics for the Organisational Culture factor

The item descriptive statistics for the two factors of *Organisational culture* are presented. Organisational culture was found to be one of the five components of strategic leadership and this study sought to investigate the existence of such a culture in the SMEs.

Table 5.19 Item Descriptive Statistics for Organisational Culture

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Changing situations in the environment means that we have to change our cultural practices (the way we do business)	4.9017	0	0	2	57	70	44
I always communicate new cultural practices (new ways to do business) to employees when the need arises	4.7861	0	5	5	51	73	39
I reward employees who are involved in strengthening the new cultural practices	4.6647	0	10	13	42	68	40
I am honest with all stakeholders including employees in developing an organisational culture that supports success	5.2081	1	1	1	14	97	59

There was general consensus in the responses given by strategic leaders on all the items on the organisational culture section as highlighted in Table 5.19. The mean value for each item ranged between 4.6647 and 5.2081, which is considered exceptionally high. It became imperative to consider each of the items in the Organisational Culture section. Changing situations in the environment had some influence in the cultural practices of SMEs, and they had to change the way they did business, as confirmed by some of the strategic leaders, with a significantly high mean value of 4.9017. When the need arose, these strategic leaders communicated new cultural practices to employees, so that they could be aware of such practices. Employees who were involved in strengthening the new cultural practices were rewarded, confirmed by a moderately high mean value of 4.6647.

There was great concurrence on the part of strategic leaders on items such as honesty and interpersonal relations, which scored exceptionally high mean values exceeding 5.00. In fact, almost all the strategic leaders indicated that they were honest with all their stakeholders, including employees, in developing organisational cultures that support success, recording a very high mean value of 5.2081.

5.3.4.3. Item descriptive statistics for the Ethical Practices factor

The existence of ethical practices was also investigated in the study in order to confirm whether such practices were evident in SMEs. The results are tabulated below.

Table 5.20 Item Descriptive Statistics for Ethical Practices

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Employees have faith in me	4.9827	0	1	1	36	97	38
I give personal attention to employees	5.0765	0	0	2	22	107	39
I always exercise my integrity in decision-making, in order to inspire employees	5.1221	0	0	3	16	110	43
As an ethical strategic leader, I take accountability for ensuring that we always do the right thing	5.1098	0	0	2	31	86	54
I always communicate the ethical standards of my organisation to employees	4.9244	0	2	5	41	80	44
I always communicate the ethical standards of my organisation to customers and other stakeholders	4.9123	0	1	5	42	83	40
I treat all employees with respect in my organisation	5.2254	0	3	2	11	94	63
We deliver what we promise to our customers	5.2197	0	3	5	13	82	70

Results in Table 5.20 reveal the existence of strong ethical practices in SMEs, as evidenced by high mean values, ranging between 4.9123 and 5.2254. Almost all the strategic leaders confirmed that their employees had faith in them. The strategic leaders were also seen to afford employees personal attention, which was verified by the majority of the leaders, as evidenced by a high mean value of 5.0765.

Another variable where strategic leaders exhibited a high degree of convergence of responses was with regard to the exercising of integrity in the decision-making process which was affirmed by almost all the strategic leaders, evidenced by the high mean value of 5.1221. Ethical strategic leaders have been seen to be accountable for their actions by ensuring that they always do the right thing in their SMEs, as confirmed by a high mean score of 5.1098.

Ethical standards have been found to be communicated to employees within the various SMEs as reflected in the high mean value of 4.9244, and the majority of the strategic leaders were also seen to communicate their organisations' ethical standards to their customers and other stakeholders as evidenced by a mean score of 4.9123.

A significant number of strategic leaders were of the view that they treated all their employees in their organisation with respect and this variable recorded the highest mean value of 5.2254. Lastly, there was general consensus among the strategic leaders regarding delivering what they promised to their customers. This variable recorded one of the highest mean scores of 5.2197.

5.3.5. Factor Analyses: Leadership Enablers

This section reports on the factor analyses for the combined sections Resources (8 items) and Enablers (8 items). The measure obtained an acceptable KMO value of 0.812, which confirmed the combined sections' suitability for factor analyses (Hair et al., 2010). An exploratory factor analysis using the principal components extraction method showed that two factors could be distinguished. A subsequent factor analyses using varimax rotation were used to specify the two factors. The two factors explained 51,418% of the variance for these sections. Two items were deleted because of problematic loadings. Factor 1 was labelled *Enablers* and Factor 2, *Resources.* The rotated component matrix for the measurement is reported in Table 5.21 below. All items showed acceptable loadings of above 0.40 (Field, 2009).

Table 5.21 Rotated Component Matrix of Strategic Leadership Enablers section of the questionnaire

	Component	
	Enablers	Resources
SLE1	.029	.690
SLE2	.189	.658
SLE3	-.048	.847
SLE4	.133	.792
SLE5	.110	.708
SLE6	.028	.644
SLE7	.325	.512
SLE8	.597	.046
SLE9	.727	.181
SLE10	.764	.144
SLE10	.676	.067
SLE11	.724	.109
SLE12	.738	.090
SLE13	.719	.009

A subsequent second-order factor analysis was performed on the two factors. The results showed one underlying factor that explained 63.916% of the variance. The factor was labelled *Strategic Leadership Enablers.*

5.3.6. Descriptive statistics of Strategic Leadership Enablers section of the questionnaire

The descriptive statistics of the Leadership Enablers section are reported below.

Table 5.22 Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Leadership section of the questionnaire

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Resources	4,2892	0,82593	-0,766	1,315	0,818
Enablers	4,9544	0,56617	0,195	-0,507	0,833

Organisational Resources and Enablers of Strategic Leadership both had acceptable Cronbach alphas, above the cut-off level of 0.7, as previously identified. Results in Table 5.22 also show that, generally, there was agreement among strategic leaders that enablers of strategic leadership and organisational resources are critical in SMEs, evident in the high mean values.

5.3.7. Item descriptive statistics

The item descriptive statistics for the *Enablers* and *Resource* factors are reported below.

5.3.7.1. Item descriptive statistics for Strategic Leadership Enablers

Strategic leadership enablers were also examined in the study and the mean values as well as the responses are shown in Table 5.23.

Table 5.23 Item Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Leadership Enablers

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I always initiate new products in my organisation in order to remain in business	4.4535	0	9	10	70	60	23
I encourage innovation which is key to my organisation in providing customers with value	4.7093	1	2	8	61	64	35
In order to be competitive, my organisation focuses on growing its market share	4.9012	0	1	3	50	77	40
I value the knowledge and skills base of employees	5.2235	0	0	0	14	105	50
I encourage employees to come up with new ways of performing their duties	5.1337	0	0	2	23	98	48
The way we do things in my organisation needs to be adapted if we are to prosper	5.0640	0	0	2	35	86	48
I view employees as key to innovation	5.1824	0	0	2	32	70	65

Results in Table 5.23 shows that *Employee skills base and knowledge, Employee initiative*, *Adapting to the environment,* and *Stakeholder interactions* were the most critical enablers of strategic leadership, as all the variables recorded mean scores above 5.00. In order to remain in business, some of the strategic leaders were of the view that they had to initiate new products (product development), while the majority concluded that they always encouraged innovation, evidenced by a high mean value of 4.7093. Market share growth was found to be an enabler of strategic leadership, since the majority of the strategic leaders alluded indicated that they focused on market growth in order for their SMEs to be competitive (a mean value of 4.9012). The knowledge and skills base of employees was valued by almost all the strategic leaders, which was evidenced by an exceptionally high mean value of 5.2235.

Furthermore, strategic leaders have been found to encourage their employees to be initiative in coming up with new ways of performing their duties and employees were viewed as the key to innovation as shown by the second highest mean value in the items under consideration (mean value of 5.1824).

5.3.7.2. Item descriptive statistics for Resource Portfolio

This study also sought to solicit responses from strategic leaders as regards the management of the firm's resource portfolio and the results are presented in Table 5.24.

Table 5.24 Item Descriptive Statistics for Firm's Resource portfolio

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My organisation is financially in a good position if compared to competitors	3.6705	21	27	13	52	47	13
My organisation possesses most up to date machinery	3.3353	24	41	22	39	33	14
My employees are well trained and can be a source of competitive advantage	4.4162	7	7	12	47	86	15
Employees receive training in order to improve their performance	4.5087	4	3	14	56	72	24
I create opportunities for every employee to succeed	4.8012	2	2	3	38	102	24
Good internal relations exist in my organisation	5.0119	1	2	5	31	76	53
My SME works with other SMEs in order to come up with new products	4.1105	9	21	13	44	69	16

Slightly more than half of the owner- managers indicated that their SMEs were not in a healthy financial position, compared to their competitors, which is reflected by a low mean value of 3.6705. In addition, less than half of the strategic leaders were of the view that their SMEs did not possess up-to-date machinery, this item recorded the lowest mean value of 3.3353.

Training of employees was valued as a source of competitive advantage by the strategic leaders, as shown by a moderate mean value of 4.4162. Employees received training in order to improve their performance, confirmed by the majority of the strategic leaders. The strategic leaders also created opportunities for employees to succeed, as evidenced by a significant high mean value of 4.8012. Internal relations were critical in organisations, and the majority of the strategic leaders confirmed the existence of such relations, thus scoring a very high mean value of 5.0119.

5.3.8. Factor Analyses: Strategic Leadership Challenges

This section reports the results related to Strategic Leadership Challenges. The Strategic Leadership section of the questionnaire obtained an acceptable KMO value of 0.798(Hair et al., 2010). A principal components analysis was done on the six factors of Strategic Leadership section of the questionnaire. The results showed that one factor could be extracted which explained 58.131% of the variance. All items showed acceptable loadings. The component matrix is shown in Table 5.25.

Table 5.25 Component Matrix

	Component 1
SLC1	0,633
SLC2	0,577
SLC3	0,670
SLC4	0,899
SLC5	0,888
SLC6	0,843

5.3.8.1. Descriptive statistics of the strategic leadership challenges section of the questionnaire

The descriptive statistics and reliability are reported below.

Table 5.26 Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Leadership Challenges

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Leadership Challenges	4,4267	1,18797	-0,577	-0,719	0,855

Table 5.26 highlights that the majority of strategic leaders faced challenges at strategic level, evidenced by a high mean value of 4.4267.

5.3.8.2. Item descriptive statistics for Strategic Leadership Challenges section of the questionnaire

The item descriptive statistics section: Strategic Leadership Challenges are reported below, in Table 5.27. One of the objectives of this study was to explore the challenges faced by strategic leaders in executing their duties, the results are provided below.

Table 5.27 Item Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Leadership Challenges

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bad debt, due to customers not paying accounts is a problem in the business	5.0234	0	11	5	20	68	67
Late payments by customers is one of the major challenges	5.0465	0	9	7	22	63	71
The slow movement of stock is a big challenge to my organisation	4.8225	4	14	8	24	51	68
A highly regulated industry is my major problem	4.1111	22	27	11	14	44	53
Negative employee attitudes are seriously affecting our business	3.8480	22	37	10	25	30	47
Lack of skilled employees in the market, to do their job well is a challenge for my business	3.7791	27	34	14	18	33	46

There was great variability in terms of how strategic leaders responded to the six identified challenges, with mean values ranging between 3.7791 and 5.0465. Bad debts and late payments by customers were the major challenges faced by the strategic leaders, these two variables had the highest mean values above 5.00. Late payments by customers was the most significant challenge faced by the majority of strategic leaders as reflected in an exceptionally high mean value of 5.0465 followed by bad debts with a significant mean value of 5.0234.

Other challenges included slow movement of stock (with a mean value of 4.8225), and a highly regulated industry, which showed a moderate mean value of 4.1111. The lack of skilled

employees in the market did not necessarily seem to be a major challenge, since it had the lowest mean score of 3.7791.

5.3.9. Factor analyses for Organisational Success Factors

This section reports the results of organisational success factors. The Organisational Success Factors section of the questionnaire (11 items) obtained an acceptable KMO value of 0.797(Hair et al., 2010). A principal components analysis was done on the 11 items of the Organisational Success Factor section of the questionnaire. The results showed that one factor could be extracted which explained 40.074% of the variance. Two items were deleted because of problematic loadings. The component matrix is reported in Table 5.28 below. All items showed acceptable loadings above 0.40 (Field, 2009).

Table 5.28 Component Matrix for Organisational Success factors

	Organisational Success Factors
SUCCESS1	0,749
SUCCESS2	0,568
SUCCESS3	0,785
SUCCESS4	0,561
SUCCESS5	0,527
SUCCESS7	0,480
SUCCESS9	0,510
SUCCESS10	0,686
SUCCESS11	0,744

5.3.9.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Organisational Success factor section of the questionnaire

Table 5.29 Descriptive Statistics of Organisational Success factors

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Success	4,9875	0,65166	-0,446	-0,828	0,795

Table 5.29 highlights that, overall, there was agreement among the strategic leaders on the items that constituted success factors for their SMEs, as evidenced by a high mean value of 4.9875.

5.3.9.2. Item descriptive statistics of the Organisational Success factor section

SME success factors were investigated in order to make recommendations in the final analysis to all critical stakeholders, who included among others, SME owner-managers, financiers, and policy makers. Table 5. 30 depicts the identified SME success factors.

Table 5.30 Item Descriptive Statistics of Organisational Success factors

	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I define success as the ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for me and my employees	4.4335	5	27	9	30	51	51
I define success as being in business for a long time	4.6647	0	16	6	38	69	41
My age contributes to the success of my SME	4.4884	4	19	17	23	67	42
SMEs that have been in operation for a longer time (3+ years) are likely to succeed	4.6821	4	15	8	25	74	47
Coming up with new products in mandatory in order to succeed in SMEs	4.8266	2	3	6	47	69	46
SMEs utilising the latest technologies fare much better than those using old machinery	5.1098	1	2	3	24	84	59
Government should set up a bank for SMEs	5.5780	0	0	2	10	47	114
A well-detailed business plan guides SME operations in the final analysis contributing to the SME's success	5.4162	0	0	0	24	53	96
Competitors influence my actions so that I succeed in meeting my objectives	5.3410	0	0	2	22	64	85

Table 5.30 shows that there was considerable convergence in viewpoints among the strategic leaders on a number of items, since the mean scores were very high, ranging between 4.4 and 5.5. I sought the opinions of strategic leaders on how they defined success, and a considerable number defined success as the ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for both themselves and their employees, as evidenced by a moderate mean score of 4.4335. A significant number of the strategic leaders defined success as being in business for a very long time, recording a high mean value of 4.6647. Strategic leaders were also asked whether their age contributed to the success of their SMEs, and a large number indicated that their age indeed contributes to the success of their organisations (with a mean value of 4.4884).

Furthermore, more than half of the respondents were of the opinion that SMEs that have been in business for a period of three years or longer were likely to succeed as reflected in the mean value of 4.6821. Technology, well-detailed business plan, reduction of duty on raw materials, establishing an SME bank were identified as critical to the success of SMEs; these items had mean scores well above 5.1.

In order for SMEs to succeed, coming up with new products was mandatory, as confirmed by a high mean value of 4.8266. With regard to technology, SMEs utilising the latest technologies fared much better than those using old machinery, as validated by the majority of the strategic leaders which reflected in a very high mean value of 5.1098.

The recommendation that the GoZ should set up a bank specifically for the needs of the SMEs was opined by almost all the strategic leaders, yielding the highest mean value of 5.5780. A well-detailed business plan was also found to contribute significantly to the success of SMEs, as indicated by the majority of the respondents, with the second highest mean value of 5.4162.

5.4. Testing of Hypothesis

This section reports on the testing of the hypothesis. For the purposes of this research, the following hypothesised model was developed, (see Figure 5.1).

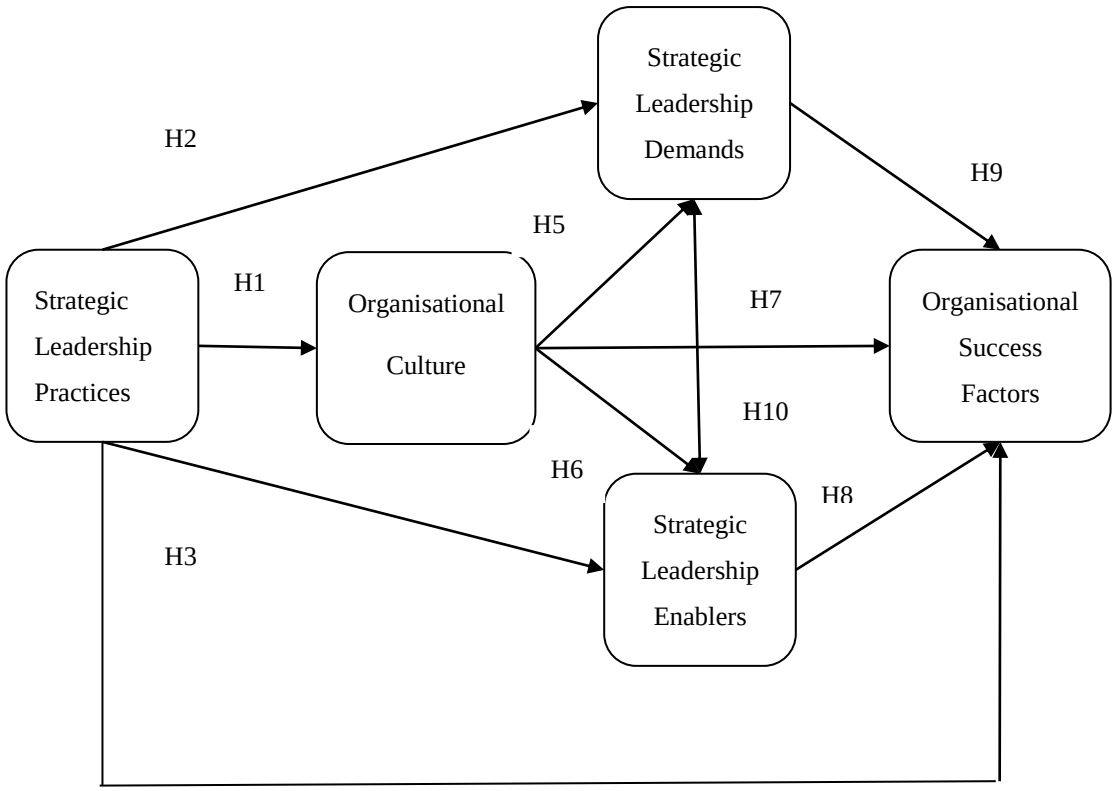


Figure 5.1 Hypothesised Model

Source: Researcher's own construction

H 1: Strategic leadership practices would be positively related to Organisational Culture

H 2: Strategic leadership practices would be negatively related to Strategic Leadership Demands

H 3: Strategic leadership practices would be positively related to Strategic Leadership Enablers

H 4: Strategic leadership practices would be positively related to Oganisational Success Factors

H 5: Organisational Culture would be negatively related to Strategic Leadership Demands

H 6: Organisational culture would be positively related to Strategic Leadership Enablers

H 7: Organisational culture would be positively related to Oganisational Success Factors

H 8: Strategic Leadership Enablers would be positively related to Oganisational Success Factors

H 9: Strategic Leadership Demands would be negatively related to organisational success factors

H 10: Strategic Leadership Enablers would be negatively related to strategic organisational demands

First a Pearson correlation was done to determine the relationships between the specified variables in Figure 5.1 above. Second Pearson correlations were done between the second order factors, to determine the relationships between the variables.

Correlation analysis was performed to establish the relationships among different variables; Table 5.31, below shows the different types of relationships. The results are reported below.

Table 5.31 Correlation Analysis

	Strategic direction	Resource	Culture	Ethics	Financials	Strategic implementation	Strategy management	Challenges	Enablers	Success
Strategic direction	1									
Resource	.378**	1								
Culture	**.647****	.382**	1							
Ethics	.447**	.371**	**.675****	1						
Financials	-.015	.166*	.360**	.488**	1					
Strategic implementation	.242**	.201*	**.534****	**.608****	**.544****	1				
Strategy management	**.626****	.361**	**.586****	.407**	.094	.438**	1			
Challenges	**.552****	.190*	.356**	.127	-.260**	.002	**.542****	1		
Enablers	.319**	.248**	.416**	.423**	.250**	.278**	.422**	.378**	1	
Success	**.550****	.283**	.429**	.200*	-.194*	.162*	**.538****	**.800****	.470**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

- *Strategic direction* is practically significantly positively related to *Strategy management, Culture* and *Success* (all large effects); *Resources* and *Enablers* (both medium effects), and *Strategic implementation* and *Ethics. Strategic direction* is practically significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges* with a large effect.
- *Strategic implementation* are practically significantly positively related to *Strategy management* and *Culture* (medium effects) and *Ethics* (large effect). *Strategic implementation* is significantly positively related to *Strategic leadership enablers* and *Success factors.*
- *Strategy management* is practically significantly positively related to *Culture* and *Success* (both large effects), *Resources* and *Strategic leadership enablers* (both medium effects) and significantly positively related to *Ethics. Strategy management* is practically significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges* (large effect).
- *Organisational culture* is practically significantly positively related to *Ethics*, *Resources*, *Strategic leadership enablers* (All medium effects) and *Success factors* (large effect). *Organisational culture* is practically significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges* (large effect).
- *Ethical practices* is practically significantly positively related to *Enablers* (medium effect) and *Resources.*
- *Strategic leadership resources* are significantly positively related to *Strategic leadership enablers* and *Success factors* and significantly negatively related to *Success factors.*
- *Strategic leadership enablers* are practically significantly positively related to *Strategic leadership challenges* (medium effect) and practically significantly negatively related to *Success factors* (large effect).
- *Strategic leadership challenges* is practically significantly negatively related to critical *Success factors* (large effect).

