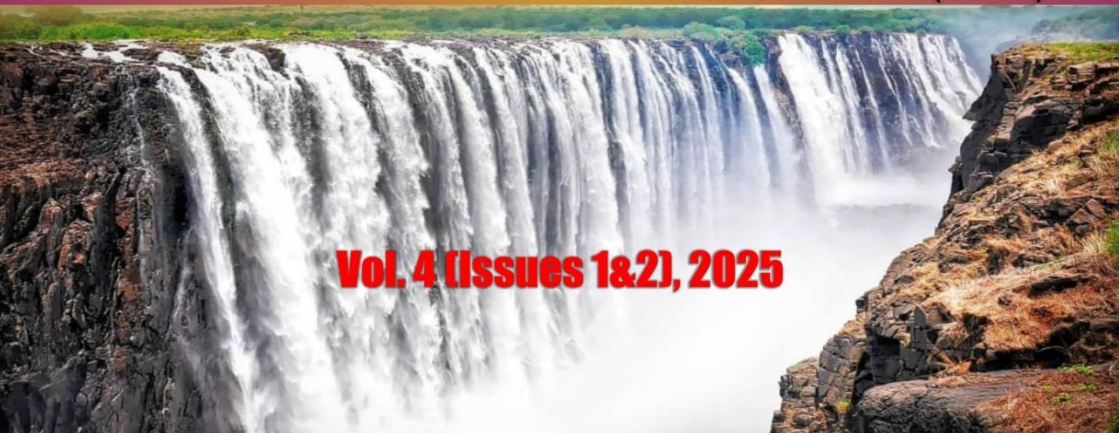




# FUTURES

THE ZIMBABWE EZEKIEL GUTI UNIVERSITY  
JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

ISSN 2954-8450 (Print)  
ISSN 3007-2190 (Online)



**Vol. 4 (Issues 1&2), 2025**

ISSN 2954-8450 (Print)  
ISSN 3007-2190 (Online)

**FUTURES**  
**Journal of Leadership, Governance  
and Development**

**Vol. 4 (Issues 1&2), 2025**

**©ZEGU Press 2025**

Published by the Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University Press  
Stand No. 1901 Barrassie Rd,  
Off Shamva Road  
Box 350  
Bindura, Zimbabwe

All rights reserved

**“DISCLAIMER:** The views and opinions expressed in this journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of funding partners”

Typeset by Divine Graphics  
Printed by Divine Graphics

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Dr Noah Maringe, Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University, Zimbabwe

**MANAGING EDITOR**

Ms Florence Chaka, Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University, Zimbabwe

**EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD**

Professor Assefa Fiseha, Addis Ababa University College of Law and Governance, Ethiopia (LLB (Hons) (Addis Ababa Univ), LLM (Univ of Amsterdam), Phd (Utrecht University)

Professor Francis Machingura, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe (Ph. D. in Intercultural Biblical studies (University of Bayreuth, Germany); M.A in Religious Studies (UZ); B.A (Hons) in Religious Studies (UZ); Grad.DE (UZ); Diploma in Project Planning and Management (CCOSA); Diploma in Pastoral Studies (Domboshawa Theological College).

Dr Jimcall Pfumodze, University of Botswana, Botswana (LLD (Pretoria), LLM (UWC), LLB (Hons) UZ, PGD Tax (BAC).

Dr Beauty Vambe, University of South Africa, South Africa (LLD, LLM, LLB (Hons) (UNISA).

Dr Aaram Gwiza, Marondera University of Agricultural Science Technology, Zimbabwe (PhD in Public Management and Governance (University of Johannesburg-UJ), Master of Public Administration (University of Zimbabwe-UZ), BSc (Hon) in Administration (University of Zimbabwe-UZ), Diploma in Personnel Management (Institute of Personnel Management in Zimbabwe -IPMZ), Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher and Tertiary Education- (UZ))

Dr Ledwin Chimwai, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe (Bsc. Econs (UZ), Grad CE (UZ), MCom. Ban. & Fin. (MSu), MBA (Zou), DPhil Mgt. (CU-India).

Dr Vincent Chakunda, Midlands State University, Zimbabwe (PhD in Public Administration (UFH), Master of Commerce in Strategic Management and Corporate Governance (MSU), BSc Local Governance Studies (MSU), Post Graduate Diploma in Tertiary Education (MSU).

Dr Clemenciana Mukenge, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe (DPhil (UZ), MA Language for Specific Purposes (UZ), MA English (UZ), BA Special Honours in English (UZ), BA English and Linguistics (UZ).

### **SUBSCRIPTION AND RATES**

Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University Press Office

Stand No. 1901 Barrassie Rd,

Off Shamva Road

Box 350

Bindura, Zimbabwe

Telephone: ++263 8 677 006 136 | +263 779 279 912

E-mail: [zegupress@admin.uz.ac.zw](mailto:zegupress@admin.uz.ac.zw)

<http://www.zegu.ac.zw/press>

# About the Journal

## JOURNAL PURPOSE

The Futures - Ezekiel Guti University Journal of Leadership, Governance and Development aims to provide a forum for eldership, development and governance solutions based on a systems approach and thinking.

