



Doctor of Philosophy Thesis

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DECLARATION

I, Godfrey Tambudzayi Musabayana (student number 218084474), declare that this research study entitled: Re-thinking government policy framework towards resource adequacy for small and medium enterprise performance in Zimbabwe, is a result of my own, original independent effort and work, except where it is specifically indicated. All the secondary sources that have been used or quoted have been duly acknowledged by means of complete references. In addition, I declare that the thesis has not been accepted for submission to any institution for degree purposes. Furthermore, I give consent to the University of KwaZulu-Natal to make my thesis available for inter-library loan for academic purposes; however, anyone who uses any idea, in part or in full, from this thesis must acknowledge the researcher.

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Date 20 January 2021

ABSTRACT

The government's commitment to support the policy it has developed is key to the transformation of the policy framework from planning to the implementation process. An effective SME strategic framework is designed to assist the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes that aim to improve the performance of SMEs. The prime objective of the research is to produce a strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement to improve the performance of SMEs. From this objective, the study aims to assess if the government policies positively influence the performance of SMEs and assess the extent to which government framework provide adequate resources to the SMEs. The study identified what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME performance.

The mixed method research was used in the study following the sequential exploratory strategy which employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The study followed the dominant sequential mixed strategy which collected data in two phases. The first phase used qualitative data collection methods and analysis followed by the second phase which is quantitative in nature and builds on the information obtained in phase one. The findings of this study revealed that the government crafted policies that promote the SME performance which were not supported with the resources and did not provide meaningful financial assistance to the SMEs. The government lacked capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilisation and Information Technology development programmes, to support the performance of SMEs. The findings of the study from both the primary and secondary data sources further revealed that the government's support to the SME implementers was insignificant and did not make any impact on the performance of the SMEs.

The study will contribute to the body of knowledge especially the existing literature of SMEs, focusing on government policy framework and its implementation strategies. The findings would influence the legislature to directly support the SMEs in order to improve their performance. The results would provide insights for policymakers and all SME stakeholders on possible ways to improve on the performance of their economies through planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation schedules of SME operations.

Key words: indigenisation, policy, SME performance, strategic framework, entrepreneurship

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to humbly extend my sincere acknowledgements to my supervisors, Dr Ngwenya and Dr Mutambara for the great support, guidance and the contributions you made throughout the years of my study. You always gave me confidence, and when I was down, you were the source of my inspiration, making me remain focused and believe in myself despite all the challenges that I encountered. I extend my appreciation to Dr Pfano, Academic Leader, and Zikhona Mojapelo, for all the support and assistance. Your communication was excellent and you were ready to assist at any time and this made my research process flow with very few hurdles; your participation has seen this research study come to completion.

I wish to thank most sincerely the Ministry of SMEs for granting me access to data collections and the provincial offices that provided the database of the SMEs. I particularly would like to thank the Zimbabwe Business Coalition on SMEs, the Zimbabwe Association of Cross Border Traders, the Zimbabwe Indigenous Business Community and the Indigenous Business Women in Zimbabwe which coordinates women in business, who assisted me with any information that I required in connection with their affiliated members. Despite the challenges from Covid 19, these registered business entities that house most of the SME operators helped me in the data collection.

I did not walk alone on this research journey; I received great support and assistance from research scholars and other academics from other institutions. Mr Knowledge Mukanda, always checked on my progress. Dr Chimuti, helped me with the quantitative analysis of data, and Dr Sithole, from the Chinhoyi University of Technology, assisted with qualitative data analysis. Special thanks to Soul Mukwayo, who always provided the lighter moments, humour and tips on dealing with the challenges I faced along the research pathway.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the great people who have inspired me in my life and changed my perception of education. I dedicate this project to my mother, VaMadhuve, who never went to school, but made every effort for me to achieve my academic dreams; to my father, who is my source of academic inspiration, who placed high value in education and always said: “you can conquer the world with education”. I don’t know how he would have contained his joy of this success, had he been alive; he is indeed my source of academic inspiration and pursuit. Special dedication to OG Nhau, who picked me up at a tender age and directed me on the academic pathway, which prepared me for this grand academic level.