The results of the Pearson correlations of the second-order factor analyses are reported below.

Table 5.32 Pearson Correlations of the Second Order Factor analyses

	Strategic leadership practices	Organisational culture	Strategic leadership enablers	Strategic leadership challenges	Organisational success factors
Strategic leadership practices	1				
	144				
Organisational culture	.753**	1			
	0,000				
	142	167			
Strategic leadership enablers	.509**	.519**	1		
	0,000	0,000			
	139	156	161		
Strategic leadership challenges	-.484**	-.343**	-.328**	1	
	0,000	0,000	0,000		
	139	160	156	166	
Organisational success factors	.580**	.467**	.413**	-.740**	1
	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	
	140	163	157	162	169

* Statistically significant: $p < 0, 01$
+ Practically significant correlation (medium effect): $r > 0, 30$
++ Practically significant correlation (large effect): $r > 0, 50$

The results in Table 5.32 show the following:

- *Strategic leadership practices* are practically significantly positively related to *Organisational culture*, *Strategic leadership enablers*, and *Organisational success factors* (all large effects) and significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges* (medium effect).
- *Organisational culture* is practically significantly positively related to *Strategic leadership enablers* (large effect) and *Organisational success factors* (medium effect) and significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges* (medium effect).

- *Strategic leadership enablers* are significantly positively related to *Organisational success factors* (medium effect) and practically significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges.*
- *Strategic leadership challenges* are practically significantly negative related to *Organisational success factors* (large effect).

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter explored the demographic characteristics of the respondents, who were qualified to give responses to the questionnaire, based on their work designations since the majority of them were SME owner managers who were very experienced in running their firms. It was also acknowledged that manufacturing and engineering SMEs are dominated by men. Factor analyses were also performed on strategic leadership practices, organisational culture, leadership enablers, leadership challenges, and organisational success factors.

Results from the hypothesised model show that strategic leadership practices advanced the organisational culture, which in turn, creates an enabling and resourceful environment for leaders to ensure that the organisation achieve its success. The availability of strategic leadership practices, organisational culture and strategic leadership enablers, can significantly reduce the strategic leadership demands.

Furthermore, results from the quantitative study positively contributed to the qualitative findings. These have enhanced their usefulness in the development of the strategic leadership framework for the success of SMEs in Zimbabwe. In Chapter 6, both qualitative and quantitative findings are discussed, taking cognisance of the research objectives and research questions of the study.

CHAPTER 6 : DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings from the qualitative phase, reported in Chapter 4 and the quantitative results, reported in Chapter 5 since the study was based on a sequential exploratory design. Chapter 5 highlighted that the questionnaire that was administered to respondents was based on the emergent themes from the qualitative findings as well as major themes from literature. Discussion of the findings and results is aimed at answering the main research question of the study: "What are the critical components/constructs in a strategic leadership framework that, if implemented, will lead to the successful implementation of strategies in manufacturing and engineering SMEs?"

6.2. Overview of research findings and results

The findings of the qualitative study and results from the quantitative study related to five main areas that strategic leaders in an SME should apply namely:

- Establishing strategic direction (setting the vision);
- Effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio;
- Sustaining an effective organisational culture;
- Emphasising ethical practices; and
- Establishing balanced organisational controls.

Table 6.1 highlights the five main areas that strategic leaders in an SME should consider as well as the ten core themes that emerged from the data.

Table 6.1 Main areas that should be applied by SME Strategic leaders; core themes from findings

Five main areas that should be applied by strategic leaders	Ten themes- from findings
Establishing strategic direction (setting the vision, mission)	Strategic direction
	Organisational resource portfolio
Effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio	Organisational culture and ethics
	Strategic and control systems
Sustaining an effective organisational culture	Strategic implementation
	Strategic leadership enablers
Emphasising ethical practices	Strategy management
	Organisational challenges
Establishing balanced organisational controls	Organisational success factors
	Role of government

Each of the ten themes will be further illustrated by quotes, and discussed, and related to theory.

6.2.1. Theme 1: Strategic direction: vision, mission, strategic planning.

Findings in Chapter 4 indicated that only five of the 12 participants confirmed that there they would not run their businesses without vision, mission statements, and strategic plans in place. Some of the mission and values of the organisations were written down and available within the organisation. There was great concurrence amongst all the SME strategic leaders in this regard.

On the contrary, from the quantitative results, 71.6% of the respondents confirmed that their SMEs had mission and vision statements in place and 94.3% of the respondents considered the setting of a vision statement to be very important. This finding confirmed the assertion of Alavi

and Karami (2009) in which they argued that the first responsibility of strategic leaders is to formulate the organisation's vision and mission. Literature further confirms that strategic leaders set the vision for the organisation, make strategic decisions, and provide direction to the organisation (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000; Frantz et al., 2017; Hart & Quinn, 1993; House & Aditya, 1997).

Four of the strategic leaders found it difficult to set strategic plans due to the prevailing harsh economic environment especially from 2008, when the Zimbabwean economy plummeted to its current state. The findings also indicate that strategic planning was a daunting task since the strategic leaders could be overtaken by events while they are still in the process of planning, thus, rendering planning useless.

Results from the quantitative phase showed that 28.4% of the respondents did not have vision, or mission statements or a strategy in place. This finding is iterated in literature. Frantz, *et al.*, (2017) asserted that research has shown that very few SMEs adopt vision- and mission statements as strongly as their larger organisational counterparts. This was an interesting finding; despite these SMEs not having had a strategy since 2008, they have managed to stay afloat, and are still operational today (2018). From the results, it was quite clear that the operating environment has posed great challenges to these SMEs, but despite such adversity, the strategic leaders in these SMEs have been resilient. SMEs had stayed operational for more than 9 years.

In setting the vision and mission, the strategic leaders also sought the input of subordinates and communicated to them, and communicated the vision and mission to their employees. Employees were therefore aware of the expectations of them in terms of job responsibilities and task performance. In this regard, a number of strategic leaders interviewed confirmed the involvement of all employees in the planning process and in some instances strategising.

Quantitative results confirmed the qualitative findings in respect of communicating the vision and mission. A total of 78.6% of the strategic leaders confirmed that they communicated the

mission statement to employees and 81.2% of the strategic leaders communicated vision statements to their employees. Furthermore, 67.6% of the respondents indicated that their employees were involved in formulating the vision statements.

Communication of the vision and mission of the organisation has been found to be critical in enhancing commitment towards organisational goals (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000; Brubaker 2005, Kantabutra & Avery, 2010). The involvement of employees in the planning process brings about commitment to goal attainment on the part of employees as they take ownership of the areas for which they are responsible. It is therefore critical to secure some form of 'buy-in' from employees. This finding also confirms the assertions by Alavi and Karami (2009) as well as Hamel and Prahalad (1989) that when employees are involved in planning which includes setting the direction of the company, they will exert additional personal efforts, and become committed to the organisation.

Another important issue that emerged from the data was that of operational planning. Although the majority of the strategic leaders confirmed that they had strategic plans in place, they relied more on short- term plans, in most instances monthly. Quantitative results confirmed this finding; since 88.5% of the strategic leaders indicated that they had some form of business plan or operational plan in place, while 71.6% indicated that their SMEs operated according to monthly plans.

6.2.2. Theme 2: Effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio

The second theme to emerge from the data was the competency of effectively managing organisational resources. Some of the participants indicated that they possessed machinery and equipment that was better than those of competitors. The possession of capital has been found to be important to the organisation. Capital can be exploited in a variety of ways, but its main function, as identified by participants was to purchase machinery and equipment. The majority of the strategic leaders were of the view that capital was the backbone of their firms, especially in this era of new and advanced technologies.

Human, financial, and social resources are critical to the success of the organisation as postulated by Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2009) and Lampadarios (2017). The finding on human capital was also in line with the general human capital theory. Oxford Economics (2017) concurred with Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson that, for SMEs to be competitive in the market, they need to attract talent, especially employees with the requisite skills. However, there was some variation in the responses given by the strategic leaders in the quantitative phase, which contradicted the qualitative findings. A total of 64.8% of the respondents indicated that their SMEs were not in a good financial position, compared to competitors; and 49.7% of the strategic leaders indicated that they did not possess up- to- date machinery. Internal relations were valued by 92.4% of the strategic leaders and employees were trained, which gave them some competitive advantage, as indicated by 85.6% of the strategic leaders.

6.2.3. Theme 3: Organisational culture and ethical practices

A number of themes emerged from the qualitative findings related to the organisation's culture and norms of behaviour. One of the themes was honesty. The strategic leaders practised what they said and set an example for their employees. As they pointed out, no one was above the laws, rules, and regulations of the company. The above findings were confirmed by 97% of the strategic leaders mentioning that they were honest with stakeholders, and employees who strengthened new cultural practices were rewarded, indicated by 86.9% of the strategic leaders.

Trust and integrity were some of the values espoused by the strategic leaders. Trust builds confidence in people, which also eliminates suspicion regarding the way people conduct business. Making unfulfilled promises to customers destroys trust, and leads to loss of confidence in the business. Owner-managers should therefore be a role model of trustworthy action to promote this value in the organisation. SME strategic leaders have to be trustworthy with regard to the payment dates for salaries. This is an important consideration, as some of the SMEs under study had not paid their employees for some months. Strategic leaders have to be honest regarding the promises they make to customers.

Communication was one of the sub- themes to emerge from data, especially with regard to ethical practices in SMEs. Without effective communication, which has been argued by some scholars to be the lifeblood of every organisation, it would be difficult to attain organisational goals. If there are changes to the existing cultural values, then communication becomes imperative (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2009). The strategic leaders confirmed that they communicated the ethical standards to employees in weekly meetings. Faithfulness and being true to the company were communicated by the strategic leaders and they also emphasised no intolerance for underhand dealings and the importance of transparency.

Results from the quantitative study confirmed the above-mentioned ethical issues. The SMEs exhibited strong ethical practices. A total of 95.4% of the strategic leaders confirmed that they communicated ethical standards to employees, and these employees were treated with respect, indicated by 97.1% of the respondents. Further, 95.4% of the respondents confirmed that they communicated the same ethical standards to customers and stakeholders. The above findings confirm that top managers who uphold honesty, trust, and integrity in their decision- making are able to inspire their employees and create an organisational culture that encourages the use of ethical practices in day-to day organisational activities (Slawinski, 2007).

6.2.4. Theme 4: Strategic Implementation

The strategic leaders were the driving force in the implementation of strategies in their organisations. One of the secondary objectives of this study was to investigate the role of strategic leaders in the execution of strategies. The role of the strategic leader was found to be that of monitoring, making evaluations, and following up. In addition, SMEs' strategic leaders set the vision, mission, and strategies of the firm, and made resources available for implementation. Staffing, especially recruiting the right calibre of staff with the requisite skills and organising employees was indicated as one of the critical elements in the implementation process.

Based on the assertions of the strategic leaders, one could argue that strategic leaders play a critical role in strategy implementation. They set the organisation's strategy, direct the strategy, and monitor and evaluate the strategies put in place. In addition, strategic leaders make resources available for the strategy implementation process to be a success.

Corroborating the qualitative research findings, many respondents were in agreement with the roles played by strategic leaders in the implementation of strategies. The quantitative results showed that 96.5% of the strategic leaders influenced the implementation of strategies, and 98.9% were involved in the strategic implementation process. A total of 98.3% of the strategic leaders confirmed that they balanced strategic and operational issues, and 98.8% indicated that they ensured that resources were available for the implementation process. The strategic leaders also communicated strategic information to employees, confirmed by 98.8% of the respondents.

Literature confirms the role of strategic leaders in the implementation of strategies, which entails, among others, determining the strategic direction/setting the vision of the organisation, communicating strategic information to employees and ensuring that the requisite resources are available (Ates & Bititci, 2008; Boal & Hooijberg, 2000; Boal, 2004; Davies & Davies, 2010; Elenkov, Judge & Wright 2005; Hrebiniak, 2013; Jooste & Fourie, 2009; New Zealand Institute of Management 2004). Monitoring, evaluating, organising and leading employees are part of the implementation process, which is also a key role played by strategic leaders. Strategic implementation as one of the roles played by strategic leaders has been confirmed in literature by Rowe, (2009); and Davies and Davies (2010).

6.2.5. Theme 5: Strategic and Control systems

The qualitative findings revealed that the strategic leaders had internal control systems in place; performance management systems and information management were applied in the SMEs. Some of the SMEs had a quality management system (ISO 9002), which had built- in control systems from purchase, production, sales, and after sales service. An external audit company audited some of their internal processes and systems.

Many strategic leaders disseminated information through meetings and memoranda, whilst group and individual targets were used to manage performance. The above findings confirmed the literature in this regard, that strategic controls are accomplished through information exchanges that help to develop strategies, whereas financial controls are accomplished through setting objective criteria, such as performance targets (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Slawinski, 2007). However, the quantitative results of the present study showed that the strategic leaders did not use strategic and control systems, as they considered the assessments unreliable.

6.2.6. Theme 6: Strategic Leadership Enablers

As part of the secondary objectives, this study sought to investigate the enablers of strategic leadership that could enhance the success of the strategies crafted by strategic leaders. From the qualitative research findings, employee skills base, knowledge, and initiative emerged the key strategic leadership enablers. Some of the SME strategic leaders were of the view that qualified and skilled employees were a key asset to the organisation, since they were the ones who were always in contact with customers. The quality of the product was heavily dependent on the skills of the workers especially in production.

The above findings were confirmed by the quantitative results; 97.7% of the strategic leaders valued the knowledge and skills base of the employees; and the importance of employee initiative was indicated by 97.6% of the strategic leaders. In the majority of instances, adaptation of business processes to the environment also emerged as a key strategic enabler as indicated by 97.7% of the strategic leaders. The skills and capabilities of employees have been found to be an important factor in innovation and the creation of core competencies (Muenjohn & McMurray, 2016; Rowe & Nejad, 2009). The organisation's human resources are what differentiate the organisation from competitors, as employees are the ones who are responsible for providing services and manufacturing products.

Another key strategic leadership enabler was employee innovation. Most of the strategic leaders felt that innovation which resulted in product development, and that organisations could attain a

competitive advantage if they were continuously designing new products that offer benefits and value. In line with this view, product differentiation (resulting from innovation) can be a source of a firm's competitive advantage. Previous research on organisational culture confirmed that strategic leaders should develop an organisational culture that fosters innovation and competitiveness (Arham, 2014; Hagen, Hassan & Amin, 1998; Ng & Kee, 2018; Oxford Economics, 2017).

The above findings were also confirmed by the quantitative results; 96.6% of the strategic leaders viewed employees as key to innovation; 92.5% of the respondents promoted innovation within their SMEs; and 88.5% of the strategic leaders encouraged product development. Market share growth as an enabler of strategic leadership was indicated by 96.5% of the strategic leaders. Literature confirms the abovementioned strategic leadership enablers: growth orientation of the market share through innovation and product development, knowledge management, and human capital, as well as an effective organisational culture (Hagen, Vaicys, & Hassan, 2011).

6.2.7. Theme 7: Strategy Management

This section focuses on findings related to the management of strategy, which is a critical component of the strategic management process. The qualitative findings indicated that in the majority of cases, the strategies that were pursued by strategic leaders were effective in the realisation of the firm's objectives. It was also revealed that in setting the firm's strategies, competitor actions were considered in terms of price, quality, market coverage, and performance. Customer satisfaction was achieved, due to the clearly defined plans of action followed. The quantitative results confirmed these qualitative findings.

The above findings are confirmed in literature. The commitment of employees in the execution of strategies has been identified by Johnson, Scholes, and Whittington, (2008), who argued that the management of strategies need structured support from employees. Furthermore, the formulation and adjustment of strategies in firms should be in line with competition and the environment, confirmed by Frantz, *et al.,* (2017), Mainardes, *et al.*, (2014) and Porth (2002).

These authors confirmed that strategies should be aimed at customer satisfaction and retention. As already noted in the literature section, every firm should have a strategy in place to achieve a competitive advantage (David & David, 2017).

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that some owner- managers employed strategies that were not planned *(Unplanned strategies)* in order to survive, which was confirmed by the qualitative findings, which included flexibility, where owner- managers relied on customisation as a strategy for survival. Other strategies included reliance on the SME's brand, focusing on quality, lack of a specific product line, negotiated pricing, and cost containment and management.

Some of the strategies above relate to relationship marketing, which is a unique manner to ensure customer satisfaction. Relationship marketing aims to build relationships that are mutually beneficial, in order to earn and retain customer's business (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

6.2.8. Theme 8: Embracing strategic leadership challenges

This section presents the discussion of the findings from the qualitative and the quantitative phases of the study with regard to the challenges faced by strategic leaders in the execution of strategies. Findings from the qualitative study showed that the major challenge faced by strategic leaders was that of obtaining financing. This finding confirms previous research studies by Oxford Economics (2017), where the researchers concluded from their survey study, that 53% of the respondents reported that it was difficult to get sufficient access to capital for expansion. Wang, (2016) supported this finding in a research study on Czech Republic SMEs.

Challenges identified from the quantitative results included a dwindling customer base, a harsh operating environment, a highly regulated industry, bad debts, late payments by customers, and slow movement of products in retail shops. With regard to debtors, they were taking a longer time before paying their dues. For SMEs that were exporting goods, obtaining an export certificate was an uphill task. The GoZ was also a major debtor of some of the SMEs, and they

were battling to get payments. Quantitative results confirmed the above findings, in terms of the rankings: 90.1% of the strategic leaders were in agreement that late payments by customers was a major problem confronting their SMEs, followed by bad debts (89.6%); slow movement of stock (82.7%) and a highly regulated industry (64.1%).

The summarised organisational challenges for Zimbabwean SMEs depicted above are at variance with the ones identified by researchers in other economies. For instance, as noted from literature the major challenges that strategic leaders face in the implementation of strategies included market changes, strategic flexibility, and the implementation process (Hagen, Vaicys & Hassan, 2011; Nastase, 2010; Wolfe, 2012).

6.2.9. Theme 9: Focus on organisational success factors

This section discusses the findings and results from both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. There was no single definition of success, but the major descriptions were related to staying afloat in a challenging environment; being in business for a long time, (which is also confirmed in literature by Wasilczuk (2000) and Indarti and Langenberg (2004); being able to pay decent salaries, (which is consistent with the findings of Beaver (2002)); owning property and achieving what the owner manager would have planned. The finding on achieving what the owner-manager had planned in the business confirmed the findings of Indarti and Langenberg (2004), who classified such factors as contextual variables.

Participants were asked to recommend what could be done to overcome the challenges they were facing, and some of them suggested that the GoZ should take the lead in creating an enabling environment for business, and establish a bank specifically for SMEs, to cater for all their diverse needs.

The results from the quantitative phase confirmed the findings described above; 76.3% of the respondents defined success as the ability to sustain an acceptable level of income, while 85.6%

of the strategic leaders defined success as being in business for a long time. The quantitative results showed that 76.3% of the respondents indicated that the age of the entrepreneur significantly contributes to the success of the SME, while 84.4% of the strategic leaders were of the view that SMEs that had been operating for more than three years would succeed in their operations. All the respondents were in agreement that a well- detailed plan is one of the key success factors for SMEs. In addition, 93.7% of the respondents confirmed that designing new products is mandatory in order to succeed in an SME.

The majority of success factors identified above have also been confirmed in previous research studies and literature. For instance, that the possession of modern technology is critical as argued by Indarti and Langenberg (2004); Cartsson (2008); and Jasra *et al.*, (2011). Organisations that have been in existence for a long time having been found to be successful is consistent with the research findings of Kristiansen, Furuholt, and Wahid, (2003); and Islam, Khan, and Obaidullah, (2011). Literature further confirms that the age of the strategic leader has a positive influence on business success, as does product development (Lonnqvist, 2004; Ng & Kee, 2018; Oxford Economics, 2017; Saleem, 2012).

The findings have provided additional success factors that may not have been reviewed by other researchers, namely skilled personnel, specialisation, expanding into the region, and streamlining operations. Some strategic leaders were of the opinion that because the Zimbabwean economy was not performing, it was imperative that they embark on regional forays and capitalise on opportunities in countries such as Zambia, Botswana and Mozambique whose economies are growing steadily.