## CONTRIBUTION AND READERSHIP

Leaders (coming from various circles of life), professional associations, students, researchers and practitioners will be the primary contributors and consumers.

## JOURNAL SPECIFICATIONS

*Futures - Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University Journal of Leadership, Governance and Development*

ISSN 2954-8450 (Print)

ISSN 3007-2190 (Online)

## SCOPE AND FOCUS

The journal is a forum for the discussion of ideas, scholarly opinions and case studies of leadership, development and governance at local, national and supranational levels and also coming from across various sectors of the economy. It is premised on the idea that leadership is meant to create anticipated futures by leaders. Development is a revelationist endeavour that must be governed well for the sake of intergenerational equity. The journal is produced bi-annually.

## Guidelines for Authors for the Futures Journal

Articles must be original contributions, not previously published and should not be under consideration for publishing elsewhere.

**Manuscript Submission:** Articles submitted to the *Futures - Ezekiel Guti University Journal of Leadership, Governance and Development* are reviewed using the double-blind peer review system. The author's name(s) must not be included in the main text or running heads and footers.

**A total number of words:** 5000-7000 words and set in 12-point font size width with 1.5 line spacing.

**Language:** British/UK English

**Title:** must capture the gist and scope of the article

**Names of authors:** beginning with the first name and ending with the surname

**Affiliation of authors:** must be footnoted, showing the department and institution or organisation.

**Abstract:** must be 200 words

**Keywords:** must be five or six containing words that are not in the title

**Body:** Where the authors are more than three, use *et al.*,

Italicise *et al.*, *ibid.*, words that are not English, not names of people or organisations, etc. When you use several authors confirming the same point, state the point and bracket them in one bracket and ascending order of dates and alphabetically separated by semi-colon e.g. (Falkenmark, 1989, 1990; Reddy, 2002; Dagdeviren and Robertson, 2011; Jacobsen *et al.*, 2012).

**Referencing Style:** Please follow the Harvard referencing style in that:

— In-text, citations should state the author, date and sometimes the page numbers.

— the reference list entered alphabetically, must include all the works cited in the article.

In the reference list, use the following guidelines, religiously:

### **Source from a Journal**

- Anim, D.O and Ofori-Asenso, R (2020). Water Scarcity and COVID-19 in Sub-Saharan Africa. *The Journal of Infection*, 81(2), 108-09.
- Banana, E, Chitekwe-Biti, B and Walnycki, A (2015). Co-Producing Inclusive City-Wide Sanitation Strategies: Lessons from Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe. *Environment and Urbanisation*, 27(1), 35-54.
- Neal, M.J. (2020). COVID-19 and Water Resources Management: Reframing Our Priorities as a Water Sector. *Water International*, 45(5), 435-440.

### **Source from an Online Link**

Armitage, N, Fisher-Jeffes L, Carden K, Winter K. (2014). Water Research Commission: Water-sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) for South Africa: Framework and Guidelines. Available online: <https://www.greencape.co.za/assets/Water-Sector-Desk-Content/WRC-Water-sensitive-urban-design-WSUD-for-South-Africa-framework-and-guidelines-2014.pdf>. Accessed on 23 July 2020.

### **Source from a Published Book**

Max-Neef, M. (1991). *Human Scale Development: Concepts, Applications and Further Reflections*, London: Apex Press.

### **Source from a Government Department (Reports or Plans)**

National Water Commission (2004). Intergovernmental Agreement on a National Water Initiative. Commonwealth of Australia and the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. Available online: <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/water-reform/national-water-initiative-agreement-2004.pdf>. Accessed on 27 June 2020.

### **The source being an online Newspaper article**

*The Herald* (2020). Harare City Could Have Used Lockdown to Clean Mbare Market. *The Herald*, 14 April 2020. Available online: <https://www.herald.co.zw/harare-city-could-have-used-lockdown-to-clean-mbare-market/>. Accessed on 24 June 2020.