My academic journey would be incomplete, if I did not acknowledge in dedication, my wife Francisca, and my two black diamonds, Ivainashe and Ivainesu, who were always on my side to give me unparalleled love and support and that extra push that I needed most. To all of this great family, I salute you and sincerely thank you for being the wind on my back to be what I am today.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to design a strategic framework that can be implemented by the Zimbabwean small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in order to transform their current business operational system into a more economically viable productive entity which can be used as a project in the region and beyond it. Government policy provides the environment in which SMEs thrive, therefore their performance is directly linked to the support that is given by the government of the day. This support highly influences SME performance in the form of financial support, management, training, information technology, research and development and monitoring and evaluation. In this way, the government provides the institutional environment for the performance of SMEs. Thus, this performance is highly dependable on a government policy framework to provide the platform from which they can excel. This implies that the government provides the policy structure and the resources that are required for their improved performance.

The resources and opportunities should be deliberately made available to the people so that they can participate in the growth and development of the economy, the concept of black empowerment was adopted by Zimbabwe. Crafted as the policies of economic transformation, which had the empowerment of blacks as the main agenda through the promotion of SME performance, was the introduction of the Indigenisation and Empowerment Policy (IEP) and the Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy (IDP). Both policies focus on economic empowerment of black people, increased access to financial and human resources, access to economic activities, land, infrastructure, business ownership and skills development for the indigenisation of people whose past was disadvantaged by the colonial settlers. However, government willpower, support, the implementation process, the timing of the programme and the general management of SMEs have and the performance of SMEs. This study therefore crafts a performance oriented strategic framework, which can be implemented by SMEs in Zimbabwe.

Since the attainment of political independence in 1980, SMEs of Zimbabwe have become the bedrock of the Zimbabwean economy, and yet they seem to lack policy directives that dictate how they should be resourced in order to significantly participate in the economy. Without

effective policy statements that support operations and resource capacity, SMEs will continue to struggle, and while there has been effort by government to craft policies that spearhead the growth and development of the sector, there seems to be policy shifts and inconsistencies that are quite disturbing, calling for much more effort to re-think the policy framework for Zimbabwean SMEs. It is therefore against this development that the study sought to re-think and design a government policy framework to enhance their performance in Zimbabwe.

1.2 Background of the study

The advancement of SMEs in the developed nations has been achieved by the policies that have supported their growth and development. For instance, at European Union (EU) policy level, on January 31 2008, the European Commission launched a public consultation on the content of a European 'Small Business Act' with an objective of putting small and medium-sized enterprises at the forefront of decision-making in the EU, and of introducing measures that would unlock their growth potential (Schmiemann, 2008). Its mandate was to support SMEs from all sectors to take greater advantage of the opportunities offered by the single market (Statistics in focus, 2008). The EU policy was a transformation tool, which enhanced the function of the SMEs in the region.

Another instance is Singapore's national innovation system, which was transformed from one with a primary emphasis on technology adoption to one with a more balanced approach that significantly encourages indigenous innovation capability, including basic and strategic research and development and the creation of local high-tech firms (Wong and Singh, 2012). The policy was instrumental in transforming the SMEs in Singapore. However, in the case of Japan, the last decades saw the decline in the local and regional economy. During the years 2009 to 2012, SMEs were decreasing, and in 2014 (June), the 'Small and Micro Enterprises Promotion Act' was introduced in Japan and an increase in SMEs was recorded; currently, there are 3,340,000 small and micro enterprises and 90% out of 3,850,000 are SMEs (White Paper, 2014). Thus, the government managed to tackle the problems of SMEs. Moreover, the Asian Development Bank Institute (2016) has acknowledged that government policy plays an important role in promoting the production of SMEs. The related literature indicates that governments are major stakeholders in the development of SMEs.