6.3. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the results and findings from the research which were placed within the context of the extant relevant literature. Results and findings of the study established that the majority of the strategic leaders provide direction to their organisations; had sound organisational and ethical practices; had balanced organisational control systems in place; and managed the organisations' resource portfolios.

However, it was evident that some SMEs did not have vision- and mission statements and lacked planning. Even though such SMEs lacked planning, they were able to devise other copying mechanisms for survival in the Zimbabwean economy, which included, among others, flexibility, reliance on brand name, negotiated pricing, focus on quality and cost containment and management. The majority of the qualitative findings were confirmed by findings from both literature and the quantitative results. In view of these findings, Chapter 7 proffers the concluding remarks and recommendations for Government and SME owner-managers, coupled with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 7 : CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the study and the background to the research problem. The discussion focused on the contribution of SMEs globally, which was then narrowed down to the context of Zimbabwe. The problem statement was articulated, together with the significance and delimitations of the study.

Chapter 2 focused on the review of related literature on strategic leadership theory, which guided the theoretical framework for this study. The next chapter situated this study's research philosophy on pragmatism, employing a mixed-methods approach and a sequential exploratory design.

Based on a sequential exploratory design, the qualitative study explored the five main areas that strategic leaders should employ, which include: establishing strategic direction (setting the vision); effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio; sustaining an effective organisational culture; emphasising ethical practices; and establishing balanced organisational controls. The results of the quantitative phase of the study were then reported, which corroborated the findings from the qualitative phase. Chapter 6 presented a discussion of the findings and results of the study.

The present chapter consolidates the findings of this study by making conclusions and recommendations, taking cognisance of the research objectives. Furthermore, the study's theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions are highlighted in this chapter. Research limitations are presented, and areas for further study are proposed.

7.2. Conclusions from research findings

7.2.1. Conclusions based on research framework

A theoretical review of the literature (presented in Chapter 2) contributed to the development of a strategic leadership framework for SME success (depicted in Figure 7.1). The development of the framework was mainly influenced by strategic leadership theory, coupled with the research findings. The strategic leadership framework for SME success comprise ten themes, namely: 1) Strategic direction; 2) Managing the organisation's resource portfolio; 3) Strategy management; 4) Strategic implementation; 5) Organisational culture including ethical practice; 6) Strategic leadership enablers; 7) Strategic leadership challenges; 8) Role of Government and Organisational capability factors; 9) Skilled staff, and 10) Technology.

Based on strategic leadership theory, the framework suggests that strategic leadership practices advances the organisational culture which in turn creates an enabling and resourceful environment for leaders to ensure that the organization achieve its success. The application of strategic leadership practices, organisational culture, and strategic leadership enablers could significantly reduce the strategic leadership demands.

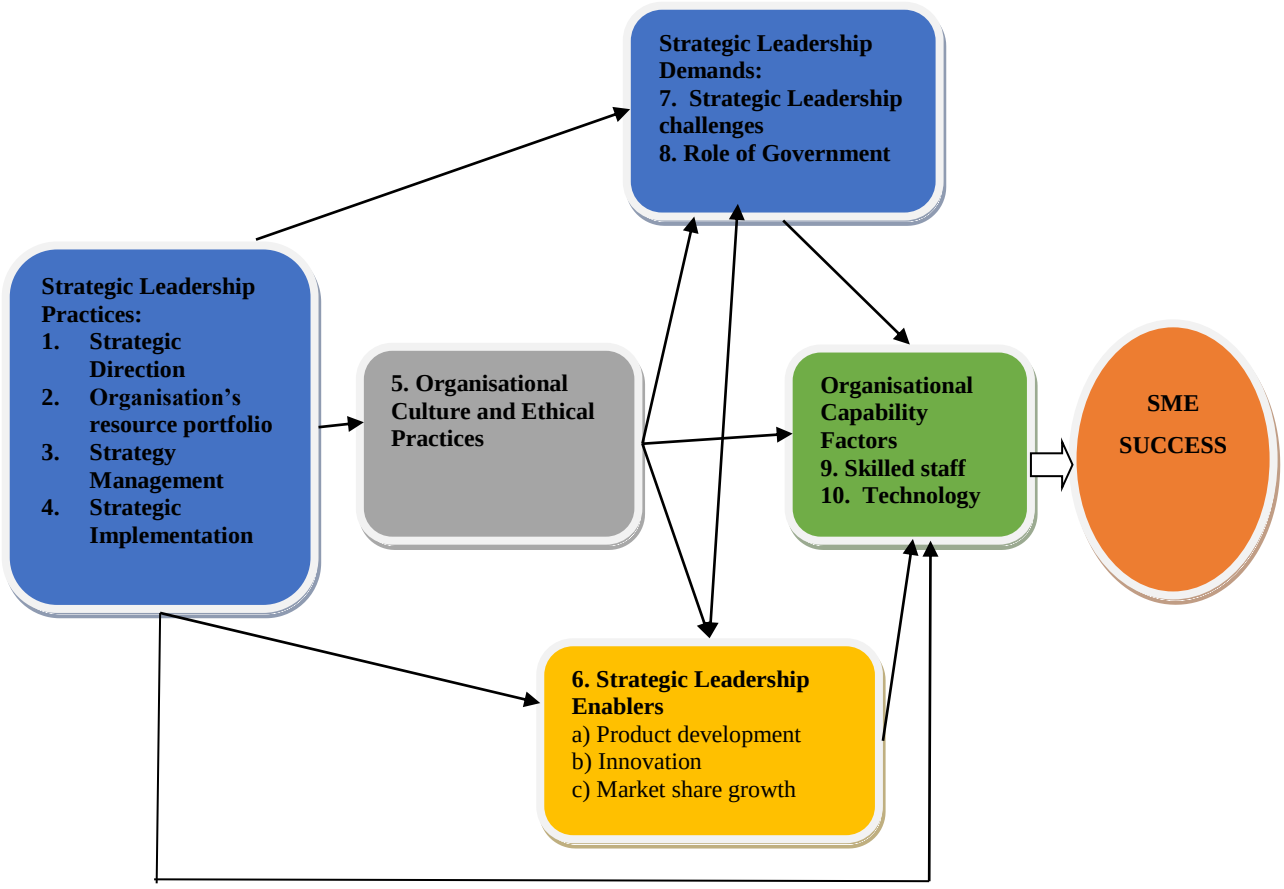


Figure 7.1 Final Strategic Leadership Framework for SME success

Source: Researcher's own construction

In order for SMEs to be successful in their operations, the owner- managers should undertake strategic leadership practices that include the provision of a strategic direction to the firm, and capitalise on the organisation's resource portfolio, so as to sustain a competitive advantage, exhibit positive cultural values, and uphold sound ethical practices, coupled with the management and implementation of organisational strategies. The availability of strategic leadership enablers will complement the strategic leadership practices, and organisational culture which will result in fewer strategic leadership demands and ultimately success.

7.2.2. Conclusions from research findings

Chapter 1 presented the research questions for the study; these are addressed in this section. The research questions were:

The main research question was: *"What are the factors in a strategic leadership framework that lead to success beyond the critical time line of three years that, if implemented, will lead to the success of manufacturing and engineering SMEs in a developing country context?"*

The following sub-questions supported the main research question:

1) Does strategic leadership play a role in the implementation of strategies in SMEs?
2) How do strategic leaders view the strategies they use to manage manufacturing and engineering SMEs?
3) What are the challenges/barriers faced by strategic leaders in implementing strategy, and why do they face these challenges?
4) What are the enablers of effective strategic leadership in strategy implementation, in manufacturing and engineering SMEs in Zimbabwe?
5) What are the success factors for manufacturing and engineering SMEs' sustainable performance?

Each of the identified research questions is addressed in the discussion that follows.

Main research question

The main research question is central to this study, which required an empirical examination of the five components of strategic leadership which include: 1) direction setting, 2) sustaining an effective organisational culture, 3) emphasising ethical practices, 4) the organisation's resource portfolio, and 5) balanced strategic and financial controls. I first took a qualitative approach in gaining an insight into the components of strategic leadership by interviewing participants in semi-structured interviews. Thereafter, I employed a quantitative approach by administering a

structured questionnaire to the identified 207 strategic leaders of various SMEs, in order to validate the qualitative findings. Factor analysis was carried out to measure the instruments, that is, the questionnaire which contained the following sections: Strategic Direction; Resource Portfolio; Organisational Culture; Ethical Practices; Strategic Control Systems; Strategy Implementation; Strategy Management; Leadership Challenges; Leadership Enablers and Success Factors.

As a result of factor analyses, the following combinations were then made:

Strategic leadership practice: constituted strategic direction, strategic control systems, strategic implementation and strategy management; Organisational culture: made up of organisational culture and ethical practices; Leadership enablers: a combination of organisational enabling elements and resources; Leadership challenges and organisational success factors.

Ten hypotheses, were then formulated to answer the main research question, as shown in Figure 5.1. Thereafter a Pearson correlation of the first - order factor analyses was done to determine the degree of relationships among the five specified variables. Results from the correlation indicated, that, in the majority of cases, there were significantly positive relationships among the variables, with the following exceptions: *Strategic direction* was significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges; Strategy management* was significantly negatively related to *Strategic leadership challenges* while *Strategic leadership enablers* was practically significantly negatively related to *Success factors.*

Furthermore, Pearson correlations of the second-order factor analyses were performed on *Strategic leadership practices*, *Organisational culture*, *Strategic leadership enablers*, *Strategic leadership challenges* and *Organisational success factors*. One can therefore conclude that sound strategic leadership practices, organisational culture, and strategic leadership enablers can significantly reduce strategic leadership demands resulting in organisational success. The results indicated that strategic leadership practices, organisational culture, strategic leadership demands,

strategic leadership enablers and organisational success factors should be the major components of the strategic leadership framework which will result in the successful implementation of strategies in Zimbabwean manufacturing and engineering SMEs.

Sub-research question 1: Does strategic leadership play a role in the implementation of strategies in SMEs?

To answer Research Question 2, I first interviewed participants to determine the role of strategic leaders in the implementation of strategies in their organisations. The findings confirmed that strategic leaders have an important role to play in the implementation of organisational strategies. Strategic leaders' first responsibility is to set the vision- and mission of the organisation. The implementation process was also confirmed to include the provision of strategic leadership to employees, hire and organise employees, monitor and evaluate the formulated strategies, and making available resources so that the implementation process could be a success. To corroborate the qualitative findings, factor analysis was then performed on the *Strategic implementation* factor.

In addition, correlation analysis showed that *Strategic implementation* was significantly positively related to *Strategic leadership enablers* and *Organisational success*. Since strategic implementation is part of strategic leadership practices, Hypothesis 3, which states that strategic leadership practices are positively related to strategic leadership enablers and Hypothesis 4, which states that strategic leadership practices are positively related to organisational success factors, are supported. The quantitative results confirmed the qualitative findings. To conclude, strategic leaders of Zimbabwean SMEs play a critical role in the implementation of strategies for their organisations.

Sub-research question 2: How do strategic leaders view the strategies they use to manage manufacturing and engineering SMEs?

Research Question 2 sought to elicit views from respondents to gauge the usefulness and relevance of the strategies pursued by strategic leaders in SMEs. The findings showed that the strategic leaders were able to manage their firms through organisational strategies that they had formulated and communicated to employees. The strategic leaders claimed, that in the majority of cases, their strategies were working for them as they achieved the set objectives through those strategies. The strategies alluded to were activities that were pursued differently in order to give them value, per the definition by Porter (1996). Some of the strategies were unplanned, which included adaptability to the environment, and offering customised products.

SMEs used their enterprise's brand as a strategy for differentiating their products from competitors. Negotiable pricing was another strategy used by SMEs. It was not unusual that the same product was marketed to customers at varying prices. Product quality was another critical focal point for SMEs. The findings showed that SMEs faced competition from other companies that were importing products especially from Asian countries such as China. The perception of the strategic leaders was that the majority of the imported products were of an inferior quality. The strategic leaders confirmed that they did not have a specific product line but had to rely on an array of products depending on what customers wanted (non-committal to a specific product line). In this regard, the most popular products were those which were fast moving.

Lastly, the strategic leaders confirmed that they had to be flexible in responding to market needs. In other words, the strategic leaders had to be flexible in their operations, depending on customers' needs. The response time to customer needs had to be shortened in order to have a competitive advantage.

Leaders of the SMEs acknowledged the commitment exhibited by the employees in the course of executing their duties, which resulted in customer satisfaction. Furthermore, competition played a significant role in the shaping and crafting of the SMEs' strategies. The preceding information leads one to conclude that strategic leaders' strategies in Zimbabwean SMEs are working, since the majority of the SMEs are still operational (in some instances since 2000), despite the

challenging environment within which they operate. Some of the strategic leaders confirmed that, they were realising up to 70% of their objectives through the use of current strategies they had implemented.

Sub-research question 3: What are the challenges/barriers faced by strategic leaders in implementing strategy, and why do they face these challenges?

Sub-research question 3 was posed so that means and ways of mitigating the identified challenges to the implementation of strategies could be suggested, as the ultimate aim of the research was to make recommendations to enhance the success of SMEs. Results from the study indicated that the main source of the challenges faced by strategic leaders was Zimbabwe's poor economic shape. The harsh operating environment came up as the main challenge to SMEs. Other major challenges faced by strategic leaders included the lack of finance, which led firms being unable to purchase the latest production technologies. Another notable challenge was a dwindling customer base, due to the fact that few customers had access to disposable income to purchase products, as a result of the closure of many companies and a highly regulated industry in which SMEs have to comply with numerous stringent operating regulations.

The slow movement of products as one of the noted challenges was related to the dwindling customer base. Lastly, SMEs faced the problem of late payment by customers, which could also be attributed to the harsh operating environment. These findings were not consistent with strategic leadership challenges identified in western countries such as market changes, strategic flexibility, and the implementation process (Hagen, Vaicys, & Hassan, 2011; Nastase, 2010; Wolfe, 2012). In view of the above, organisational challenges hampered the success of Zimbabwean SMEs, hence, Hypothesis 9, which states that strategic leadership demands are negatively related to organisational success factors is supported.

Sub-research question 4: What are the enablers of effective strategic leadership in strategy implementation in manufacturing and engineering SMEs in Zimbabwe?

Sub-question 4 sought to examine the enablers of strategic leadership; however, due to the prevalence of intricate and widespread challenges, there were few conditions that acted as enablers of strategic leadership. Results from the study indicated that innovation was a key enabler which resulted in product development and product differentiation which could be used as a source of competitive advantage for firms. Literature also confirmed that organisations that do not innovate were bound to fail. Other enablers included employee skills and entrepreneurial skills.

The findings confirmed that, in some instances, the owner-managers had to use their entrepreneurial skills in supervising employees to make sure that they were performing their tasks well. Supervision was a challenge especially for those owner- managers who were not skilled. The ability of the business to adapt to the business environment and increase market share were also confirmed strategic leadership enablers. Since there were few strategic leadership enablers, Hypothesis 10 which states that strategic leadership enablers would be negatively related to organisational demands is supported.

Sub-research question 5: What are the success factors for manufacturing and engineering SMEs' sustainable performance?

Sub-question 5 investigated those factors that were critical to the success of SMEs. The strategic leaders were asked their opinions on factors that were critical to the success of their firms. The findings showed that companies that utilised up-to- date technologies fared better than those which did not. The company's years' of existence also constituted a success factor, in that longevity provides a company an advantage in terms of experience. If a company has been in business for a longer time, systems and processes could be improved, while experienced staff will make fewer errors in performing tasks resulting in quality products/service. Since the Zimbabwean business environment is challenging for firms, regional expansion, especially into southern African countries such as Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique, which are experiencing positive growth rates was viewed as an important success factor.

Customer satisfaction; knowledge management; adequate funding; product development, and the age of the strategic leader were also mentioned as success factors. Customer satisfaction implies repeat business. Funding is also critical to the success of SMEs. The availability of capital enhances the operations of the SMEs, it enables the purchase of raw materials, labour, and machinery. The age of the strategic leader was found to have a positive influence on the success of the organisation. The more mature an SME leader is, the greater the likelihood of succeeding in business would be.

One can therefore conclude that the above success factors are critical for SMEs if they are to succeed. Therefore, Hypothesis 8 which states that strategic leadership enablers are positively related to organisational success factors, is supported.

7.2.3. Recommendations

Based on the research findings and results, the following recommendations are proffered to enhance the success of Zimbabwean SMEs:

7.2.3.1. Role of Government

Findings from the study have confirmed that SMEs play a significant role within the Zimbabwean context as their contribution to employment creation, improving society's well-being as well as being sources of innovation, research and development is well documented (European Union, 2015). As evidenced in the literature, many Zimbabwean companies have closed as the economy has become informalised, and 84% of the population now rely on SMEs for their survival. In view of the aforesaid, the GoZ needs to nurture the growth of the SMEs, as they are now the engines of growth. The only hope for economic and social sustenance rests with the SMEs, considering that hyper inflationary pressures have once again exerted pressures on the ailing economy, with the annual inflation rate for October 2017 recorded at 348% (Hankes, 2017).

Results from the study have confirmed that in the majority of cases, governments are playing critical roles in meeting the funding requirements of SMEs and enacting favourable legislation that invigorates SME operations. On the other hand, few studies have shown that government does not positively influence the success of SMEs. However, based on the results from the present study, recommendations can be made to the effect that Government has a crucial role to play by creating an enabling environment that is conducive for business success. The present study found that some of the SMEs were importing raw materials to capacitate their operations. It is therefore recommended that government reduce duty on raw materials.

The GoZ is also advised to set up an SME bank that specifically deals with the funding requirements of SMEs, thus providing the necessary support infrastructure. However, it is notable and commendable that the GoZ has shown some interest in the operations of SMEs by setting up SEDCO, creating the Ministry of Small, Medium Enterprises and Cooperatives, whose mandate is to deal with the specific requirements of SMEs. The year 2015 witnessed the transformation of SEDCO into SMDECO which is operating under the purview of the RBZ. This is a positive move, which could capacitate the operations of SMEs in the long run since SMDECO will focus primarily on all the needs of SMEs. The growth of SMEs provides great opportunities for developing countries such as Zimbabwe. The exponential growth of these firms will guarantee wealth generation, competitiveness, sustainability, employment creation and ultimately economic growth.

7.2.3.2. Strategic Leaders should focus on technology and other success factors

Based on the discussion of success factors, it is recommended that strategic leaders in Zimbabwean SMEs acquire the latest technologies for their manufacturing processes. It is also imperative that SME strategic leaders focus on customer satisfaction. Literature confirmed that the development of strategies should be such that the firm is able to attract and retain its customers so as to realise its financial objectives besides the attainment of the firm's vision and mission (Mainardes et al., 2014).

Expansion into the regional market is also recommended as the majority of the countries identified by the strategic leaders have relatively stable economies that are not prone to inflationary pressures such as those that prevail in Zimbabwe. Hankes (2017) asserted that Zimbabwe's annual inflation for the month of October 2017 stood at 348%, which is the 58th verified episode of hyperinflation on record. Strategic leaders are also advised to focus on product development in order to gain new customers.

7.2.3.3. Focus on innovation, entrepreneurial and employee skills

The findings confirmed that innovation is one of the key enablers of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategies. Innovation brings about new differentiated products that could be a source of competitive advantage. Coupled with innovation, strategic leaders also relied on their entrepreneurial skills, as well as employee skills to succeed. An innovative culture has been confirmed in the literature to be a contributory factor in SME success (Acs & Audretsch, 1990; Beaver, 2002; Arham, 2014; European Union, 2015; Hagen, Hassan & Amin, 1998; Ng & Kee, 2018; Oxford Economics, 2017).

7.3. Contributions and implications of research findings

7.3.1 Theoretical contributions

This study has generated findings that have direct implications for strategic leadership theory and managerial practices. The present study has made many theoretical contributions in the sphere of strategic leadership by adding strategic leadership enablers and organisational success factors as new constructs, related to the performance of SMEs, which resulted in a proposed framework for SMEs' success. The framework expands the body of knowledge on the configuration of strategic leadership components. Previous studies focused mainly on five strategic leadership components: strategic direction, organisational controls, organisational culture, ethical practices, and resource management. The theoretical contributions of the study are outlined in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Theoretical Contributions of the Study

Contribution	Knowledge areas contribution
Strategic Leadership	Strategic leadership practices significantly influence an organisation's culture
	Strategic leadership enablers and organisational success factors are negatively related to strategic leadership challenges
	Organisational culture is significantly related to strategic leadership enablers
	Organisational success factors are negatively related to strategic leadership challenges
	Strategic leadership enablers are positively related to organisational success factors
	Strategic leadership enablers are negatively related to strategic leadership challenges
	Strategic leadership challenges are negatively related to organisational factors
	SMEs can succeed without having vision and mission statements. Instead, they can rely on negotiated pricing, company brand, not having a specific product line and flexibility.
	Business success factors now include skilled personnel, specialisation, and streamlining operations.