# EVALUATION OF STRATEGIC BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE IMPLEMENTATION FOR AUGMENTING PERFORMANCE OF SMALL TO MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN MANICALAND METROPOLITAN PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE

OSCAR I. TSVUURA<sup>1</sup>, OBERT SIFILE<sup>2</sup>, COLLEN KAJONGWE<sup>3</sup> AND MELODY V. JHAMBAA<sup>4</sup>

---

## Abstract

The main aim of this study is to assess the effect of strategic business architecture implementation on performance of Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Manicaland Metropolitan Province in Zimbabwe. The quantitative study used random sampling to select 20 SMEs owners registered in the manufacturing and service delivery sectors and been in operation for the past 10years. Structured questionnaires are used to solicit data which were analysed using descriptive statistics and correlations. Study findings are presented in numbers, tables and graphs. Ethical considerations were done during the data generation and analysis procedure. The study results indicate that SMEs adopt strategic processes to pave way for formulation and implementation of favourable business policies to harness business sustainability. Study results show that strategic architecture allows rapid economic and technical change for SMEs and also allows them to provide quality service, total quality management as well as customer-handling to retain customer base. In addition, research findings show that that strategic architecture had been impinged by lack of technical strategic tools, lack of human resources expertise, prohibitive legal systems and infrastructural challenges. As a result, the findings of this study are pertinent because they inform policy and practice on the effectiveness of integrating human capital to augment sustainable performance of SMEs in regards to

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Business Management and Entrepreneurship, Chinhoyi University of Technology (ORCID: 0009-002-6589-5303, [otsvuura@gmail.com](mailto:otsvuura@gmail.com)).

<sup>2</sup> Department of Business Management and Entrepreneurship, Chinhoyi University of Technology (ORCID: 0000-0002-4414-6306, [osifile@cut.ac.zw](mailto:osifile@cut.ac.zw)).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Applied Psychology, Manicaland State University of Applied Sciences (ORCID: 0009-003-8372- 5110, [collen.kajongwe@staff.msuas.ac.zw](mailto:collen.kajongwe@staff.msuas.ac.zw)).

<sup>4</sup> Department of Business Management and Entrepreneurship, Chinhoyi University of Technology, (ORCID: 0009-003-8372-5110, [melojhamba@gmail.com](mailto:melojhamba@gmail.com)).



strategic architecture and performance of SMEs. The results of the study further strengthen the existing body of literature in that strategic management is a critical aspect of the organisation affecting the organisation's performance. SMEs are also urged to pay attention to their systems, processes, communication channels and policies since these have a serious bearing on the effectiveness of the organisation. As such, it is recommended that future research be done in several other SMEs sector in Zimbabwe in order to make meaningful generalisations.

**Keywords:** Strategy, strategic architecture, organisational performance

## INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW

It is collectively acknowledged globally that SMEs are effective instruments of employment creation and economic development, eventually resulting in alleviation of poverty and creation of wealth for entrepreneurs and their employees (Neneh and Van Zyl, 2017; Manuere, *et al.*, 2018; Nyoni and Bonga, 2018; Yunis *et al.*, 2018). More so, the substantial role that SMEs continue to play in economic development is progressively accredited by economic planners and development experts the world over (Igwe *et al.*, 2018; Mamman *et al.*, 2019; Berisha and Pula, 2020; Zindiye *et al.*, 2022). As such, SMEs are central to the expansion of the local private sector as well as being significant drivers of economic expansion and crucial builders of social infrastructure (Chiwara, 2020). They are also imperative in the development and acceleration of change of economies in transition such as those in which agricultural predominance paves way for industry and services, or those migrating from a centralised to a free market economy (Matinde, 2020). The majority of SMEs are regarded as the engines of the real economy and the seedbed for bigger enterprises, with the ability to improve the business environment, enhance access to finance and stimulate the entry of new enterprises (Tusubira, Box and Nkote, 2023).

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play a vital role in economic growth globally (Berisha and Pula, 2015; Zindiye *et al.*, 2012; Igwe *et al.*, 2018; Mamman *et al.*, 2019). As a result, SMEs play a crucial role in the economy and the foundations of social infrastructure (Chiwara, 2015). Competing in a dynamic collaborative global ecosystem, SMEs need strategic management tools to help develop the requisite capabilities, structure and integrate and leverage the underlying resources in line with the dynamic market and

ecosystem conditions. In this context, Enterprise Business Architecture (EBA) may seem to be ideal solution as a strategic management tool to help manage and structure SMEs business.

EBA is a discipline that focuses on aligning an organisation's business strategy, processes and information systems to achieve its goals (Berisha and Pula, 2015). It provides a blueprint for how an organisation operates and how it's various components, including business units, processes and technologies interact with each other (Ignatiadis *et al.*, 2021). EBA helps organisations understand their current state, identify areas for improvement and develop plans for future development and change. It ensures that all aspects of the organisation, including business processes, information systems and technology infrastructure, are aligned with the overall business strategy and objectives (Zindiye, 2012; Ignatiadis *et al.*, 2021).

Although the advantage of adaption to dynamic business architecture within SMEs is evidently revolving, one should be aware of the importance of strategic management, resource orchestration and investment the decision-making process in order to create sustained value from such resources and capabilities (Levy *et al.*, 2020). While enterprise systems and processes have been structured in SMEs' value chain using enterprise resource planning and business planning management, research has indicated that SMEs are grappling with adverse changes to fit into new business management through the inclusion of human capital management to augment their operational performance (Bajwa *et al.*, 2019; Ignatiadis *et al.*, 2020; Vos, 2022; Feldbacher *et al.*, 2021). However, developing strategies and clear roadmaps around business capabilities for SMEs, more likely enables them to identify new technologies, improve performance of new systems, along with utilising and better leveraging current capabilities (Riemenschneider and Mykytyn, 2020).