Rajesh (2009) has mentioned that in China, the focus of policies in the mid-2000s was to improve the operating environment of SMEs, and further emphasises that the Chinese SMEs Promotion Law, which came into effect in 2003, was a milestone in policies and laws specific to these enterprises. The Chinese government would support SMEs actively, improve the quality of service for SMEs, create an environment where enterprises could compete fairly and promise to encourage the development of SMEs with more effective policies, especially in the fields of finance and taxation (Shi and Li, 2006). In a string of reforms, by 2006, China had placed an emphasis on proactively supporting the development of SMEs (Hussain et al., 2006). The main mission for the government in this period was to implement the SMEs Promotion Law (Chen, 2006), which sought to improve policies and measures for development, remove institutional barriers, create a level playing field, promote scientific and technological innovations, and upgrade and optimise the industrial structure to enhance the overall quality and competitiveness of SMEs. Due to these reforms and policies, they have grown quickly in size, number, financial status and profitability.

African countries, too, have crafted policies that support the advancement of SMEs. In developing countries, the concern for their role in the development process continues to be at the forefront of policy debates (Cook, 2001), as they comprise a majority of the business population in most countries, and therefore play a crucial role in these economies (Mitchell and Reid, 2000). Hansen et al., (2015) provides the example of local content policies and programmes such as the Mining Act of 2010 in Tanzania stipulating that certain parts of the exploration cycle are reserved for companies that are solely owned by Tanzanian citizens. Eniola, (2014) observed that the Nigerian government has introduced different development support policy programmes since the early 1970s, to help improve the performance of small and medium business owners and small and medium business investors through financing, and to help diversify the country's dominant over-reliance on the oil sector economy. The Nigerian government, in realising vision 2020, is putting in place enabling policies, collaborating with several committed international agencies and NGOs to promote an effective development of the SME sector for Nigeria through credit schemes (Eniola, 2014). Thus, the policies developed by African states promote the development of SMEs.

In Southern Africa, previous studies have shown that a number of policies were adopted to promote SMEs as soon as countries attained independence (Chaminuka, 2015). For example, when Namibia attained independence in 1990, the government adopted policies to redress some of the apartheid legacies. Jauch, Edwards and Cupido (2009) postulate affirmative action and black economic empowerment (BEE) programmes as some of the measures taken to empower formerly marginalised blacks under Article 23 (2) of the Namibian constitution. At independence in October 1964, Zambia adopted the socialist mode of economic development to redress colonial imbalances and bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth (OECD Investment Policy Reviews: Zambia, 2012). Mozambique has developed a series of organisational and institutional policies to encourage SME development. The most important of these is the “Industrial Policy and Strategy” from 2007 and the related “Strategy for the Development of Small and Medium Size Enterprises in Mozambique” from the same year (Krause and Kaufmann, 2011:29). African leaders realised that SMEs are a vital cog in the economic development of a country. In South Africa there was a review of the country’s SME policy through the formulation of the BEE policies after the attainment of independence in 1994 (Nieman, 2008).

NugiNkwe, (2012) observed that in Botswana in the 20th Century, support for SMEs by the government came in many different forms, but predominantly through finance. The Citizen Entrepreneurship Development Agency (CEDA) formed in June 2002 is one of its financial support institutions; CEDA disburses subsidised funding to the SME sector. NugiNkwe argued further that the government has so much faith in this funding organ, that the Out of Youth Fund has been implemented as 50% grant and 50% loan, up to a maximum of P100 000. The fund was established to help youth engaged in business. Moreover, Botswana’s SMEs received support from all sectors, as commented by NugiNkwe (2012) when he pointed out that, in addition, there are many institutions to help finance SMEs such as the National Development Bank, Botswana Development Corporation and others. Other institutions are major role players in policy formation and non-financial support such as the Botswana Confederation of Commerce Industry and Manpower, Exporters Association of Botswana, Small Business Promotion Agency, Small Business Council, Enterprise Botswana and Local Enterprise Authority.

The indigenous policies are not exclusive to Zimbabwe and have been adopted worldwide by many nations. However, in Zimbabwe, the support of SMEs was regarded by the government as the best tool to empower black people and for them to participate in the economy of the country and eventually control the economy. As a result, Zimbabwean local authorities have taken a firm stance in implementing government policy to stimulate SME growth, which will ultimately result in economic growth (Simbi, 2004). In the country, SMEs are the engines of economic empowerment and growth in both the formal and informal sectors (Mudavanhu et al., 2011). However, they have failed to improve the economy of the country, and the economic situation of Zimbabwe has drastically deteriorated since the establishment of the indigenous policies.