Existing literature on key success factors has been extended by the findings of the present study. Whilst the majority of the success factors for Zimbabwean SMEs are confirmed in literature, new success factors emerged from the study, namely, skilled personnel, specialisation and streamlining business operations. The streamlining of business operations is the direct opposite of market expansion which has been suggested in the literature as a key success factor. This finding therefore contributes positively to scholarly debates on theory expansion as regards success factors for SMEs.

Furthermore, strategic leadership has been widely researched, mainly in the USA and developed economies, while, as noted by Zoogah (2009), research on strategic leadership in developing economies is very limited. This study has therefore broadened the academic discourse on strategic leadership on the African continent, highlighting and confirming the applicability of American and western strategic leadership practices to developing economies such as that of Zimbabwe. In addition, this study may offer beneficial outcomes to Zimbabwe's neighbours that share similar cultural norms and values, such as Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Namibia.

7.3.2 Managerial/ practical contributions

The main aim of the study, as articulated in Chapter 1 was to investigate strategic leadership factors that are critical to the success of manufacturing and engineering SMEs. This study offers practical contributions to various stakeholders. The SME owner-managers may benefit from the strategic leadership framework provided. Key enablers of strategic leadership and success factors were identified, which the SME owner-managers could consider in their day to day operations. I managed to convince a small number of SME owner-managers to apply the framework in their businesses, in order to be successful. In view of the foregoing, SME owner- managers could make use of the findings from this study to formulate their strategies and practice strategic leadership effectively and efficiently in order to improve business performance.

Results from the quantitative study and the qualitative findings confirmed that the majority of SME owner- managers provided direction to their organisations, had sound cultural, and ethical practices, had effective control systems in place and implemented strategies in their SMEs. Findings from this study may aid in the adoption of behaviours that are expected of strategic leaders. This study identified some of the strategies adopted by strategic leaders to stay afloat (unplanned strategies) including flexibility, reliance on brand, focus on quality, negotiable pricing, transparency, cost containment and management, as well as non- committal to a specific product line. These strategies could be adopted by strategic leaders whose SMEs are struggling. SME strategic leaders are therefore encouraged to broaden their understanding of strategic

leadership, and to develop and nurture such critical knowledge, which could enhance the successful implementation of strategies in their firms.

Results from this study have shown that strategic leadership practices- the provision of strategic direction to the organisation, having systems and control, strategy management, and strategic implementation, coupled with a sound organisational culture, and ethical behaviours, and strategic leadership enablers- can significantly reduce strategic leadership demands. The display of such strategic leadership knowledge can be a seedbed for Zimbabwean SME success. In light of the above, it is imperative that SME owner- managers master the principles of strategic leadership with the aim of long- term growth and success.

The outcomes of this study are also relevant for the nurturing and development of strategic leaders in Zimbabwe. SMEDCO is a parastatal tasked with overseeing and addressing the specific needs of SMEs which include finance and training. SMEDCO could customise strategic leadership training and development programmes to nurture the growth of SMEs which would contribute positively to economic development. Findings from this study confirmed the existence of challenges such as a lack of finance, slow movement of products, dwindling customer base, late payments by customers, a highly regulated industry, and the harsh operating environment. Training should be targeted at addressing these challenges. The training programmes should enhance business skills and copying strategies to train a new breed of SME entrepreneurs who possess innovative skills.

Furthermore, one can conclude that some of the challenges faced by Zimbabwean SME strategic leaders are similar to those faced by strategic leaders in other continents such as lack of financing which is a major problem globally. However, strategic leaders have no influence on the macro environment, hence, the only way of adapting to the external environment should be through crafting strategic plans that could insulate their enterprises against external shocks. In this regard, scanning the external environment for valuable information is imperative for strategic leaders.

7.3.3 Methodological contributions of the study

This study made use of mixed-methods in the development of a strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe. The study therefore makes a significant contribution to the existing methodological literature on strategic leadership, within the Zimbabwean context, utilising both qualitative and quantitative data which could be the first of its kind. A review of the Zimbabwean literature on methodologies used by other researchers showed that Gunhe (2014) used the mixed -method in addressing the effect of leadership styles on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe; Nyamwanza and Mavhiki (2014) examined the implementation of strategies in SMEs using a qualitative approach: case study; and Magaisa, *et al.* (2014) explored strategy formulation in SMEs using an exploratory approach. Nyamwanza (2014) investigated the effects of culture and implementation of strategy in SMEs which was a qualitative study, using multiple case studies. Lastly, Magaisa *et al.* (2014) researched on strategy implementation in Zimbabwean SMEs utilising both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

Since this research was a sequential exploratory study, qualitative data was critical in the first instance in that the meanings of strategic leadership could be deeply explored, enablers of strategic leadership, strategic leadership challenges, and success factors for SMEs clearly emerged from the participant's narratives. Qualitative data was relevant in that through the use of semi-structured interviews, I was able to probe issues which lacked clarity. Findings from the qualitative phase were then used to draft and design a questionnaire which sought to complement the qualitative research findings. To confirm and corroborate the qualitative findings, quantitative data became significant for performing factor analysis, testing the proposed hypothesis, and performing correlations, resulting in rich data. Data from both the qualitative and quantitative phase were then analysed and merged to design a strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe.

7.4. Research limitations

This study presented significant theoretical and practical implications to the field of strategic leadership. However, like any other study, the present study has some limitations. The greatest limitation were outdated statistics especially from the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation which relate to the failure rates of SMEs. The statistics available were for 2004 and all the researchers within the Zimbabwean context rely on such statistics which may not be accurate considering the fourteen-year gap since they were released. Findings and results which were based on these outdated statistics may not be very accurate.

In addition, as alluded to in Chapter 5, locating some of the owner-managers at the specified addresses on the SMEAZ website was a big challenge for the researcher. Some of the SMEs had relocated to other geographical areas within Harare and the researcher had to move from one place to the other, trying to locate them which was time consuming. The researcher had to rely on the information provided by other SME owner-managers as regards the present location of the SMEs that had relocated. Another limitation of this study was that only manufacturing and engineering SMEs operating in Zimbabwe were studied; therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to all sectors and SMEs operating in and outside Zimbabwe. Future research should therefore focus on other sectors and firms.

With regard to the quantitative phase, the study was cross-sectional in nature, whereby data were collected at a specific point in time, from 1 June 2016 until mid-July 2016. It would be interesting to find out what the results would be if the questionnaires were distributed to respondents at different time intervals spanning over several months (a longitudinal study). Longitudinal studies could probably yield insights into how the strategic leadership perceptions of SME owner- managers vary over time in these times of economic, social and technological changes.

Lastly this research relied on single-informant data, the SME owner- managers' perceptions were only for a specific period on how they managed their SMEs. The common method variance

(CMV) normally arises when multiple measures come from the same data source which can potentially affect the results. However, the issue has been viewed as a non- issue since the common method variance still constitutes a limitation to the accuracy and a possible cause for skewed retrospection (Ng, Kee & Ramayah, 2016). However, in minimizing CMV, I employed and administered two different data gathering methods at different times, namely face-to-face in-depth interviews and structured questionnaires to two different samples at different time intervals.

7.5. Further research

This study focused on manufacturing and engineering SMEs, registered with SMEAZ. Further strategic leadership research could be carried out on SMEs in other sectors such as agriculture, automotive, building and construction, business consulting, mining, clothing and textiles, and communication. A comparative analysis could also be undertaken between SMEs registered by SMEAZ and non-registered SMEs to determine whether there are variations in strategic leadership practices.

Future research could also be based on a comparative analysis of strategic leadership practices in SMEs in the African context versus strategic leadership practices in other continents besides the USA and Europe as previous studies have focused on the USA and Europe. Furthermore, future research could focus on strategic leadership practices of Zimbabwean SMEs compared to those of other African SMEs, to determine areas of convergence and divergence regarding practices.

Furthermore, future research could also include the views of employees as regards the crafting of organisational strategies since they are responsible for the implementation of strategies in firms. Employees have been found to be a source of competitive advantage, hence their opinions are valuable, to validate, corroborate or disconfirm the assertions of strategic leaders in the management and governance of SMEs.

7.6. Conclusion

This study confirmed the view that SMEs the world over are contributing greatly to global economies and are now viewed as the engines of growth. In Zimbabwe, it has been widely acknowledged that, with the closure of many companies in the formal sector, the economy has been informalized to the extent that 84% of Zimbabweans are sustained by SMEs. However, SMEs the world over are plagued by various challenges that inhibit their growth prospects and Zimbabwean SMEs are no exception. In view of these assertions, the lack of strategic leadership has been viewed as a contributory factor to the failure of SMEs, which was the motivation for this research, which aimed to design a strategic leadership framework that could enhance the success of SMEs.

Results from the study confirmed that the majority of strategic leaders provided direction to their SMEs. They applied sound organisational culture and ethical practices; managed their resource portfolios; and had balanced strategic and financial controls. The quantitative results were obtained through factor analysis, hypothesis testing, and correlation analysis. This study has proposed a new strategic leadership framework with the following components: *Strategic leadership practices; Organisational culture; Strategic leadership demands; Strategic leadership enablers* and *Organisational success factors.* Strategic leadership practices, organisational culture, and strategic leadership enablers can significantly reduce strategic leadership demands. A practical application of all these factors will significantly enhance the success of SMEs in general and in Zimbabwe in particular.

To conclude, this study has synthesised, and offered an incisive discourse on strategic leadership regarding the theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions to different constituencies which include the academia, SME owner-managers and policy makers as clearly articulated and adduced from the preceding evidence and discussion. The strategic leadership framework proposed surely fits the contemporary challenges given its practical value.

REFERENCES

Abawi, K., 2013. Questionnaire and Interview. Available online:

http://www.gfmer.ch/SRH-Course-2012/Geneva-Workshop/pdf/Data-collection-instruments-Abawi-2013.pdf, [Accessed 16 June 2015].

Abu Zarim, Z., 2014. Key Success Factors for Malaysian SME Companies' Entrepreneurial Leader. Available online:

https://www.waset.org/downloads/presentations/14/key-success-factors-for-malaysian-smes-companies-.pdf, [Accessed 10 September 2015].

Achanga, P, Shehab, E, Roy, R., and Nelder, G., 2006. Critical Success Factors for Lean Implementation within SMEs. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management. 17*(4), pp. 460-471.

Acs, Z.J. and Audretsch, D.B., 1990. Innovation in Large and Small Firms: An empirical analysis. *The American Economic Review, 78*(4), pp. 678-90.

Adams, A., and Cox, A.L., 2008. 'Questionnaires, In-depth Interviews and Focus Groups'. In: P. Cairns and A.L. Cox, (Eds) *Research Methods for Human Computer Interaction,* Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, pp. 17-34.

Adams, J., Khan, H.T.A., Raeside, R., and White, D., 2007. *Research Methods for Graduate Business and Social Science Students*, New Delhi: Sage publications.

Africa Development Bank. 2016. Zimbabwe Economic Outlook. Available online:

https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/southern-africa/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-economic-outlook/, [Accessed 18 July 2018].

Agarwal, N.K., 2011. Verifying Survey Items for Construct Validity: A Two-Stage Sorting Procedure for Questionnaire Design in Information Behaviour Research. Available online: www.asis.org/asist2011/proceedings/.../166_FINAL_SUBMISSION.pdf, [Accessed 1 July 2015].

Ahmad, N. H., Wilson, C., and Kummerow, L., 2011. 'Assessing the Dimensionality of Business Success: The Perspectives of Malaysian SME Owner-Managers', *Journal of Asia-Pacific Business, 12*(3), pp. 207–224.

Alavi, M.T., and Karami, A., 2009. Managers of Small and Medium Enterprises: Mission Statement and Enhanced Organisational Performance. *Journal of Management Development, 28*(6), pp. 555-562.

Allio, R.J., 2013. Leaders and Leadership-Many Theories, But What Advice is Reliable? *Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Strategy & Leadership, 41*(1), pp. 4-14.

Ando, H., Cousins, R. and Young, C., 2014. Achieving Saturation in Thematic Analysis: Development and Refinement of a Codebook 1, 2, 3. *Comprehensive Psychology*, *3*, pp.03-CP.

Anwar, S. F., and Andaleeb, S.S., 2007. Factors Contributing to Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Growth: A Theoretical Perspective. *International Review of Business Research Papers, 3*(5), pp. 44-53.

Arain, M., Campbell, M.J., Cooper, C.L., and Lancaster, G.A., 2010. What Is a Pilot or Feasibility Study? A Review of Current Practice and Editorial Policy. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 10*(1), pp. 67.

Arham, A.F. 2014. *The Relationship between Leader behaviour, Entrepreneurial Orientation and Organisational Performance in Malaysian Small and Medium Enterprises.* Melbourne: Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University.

Arnold, D.M., Burns, K.E., Adhikari, N.K., Kho, M.E., Meade, M.O., and Cook, D.J., 2009. McMaster Critical Care Interest Group. The Design and Interpretation of Pilot Trials in Clinical Research in Critical Care. *Critical Care Medicine, 37*(1), pp. S69- S74.

Astley, W.G. and Van de Ven, A.H., 1983. Central perspectives and debates in organization theory. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, pp.245-273.

Ates, A., 2008. *Strategy Process in Manufacturing SMEs*, PhD Thesis, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde.

Ates, A. and Bititci, U., 2009. Strategy Management in Small to Medium-sized Enterprises: Evidence from UK manufacturing SMEs, *In 16th International European Operations Management Association Conference*. pp. 1-10.

Ates, A., Garengo, P., Cocca, P., and Bititci, U., 2013. The Development of SME Managerial Practice for Effective Performance Management. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 20*(1), pp. 28-54.

Aziz, R.A., Abdullah, M.H., and Tajudin, A., 2013. The Effect of Leadership Style on The Business Performance of SMEs in Malaysia. *International Journal of Business and Management Sciences, 2*(2), pp. 45-52.

Bansal, P. and DesJardine, M.R., 2014. Business sustainability: It is about time. *Strategic Organization, 12*(1), pp.70-78.

Bamiatzi, V. C., and Kirchmaier, T., 2014. Strategies for Superior Performance under Adverse Conditions: A Focus on Small and Medium-Sized High-Growth Firms. *International Small Business Journal, 32*(3), pp. 259-284.

Barca, M., 2002. Stratejik Açı: Stratejik Düşünme Düzeyi, Tarzı ve Gerekliliği. Dalay, İ., R. Coşkun ve R. Altunışık (Ed.), Stratejik Boyutuyla Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları İçinde, İstanbul: Beta Basım Yayım Dağıtım, 9-25.

Barney, J.B., 1986. Organizational culture: can it be a source of sustained competitive advantage? *Academy of Management Review, 11*(3), pp.656-665.

Bass B.M., 1985. Leadership and Performance beyond Expectations In: T. W. Kent, J.C. Crotts, J. and A. Azziz., 2001. Four Factors of Transformational Leadership Behaviour. *Leadership and Organisation Development Journal, 22* (5), pp. 221-229.

Bass, B.M., 2007. Executive and Strategic Leadership. *International Journal of Business, 12*(1), pp. 34-52.

Bass, B. M., 1997. The Ethics of Transformational Leadership, College Park: University of Maryland, Leadership Studies Group, *Centre for Politics and Participation.*

Bass, B.M. and Avolio, B.J., 1997. *Full Range Leadership Development: Manual for the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.* Mind Garden, Redwood City, CA.

Baum, J.R., Locke, E.A., and Kirkpatrick, S.A., 1998. A Longitudinal Study of the Relation of vision and Vision Communication to Venture Growth in Entrepreneurial Firms. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 83*(1), pp. 43-54.

Beaver, G., 2002. *Small Business, Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development.* Pearson Education: Harlow.

Beaver, G., 2002. Strategy and Management in the Smaller Enterprise. *Strategic Change, 11*(4), pp. 175-181.

Beauchamp, T.L., and Childress, J.F., 2009. *Principles of Biomedical Ethics.* 6th Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bennedsen, M., Perez-Gonzalez, F. and Wolfenzon, D., 2006. Do CEOs Matter?

NYU Working Paper No. Fin-06-032. Available online:

https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Bennedsen%2C+Morten+and+Perez-Gonzalez%2C+Francisco+and+Wolfenzon%2C+Daniel%2C+Do+CEOs+matter%3F+October+2006&btnG= [Accessed 17 July 2018].

Benzing, C., Chu, H.M., and Szabo, B., 2005. Hungarian and Romanian Entrepreneurs in Romania-motivations, Problems and Differences. *Journal of Global Business, 16*, pp. 77-85.

Benzing, C., Chu, H.M., and Kara, O., 2009. Entrepreneurs in Turkey: A Factor Analysis on Motivations, Success Factors and Problems. *Journal of Small Business Management, 47*(1), pp. 58-91.

Birks, M., and Mills, J., 2011. *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide.* London: Sage publications.

Bland, J., and Altman, D. 1997. Statistics Notes: Cronbach's alpha. *Bmj, 314* (7080), p. 572.

Boal, K.B., and Hooijberg, R., 2000. Strategic Leadership research: Moving on. *The Leadership Quarterly, 11*(4), pp. 515-549.

Boal, K. B., 2004. Strategic Leadership, In G. R. Goethals, G. J. Sorenson, & J. M. Burns (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Leadership.* Sage publications.

Boal, K. B., and Schultz, P.L., 2007. Storytelling, Time and Evolution: The Role of Strategic Leadership in Complex Adaptive Systems. *The Leadership Quarterly, 18*, pp. 411-428.

Bossidy, L., and Charan, R., 2002. *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done*. London: Random House.

Bracker, J., 1980. The Historical Development of Strategic Management Concept. *Academy of Management Review, 5*(2), pp. 219-224.

Brooksbank, R., Kirby, D., Tompson, G., and Taylor D., 2003. 'Marketing as a Determinant of Long-run Competitive Success in Medium Sized UK Manufacturing Firms. *Small Business Economics, 20*(3), pp. 259-272.

Brubaker, D.L., 2005. The Power of Vision, In: D.L. Brubaker and L.D. Colbe, *The Hidden Leader*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Bryant, A., 2002. Re-grounding Grounded Theory. *Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application, 4*(1), p. 25.

Bryant, A., and Charmaz, K., (Eds) 2007. *Handbook of Grounded Theory*. London: Sage publications.

Bryman, A., 2006. Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research: How Is It Done? *Qualitative Research, 6*(1), pp. 97-113.

Bryman, A., 2008. *Social Research Methods.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E., 2011. *Business Research Methods.* 3rd Edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E., 2014. *Research Methodology: Business and Management Contexts*. Oxford University Press Southern Africa.

Burnard, P., Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, and Chadwick, B., 2008. Analysing and Presenting Qualitative Data. *British Dental Journal, 204*(8), pp. 429-432.

Burns, A.C. and Bush, R.F., 2014. *Marketing Research.* 7th Ed. Harlow: Pearson

Cameron, R., 2011. Mixed Methods Research: The Five Ps Framework. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 9*(2), pp. 96-108.

Carmeli, A., Tishler, A. and Edmondson, A.C., 2012. CEO relational leadership and strategic decision quality in top management teams: The role of team trust and learning from failure. *Strategic Organization*, *10*(1), pp.31-54.

Carter, T., and Pucko, D., 2010. Factors of Effective Strategy Implementation: Empirical Evidence from Slovenian Business Practice. *Journal for East European Management Studies, 15*(3), pp. 207-236.

Cartsson, J., 2008. Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design. *The Journal of Small Business Finance, 2*(1), pp. 219-231.

Caruth, G.D., 2013. Demystifying Mixed Methods Research Design: A Review of The Literature. *Mevlana International Journal of Education*, *3*(2), pp.112-122.

Castro, F.G., Kellison, J.G., Boyd, S.J., and Kopak, A., 2010. A Methodology for Conducting Integrative Mixed Methods Research and Data Analysis. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 4*(4), pp. 342-360.

Calopa, M.K., 2017. Business Owner and Manager's Attitudes Towards Financial Decision-Making and Strategic Planning: Evidence from Croatian SMEs. *Management: Journal of Contemporary Management Issues, 22*(1), pp. 103-116.

CDC, 2008. Questionnaires. Available online: http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/evaluation/pdf/brief14.pdf, [Accessed 30 June 2015].

Charmaz, K., 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis.* Los Angeles, CA: Sage publications.

Charmaz, K., 2014. *Constructing Grounded Theory.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE. https://books.google.co.bw/books?hl=en&lr=&id=v_GGAwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Charmaz,+K.+2014.+Constructing+grounded+theory.+Sage, [Accessed 18 January 2016].

Carter, S. M., and Greer, C. R., 2013. Strategic Leadership: Values, Styles, and Organisational Performance. *Journal of Leadership & Organisational Studies, 20*(4), pp. 375-393.