Apparently, SMEs, as main participants of collaborative networks, are engaged in information exchange, resource acquisition and technology transformation which help them to overcome lack of resources and challenges that they are facing in the dynamic ecosystems (Nieto and Santamaria, 2021). The openness of such dynamic ecosystems drives SMEs to develop their capabilities and capacities in order to be susceptible to sense and acquire opportunities from external innovations, adapt to the new network structure, whether it is technology, systems or business structure.

Nevertheless, not only will the internal organisation interoperability, infrastructure, technology, information, strategy and business structure determine the operation and formation of collaboration networks, but also appropriate architecture principles, business strategies and alignment are required to enhance network goals for SMEs (Ignatiadis *et al.*, 2021).

EBA is a multidisciplinary concept which represents the real-world aspect of business and integrates the fundamental disparate concepts of an organisation to guide its transformation to the target or new organisations (Nieto and Santamaria, 2021). Using the EBA concept enables SMEs describe current and future states, the relationship between its internal and external environmental elements, define the strategies and the associated roadmap to articulate these strategies in measurable and actionable ways (Burton, 2018). Using this capability enables SMEs to create more value for organisations internally as well as within collaborative ecosystems (Bradley *et al.*, 2021). EBA is an on-going process to manage internal and external changes and to re-engineer SME structure in terms of business processes, knowledge, and strategy and business capabilities to adapt to the new environment (Hoogervorst, 2022).

Developing architectures in different levels of SMEs can be a daunting task even for any established business, but more challenging for SMEs (Biden *et al.*, 2022). The challenges faced by SMEs are related to their specific characteristics, constraints and resource shortages. The limited number of trained and experienced people within their organisation causes the owner/managers to be responsible for many tasks and perform a central role in their decision-making process (Gagalis *et al.*, 2020; Sternad *et al.*, 2021). In essence, resource shortages drive SMEs to seek a simple, quick-action strategic management framework for managing the entire Strategic Planning and implementation lifecycle that can be readily and easily applied by small group of people (mainly SME managers and owners) (Gagalis *et al.*, 2020, Sternad *et al.*, 2021). Due to SMEs' specific business characteristics in terms of working capital constraints and lack of resources, they have a pressing need to strategically structure and manage their business capabilities and resources in line with the changing external environments.

To achieve organisational excellence and ensure its continued viability over the long term, good Strategic Planning and implementation are required (Oktavi, Marimin and Djohar 2017). Through the use of strategic

architecture, members of an organisation's strategy are evaluated and then placed in a position that will support the organisation's overall plan all the way through to its performance (Shannassy, 2014; Pearce, 2016). According to Ireland (2011), this is the reason strategic architecture is claimed to have considerable influence on the human resources in corporate organisations, as well as on the overall performance standards of organisations. Strategic architecture makes a contribution to the development of organisational architecture by improving both the efficiency of the organisational structure and the productivity of its human resources. This is created with the objective of achieving strategic goals of the business (Mansfield, 2005).

It is for these and many more reasons that strategic architecture is absolutely necessary for the purpose of assisting businesses in achieving their objectives, and improving their performance. The way an organisation plans to improve its resource capabilities are the aspects of strategic architecture that best reflect the organisation's strategy (Schmidt and Robbins, 2011). This approach will also have an effect on organisational culture, which plays an essential role in the formation of values and beliefs that contribute to quality, constant improvement, excellence and the long-term viability of an organisation (Tucci, 2011). Utilising strategic alliances, businesses in the manufacturing sector are able to collaborate in order to achieve objectives that are mutually beneficial in the design, manufacture, or distribution of products and services by pooling resources and talents. This is made possible through the utilisation of strategic alliances (Hitt *et al.*, 2001; Schmidt and Robbins, 2011).

It is necessary to conduct an analysis of the effectiveness of the components of strategic architecture, as well as of the new procedures, systems and tools that these components employ, as well as of the ways in which advances in technology have influenced the development of new production systems (Arikan, 2021). As a result of this, it is essential to conduct research into establishing a strong strategic base. It is possible that this will have an effect on how successful the company is as a whole. The technological strategy of a company should also be evaluated to determine whether or not it is in alignment with the company's goals, whether or not other departments share the vision articulated by the founder or CEO of the company, and whether or not those departments are willing to collaborate on the implementation of an innovative and sometimes untested approach (Umoren and Joseph, 2016). It would appear that there is a paucity of empirical