Chawla, S., Khanna, D., and Jin, C., 2010. Are Small Business Critical Success Factors the Same in Different Countries? *SIES Journal of Management, 7*, pp. 1-12.

Chittithaworn, C., Islam, M.A., Keawchana, T., and Yusuf, D.H.M., 2011. Factors Affecting Business Success of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Thailand. *Asian Social Science, 75*(5), pp. 180-190.

Christen, A., Halter, F., Kammerlander, N., Künzi, D., Merki, M. and Zellweger, T., 2013. Success factors for Swiss SMES: Company succession in practice.

Chong, W.Y., 2012. Critical Success Factors for Small and Medium Enterprises: Perceptions of Entrepreneurs in Urban Malaysia. *Journal of Business and Policy Research, 7*(4), pp. 204-215.

Cohen, J., 1988. *Statistical Power Analysis for The Behavioral Sciences,* 2nd Edition. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Coleman, J.S., 1988. Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology, 94*, pp. S95-S120.

Collis, J., and Hussey, R., 2003. *Business Research, A Practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students.* 2nd Edition, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries. 2014. The Annual CZI State of the Manufacturing Sector Survey. Available online:

http://www.czi.co.zw/, [Accessed 23 July 2018].

Connelly, L.M., 2014. Ethical Considerations in Research Studies. *Medsurg Nursing, 23*(1), p.54.

Conrad, C., Neumann, A., Haworth, J. G., and Scott. P., 1993. *Qualitative research in higher education: Experiencing Alternative Perspective and Approaches.* Needham Heights, MA: Ginn Press.

Corbin, J., and Strauss, A., 1990. Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria. *Qualitative Sociology, 13*(1), pp. 3-21.

Coy, S.P., Shipley, M.F., Omer, K., and Khan, R.N.A., 2007. Factors Contributory to Success: A Study of Pakistan's Small Business Owners. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, 12*(02), pp. 181-198.

Creswell, J.W., 2003. *Research Design, Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches.* 2nd Edition, Thousand Oaks: Sage publications.

Creswell, J. W., 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches.* Thousand Oaks: Sage publications.

Creswell, J.W., and Plano Clark, V.L., 2011. *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research.* 2nd Edition, Los Angeles, CA: Sage publications.

Creswell, J.W., Klassen, A.C., Plano Clark, V.L., and Smith, K.C., 2011. Best Practices for Mixed Methods Research in The Health Sciences. Washington D.C: National Institute of Health. Available online: http://obssr.od.nih.gov/mixed methods research.pdf, [Accessed 23 March 2015].

Creswell, J.W., 2012. *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research.* 4th Edition, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Creswell, J.W., 2013. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Choosing Among the Five Approaches.* 3rd Edition, Thousand Oaks: Sage publications.

Creswell, J.W., 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches.* 4th Edition, Thousand Oaks: Sage publications.

Crittenden, V.L., and Crittenden, W.F. 2008. Building A Capable Organisation: The Eight Levers of Strategy Implementation. *Business Horizons, 51*(4), pp. 301-309.

Daft, R.L., 2005. *The Leadership Experience.* 3rd Ed Mason, OH: Thomson, South-Western.

David, F., 2011. *Strategic Management, Concepts and Cases*. 13th Edition, New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

David, F.R and David, F.R., 2017. *Strategic Management. A Competitive Advantage Approach, Concepts and Cases.* 6th Edition. London: Pearson Education Limited.

Davies, B., and Davies, B.J., 2005. Strategic Leadership Reconsidered. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 4*(3), pp. 241-260.

Davies, B., and Davies, B.J. 2008. Strategic Leadership. Available online: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/24490_Davies_1st_Chapter.pdf, [Accessed 10 March 2015].

Davies, B., and Davies, B.J., 2010. The Nature and Dimensions of Strategic Leadership. *ISEA 38*(1), pp. 5-21.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills., 2011. BIS Small Business Survey. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Sheffield.

Denscombe, M., 2008. Communities of Practice: A Research Paradigm for the Mixed Methods approach. Available online:

https://www.dora.dmu.ac.uk/.../JMMR-Communitiesofpractice%5B1%5D..., [Accessed 26 March 2015].

Detarsio, R., North, K. and Ormaetxea, M., 2016. Surviving and competing in times of crisis: Cases of strategies by Argentine SMEs. In *Competitive Strategies for Small and Medium Enterprises* (pp. 139-151). Springer, Cham.

DeVellis, R., 2003. *Scale Development Theory: Theory and Application*. Thousand Oaks: Sage publications.

Doody, O. and Noonan, M., 2013. Preparing and Conducting Interviews to Collect Data. *Nurse Researcher, 20*(5), pp.28-32.

Drost, E.A., 2011. Validity and Reliability in Social Science Research. *Education Research and Perspectives, 38*(1), pp. 105-123.

Drucker, P., 1954. *The Practice of Management*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Duursema, H., 2013. *Strategic Leadership: Moving beyond the leader-follower dyad* (No. EPS-2013-279-ORG).

Elenkov, D.S., Judge, W., and Wright, P., 2005. Strategic Leadership and Executive Innovation Influence: An International Multi-Cluster Comparative Study. *Strategic Management Journal, 26*(7), pp. 665-682.

Ensari, M.B., and Karabay, M.E., 2014. What Helps Make SMEs Successful in Global Markets? *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 150*, pp. 190-201.

Erasmus, B.J., Strydom, J.W., and Rudansky-Kloppers, S., (Eds). 2013. *Introduction to Business Management.* 9th Edition, Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Eschker, E., Gold, G., and Lane, M.D., 2017. Rural Entrepreneurs: What are The Best Indicators of Their Success? *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development. 24*(2), pp. 1-26.

European Union. (2015). Fact and Figures About the EU's Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs). Available online:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/index_en.htm, [Accessed 30 October 2016].

Eyong, EJ. 2017. Indigenous African leadership: key differences from Anglo-centric thinking and writings. *Leadership 13*(2), pp. 133-153.

Farrelly, P., 2013. Issues of Trustworthiness, Validity and Reliability. *British Journal of School Nursing, 8*(3), pp. 149-151.

Fassinger, R. and Morrow, S.L., 2013. Toward Best Practices in Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed-Method Research: A Social Justice Perspective. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, *5*(2), pp.69-83.

Fetters, M.D., Curry, L.A., and Creswell, J.W., 2013. Achieving Integration in Mixed Methods Designs-Principles and Practices. *Health Services Research, 48*(6pt2), pp. 2134-2156.

Field, A., 2009. *Discovering Statistics using SPSS*. Sage publications.

Finkelstein, S., Hambrick, D.C., and Cannella, A.A., 2009. *Strategic Leadership: Theory and Research on Executives, Top Management Teams, and Boards*. Oxford University Press Inc: New York, NY.

Finkelstein, S., and Hambrick, D.C., 1996. *Strategic Leadership: Top Executives and Their Effects on Organisations*. Minneapolis: West Publishing.

Finkelstein, S., and Hambrick, D. C., 1990. Top-Management-Team Tenure and Organizational Outcomes: The Moderating Role of Managerial Discretion. *Administrative Science Quarterly,* pp. 484–503.

Finscope., 2012. MSME Survey Zimbabwe 2012. Available online: http://www.finmark.org.za/wp-content/uploads/pubs/Finscope_Zimbabwe_Broch/3nfl.pdf [Accessed 18 May 2015].

Fiorito, S., and La Forge, R., 1986. A Marketing Strategy Analysis of Small Retailers. *American Journal of Small Business, 10*(4), pp. 7-17.

Fjose, S., Grunfeld L.A., and Green, C., 2010. SMEs and Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa, Identifying SME Roles and Obstacles to SME Growth. Available online: http://menon.no, [Accessed 31 March 2015].

Frantz, E., Dugan, A., Hinchberger, K., Maseth, B., Al Sharfa, O., and Al-Jaroodi, J., 2017, June. SMEs: The Effects of Strategic Management. In *Technology & Engineering Management Conference (TEMSCON), 2017 IEEE* (pp. 388-393). IEEE.

Fusch, P.I., and Ness, L.R., 2015. Are We There Yet? Data Saturation in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report, 20*(9), p.1408.

Gadenne, D., 1998. Critical Success Factors for Small Business: An Inter-Industry Comparison. *International Small Business Journal, 17*(1), pp. 36-56.

Garengo, P., Biazzo, S., and Bititci, U.S., 2005. Performance Measurement Systems in SMEs: A Review for a Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 7*(1): 25-47.

Gibbs, G.R., and Taylor, C., 2010. "How and What to Code." Available online:

Onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/Intro_QDA/how_what_to_code.php, [Accessed 4 December 2015].

Gica, O.A., 2011. Strategic Management Process in Small and Medium Enterprises. Doctoral Thesis, Available online:

doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/sustinerea_publica/resumate/2011/management/Rezumat.En_Oana Adriana Gica.pdf, [Accessed 11February 2014].

Gilbert, D.U., and Behnam, M., 2009. Strategy Process Management in Multinational Companies: Status quo, Deficits and Future Perspectives. *Problems and Perspectives in Management, 7* (1), pp. 70-85.

Glaser, B.G., and Strauss, A.L., 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Glaser, B.G., 1978. *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in The Methodology of Grounded Theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.G., 1992. *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.G., 1998. *Doing Grounded Theory. Issues and Discussions.* Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Global Finance Magazine 2015. The Poorest Countries in the World. Available online:

https://www.gfmag.com/global-data/economic.../the-poorest-countries-in-the-world

[Accessed 13 March 2017].

Gold, J., Anderson, L., Kempster, S., George, M., and Thorpe, R., 2007. What works in SME Management and Leadership Development. Available online: www.northernleadershipacademy.co.uk, [Accessed 11 March 2015].

Google Maps. 2017. Map of Greater Harare. Available online:

http://www.pinsdaddy.com/harare-map-world-of-holiday-travel_LsWkLp79tFDbBgzFis1e2qJsxQ4Ohl8ldPXN*XD7sD1ImZ*iG*JrZ3V0qdsIQ3lEPLrScTP*7gM4Ty8n1NRecA/*csgbbg*z2m2QGO8jejjYYnhG4ehkrg|p1JrZkI*q8v8tqC2zqMcXv5PzCfqr9qoqy8JS4drNuCpST8zJXsOInyURAXGXqVk6iiJvNeOa5I8Yw4wNvUxsMyY6a9AAHSO/, [Accessed 16 October 2017].

Gorgievsk, M.J., Ascalon, M.E., and Stephan, U., 2011. Small Business Owners' Success Criteria, A Values Approach to Personal Differences. *Journal of Small Business Management, 49*(2), pp. 207-232.

Government of Zimbabwe. 2015. *Zimstat Labour Force Survey*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Government of Zimbabwe. 2012. *Industrial Development Policy, 2012-2016*. Harare: Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

Graff, J.C., 2011. Mixed Methods Research. Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC. Available online: samples.jbpup/com/9781449625917_Ch03_045_064.pdf, [Accessed 23 March 2015].

Greaney, A.M., Sheehy, A., Heffernan, C., Murphy, J., Ni Mhaolrunaigh, S., Heffernan, E., and Brown, G. 2012. Research Ethics Application: A Guide for The Novice Researcher. *British Journal of Nursing, 21*(1), pp. 38-43.

Greenbank, P. 2001. Objective Setting in The Micro-Business. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research, 7*(3), pp.108-127.

Greene, J.C., Caracelli, V.J, and Graham, W. F., 1989. Toward a Conceptual Framework for Mixed-Method Evaluation Designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 11*(3), pp. 255-274.

Grint, K., 2005. *Leadership: Limits and Possibilities*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Guest, G., Bunce, A., and Johnson, L., 2006. "How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability." *Field Methods, 18*(1), pp. 59-82.

Gunhe, P., 2014. Effects of Leadership styles on SMEs Performance: A Survey on Selected SMEs in Zimbabwe. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Midlands State University, Available online: http://msu.ac.zw/postgrad.php?inc=postbc, [Accessed 6 January 2016].

Ha, M., Siriwan, U., Ramabut, C., Thitikalaya, N., Thitikanlaya, T., and Kiatnarong, C., 2014. Key Factors for Successful Entrepreneurship in Thailand. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 2*(09), pp. 116.

Hagen, A.F., Hassan, M.T., and Amin, S.G., 1998. Critical Strategic Leadership Components: An Empirical Investigation. *SAM Advanced Management Journal, 63*(3), p.39.

Hagen, A., Vaicys, R., and Hassan, M., 2011. Suggested Strategies for Effective Implementation of Strategic Leadership Practice in This Globalization Era. *International Business and Economic Research Journal, 1*(6), pp. 19-30.

Hair, J.F., Black, B., Babin, B., Anderson, R.E., and Tatham, R.L., 2006. *Multivariate Data Analysis.* 6th Edition, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice-Hall.

Hair, J. Jr, Black, W., Babin, B. and Anderson, R., 2010. *Multivariate Data Analysis: With Readings.* Pearson Education Inc: Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Hakonsson, D.D., Burton, R.M., Obel, B. and Lauridsen, J.T., 2012. Strategic Implementation Requires the Right Executive style: Evidence from Danish SMEs. *Long Range Planning, 45*(2), pp. 182-208.

Hallberg, L.R., 2006. The 'Core category' of Grounded Theory: Making Constant Comparisons. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, 1*(3), pp.141-148.

Hambrick, D. C. 1989. Putting Top Managers Back in the Strategy Picture - Introduction. *Strategic Management Journal, 10*(S1), pp. 5-15.

Hambrick, D.C., Finkelstein, S. and Mooney, A.C., 2005. Executive Job Demands: New Insights for Explaining Strategic Decisions and Leader Behaviors. *Academy of Management Review, 30*(3), pp. 472-491.

Hambrick, D.C., and Mason, P., 1984. Upper Echelons: The Organisation as A Reflection of Its Top Managers. *Academy of Management Review, 9*(2), pp. 193-206.

Hambrick, D., and Pettigrew, A., 2001. Upper echelons: Donald Hambrick on Executives and Strategy. *Academy of Management Executive, 15*(3), pp. 36-44.

Hamel, G., and Prahalad, C.K., 1989. Strategic Intent. *Harvard Business Review, 67*(3), pp. 63-76.

Hankes, S., 2017. Zimbabwe Hyperinflates Again, Entering the Record Books for a Second Time in Less Than a Decade. Available online: https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevehanke/2017/10/28/zimbabwe-hyperinflates-again-entering-the-record-books-for-a-second-time-in-less-than-a-decade/#1f4fa69e3eed, [Accessed 30 October 2017].

Hardicre, J., 2014. Valid Informed Consent in Research: An Introduction. *British Journal of Education, 23*(11), pp. 564-567.

Harrington R.J., 2006. The Moderating Effects of Size, Manager Tactics and Involvement on Strategy Implementation in Food Service. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 25*(3), pp. 373-397.

Harris, L.R., and Brown, G.T.L., 2010. Mixing Interview and Questionnaire Methods: Practical Problems in Aligning Data. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation, 15*(1), pp. 1-19.

Hart, S.L., and Quinn, R.E., 1993. "Roles Executives Play: CEOs, Behavioral Complexity and Firm Performance." *Human Relations*, *46*(5), pp. 543-574.

Heathfield, S.M., 2014. Leadership Success Secrets. Available online:

http://humanresources.about.com/od/leadership/a/leader_inspire.htm [Accessed on 12 June 2014].

Hill, C.W.L., and Jones, G.R., 2004. *Strategic Management Theory, An Integrated Approach.* 6thEdition, Boston: Houston Mifflin Company.

Hill, C. W.L., and Jones, G.R., 2011. *Essentials of Strategic Management*. 3rd Edition, Mason, Ohio: South-Western Cengage Learning.

Hinkelmann, K., and Witschel, H.F., 2013. How To Choose A Research Methodology. Available online: http://knut.hinkelmann/lectures/project2013/p15 [Accessed 23 March 2015].

Hitt, M.A., Bierman, L., Shimizu, K., and Kochhar, R. 2001. Direct and Moderating Effects of Human Capital on Strategy and Performance in Professional Service Firms: A Resource-Based Perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, *44*(1), pp. 13-28.

Hitt, M.A. and Duane, R., 2002. The essence of strategic leadership: Managing human and social capital. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *9*(1), pp.3-14.

Hitt, M.A., Ireland, R.D., and Hoskisson, R.E., 2004. *Strategic Management, Competitiveness and Globalization, Concepts and Cases.* 6th Edition, Ohio: Thomson/South-Western.

Hitt, M.A., Ireland, R.D., and Hoskisson, R. E., 2007. *Strategic Management, Competitiveness and Globalization.* 7th Edition, Ohio: Thomson/South-Western.

Hitt, M.A., Ireland, R.D., and Hoskisson, R. E., 2009. *Strategic Management, Concepts and Cases, Competitiveness and Globalization*. 8th Edition, Mason, Ohio: South-Western Cengage Learning.

Hodgetts, R.M., Luthans, F., and Doh, J., 2005. *International Strategic Management*. 6th Edition, New York: McGraw-Hill Companies.

Holton, J.A., 2010. The Coding Process and Its Challenges. *The Grounded Theory Review, 9*(1), pp. 21-41.

House, R.J., and Aditya, R.N., 1997. "The Social Scientific Study of Leadership: Quo vadis?" *Journal of Management, 2*(23), pp. 409-473.

Hrebiniak, L.G. 2013. Making Strategy work: Leading Effective Execution and Change. Available online:

https://books.google.co.bw/books?hl=en&lr=&id=ds9_9HQAkyAC&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=hrebiniak+2013+strategy+work&ots=IJ00uiKyvg&sig=_niSmhqHmr02GLIwBb08hL6-1DE&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=hrebiniak%202013%20strategy%20work&f=false [Accessed 17 October 2017].

Hrebiniak, L., 2008. Making Strategy Work: Overcoming the Obstacles to Effective Execution. *Ivey Business Journal*, *72*(2), pp.1-6.

Hrebiniak, L.G., 2005. *Making Strategy Work: Leading Effective Execution and Change*. New Jersey: Wharton School Publishing.

Hrebiniak, L, G., and Joyce, W. F., 1984. *Implementing Strategy*. New York: MacMillan Publishing.

Huang, X., 2009. Strategic Decision Making in Chinese SMES. *Chinese Management Studies, 3*(2), pp. 87-101.

Hudson, M., Smart A., and Bourne, M., 2001. Theory and Practice in SME Performance Measurement Systems. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management. 21*(8), pp.1096-1115.

Hung Mahn, C., Benzing, C., and McGee, C., 2007. Ghanaian and Kenyan entrepreneurs: A Comparative Analysis of Their Motivations, Success Characteristics and Problems. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, 12*(03), pp. 295-322.

Husain, R.B.M and Xiao, L.X., 2016. The Antecedents of Women Leadership in SMEs: The Malaysian Senior Female Managerial Perspective. *International Journal of Business and Management, 11*(5), p.179.

Hussein, M.E., Hirst, S., Salyers, V., and Osuji, J., 2014. Using Grounded Theory as a Method of Inquiry: Advantages and Disadvantages. *The Qualitative Report*, *19*(13), pp. 1-15.

Ireland, R.D., and Hitt, M.A., 1999. Achieving and Maintaining Strategic Competitiveness in the 21st Century: The Role of Strategic Leadership. *Academy of Management Executive, 13*(1), pp. 43-57.

Ireland, R.D., and Hitt, M.A., 1999. Achieving and Maintaining Strategic Competitiveness in the 21st Century: The Role of Strategic Leadership In A. Hagen, R. Vaicays, and M. Hassan, 2011. Suggested Strategies for Effective Implementation of Strategic Leadership Practices in This Globalization Era. *International Business and Economic Research Journal, 1*(6), pp. 19-30.

Indarti, N., and Langenberg, M., 2004. Factors affecting Business Success among SMEs: Empirical Evidences from Indonesia. Research Gate, Available online: http://researchgate.net/publication/228375543, [Accessed 15 September 2015].

Insah, B., Mumuni, A., and Bangiyel, P., 2013. An Analysis of the Determinants of Business Growth in Ghana: A study of Wa Municipal in the Upper West Region. *European Journal of Business and Management, 5*(31), pp.187-192.

Ireland, R.D., and Hitt, M.A., 2005. Achieving and Maintaining Strategic Competitiveness in The 21st Century: The Role of Strategic Leadership. *Academy of Management Executive, 19*(4), pp. 63-77.

Islam, M.A., Khan, M.A., Obaidullah, A.Z.M., and Alam, M.S., 2011. Effect of Entrepreneur and Firm Characteristics on the Business Success of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Business and Management, 6*(3), pp. 289-299.

Jackson, W., and Verberg, N., 2006. *Methods: Doing Social Research.* 4th Edition, Toronto: Pearson Education.

Jarvis, R., Curran, J., Kitching, J., and Lightfoot, G., 2000. The Use of Quantitative and Qualitative Criteria in The Measurement of Performance in Small Firms. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 7*(2), pp. 123-134.