research on the strategic components of SMEs business that are necessary for success. There is a dearth of scholarly investigation into the ways in which strategic architecture may be developed and implemented in the SMEs industry in order to get more favourable results.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Both in industrialised and developing economies, there has been a significant focus on the role that SMEs play as drivers of economic growth. The vast majority of SMEs in Zimbabwe, on the other hand, have failed to meet expectations. This is evidenced by their inability to grow and remain competitive on a global and regional scale, as well as their inability to satisfy the demands of their respective domestic markets (IMF, 2016). In addition to this, in Zimbabwe, 75% of newly established companies fail within the first year of their operations (Mbizi *et al.*, 2015). According to the SMEs Association of Zimbabwe (SMEAZ) (2015), a substantial number of SMEs withdrew their membership. This was because a significant number of their businesses were forced to shut down as a result of the challenging economic situation in Zimbabwe. If the business models of SMEs do not include a strategic architecture, then they may perform poorly despite all the technological opportunities that have become available as a result of the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1). In order for SMEs to be able to conquer the obstacles that stand in the way of their growth and success, it is vital for these them to put into practice a strategic architecture. Because of this, empirical evidence regarding the influence of strategic architecture on the performance of SMEs is still dispersed, despite the fact that its significance in increasing performance is widely acknowledged. In a similar vein, a few studies on the strategic architecture and performance of major corporations have been conducted. But nothing has been done to address the strategic architecture and performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe, particularly in Manicaland Province which this study sought to address. In light of this, the goal of this research was to fill in the gaps in the understanding of the ways in which strategic architecture influences the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe.

### **THE EFFECT OF STRATEGIC BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE ON PERFORMANCE OF SMES**

Enterprise architecture (EA) is widely claimed to be an approach to manage change and complexity (Arikan, 2021). EA not only constitutes a baseline for managing change, but also provides the mechanism by which the reality of the enterprise and its systems can be aligned with management intentions.

Researchers argue that EA can contribute towards a solution to the criticism against growth stage models that a small enterprise may not pass through all stages of transformation (Arikan, 2021; Gagalis *et al.*, 2020, Sternad *et al.*, 2021). The Strategic Planning process architecture has a direct influence on the profitability of small businesses Return on Investment (ROI). It is essential for the management structure of a small firm to incorporate some form of Strategic Planning in order for the company to realise its full potential (Flamholts, 2020). The vision of a firm is communicated to the organisation's stakeholders through the process of Strategic Planning. Accordingly, the vision and goals of an organisation can be realised if the management and the workers of the organisation are able to communicate effectively about the firm's vision and objectives (Real, 2019). Companies should communicate their vision to key stakeholders in order to support employees in achieving their goals and realising their vision. This will assist stakeholders to have a better understanding of the direction the company is heading (Cokins, 2020).

Internal interdependence in an organisational architecture is critical for the survival of an organisation in that they bring to the fore two interesting issues. First, the systemic view of an organisation takes cognisance of the various elements and complex relationships in the organisational architecture which influences organisational survival (Kanyangale and Dyasi, 2018). Secondly, it provides a holistic view of the organisation, enabling informed decisions about resource allocation, technology investments and strategic initiatives (*ibid.*).

In this vein, an organisational architecture is defined as “the underlying model of the organisation’s way of doing business” or its *‘modus operandi’* (Louw and Venter, 2019). The organisational architecture is a blueprint which clarifies what the business is all about, its common goal, the key drivers and relationships between each of them as they reinforce each other. In a nutshell, the interdependent elements constituting the organisational architecture are categorised as either “hard” elements (e.g. strategy, structure and systems) or “soft” elements (e.g. shared values, skills, staff and styles) (Higgins, 2019). However, not much is currently known about how small business managers perceive strategic management, and thus what strategy means to them in their everyday business (Kutlllovci and Shala, 2019). Research has consistently shown that most SMEs do not engage in Strategic Planning. SME owners and managers have been accused of being

“strategically myopic” and lacking the “long-term vision as to where their company is headed” (Mazzarol, 2022).

Lack of expertise, limited time budget for formal planning in the face of continual day-to-day operating problems, and distrust to share information with employees or outside consultants, restricts Strategic Planning by SMEs (Gagalis *et al.*, 2020, Sternad *et al.*, 2021). The context or the environment (e.g. dynamic, stable) illuminates the deliberate or emergent nature of planning. Two types of planning occur in a stable environment, namely Strategic Planning and strategic venturing (Tovstiga, 2020). In a stable context, Strategic Planning is a deliberate process to specify the long-term direction of an organisation. Conversely, strategic venturing is emergent and focuses on new business creations that meet the unmet and unserved needs of customers in a stable market (Gagalis *et al.*, 2020, Sternad *et al.*, 2021). Other scholars are explicit that SMEs engage in strategic thinking, forcing them to continuously think about the harsh realities of the business world, improvise workable solutions and leverage resources to change (Bouncken, Fredrich and Pesch, 2020). Strategic Foresight is key to exploring all possible organisational futures, and also challenges conventional thinking when making decisions.