Jasra, J.M., Khan, M.A., Hunjra, A. I., Rehman, R.A., and Rauf, I.A., 2011. Determinants of Business Success of Small and Medium Enterprises. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 2*(20), pp. 274-280.

Jennings, P.L., and Beaver, G., 1997. The Performance and Competitive Advantage of Small firms: A Management Perspective. *International Small Business Journal, 15*(2), pp. 63-65.

Jensen, E., 2012. Combining Methods and Research Paradigms. Available online: www2.warwick.ac.uk..../combining_research_methods_dtc_psr_module,

[Accessed 10 November 2014].

Johnson, G., Scholes, K., and Whittington, R., 2008. *Exploring Corporate Strategy, Text and Cases.* 8th Edition, London: Pearson Education Limited.

Johnson, R.B., and Onwuegbuzie, A.J., 2004. Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come. *Educational Researcher, 33* (7), pp. 14-26.

Johnson, R.B., Onwuegbuzie, A.J., and Turner, L.A., 2007. Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*(2), pp.112-133.

Jooste, C., and Fourie, B., 2009. The Role of Strategic Leadership in Effective Strategy Implementation: Perceptions of South African Strategic Leaders. In *South African Business Review, 13*(3), pp. 51-68.

Jutla, D., Bodorik, P. and Dhaliqal, J., 2002, ‘‘Supporting the e-business Readiness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: Approaches and Metrics’’, *Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy, 12*(2), pp.139-164.

Kanyangale, M., 2017. Exploring the Strategic leadership of small and medium size entrepreneurs in Malawi. *Journal of Contemporary Management, 14*(1), pp.482-508.

Kantabutra, S., 2008. “What Do We Know About Vision?” *Journal of Applied Business Research, 24*(2), pp. 127-138.

Kaplan, R. S., and Norton, D. P., 2001. Transforming the Balanced Scorecard from Performance Measurement to Strategic Management: Part 1. *Accounting Horizons, 15*(1), pp. 87-104.

Karda, L., 2009. The Strategic Leadership of Small and Medium Enterprises. Doctoral Thesis, University of West Hungary, Available online: doktori.nyme.hu/278/angol.pdf, [Accessed 13 March 2015].

Karel, S., Adam, P., and Radomir, P., 2013. Strategic Planning and Business Performance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. *Journal of Competitiveness, 5*(4), pp.57-72.

Kemayel, L. 2015. Success Factors of Lebanese SMEs: An Empirical Study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 195*, pp. 1123 – 1128.

Kent, T.W., Crotts, J.C. and Azziz, A., 2001. Four factors of transformational leadership behaviour. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 22*(5), pp.221-229.Kim, Y., 2011. Lessons for Culturally Competent Research: The Pilot Study in Qualitative Inquiry: Identifying Issues and Learning. *Qualitative Social Work, 10*(2), pp. 190-206.

Kirklees Council. 2006. Research and Consultant Guidelines. Questionnaires. Available online: https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/yoursay/Questionnaires.pdf, [Accessed 15 June 2015].

Kirpalani, V. H., and Macintosh, N. B., 1980. International Marketing Effectiveness of Technology-Oriented Small Firms. *Journal of International Business Studies, 11*(3), pp. 81-90.

Kisely, S. and Kendall, E., 2011. Critically Appraising Qualitative Research: A Guide for Clinicians More Familiar with Quantitative Techniques. *Australasian Psychiatry*, *19*(4), pp.364-367.

Kızıloglu, M and Serinkan, C., 2015. Perception of Strategical Management in Textile Sector. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 207*: 306 – 314.

Kotey, B., and Meredith, G.G., 1997, Relationships Among Owner/manager Personal Values, Business Strategies and Enterprise Performance. *Journal of Small Business Management, 35*(2), pp. 37-64.

Kotler, P., and Keller, K.L., 2016. Marketing Management, Global Edition, 15th Edition, Pearson: Harlow, Essex CM20 2JE

Kraemer, H.C., Mintz, J., Noda, A., Tinklenberg, J., and Yesavage, J.A., 2006. Caution Regarding the Use of Pilot Studies to Power Calculations for Study Proposals. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 63*(5), pp. 484-9.

Kriger, M., and Zhovtobryukh, Y., 2013. Rethinking Strategic Leadership: Stars, Clans, Teams and Networks. *Journal of Strategy and Management, 6*(4), pp. 411-432.

Kristiansen, S., Furuholt, B., and Wahid, F., 2003. Internet café Entrepreneurs: Pioneers in Information Dissemination in Indonesia. *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, 4*(4), pp. 251-263.

Kumar, R.V., 2011. Design of questionnaire. Available online: https://xisspm.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/questionnaire-design-full.pdf, [Accessed 16 June 2015].

Kur, E. 1995. Developing leadership in organizations: A continuum of choices. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 4*(2), pp. 198-206.

Kvale, S., and Brinkmann, S., 2009. *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Interviewing*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage publications.

Laitinen, E.K., Lukason, O. and Suvas, A., 2014. Behaviour of Financial Ratios in Firm Failure Process: An International Comparison. *International Journal of Finance and Accounting, 3*(2), pp.122-131.

Lampadarios, E., 2015. *Critical Success Factors for SMEs: An empirical study in the UK chemical distribution industry*. Doctoral thesis. Leeds: Leeds Beckett University.

Lampadarios, E., 2017. A Qualitative Perspective of Enterprise Success Factors for SMEs: A case study in the UK Chemical Distribution Industry. Macrothink Institute. *Case Studies in Business and Management. 4*(1), pp. 49-76.

Lancaster, G.A., Dodd, S., and Williamson, P.R., 2004. Design and Analysis of Pilot Studies: Recommendations for Good Practice. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice, 10*(2), pp. 307-312.

Leedy, P.D., and Ormrod, J.E., 2005. *Practical Research Planning and Design*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Leon, A.C., Davis, L.L., and Kraemer, H.C. 2011. The Role and Interpretation of Pilot Studies in Clinical Research. *Journal of Psychiatric Research, 45*(5), pp. 626-629.

Levine, D. M., Krehbiel, T.C., Berenson, M.L., and Viswanathan, P.K., 2011. *Business Statistics, A First Course.* 5th Edition, Chennai: Dorling Kindersley Pvt. Ltd.

Lincoln, Y.S., and Guba, E. G., 1985. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverley Hills: Sage publications.

Lincoln, Y.S., 2009. Ethical Practices in Qualitative Research, In D.M Mertens & P.E Ginsberg *(*Eds*), The Handbook of Social Research Ethics*. Los Angeles: Sage publications.

Lo, M.C., Wang, Y.C., Wah, C.R.J. and Ramayah, T., 2016. The Critical Success Factors for Organizational Performance of SMEs in Malaysia: A Partial Least Squares Approach. *Revista brasileira de gestão de negócios*, *18*(61), pp.370-391.

Local Enterprises Authority. 2007. Small, Medium and Large Enterprises Database, Sector Mapping and Validation in Botswana: 'Findings and Strategies' for Local Enterprise Authority in the Republic of Botswana. Available online:

www.lea.co.bw/uploads/files/Packaged BIDPA study.pdf, [Accessed 18 May 2015].

Lonnqvist, A., 2004. *Measurement of Intangible Success Factors: Case Studies on Design, Implementation and Use of Measures*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Tampere University of Technology, Tampere, Finland.

Losby, J and Wetmore, A., 2012. CD Coffee Break: Using Likert Scales in Evaluation Survey Work. Available online:

https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/docs/cb_february_14_2012.pdf, [Accessed 10 October 2017].

Lussier, R.N., Sonfield, M.C., Corman, J., and McKinney, M., 2001. Strategies Used by Small Business Entrepreneurs. *American Journal of Business, 16*(1), pp. 29-38.

Lusier, R.N., and Halabi, C.E., 2010. Three-Country Comparison of the Business Success versus Failure Prediction Model. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *48*(3), pp. 360-377.

Maes, J., Sels, L. and Roodhooft, F., 2005. Modelling the Link between Management Practices and Financial Performance. Evidence from Small Construction Companies. *Small Business Economics*, *25*(1), pp.17-34.

Magaisa, G.M., Matipira, L., and Kanhai C., 2013. Strategy Formulation in Zimbabwean Manufacturing SMEs. *International Journal of Economy, Management and Social Sciences, 2*(8), pp. 598-602.

Magaisa, G.M, Matipira, L., and Kanhai, C., 2014. Strategy Implementation for Small and Medium Enterprises in Zimbabwe. *Issues in Business Management Economy, 2*(1), pp. 001-008.

Mainardes, E.W., Ferreira, J.J., and Raposo, M.L., 2014. Strategy and Strategic Management Concepts: Are they Recognised by Management Students? *Business Administration and Management, 1*(4), pp. 43-61.

Makoshori, S., 2014. Government Mobilizes US4m for SMEs. In *The Financial Gazette, 13 February 2014*. Available online: http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/govt-mobilises-us4m-for-smes/, [Accessed 8 April 2015].

Mambula, C. J., 2004. Relating External Support, Business Growth & Creating Strategies for Survival: A Comparative Case Study Analyses of Manufacturing Firms and Entrepreneurs. *Small Business Economics, 22*(2), pp. 83-109.

Mapetere, D., Mavhiki, S., Nyamwanza, T., Sikomwe, S., and Mhonde, C., 2012. Strategic Role of Leadership in Strategy Implementation in Zimbabwe's State- Owned Enterprises. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 3*(16), pp. 271-276.

Marom, S., and Lussier, R.N., 2014. A Business Success versus Failure Prediction Model for Small Businesses in Israel. *Business and Economic Research, 4*(2), pp. 63–81.

Marshall, B., Cardon, P., Poddar, A., and Fontenot, R., 2013. Does Sample Size Matter in Qualitative Research? A Review of Qualitative Interviews in IS research. *Journal of Computer Information Systems, 54*(1), pp. 11-22.

Masuo, D., Fong, G., Yanagida, J., and Cabal C., 2001. Factors Associated with Business and Family Success: A Comparison of Single Manager and Dual Manager Family Business Households. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues, 22*(1), pp. 55-73.

Martin, P.Y., and Turner, B.A., 1986. Grounded Theory and Organizational Research. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 22*(2), pp. 141-157.

Mavondo, F. T. 1999. Environment and Strategy as Antecedents for Marketing Effectiveness and Organizational Performance. *Journal of Strategic Marketing 7*(4), pp. 237– 250.

McClelland, D.C., 1987. Characteristics of Successful Entrepreneurs. *Journal of Creative Behaviour, 21*(3), pp. 219-233.

McGrath, J.M., 2013. Not all Studies with Small Samples are Pilot Studies. *Journal of Perinatal and Neonatal Nursery, 27*(4), pp. 281-283.

McLarty, R., Pichanic, M., and Sarapova, J., 2012. Factors Influencing the Performance of Small to Medium-Sized Enterprises: An Empirical Study in the Czech Republic. *International Journal of Management, 29*(3), pp. 36-47.

McMillan, J.H., and Schumacher, S., 2006. *Research in Education: Evidence-based Inquiry*. New York: Pearson Education Inc.

Meredith, G.G., and Miller, P., 2009. *Asian SME Business Doctoral Research Outcomes*. Proceedings of 2009 International Council for Small Business (ICSB) World Conference, Seoul, Korea, 22-24 June.

Miller, S., Wilson, D., and Hickson, D., 2004. Beyond Planning. Strategies for successfully implementing strategic decisions. *Long Range Planning. 37*(3), pp. 201-218.

Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development. 2014. About The Ministry, Available online:

http://www.smecd.gov.zw/index.php/2013-11-26-07-35-44, [Accessed 20 January 2014].

Minović, J., Lazarević–Moravčević, M. and Beraha, I., 2017. Strategic Orientation of SMEs: Empirical Research. *Management: Journal of Sustainable Business and Management Solutions in Emerging Economies*, *21*(81), pp.16-26.

Mintzberg, H. and Waters, J.A., 1985. Of strategies, deliberate and emergent. *Strategic Management Journal*, *6*(3), pp.257-272.

Misankova, M., and Kocisova, K., 2014. Strategic Implementation as a part of Strategic Management. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences 110*, pp. 861-870.

Mohamad Radzi, K., Nor, M.N.M., and Ali, S.M. 2017. The Impact of Internal Factors on Small Business Success: A Case of Small Enterprises Under the FELDA Scheme. *Asian Academy of Management Journal, 22*(1), pp. 27-55.

Moore, H., and McSherry, W., 2013. Ethical Implications of Consent in Translational Research. *Cancer Nursing Practice, 12*(10), pp. 22-26.

Moore, S. L., and Manring, S. L., 2009. Strategy Development in Small and Medium sized Enterprises for Sustainability and Increased Value Creation. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 17* (2), pp. 276-282.

Morgan, D.L., 2007. Paradigms Lost and Pragmatism Regained: Methodological Implications of Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*(1), pp.48-76.

Morrison, A., 2003. SME Management and Leadership Development: Market Orientation. *Journal of Management Development, 22*(9), pp. 796-808.

Morse, J.M., 2015. Critical Analysis of Strategies for Determining Rigor in Qualitative Inquiry. *Qualitative Health Research, 25*(9), pp.1212-1222.

Mpofu, T., and Chigwende, S., 2013. Factors Influencing Marketing Planning and Implementation in Zimbabwean SMEs. *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research, 12* (1), pp. 82-92.

Muenjohn, N., and Armstrong, A., 2007. Transformational Leadership: The Influence of Culture on the Leadership Behaviours of Expatriate Managers. *International Journal of Business and Information, 2*(2), pp. 265-283.

Muenjohn, N., and McMurray, A., 2016. The Impact of Leadership on Workplace Innovation in Thai and Vietnamese SMEs. *The Journal of Developing Areas, 50*(5), pp. 479-486.

Mugwindiri, K., and Madanhire, I., 2013. Manufacturing Capacity Building Baseline Survey on Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs): A Case Study of Hire Engineering Co. in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Engineering and Computer Science, 2*(1), pp. 330-346.

Msasanure, M., and Mtisi, S., 2012. The Role of Strategic Management in Enhancing the Growth of SMEs in Zimbabwe with Special Reference to the City of Bulawayo. Paper Presented at the 3rd Annual International Conference on Entrepreneurship and SBD, University of Johannesburg, 15-16 May 2012, Retrieved from: http://wernerraubenheimer.com/csbd.co.za/documents/2012-CSBD-Conference, [Accessed 13 June 2014].

Myers, M.D., 2009. *Qualitative Research in Business and Management*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.

Nastase, M., 2010. Developing a Strategic Leadership Approach within the Organisations. *Review of International Comparative Management, 2*(3), pp. 454-460.

New Zealand Institute of Management. 2004. Improving Managers. Available online: http://www.management.co.nz/articles/nzim-improving-managers, [Accessed 14 March 2015].

National Credit Regulator. 2011. Literature Review on Small and Medium Enterprises' Access to Credit Support in South Africa. Available online:

www.ncr.org.za, [Accessed 10 January 2015].

Ng, H.S., 2016. *The Influence of Transformational Leadership and Competence on Small Enterprise Success in Malaysia: The Mediating Effect of Innovativeness* (Doctoral dissertation, Universiti Sains Malaysia).

Ng, H.S. and Kee, D.M.H., 2017. The core competence of successful owner-managed SMEs. *Management Decision, 56*(1), pp. 252-272.

Ng, H.S., and Kee, D.M.H., 2013. Intangible Factors Affecting the Success of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). *International Journal of Management and Organisational Studies, 1*(2), pp. 10-15.

Ng, H.S., Kee, D. M.H., and Ramayah, T., 2016. The Role of Transformational Leadership, Entrepreneurial Competence and Technical Competence on Enterprise Success of Owner-managed SMEs. *Journal of General Management, 42*(1), pp. 23-43.

Ngwangwama, M.M., Ungerer, M., and Morrison, J., 2013. An Exploratory Study of Key Success Factors for Business Success of Companies in the Namibian Tertiary Industry. *International Journal of Innovations in Business, 2*(6), pp. 604–629.

Njuguna Chege, A., Wachira, A., and Mwenda, L., 2015. Effects of Leadership Styles on Implementation of Organization Strategic Plans in Small and Medium Enterprises in Nairobi. *Management and Administrative Sciences Review, 4* (3), pp. 593-600.

Nunnally, J., and Bernstein, I., 1994. *Psychometric Theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Inc.

Nyamwanza, T. 2013. A Case Study Review of the Strategy Formulation and Implementation Link among SMEs in Zimbabwe. *European Journal of Business and Management, 5*(13), pp. 138-145.

Nyamwanza, T., 2013. A Case Study Review of Pre-Requisites for Strategy Implementation among SMEs in Zimbabwe. *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences, 2*(9), pp.124-133.

Nyamwanza, T., and Mavhiki, T., 2014. Strategy Implementation Framework used by SMEs in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Business and Management, 3*(2), pp. 1-16.

Oladele, O.P., 2013. Effects of Strategic Leadership Styles on Organisational Development in SMEs in Lagos, Nigeria. *Net Journal of Social Sciences, 1*(2), pp. 54-60.

Onions, P.E.W., 2006. Grounded Theory Application in Reviewing Knowledge Management Literature, Available online: http://www.lmu.ac.uk/research/postgradconf/papers/Patrick_Onions_paper.pdf, [Accessed January 2014].

Onwuegbuzie, A.J., Bustamante, R.M., and Nelson, J.A. 2010. Mixed Research as a Tool for Developing Quantitative Instruments. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research 4*(1), pp. 56-78.

Oxford Economics. 2017. SME Success Factors, A Global Study that Reveals the Key Drivers of Success for SMEs in 2017 and Beyond. Available online:

http://info.aliceapp.com/hubfs/Amex-Small-Business-Strategies.pdf?t=1497027864089, [Accessed 10 October 2017].

Paige, R.C. and Littrell, M. A., 2002. Craft Retailers' Criteria for Success and Associated Business Strategies. *Journal of Small Business Management, 40*(4), pp. 314-331.

Panda, A. and Gupta, R.K., 2013. Using Mixed Methods Approach in Cross-cultural Studies: Lessons of a Research Experience. *Psychological Studies, 58*(3), pp. 289-307.

Paoletti, I. 2014. Ethics and The Social Dimension of Research Activities. *Human Studies, 37*(2), pp. 257-277.

Pathak, A., and Intratat, C., 2012. Use of Semi-structured Interviews to Investigate Teacher Perceptions of Student Collaboration. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research, 8*(1), p.1.

Peake, W. and Marshall, M., 2011. Experience and Entrepreneurship in Industrialized Countries: A Meta-Analysis. *Southern Journal of Entrepreneurship, 4*(1), pp.49-70.

Phellas, C.N., Bloch, A., and Seale, C., 2011. Structured Methods: Interviews, Questionnaires and Observation, In Seale, C. 2011. *Researching Society and Culture.* 3rd Edition, London: Sage publications.

Phipps, K.A., and Burbach, M.E., 2010. Strategic Leadership in the Non-profit sector: Opportunities for Research. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management, 11*(2), p. 137.

Pinz, A. and Helmig, B., 2015. Success Factors of Microfinance Institutions: State of the Art and Research Agenda. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 26*(2), pp. 488-509.

Plano Clark, V.L., 2010. The Adoption and Practice of Mixed Methods: U.S. Trends in Federally funded Health-related Research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(6), pp. 428-440.

Plano Clark, V. L., 2013. Mixed Methods Research: A Practical Introduction for Prevention Researchers. SPR Conference Workshop, San Francisco, Available Online: www.preventionresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Plano-Clark-SPR-111_2.pdf, [Accessed 25 March 2015].

Polit, D.F., and Beck, C.T., 2006. *Essentials of Nursing Research. Methods, Appraisal and Utilisation.* 6th Edition, Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

Porth, S., 2002. *Strategic Management: A Cross-functional Approach.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Porter, M. E. 1996. What is Strategy. *Harvard Business Review*. November December, 61-78.

Priem, R. L., Lyon, D. W., and Dess, G. G., 1999. Inherent Limitations of Demographic Proxies in Top Management Team Heterogeneity Research. *Journal of Management, 25*(6), pp. 935-953.

Pucko, D., and T. Cater. 2008. "What Effective Strategy Implementation Depends On: The Experience of Slovenian Companies." In *An Enterprise Odyssey: Tourism – Governance and Entrepreneurship:* 4th International Conference, 1220–1234. Zagreb: Graduate School of Economics and Business.

Quong, T., and Walker, A., 2010. Seven Principles of Strategic Leadership. *International Studies in Educational Administration, (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM)), 38*(1).

Qu, S.Q., and Dumay, J., 2011. The Qualitative Research Interview. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management, 8*(3), pp. 238-264.

Rahman, S.U., 2001. Total Management Practice and Business Outcome: Evidence from Small and Medium Enterprises in Western Australia. *Total Quality Management, 12*(2), pp. 201-210.