Researchers from various scopes write about the particular significance of the strategic management for SMEs. Krasniqi *et al.* (2019) focus on the developing economy in Kosovo and the importance of strategic activities for the development of SMEs. Pop and Borza (2018) describe Romanian enterprises and their strong relationship between the strategic management and productivity of the enterprise where research findings indicate a positive correlation of strategic adoption and organisational productivity. The significance of strategic management has been growing, according to them, first of all in the time of crisis. However, researchers have established that organisations need to adopt and implement a strategic management policy since it is vital to improve operational efficiency in the dynamic business environment. This is also confirmed by Gică and Negrusa (2019) where they found a positive correlation between the implemented strategy and the productivity of the enterprise. In addition, Florea and Florea (2020) confirm that the success of Romanian SMEs depends on their ability to exploit the opportunities from the external environment to cope with endangerment which they are facing, to fix the strategic goals in view of the

environment in which they work and to find suitable sources and strategies for their achievement. In this context, the knowledge and implementation of principles of strategic management lead to the increased performance and competitiveness of organisations.

Entrialgo *et al.* (2019) confirm that enterprise productivity in Spain is influenced by the character of the strategic management and competitive strategy. Thompson *et al.* (2012), having carried out the research of the South-African SMEs, describe the importance of strategic management for running an enterprise as it was seen as vital in harnessing operational efficiency. Marn *et al.* (2020) investigate the importance of strategic management in Malaysian SMEs. Here the relationship between the degree of strategic management and achieved economic results was proved successfully. They also confirm that the less stable the surrounding environment is, the more effort shall be devoted by enterprises to Strategic Planning. Cheng *et al.* (2022) explored the use of strategic management in Asia and found out that strategic orientation of the organisation provides a framework for managing organisational changes and transitions, ensuring that they align with the overall strategy. The importance of strategic management for SMEs in the Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Finland and Sweden is described by researchers as a backbone for the sustainable development of SMEs.

Research by Hanzelková (2019), conducted on a set of owners and managers in over 1000 SMEs in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Sweden and Finland, shows that: “a large number of Czech and Slovak SMEs already applied management approaches typical for systematic strategic management, despite the fact that they are naturally inclined towards a more intuitive and ad hoc management style”. Although this is a positive trend, research has identified several problem areas in applying strategic management to SMEs. These include a not entirely systematic approach to managing the implementation of the strategy, defining the strategy for a shorter period (up to two years) and insufficiently conducting analyses of the external environment. Through the use of strategic architecture, members of an organisation's strategy are evaluated and then placed in a position that will support the organisation's overall plan all the way through to its performance (Shannassy, 2014; Pearce, 2016).



## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study is guided by the Contingency Theory (Woodward, 1987). According to the notion of the Contingency Theory, which is a subset of the Behavioural Theory, there is no single strategy that can be utilised when organising a corporation, guiding it, or making judgments. The most effective plan of action is contingent on a number of factors, some of which are internal and others external. The concept of contingency serves as a compass for performance evaluation in large and complicated organisations (Johnson, 2015). The theory has made efforts to build broad generalisations over the course of time with regard to formal structures tied to a number of technologies or are best suited for those technologies. The ability of an organisation's leaders to successfully satisfy the demands of both the internal and external environment is a critical factor in determining the level of that organisation's level of success (Tonuchi, 2018). The act of organising is not something that can be applied universally to every given circumstance. The form might be influenced either by the action or by the environment. Finding the correct person for the job is the most important part of management. Different kinds of situations call for the involvement of different kinds of strategies to harness operational performance. Throughout this investigation, the idea of "contingency" serves to highlight the importance of context. SMEs may be able to improve their performance by investigating ways in which the external environment influences the creation of a plan and its subsequent execution. Profoundly, the current study is interested in the research gap arising from lack of dynamic and systemic pattern of micro-level interactions and decisions of owners and other actors to explain how planning, leading, and organising practices shape the organisational architecture.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The quantitative study uses random sampling of selected 20 SME owners registered in the manufacturing and service delivery and have been in operation for the past 10years. Structured questionnaires were used to solicit data which was analysed using descriptive statistics and correlations. Study findings are presented in numbers, tables and graphs. Ethical considerations were done during the data generation and analysis procedure.

## FINDINGS

The researcher distributed 20 structured questionnaires and 15 were administered and returned, translating to a 75% response rate. The response rate is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Response Rate

Position of Respondents	Administered	Returned	Overall Response %
Managers	20	15	75

A high response rate of 75% implies that the matter researched is of great impact for livelihoods of SMEs in this domain.

## DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON THE IMPACT OF STRATEGIC ARCHITECTURE ON MANUFACTURING SMEs PERFORMANCE IN ZIMBABWE

Results in Table 2 show that the mean response ranged between 4.06, SD = 0.830 (item FM3) and 4.85, SD = 0.995 (item FM5) on the impact of strategic architecture on performance of manufacturing SMEs in Zimbabwe.