Raps, A., 2004. Implementing Strategy. In *Strategic Finance, 85*(12), pp. 48-53.

Raps, A. 2005. Strategy Implementation- An Insurmountable Obstacle? *Handbook of Business Strategy*, pp. 141-146.

Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. 2017. Zimbabwe National Inclusion Strategy, 2016-2020. Available online:

http://rbz.co.zw/assets/zimbabwe-national-financial-inclusion-strategy-2016---2020.pdf,

[Accessed 10 October 2017].

Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. 2007. Monetary Policy Statement. Available online: http://www.rbz.co.zw , [Accessed 19 January 2014].

Rigby, D.K., 2015. *Management Tools 2015. An Executive's Guide*. Boston, MA: Bain & Company Inc.

Rockart, J.F., 1978. Chief Executives Define their Own Data Needs. *Harvard Business Review*, *57*(2), pp. 81-93.

Rodney Turner, J., Ledwith, A. and Kelly, J., 2009. Project Management in Small to Medium-Sized Enterprises: A Comparison Between Firms by Size and Industry. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, *2*(2), pp. 282-296.

Rogoff, E.G., Lee, M.Y., and Suh, D.C., 2004. Who done it? Attributions by Entrepreneurs and Experts of the Factors that Cause and Impede Small Business Success. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *42*(4), pp. 364-376.

Roulston, K., 2010. *Asking Questions and Individual Interviews. In Reflective Interviewing: A Guide to Theory and Practice*. London: Sage publications.

Rose, R.C., Kumar, N., and Yen, L.L., 2006. The Dynamics of Entrepreneurs' Success Factors in Influencing Venture Growth. *Journal of Asia Entrepreneurship and Sustainability*, *2*(2), pp. 1-22.

Rowe, G., and Nejad, M.H. 2009. Strategic Leadership: Short-term Stability and Long-Term Viability. Available online:

http://www.iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/leadership/strategic-leadership-short-term-stability-and-long-term-viability, [Accessed 10 June 2014].

Sage, S. 2015. Strategic Implementation. Available online:

http://onstrategyhq.com/ resources/strategic-implementation/, [Accessed 6 December 2015].

Saleem, M.A., 2012. The Impact of Socio-economic Factors on Small Business Success. *Malaysia Journal of Society and Space*, *8*(1), pp. 24-29.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. 2011. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 5th Edition, New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley India Pvt Ltd.

Sbaraini, A., Carter, S.M., Evans, R.W., and Blinkhorn, A. 2011. How to Do a Grounded Theory Study: A Worked Example of a Study of Dental Practices. *BMC Medical Research Methodology Ltd, 11*(1), p. 128.

Schmidpeter, R., and Weidinger, C., 2014. Linking Business and Society: An Overview. In *Sustainable Entrepreneurship, (pp1-10).* Springer Berlin-Heidelberg.

Schuh, G., Riesener, M., and Arnoscht, J., 2012. *Critical Success Factors in Medium-sized Pharmaceutical Enterprises.* Paper presented at The 5th ISPIM Innovation Symposium-Stimulating Innovation: Challenges for Management, Science & Technology, Seoul, Korea, 9-12 December.

Seo, Y.W. and Chae, S.W., 2016. Market Dynamics and Innovation Management on Performance in SMEs: Multi-Agent Simulation Approach. *Procedia Computer Science 91*, pp. 707 – 714.

Shannon-Baker, P., 2016. Making Paradigms Meaningful in Mixed Methods Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 10*(4), pp. 319-334.

Sharma, G., 2011. Do SMEs Need to Strategize? *Business Strategy Series, 12*(4), pp. 186-194.

Shenton, A.K., 2004. Strategies for Ensuring Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Studies. *Education for Information, 22*(2), pp. 63-75.

Simpson, M., Padmore, J., and Newman, N., 2012. Towards a Model of Success and Performance in SMEs. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research, 18*(3), pp. 264-285.

Simsek, Z., Jansen, J.J., Minichilli, A. and Escriba-Esteve, A., 2015. Strategic leadership and leaders in entrepreneurial contexts: A nexus for innovation and impact missed?. *Journal of Management Studies, 52*(4), pp.463-478.

Singh, R.K., Garg, S.K. and Deshmukh, S.G., 2009. The Competitiveness of SMEs in a Globalized Economy: Observations from China and India. *Management Research Review, 33*(1), pp.54-65.

Singh, K., 2007. *Quantitative Research Methods*. New Delhi: Sage publications.

Slawinski, N., 2007. Strategic Leadership. Available online:

www.corwin.com/upm-data/15106_Rowe_Chapter.11.pdf, [Accessed 23 September 2015].

Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Zimbabwe.2014. Find A Business, Our Members, Available online:

http://smeaz.org.zw/index.php?option=com_sobipro&sid=1&Itemid=492, [Accessed 3 December 2014].

Small Enterprise Development Corporation. 2004. *Regional Assessments Reports*. Mambo: Gweru.

Small Enterprise Development Corporation of Zimbabwe. 2010. Welcome to Sedco. Available online:

http://www.sedco.co.zw [Accessed 5 January 2014].

Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation. 2012. Annual report. Harare: SEDCO.

Small Enterprise Development Corporation. 2014. Welcome to Sedco. Available online: http://www.sedco.co.zw [Accessed 2 June 2014].

Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M., 2008. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Dans JA Smith (Éd.), *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods* (2 éd., pp. 53-80).

Sociological Research Skills. 2015. Questionnaires. Available online: http://www.sociology.org.uk/methodq.pdf [Accessed 29 June 2015].

Sociological Research Skills. 2015. Semi structured Interviews. Available online: http://www.socilogy.org.uk/methodq.pdf [Accessed 28 June 2015].

Sorooshian, S., Norzima, Z., Yusof, I., and Rosnah, Y., 2010. Effects Analysis on Strategy Implementation Drivers. *World Applied Sciences Journal, 11*(10), pp. 1255-1261.

Speculand, R., 2009. Six Necessary Mind Shifts for Implementing Strategy. *Business Strategy Series, 10*(3), pp. 167-172.

Statistics Canada. 2013. Types of data collection. Available online: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/edu/power-pouvoirch2/types/5214777-eng.htm, [Accessed 22 June 2015].

Stead, J. and Stead, W., 2008. Sustainable Strategic Management: An Evolutionary Perspective. *International Journal of Sustainable Strategic Management. 1*(1), pp. 62-81.

Steiner, G. and Miner, J., 1977. *Management Policy and Strategy: Text, Readings and Cases*. New York: Macmillan.

Stern, P.N., 1994. Eroding Grounded Theory. In M.J. Morse (Ed*) Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods*, London: Sage publications.

Strand, R., 2014. Strategic Leadership of Corporate Sustainability. Available online: link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10551-013-2017-3, [Accessed 3 March 2014].

Strauss, A., and Corbin, J., 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage publications.

Strauss, A., and Corbin, J., 2008. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded theory: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. 3rd Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.

Sturges, J., 1999. What it Means to Succeed: Personal Conceptions of Career Success Held by Female Managers at Different Ages. *British Journal of Management, 10*(3), pp. 239-52.

Su, Y.S., Tsang, E.W. and Peng, M.W., 2009. How do Internal Capabilities and External Partnerships affect Innovativeness? *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 26*(2), pp.309-331.

Tadesse, A., 2009. SME Financing in Africa. Available online:

http://www.proparco.fr/jahia/webdav/site/proparco/shared/PORTAILS/Secteur_prive_developpement/PDF/SPD1/SPD1_Tadesse_EN.pdf, [Accessed 20 March 2015].

Tashakkori, A., and Creswell, J.W., 2007. Exploring the Nature of Research Questions in Mixed Methods Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*(3), pp. 207-211.

Tashakkori, A., and Creswell, J.W., 2007. The New Era of Mixed Methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* doi: 10.177/2345678906293042.

Tavakol, M., and Dennic, R., 2011. Making Sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education, 2*, p. 53.

Taylor, B., 1995. The New Strategic Leadership-Driving Change, Getting Results. *Long Range Planning, 28* (5), pp. 5-71.

Taylor, A., and Taylor, M., 2014. Factors Influencing Effective Implementation of Performance Measurement Systems in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Large Firms: A

Perspective from Contingency Theory. *International Journal of Production Research, 52*(3), pp. 847–866.

Taylor, S.J., Bogdan, R. and DeVault, M., 2015. Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: a Guidebook and Resource. Hoboken: Wiley. Available online: https://books.google.co.bw/books?id=EQSIAwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Taylor. [Accessed 10 December 2016].

Teddlie, C and Tashakkori, A. 2009. Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. Sage: London.

Temtime, Z.T., and Pansiri, J., 2004. Small Business Critical Success/failure Factors in Developing Economies: Some Evidences from Botswana. *American Journal of Applied Science, 1*(1), pp. 18-25.

Thanasegaran, G., 2009. Reliability and Validity in Research. Available online:

http://econ.upm.edu.my/researchbulletin/artikel/Vol%204%20March%202009/35-40%20Ganesh.pdf, [Accessed 7 July 2015].

Thompson, A.A., and Strickland, A.J., 2003. *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases.* 13th Edition, New York: McGraw-Hill.

Thomson, S.B., 2002. Grounded Theory-Sample Size and Validity. Available online:

http://www.buseco.monash.edu.au/research/studentdocs/mgt.pdf.2002, [Accessed 3 March 2014].

TNS Employee Insights. 2011. Sampling versus: A Comparative Analysis. Available online:

www.tnsemployeeinsights.com/images/stories/tns/pdfs/TNS_214711ARSamplingVsCentury.pdf [Accessed 22 June 2015].

Toftoy, C.N., and Chatterjee, J., 2004. Mission Statements and The Small Business. *Business Strategy Review, 15*(3), pp. 41-44.

Trochim, W.M., 2006. The Research Methods Knowledge Base. 2nd Edition, Available online: hppt://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb, [Accessed 2 January 2014].

Turkyilmaz, A., Tatoglu, E., Zaim, S., and Ozkan, C., 2010. TQM Practices and Business Performance in SMEs. In V. Esposito Vinzi, W. W. Chin, J. Henseler, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Handbook of Partial Least Squares* (pp. 605-621). Verlag: Springer.

Uddin, M. R., and Bose, T.K., 2013. Factors Affect the Success of SME in Bangladesh: Evidence from Khulna City. *Journal of Management and Sustainability, 3*(3), p.166.

University of Strathclyde. 2013. Use of Questionnaires. Available online: http://www.strath.ac.uk/aer/materials/3datacollection/unit2useofquestionnaires, [Accessed 30 June 2015].

University of Strathclyde. 2013. Questionnaire Piloting and Administration. Available online: http://www.strath.ac.uk/aer/materials/3datacollectionunit2questionnairepilotingandadministration, [Accessed 30 June 2015].

Van Gils, A., 2005. Management and Governance in Dutch SMEs. *European Management Journal 23*(5), pp. 583-589.

Venkatesh, V., Brown, S.A., and Balla, H., 2013. Bridging the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide: Guidelines for Conducting Mixed Methods Research Information Systems. *MIS Quarterly, 37*(1), pp. 21-54.

Venkatesh, V., Brown, S.A. and Sullivan, Y.W., 2016. Guidelines for Conducting Mixed Methods Research: An extension and Illustration. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, *17*(7), p.435.

Visser, D.J., De Coning, T.J., and Smith, E.V.D.M., 2005. The Relationship Between the Characteristics of the Transformational Leader and the Entrepreneur in South African SMEs. *South African Journal of Business Management, 36*(3), pp. 51-63.

Vrchota, J and Rehor, P., 2017. Influence of Strategies to Determine the Significance of the Crisis by the Managers of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises. *Serbian Journal of Management, 12* (1), pp. 53-63.

Wagner, S.M., Lukassen, P., and Mahlendorf, M., 2010. Missed and Missed Use-Grounded Theory and Objective Hermeneutics as Methods for Research in Industrial Marketing. *Industrial Marketing Management, 39*(1), pp. 5-15.

Walker, E., and Brown, A., 2004. What Success Factors are Important to Small Business Owners? *International Small Business Journal*, *22*(6), pp. 577-594.

Walker, E., Loughton, K., and Brown, A. 1999. The Relevance of Non-financial Measures of Success for Micro-Business Owners. Proceedings of the 1999 International Council for Small Business Conference Naples, Available online:

www.sbaer.uca.edu/research/icbs/1999/101.pdf, [Accessed 17 January 2014].

Wang, Y., 2016. What are The Biggest Obstacles to Growth of SMEs in Developing Countries? - An Empirical Evidence from an Enterprise Survey. *Borsa Istanbul Review*, *16*(3), pp. 167-176.

Wasilczuk, J., 2000. Advantageous Competence of Owner/managers to Grow the Firm in Poland: Empirical Evidence. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *38*(2), p.88.

Wheelen, T.L., and Hunger, D.J., 2006. *Concepts in Strategic Management and Business Policy*. Pearson-Prentice-Hall: Upper Saddle River.

Wieder, B., Booth, P., Matolcsy, Z.P., and Ossimitz, M.L., 2006. The Impact of ERP Systems on Firm and Business Process Performance. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, *19*(1), pp. 13–29.

Williams, H.S., and Johnson, T.L., 2010. Strategic Leadership in Schools. *Education*, *133*(3), pp. 350-355.

Williams, R.S., 1998. *Performance Management: Perspectives of Employee Performance*. London: International Thomson Business Press.

Wolfe, R., 2012. The Top 5 Strategic Challenges. Available online:

http://www.linked2leadership.com/2012/03/07/5-challenges-leaders-face-2012, [Accessed 27 May 2014].

Woods, M., 2011. Interviewing for Research and Analysing Qualitative Data: An Overview. Available online:

http://owll.massey.ac.nz/pdf/interviewing-for-research-and-analysing-qualitative-data.pdf, [Accessed 15 June 2015].

World Bank. 2017. World Bank Group, Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Boost Small and Medium Enterprise Development in Zimbabwe. Available online:

http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/07/05/world-bank-group-reserve-bank-of-zimbabwe-boost-small-and-medium-enterprise-development-in-zimbabwe, [Accessed 10 October 2017].

World Bank. 2017. Zimbabwe Economic Update. The State in the Economy. Issue 2. Available online:

http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/333081497536246610/pdf/116309-WP-PUBLIC-on-6-21-6-am-dc-time-15-6-2017-15-24-30-ZimbabweEconomicUpdate.pdf, [Accessed 18 July 2018].

World Bank. 2013. Evaluation of the World Bank Group's Targeted Support for Small and Medium Enterprises. Available online: http://ieg.worldbank.org/Data/reports/ap_evaluationof_smes.pdf, [Accessed 15 April 2015].

World Bank. 2014. Republic of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe Economic Policy Dialogue Policy Notes for the New Government – 2013. Available online:

https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/23027/Zimbabwe0Polic00the0new0government.pdf?sequence=1, [Accessed 18 July 2018].

Wray, J., 2015. Why Undertake Pilot Work in a Qualitative PhD Study? Lessons learnt to Promote Success. RCN Annual International Nursing Research Conference and Exhibition, 20-22 April 2015, Available online:

htpps://www.rcn.org.uk_data/assets/pdf_file/.../2015-research-4.1.2.pdf, [Accessed 12 August 2015].

Yen, R.C., and Santos, A., 2009. The Impact of Training on SMEs Longevity in Mozambique, *The Journal of International Management Studies*, *4*(3), pp. 121-128.

Yin, R. K., 2009. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods.* 3rd Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.

Yuchtman, E. and Seashore, S.E., 1967. A System Resource Approach to Organizational Effectiveness. *American Sociological Review*, pp.891-903.

Yukl, G., 2013. *Leadership in Organizations*. Essex: Pearson.

Yusuf, A., 1995. Critical Success Factors for Small Business: Perceptions of South Pacific Entrepreneurs. *Journal of Small Business Management, 33*(2), p. 68.

Zaccaro, S. 2001. The Nature of Executive Leadership: A Conceptual and Empirical Analysis of Success. Washington, DC: APA books.

Zafir, M.M., and Fazilah, M.H., 2007. *Menjadi Usahawan, Batu Caves.* Selangor: PTS Publications and Distributors.

Zhang, H.L., 2009. Subversion - The Way of Small and Medium Enterprises to Survival. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press.

Zhu, Y. M., and Sanderson, J. W., 2009. The Key Obstacles and Countermeasure against Development of Innovative SMEs in China. *China Soft Science, 9*, pp. 23 –31.

Zhu, Y., Wittmann, X. and Peng, M.W., 2012. Institution-based barriers to innovation in SMEs in China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 29*(4), pp.1131-1142.

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (Zimstats). 2011. Trade and Manufacturing Sector Strategic Plan for Statistics, 2011-2015. Available online: www.zimstats.co.zw/dmdocuments/trade.pdf, [Accessed 22 May 2015].

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (Zimstats). 2012. 2011 Labour Force Survey. Available online:

www.zimstat.co.zw/dmdocuments/Laborforce.pdf, [Accessed 12 January 2014].

Zohrabi, M., 2013. Mixed Method Research: Instruments, Validity, Reliability and Reporting Findings. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 3*(2), pp. 254-262.

Zoogah, D.B., 2009. Cultural Value Orientation, Personality and Motivational Determinants of Strategic Leadership in Africa. *International Journal of Leadership Studies, 4*(2), pp. 202-222.

APPENDIX 1: DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED SMES IN ZIMBABWE'S PROVINCES

BUSINESS LINE	PROVINCE					
		HARARE METROP	MASH EAST (CHITUNG WIZA)	MIDLANDS (GWERU)	BULAWAYO METROP	MASH WEST (NORTON)
CARPENTRY	33	24	8	1	-	-
METAL ENGINEERING	58	50	6	1	1	-
MACHINERY AND TOOLS	27	27	-	-	-	-
LIGHT ENGINEERING	29	28	1	-	-	-
INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES	60	57	-	-	1	2
TOTALS	**207**	**186**	**15**	**2**	**2**	**2**
PERCENT	**100**	**89.855**	**7.246**	**0.966**	**0.966**	**0.966**

Source: Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Zimbabwe (SMEAZ) (2014), Our Members

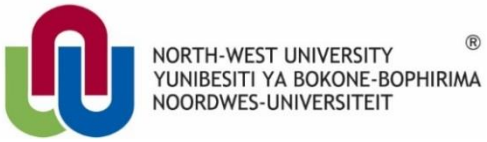
APPENDIX 2: LEADERSHIP LEVELS

I-Change (2015) argues that John Adair, of University of Surrey & Sandhurst, described three levels of leadership:

- Team leadership (control of a single team)
- Operational leadership (control of a number of teams which make up a complete operation)
- Strategic Leadership (control of the entire business/ organisation)

Source: I-Change (2015), Leadership Models and Theories, Available Online: http://www.i-change.biz/modelsandtheories.php, [Accessed 13 March 2015].

APPENDIX 3: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, INFORMED CONSENT, AND QUESTIONNAIRE



Faculty of Commerce & Administration

School of Business and Governance
Mafikeng Campus
Mmabatho, 2745

Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent

TITLE OF STUDY: A strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe

Research conducted by:
Tendai Douglas Svotwa
Student number: 27003876
+267 743 822 56

Dear Participant

As an SME owner-manager in Zimbabwean Manufacturing and Engineering SMEs, you are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Tendai Douglas Svotwa. This study will assist me in completing my PhD in Business Management and Administration at the School of Business and Governance at the North-West University (Mafikeng campus) in South Africa. The study explores the role of strategic leadership in Zimbabwean Small and Medium manufacturing and engineering Enterprises (SMEs) with the aim of developing a strategic leadership framework for SMEs success in Zimbabwe in which you as leaders play a strategic role.

Please note the following:

- This is an anonymous study as your name will not appear on the questionnaire. The answers you give to the questions in the attached questionnaire will be treated as strictly confidential as you cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.
- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.
- Please contact my study leader, (**Prof Yvonne du Plessis, Tel: +27 18 389 2021, email: Yvonne.duplessis@nwu.ac.za)** if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above. YE
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. (Please tick) .

By agreeing to participate in this study, you are invited to complete the attached self-administered questionnaire.

If you are uncertain about the meaning of key terms in relation to this study, herewith definitions for clarification of meaning applying to this questionnaire:

Strategy: The creation of a unique and valuable position involving a different set of activities (Porter, 1996).

Strategic Leadership: Strategic leadership sets the vision, directions, meaning, purposes, and goals of the organisation. It also refers to defining the vision and moral purpose and translating them into action. It is a means of building the direction and the capacity for the organisation to achieve that directional shift or change (Davies and Davies, 2010).

Strategy Implementation: An iterative process of implementing strategies, policies, programs and action plans that allows a firm to utilize its resources to take advantage of opportunities in the competitive environment (Harrington, 2006).

Success: The ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for owner/managers and their employees through maintaining an optimum level of activity with which they can cope (Beaver, 2002).