**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics

Item Code	Item Description	Mean score	Mean response	SD
FM2	Rapid economic and technical change in the global marketplace	4.24	Agree	0.898
FM3	Provision of quality services	4.06	Agree	0.830
FM4	Total Quality Management	4.32	Agree	0.913
FM5	Customer Complaints Handling	4.85	Strongly Agree	0.995
	Overall	4.32	Agree	0.906

As presented in Table 2, the mean total averaged (overall mean = 4.325; SD = 0.906) agree out of a possible score of 5 (strongly agree). This suggests that the respondents agreed on the various factors contributing to the adoption of strategies by manufacturing SMEs in Zimbabwe, like the need for rapid economic and technical change in the global marketplace,

provision of quality services, the need to improve total quality management as well as customer handling to retain customer base.

#### **DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON MOST SIGNIFICANT OBSTACLES TO THE APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC ARCHITECTURE IN ZIMBABWE'S SME MANUFACTURING SECTOR**

Table 3 exhibits mean scores and standard deviations of each item that was made use of in measuring the most significant obstacles to the implementation of strategic architecture by manufacturing SMEs in Zimbabwe.

**Table 3:** Descriptive statistics (*Survey data, 2024*)

Item Code	Item Description	Mean score	Mean response	SD
<b>TCT1</b>	Lack of technical strategic tools	3.94	Agree	0.995
<b>TCT2</b>	Lack of human resources	4.64	Agree	0.930
<b>TCT3</b>	Restraining legal	4.96	Agree	0.938
<b>TCT4</b>	Infrastructure	4.87	Agree	0.936
	Overall	4.60	Agree	0.948

According to the findings shown in Table 3, the mean responses ranged between 3.94, SD = 0.995 (item TCT1) and 4.96, SD = 0.938 (item TCT3). The mean score was computed and it averaged (overall mean = 4.60; SD = 0.948) agree out of a possible score of 5 (strongly agree). This suggests that respondents agreed that strategic architecture had been impinged by lack of technical strategic tools, lack of human resources expertise, prohibitive legal systems and infrastructural challenges.

#### **HYPOTHESES TESTING AND GOODNESS OF FIT**

Testing of Research Hypotheses were done

*H1: Strategic architecture positively improves SMEs performance*

*H2: There is no positive relationship between strategic architecture and performance.*

**Table 4:** Testing research Hypotheses (*Survey data, 2024*)

\*\*\*significant at  $p < 0.001$ , \*not significant

Hypothesis	Hypothesized Relationship	SRW	CR	Remark
H01	AUT → Performance	0.089	0.764	Supported
H02	DEM → Performance	0.441	3.461**	Supported

Notes: SRW standardized regression weight, CR critical ratio, \* significant at  $p < 0.05$ ,

The structural model displayed suitable model fit indices ( $\chi^2/Df= 2.989$ ; GFI= 0.947; AGFI= 0.931; NFI= 0.926; TLI= 0.941; CFI= 0.960 and RMSEA= 0.052). The results are presented in Table 4.

According to the findings presented in Table 4.7, it indicates that that strategic architecture positively influences performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe, Manicaland Metropolitan Province as presented.

## DISCUSSION

The study results are in agreement with other literature. The literature has been examined for key strategic actions (Knight, 2015; Rantakyro, 2016). In the case of SMEs, strategic activities are often less formal (Beaver and Prince, 2017): SMEs tend to prioritise strategy execution above other stages, particularly strategy development. Additionally, the research indicates that SMEs devoting more time to strategic operations are more effective (O'Regan and Ghobadian, 2017). This implies that despite the limited resources available to SMEs, it is essential to devote more time to the strategic stages of analysis, formulation and assessment. According to Smallbone *et al.* (2017), an examination of business strategies and kinds of business behaviour may lead to significant growth, both of which are related to the development and execution of business strategies and tactics. Raymond and Croteau (2016) assert that that SMEs must develop themselves strategically in order to remain competitive, grow and prosper in today's complex environment. The greatest challenge is for SMEs to take advantage of the enlarged economic region. The implementation of strategy initiatives is generally acknowledged to be one of the most difficult aspects of the whole process. Basic managerial qualities, referred to as "meta-abilities", must be prioritised (Meldrum and Atkinson, 2018). Several companies, according to Meldrum and Atkinson (*ibid.*), have attempted to address this issue by developing management skills of their managers. They also observed that attention to any higher order or

enabling skills is often missing from development programmes intended to achieve this goal.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study results indicate that SMEs adopt strategic processes to pave way for formulation and implementation of favourable business policies to harness business sustainability. The results also show that strategic architecture allows rapid economic and technical change for SMEs and allows them to provide quality services, total quality management, as well as customer handling to retain customer base. In addition, research findings lament that strategic architecture has been impinged by lack of technical strategic tools, lack of human resources expertise, prohibitive legal systems and infrastructural challenges. As a result, the findings are pertinent because they avail new knowledge on the current integration of strategic architecture for small business so as to improve their operational efficiency which is done mainly by bigger organisations. The study further strengthens the existing body of literature in that strategic management is a critical aspect of the organisation that affects the organisation's performance. SMEs are also urged to pay attention to their systems, processes, communication channels and policies since these have a serious bearing on the effectiveness of the organisation. As such, it is recommended that future research be done in several other SMEs sector in Zimbabwe in order to make meaningful generalisations.

## REFERENCES

- Aron, J. (2000). Growth and Institutions: A Review of the Evidence. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 15, 99-135.
- Arun, T. (2005). Regulating for Development: The Case of Microfinance. *The Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*, 45, 346-357.
- Arun, T. and Annim, S. (2010). *Economic Governance of MFIs: Inside the Black Box*, Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper Series Number 138, The University of Manchester.
- Arun, T. and Hulme, D. (2008). *Microfinance-A Way Forward*, Brooks World Poverty Research Institute Working Paper No.54, The University of Manchester.
- Arun, T. and Tuner, J. (2002). Financial Liberalization in India. *Journal of International Banking Regulation*, 4, 183-88.

- Athanasoglou, P., Delis, M. and Staikouras, C. (2006). Determinants of Banking Profitability in the South Eastern European Region, Bank of Greece Working Paper 06/47.
- Athanasoglou, P., Brissimis, S and Delis, M. (2008). Bank-Specific, Industry-Specific and Macroeconomic Determinants of Bank Profitability, *Journal of International Financial Markets, Institutions and Money*, 18, 121-136.
- Barth, J., Caprio, G. and Levine, R. (2004). Bank Regulation and Supervision: What Works Best? *Journal of Financial Intermediation*, 13, 205-248.
- Barth, J., Caprio, G., and Levine, R (2008). Bank Regulations are Changing: For Better or Worse? *Comparative Economic Studies*, 50, 537-63.
- Bartha, J.*et al.* (2009). Corruption in Bank Lending to Firms: Cross-country Micro Evidence on the Beneficial Role of Competition and Information Sharing. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 91, 361-388.
- Bauchet, J. and Morduch, J. (2010). Selective Knowledge: Reporting Biases in Microfinance Data, *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 9, 240-269.
- Becchetti, L. and Conzo, P. (2011). Enhancing Capabilities through Credit Access: Creditworthiness as a Signal of Trustworthiness under Asymmetric Information. *Journal of Public Economics*, 95, 265-278.
- Beck, N. and Katz, J. (1995). What to Do (and Not to Do) with Time Series Cross Sectional Data, *American Political Science Review*, 89, 634-647.
- Beck, T., Cull, R. and Jerome, A. (2005). Bank Privatization and Performance: Empirical Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Banking and Finance*, 29, 2355-79.
- Beck, T.*et al.* (2007). Reaching Out: Access to and Use of Banking Services across Countries. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 85, 234-266.
- Beck, T., Demirgüç-Kunt, A. and Soledad, M. and Peria, M. (2008). Banking Services for Everyone? Barriers to Bank Access and Use around the World. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 22, 397-430.
- Behr, P., Entzian, A. and Güttler, A (2011). How Do Lending Relationships Affect Access to Credit and Loan Conditions in Microlending? *Journal of Banking and Finance*, 35, 2169-2178.
- Bellucci, A., Borisov, A. and Zazzaro, A. (2010). Does Gender Matter in Bank-Firm Relationships? Evidence from Small Business Lending, *Journal of Banking and Finance*, 34, 2968-2984.

- Berger, A and Humphrey, D. (1997). Efficiency of Financial Institutions: International Survey and Directions for Future Research. *European Journal of Operations Research*, 98, 175-212.
- Delgado, C. *et al.* (2001). Livestock to 2020: The Next Food Revolution. *Outlook Agric.* 30, 27-9. doi: 10.5367/000000001101293427.
- FAO (2017). Africa Sustainable Livestock (ASL) 2050 Country Brief. Rome: FAO. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7348e.pdf>.
- FAO (2012). Pig Sector Kenya. FAO Animal Production and Health Livestock Country Reviews. Rome.
- KNBS (2019). Kenya Population and Housing Census Volume I: Population by County and Sub County. Nairobi: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2019). Available online at: <https://www.knbs.or.ke/?wpdmp=2019-kenyapopulation-and-housing-census-volume-i-population-by-county-and-subcounty>.
- Thornton, P.K. (2010). Livestock Production: Recent Trends, Future Prospects. *Philos Trans R Soc B Biol Sci.* 365, 2853-67. Doi: 10.1098/Rstb.2010.0134.