This questionnaire takes about 40 minutes to complete and I am appealing to you to complete all the areas required of you to the best of your ability. There are no wrong answers and your first response to a question is often the most valuable one.

This questionnaire (Attached) comprises three Sections:

Section A: Biographic data

Section B: Company profile

Section C: Components of a strategic leadership framework

Thank you in advance

Sincerely,

Tendai Douglas Svotwa

QUESTIONNAIRE

A strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC DATA

Please tick in the relevant box to indicate your response

1) Your Age (in years):

□ Less than 25 □ 25 – 30 □ 31 – 35 □ 36 – 40 □ 41- 50 □ More than 50

2) Your Gender: □ Male □ Female

3) Your highest Educational Qualification:

□ Undergraduate Diploma □ Bachelor's Degree □ Master's Degree..... □ Doctoral Degree
□ If others, please specify _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

4) Your Work Designation: □ Owner-manager □ Co-Owner □ If other, please specify.....

5) Years of work experience: □ Less than 5years □ 5 – 10years □ More than 10 years

SECTION B: COMPANY PROFILE

Please tick in the relevant box to indicate your response

6) Your SMEs Predominant Industry (Business line):

□ Metal Engineering □ Industrial Supplies □ Light Engineering □ Machinery and Tools □ Carpentry..... □ If other, please specify.....

7) Company's years of existence:

□ 3 to 5years □ 6 to 9 years □ 10 years and above

8) Number of Employees: □ 10-50 □51-100 □ more than 100

If applicable answer the following two questions 8.1 and 8.2 by filling in the number:

8.1) Number of Permanent Employees.....: 8.2) Number of Temporary Employees:.....

9) Company Annual Turnover (USD: □ Less than US$300 000 □ US$300 000 to US$499 000

□ US$500 000 to $699 000 □ USD$700 000 to US$899 000 □ US$900 000+

10) Ownership Structure: □ Locally owned □ Locally owned partnership □ Majority locally owned □ Majority foreign owned □ If others, please specify _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

If Foreign partnership, mention the foreign party/parties involved:

.....

11) Company Location (Province): □ Harare Metropolitan □ Bulawayo Metropolitan

□ Mashonaland West □ Midlands □ Mashonaland East

SECTION C: SURVEY QUESTIONS:

SECTION C 1: Establishing strategic direction of the company

Using the six- point scale below, please indicate (***tick in the appropriate box***) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on the establishment of strategic direction (formulation of vision and mission statements in your SME):

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	My company has a mission statement which indicates the current business we are in	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	My first task in setting the strategic direction of my SME is to set the vision and mission of the organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	I communicate the mission statement of my SME to all employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	I have a business strategy in place	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	My organisation operated more on daily plans	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	My organisation operates more on monthly plans	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	My organisation has a yearly(annual) plan	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	I communicate the vision of my organisation to all employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	The setting of a vision is important to my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	One of the values contained in the vision of the SME is honesty	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11	One of the values contained in the vision of the SME is integrity	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
12	I involve employees in setting the mission and vision statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
13	The challenging operating environment makes it difficult for me to set long term plans for my organisation.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
14	I seek information from external experts in my line of business on planning for the future	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 2: Management of the firm's resource portfolio

Using the six-point scale below, please indicate (***tick in the appropriate box*****)** the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on your core competences, human, social and financial capital in your SME:

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	My organisation is financially in a good position if compared to competitors'	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	My organisation possesses most up to date machinery	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	My employees are well trained and can be a source of competitive advantage	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	Employees receive training in order to improve their performance	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	I create opportunities for every employee to succeed.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	Good internal relations exist in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	My SME works with other SMEs in order to come up with new products	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	Capital is well spent in order to buy machinery/raw materials	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	My entrepreneurial skills are key to my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	Overall, good employees are more important than capital as a resource in my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11	Overall, capital is more important than good employees as a resource in my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 3: Organisational culture

Using the six point scale below, please indicate (***tick in the appropriate box***) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on your organisational culture (ideologies, shared values, change).

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	My organisation's culture influences the way we conduct business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	I allow employees to question the way we do business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	My organisation's culture influences employee behaviour	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	I believe in team work and team effort in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	I am always exemplary in my behaviour, "I do what I say"	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	I value transparency in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	I believe in coming up with new products all the time	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	The performance of my organisation is greatly influenced by my organisation's culture	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	Changing situations in the environment means that we have to change our cultural practices (the way we do business)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	I always communicate new cultural practices (new ways to do business) to employees when the need arises	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11	Employees are encouraged to initiate new ways of doing work	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
12	I reward employees who are involved in strengthening the new cultural practices	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
13	I am honest with all stakeholders including employees in developing an organisational culture that supports success	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
14	Sound interpersonal relations are valued in our organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 4: Organisation's ethical practices

Using the six point scale below, please indicate (***tick in the appropriate box***) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on your SME ethical practices (decision making, trust, integrity, firm's ethical standards)

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	I empower individuals to make decisions in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	Employees have faith in me	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	I give personal attention to employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	I always exercise my integrity in decision making in order to inspire employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	As an ethical strategic leader, I take accountability for ensuring that we always do the right thing	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	I always communicate the ethical standards of my organisation to employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	Underhand dealings in my organisation is not tolerated	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	I always communicate the ethical standards of my organisation to customers and other stakeholders	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	In order to improve my organisation's ethical standards, I always update our code of conduct	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	All employees value our customers by treating them with respect	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11	I treat all employees with respect in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
12	We deliver what we promise to our customers	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 5: Organisation's strategic and financial control systems

Using the six point scale below, please indicate (***tick in the appropriate box***) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on strategic and financial controls in your SME.

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	I ensure that employees understand the set goals and standards of work for them to carry out their work	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	I ensure employees know what is expected of them in order to be rewarded for their work	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	I provide rewards to employees when they reach their set goals	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	I punish employees who do not meet their set performance targets	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	I show my satisfaction by recognising employees who meet the agreed upon standards	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	I hold regular (weekly/monthly) meetings with employees in order to exchange information to improve the business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	I use the information I get from meetings to come up with organisational strategies	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	I ensure that strategic and financial controls are in place in order to put strategies into action	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	I agree individual performance targets to be achieved in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	I agree group performance targets to be achieved in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 6: Strategic leaders' role in the implementation of strategies in SMEs

Using the six point scale below, please indicate **(*tick in the appropriate box*)** the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategies in your SME:

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	I influence the implementation of strategies in my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	I balance operational and strategic issues of the organisation, hence deliver strategic action	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	I implement plans of action which enhances the long term survival of my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	I provide strategic information to my employees which contributes to successful strategy implementation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	My ability to put strategies into action contributes to my organisation's superior performance	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	My ability to communicate plans and actions enables the implementation of strategies	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	In implementing strategies, I combine organisational structure, control systems and culture so that my organisation becomes competitive	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	I involve employees in decision-making which enables my organisation to meet its goals	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	I organise employees by ensuring they understand their duties and responsibilities	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	I actively implement strategies by ensuring resources are availability	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11	I monitor strategy achievement in my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
12	I take action in directing the strategic implementation when undertaking projects	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 7: Strategic leaders' views on the strategies they use to manage SMEs.

Using the six point scale below, please indicate your views (***tick in the appropriate box***) on the strategies that you currently use in managing your SME:

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	My organisation achieves its objectives because we have clear plans of action set by me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	The plans of action I set are being fully implemented by employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	I have employees who are committed in executing the organisation's plans of action	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	I always communicate current plans of action to employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	I adjust my organisation's plans of action to be in line with the competition in our market	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	My current plans of action are effective in realizing the organisation's objectives	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	My organisation satisfies customer needs due to clearly defined plans of action	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	My organisation competes effectively using current plans of action	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	Changes in the operating environment have not impacted negatively my organisation's plans of action	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 8: Strategic leadership challenges in SMEs.

Using the six point scale below, please indicate ***(tick in the appropriate box)*** the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on the challenges faced by strategic leaders in the implementation of strategies in SMEs:

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	Lack of finance is a major challenge in our business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	I always change my organisation's structure when changes occur in the market	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	Although market changes are occurring rapidly, I am able to adjust business practices	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	Bad debt, due to customers not paying accounts, is a problem in the business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	Late payments by customers is one of the major challenges	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	A shrinking customer base is a major challenge	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	The presence of so many small companies is posing challenges to me in the form of competition	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	Lack of financial resources affects the implementation of my organisation's plans of action	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	The operating environment is a major challenge	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	The slow movement of stock is a big challenge to my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11	A highly regulated industry is my major problem	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
12	Negative employee attitudes are seriously affecting our business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
13	Lack of skilled employees in the market, to do their job well, is a challenge for my business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 9: Enablers of strategic leadership in SMEs.

Using the six point scale below, please indicate ***(tick in the appropriate box)*** the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on strategic leadership enablers in SMEs:

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	I always initiate new products in my organisation in order to remain in business	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	I encourage innovation which is key to my organisation in providing customers with value	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	In order to be competitive, my organisation focuses on growing its market share	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	I value the knowledge and skills base of employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	I encourage employees to come up with new ways of performing their duties	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	The way we do things in my organisation need to be adapted if we need to prosper	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	I view employees as the key to innovation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	I interact openly with all stakeholders (either in or outside the organisation)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

SECTION C 10: Success Factors for SMEs.

Using the six point scale below, please indicate ***(tick in the appropriate box)*** the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements which are based on the definition of success as well as success factors for SMEs:

(1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Slightly Disagree, 4 Slightly Agree, 5 Agree, 6 Strongly Agree)

		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
01	I define success in terms of financial performance, including profitability, sales and growth	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
02	I define success as the ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for me and employees	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
03	I define success as being in business for a very long time	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
04	My management skills and competencies as the owner-manager/partner are important for SME success	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
05	My work experience contributes to the success of my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
06	My age contributes to the success of my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
07	My personal satisfaction is crucial to the success of my SME	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
08	My leadership style is important in determining the success of my organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
09	SMEs which have been in operation for a longer time (3 years +) are likely to succeed	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
10	Coming up with new products is mandatory in order to succeed in SMEs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11	Financial, human and material resources greatly contribute to SME success	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
12	SMEs employing more than 51 workers succeed more as compared to small SMEs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
13	Superior service contributes greatly to the success of SMEs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
14	SMEs utilizing the latest technologies fare much better than those using old machinery	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
15	Government should create a conducive environment ensuring the success of SMEs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
16	Government should reduce duty on raw materials for SMEs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
17	Government should make funds available to SMEs through the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
18	Government should set up a bank for SMEs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
19	A well detailed business plan guides SME operations, in the final analysis contributing to the SME's success	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

20	Competitors influence my actions so that I succeed in meeting my objectives	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

Thank you for your valuable time in completing this Questionnaire which will be collected by the researcher upon completion.

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
MAFIKENG CAMPUS

Faculty of Commerce & Administration

Graduate School of Business and Government Leadership
DR ALBERT LUTHULI DRIVE
MMABATHO
2735
South Africa

CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF RESEARCH: A strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe

STUDENT NAME: TENDAI DOUGLAS SVOTWA +267 743 822 56
PROMOTER: PROFESSOR YVONNE du PLESSIS +27 833 056 227
CO-PROMOTER: PROFESSOR NICOLENE BARKHUIZEN +27 824 569 352

Invitation to Participate and Study Description

As one of 207 SME owner-managers in Zimbabwean Manufacturing and Engineering Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), you are invited to participate in a research study on the effectiveness of strategic leadership in SMEs. This study will help me better understand how strategic leadership influences the implementation of strategies in SMEs. By agreeing to participate in this study, you are agreeing to be interviewed only once and at a later stage you will be invited to complete a self-administered questionnaire. The interview will take about an hour to complete and will be recorded. Information about you will be maintained by the researcher for study purposes only.

Risks and Benefits

This study does not involve any type of physical risk; you will be asked to answer questions on strategic direction, impact of current strategies on your SME, challenges you are facing as well as success factors for your SME. This study is designed to help enhance SME success in the way

they conduct their operations as well as aid Government in coming up with policies which capacitate SMEs. The results of this research will enable the researcher to come up with a strategic leadership framework which can be used by SMEs in order for them to be successful. The results of this study will also be made available to interested research participants after the publication of the thesis sometime in 2018. Participants are welcome to contact the student and any of the two Supervisors.

Confidentiality

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. To protect your privacy, your responses to the interview questions will only be identified with a code number and will be kept by the student and the research Supervisors. Your name will not be associated with the research findings. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals and presented at conference proceedings, but only group patterns will be described and your identity will not be revealed.

The Right to Refuse or Withdraw

The decision to participate in this research project is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study without affecting your relationship with anyone or any office at North West University, Mafikeng, South Africa. You may also choose not to answer any question posed.

The Right to Ask Questions

You have the right to ask questions about this study and to have those questions answered by the student before, during or after the research. If you have any other concerns about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the student, you may contact Professor Yvonne du Plessis on +27 833 056 227.

Consent

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to participate voluntarily in this study and that you have read and understood the information provided above.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Name of Participant (PLEASE PRINT):

_____

Introduction

This study explores the role of strategic leadership in 207 Zimbabwean Small and Medium manufacturing and engineering Enterprises (SMEs) with the aim of developing a framework for the successful implementation of strategy of SMEs by leaders in strategic positions.

Strategy: The creation of a unique and valuable position involving a different set of activities (Porter, 1996) and this definition will be adopted in this research.

Strategic Leadership: Strategic leadership sets the vision, directions, meaning, purposes, and goals of the organisation. It also refers to defining the vision and moral purpose and translating them into action. It is a means of building the direction and the capacity for the organisation to achieve that directional shift or change (Davies and Davies, 2010).

Strategy Implementation: An iterative process of implementing strategies, policies, programs and action plans that allows a firm to utilize its resources to take advantage of opportunities in the competitive environment (Harrington,2006).

Success: The ability to sustain an acceptable level of income for owner/managers and their employees through maintaining an optimum level of activity with which they can cope (Beaver, 2002). In this research Beaver's definition of success will be adopted in reference to the success of SMEs.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW **SN:_ _ _ _ _**

Date:_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ **Place:_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _**

Starting Time:_ _ _ _ _ _ **Finishing Time_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _**

Duration: _ _ _ __ (Hr) **Minutes_ _ _ _ _ _ _ __ _ _ _ _ _ _ _**

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS

1) Age (in years): □ Less than 25 □ 25 – 30 □ 31 – 35 □ 36 – 40

□ 41- 50 □ More than 50

2) Gender: □ Male □ Female

3) Education: □ Undergraduate Diploma □ Bachelor's Degree □ Master's Degree

□ Doctoral Degree □ If others, please specify _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

4) Work

Designation: □ Owner- manager □ Manager

5) Years of work: □ Less than 5years □ 5 – 10years □ More than 10 years

Experience

SECTION B: COMPANY PROFILE

6) SME Predominant Business line: □ Metal Engineering □ Industrial Supplies □ Light Engineering

□ Machinery and Tools □ Carpentry

7) Company's years of existence: □ 3 years to less than 5 □ 5years to less than 7 □ 7 years to less than 9

□ 9 years to less than 11 □ 11years to less than 13 □ 13 years and above

8) Number of Employees: □ 10-50 □ 51-100

9) Company Annual Turnover (USD): □ Less than $300 000 □ $300 000 to less than $500 000 □ $500 000 to less than $700 000 □ $700 000 to less than $900 000 □ $900 000 to less than $1000 000

10) Ownership: □ Locally owned □ Locally owned partnership □ Majority locally owned Structure □ Majority foreign owned □ If others, please specify _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

SECTION C: Main research Question: Constructs/components of strategic leadership

1. Establishing strategic direction:

01 Does your company have a vision, (or a kind of plan for the future) and if so how is it set? *(Explain)*

02 How do you go about planning in your organisation?

03 After planning, how do you go about implementing your plans?

04 Are your employees aware of your vision and mission? *(Elaborate on how it is communicated)*

(*Probing questions: importance of vision, mission, motivation of workers towards vision, implementation of plans, guidelines and frameworks for reaching the intended destination)*

2. Effectively managing the firm's resource portfolio: exploiting and maintaining core competencies; developing human, social and financial capital

01 Does your company possess some resources or skills which make it superior to competitors? (*Probe areas*)

02 How important are employees to your organisation? (*Probe: Training programmes, skills, education*)

03 How important is the possession of capital to your business? *(Probe in what way?)*

04 How would you value the internal relations within your SME?

05 Overall, what is the most important resource to your SME?

3. **Sustaining an effective organisational culture: ideologies, shared values, change**

(Beliefs held in the organisation, practices, norms of behaviour)

01 What do you consider to be the most important cultural values and beliefs of your business?

(Probing areas: cultural beliefs and practices in the organisation, e.g culture of innovation, learning, changing culture?)

4. Emphasising ethical practices: decision making, honesty, trust, integrity, firm's ethical standards

(Ethics: individual's moral judgements, right or wrong)

01 How are decisions made in your organisation, by individuals or groups? *(On what basis?)*

02 Describe how ethical standards are communicated to employees and other stakeholders.

*(Probing areas: Decisions based on honesty, trust and integrity? **Ask for examples;** reliance on formalized rules, economic rewards to control managers' and employees' behaviour)*

5. Establishing balanced organisational controls: implementation of strategies, strategic and financial

01 Do you have organisational control systems in place, and if so how are they important?

02 How do you manage the performance of employees in your organisation?

03 How is information exchanged within your organisation which is used to develop strategies?

(Probing questions: performance targets, controlling performance, action taken, formal/informal meetings between owner/manager and employees)

Note: Probe: Suggested areas that could be important/critical to strategic leadership

Secondary Objectives

6. The role of strategic leadership in the management and implementation of strategies in your SME

01 Describe your role as a strategic leader in managing and actioning strategies/tactics in your SME.

(Probing questions: what is the role of strategic leaders in managing (POLC) and implementing strategies?)

7. The views of managers/ leaders with regard to the strategies they use to manage SMEs/

Impact of strategies currently used by strategic leaders in SMEs.

01 How effective are your organisational strategies since you formulated them? *(Probe)*

(Probing areas: employee involvement, commitment, communication, impact of competitors)

8. Challenges faced by strategic leaders in the implementation of strategies in SMES.

01 May you share with me some of the challenges that you face in implementing strategies in your organisation?

02 Do market changes pose any problems to the survival of your organisation? *(Probe how)*

(Probing areas: organisational structure and culture, market changes, adequacy of resources, employee commitment)

9. Enablers of strategic leadership in SMEs.

01 In your opinion, in order for strategic leaders to be effective in SMEs, what should they do? ***(Ask for examples)***

(Probing areas: growth orientation: innovation, product development; knowledge management; mobilization of human capital and the development of an effective organisational culture)

10. SME Success Factors

01 In your view, how do you define success, highlighting your performance for the past 3-5 years.

02 In order for your SME to succeed, what would you suggest?

(Probing areas: success factors, entrepreneur skills, years of existence of SME, technology, Government support)

Thank you for your valuable time in participating in this research.

APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE PRODUCTS FOR CARPENTRY- FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS

Leather Lounge Suit

Bedroom Suite

Teak Table and Chairs

APPENDIX 6: LANGUAGE EDITING CONFIRMATION

Teresa Kapp

Language Services

082 789 7878

tekapp@mweb.co.za

This serves to certify that the document

A strategic leadership framework for SME success in Zimbabwe

by

T. D. Svotwa

was duly edited by me.

I am an accredited editor with the University of Johannesburg, and my clients include Absa, FNB, Takealot, and many universities in South Africa and Namibia.

Please note that all editing is done in *Track Changes*, and I therefore have no control over what is accepted or rejected by the author. Furthermore, I have no control over text added at a later stage.

Should there be any queries, please contact me on the number provided above.

Teresa Kapp

APPENDIX 7: NWU ETHICAL CLEARANCE

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900
Faks: (018) 299-4910
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee
Tel +27 18 299 4849
Email Ethics@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF PROJECT

Based on approval by the **Human Resource Research Ethics Committee, Mafikeng Campus**, the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Project title: A strategic leadership model for SME effectiveness in Zimbabwe.

Project Leader: Prof Y du Plessis
Student: TD Svotwa

Ethics number: NWU-00435-15-A9
(Institution – Project Number – Year – Status)

Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

Approval date: 2015-10-20 **Expiry date:** 2018-10-20 **Category** N/A

Special conditions of the approval (if any): None

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- *The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC:*
  - *annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project,*
  - *without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.*
- *The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the NWU-RERC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.*
- *The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.*
- *In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC retains the right to:*
  - *request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;*
  - *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
    - *any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,*
    - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-IRERC or that information has been false or misrepresented,*
    - *the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,*
    - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Linda du Plessis

Digitally signed by Linda du Plessis
DN: cn=Linda du Plessis, o=NWU, ou=Vaal Triangle Campus, email=linda.duplessis@nwu.ac.za, c=ZA
Date: 2015.11.11 20:10:57 +02'00'

Prof Linda du Plessis

Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)