The atmosphere in which SMEs operate in Zimbabwe is characterised by economic challenges that impact the costs and production of business (Wadesango, 2015). The rate of SME failure in Zimbabwe is very high. Mudavanhu et al., (2011) argue that three fifths of SMEs in Zimbabwe fail to function within the first year of registration, a quarter of them fail to continue operating within three years and only a fifth of them have a longer life span. Majoni et al., (2016) share this view by arguing that most SMEs operate in the informal sector, a business environment that is not conducive for entrepreneurship. These results were reaffirmed by the research findings of ThinkTank (2015), who classified Zimbabwe as the worst country in Africa in terms of the SME operating environment. The table (1.1) below shows the results of the research carried out by ThinkTank (2015) and shows its classification of Zimbabwe as a country with a failed environment for the establishment and operation of SMEs.

Table 1.1: Percentage of favourable environment for Small to Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) to start and operate a business

Country	% of favourable environment to start and operate SMEs	Position
Zimbabwe	25	12
Ethiopia	30	11
Uganda	31	10
Nigeria	40	9
Kenya	47	8
Zambia	51	7
Ghana	57	6
Rwanda	59	5
Namibia	62	4
Botswana	65	3
South Africa	78	2
Mauritius	79	1

Adapted from ThinkTank Consulting — in conjunction with Microsoft (2015:8)

Table 1.1 illustrates the challenge of establishing and operating SMEs in Zimbabwe, the statistics showing that there are difficulties. In the past 12 years, Zimbabwe has experienced a 50 % decline in economic growth, a 60 % closure of factories, an 80 % formal unemployment rate, and a near 100 percent decline in foreign currency reserves (Zindiye, 2008). The other root cause of failure in SME performance in the country is the lack of government commitment to support its policies; the approach to SME development and promotion lacks government commitment on funding, research and promoting technological innovation (Makanyeza and Dzvukeye, 2015). This was echoed by Wadesango (2015), who laments that in Zimbabwe, small businesses have shown resilience and continued to operate and held on in sustaining livelihoods and the economy when the bigger corporates were in distress and most of them closed down businesses due to economic challenges. Therefore, there is need to refocus on the performance of SMEs through crafting a viable strategic framework that addresses their plight.

1.3 Problem statement

Small and medium-sized entities (SMEs) are the key drivers of the economy and the sustainable development of every nation, (Moore et al., 2014). The development of SMEs is a basic requirement for the sustainable development of developing economies (Mudavanhu et al., 2011). According to Storey and Westhead (2013) SMEs are considered as the seed-bed for the development of large companies and are the life blood of commerce and industry at large. It is against this backdrop of the significance of the SMEs in the economy of the nations that Zimbabwe has placed great emphasis on the SMEs. The policy environment which is set by the government has a great influence on the performance of the SMEs.

Studies done by Matipira and Magaisa (2019) indicate that Zimbabwe's policy environment does not support the growth and development of SMEs in order to achieve high performance and the government does not have any programmes in place to support the SMEs. There are no capacity building programmes, monitoring and evaluation programmes, research and development and financial assistance given to SMEs. These sentiments were echoed by Gombarume and Mavhundutse (2014) who assert that the SMEs are getting little financial assistance from financial the government, there is management deficiency in the SMEs which results in their collapse mainly due to poor decision making and government policies are not clearly spelt out so as to enhance the performance of SMEs. These manifestations of poor operating environment of SMEs does not support a culture of high performance and reveal a gap in the SME sector that needs further investigations.

These challenges have negatively affected the SME sector in Zimbabwe which was designed to improve the economy of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy (IDP), (2012 -2016) and the Indigenisation and Empowerment Policy (IEP) were enacted in order to improve the economy of the country by supporting the SME sector. Zimbabwe intended to emulate the economic power houses in Africa which includes South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and Kenya, where the SME sector is estimated to contribute over 70 percent in employment, and 30 to 40 percent contribution to GDP (Munyanyiwa, 2009). The statistics indicate that the role of SMEs in the economy of any nation as a key driver of the economy is of great importance. it is imperative to note that the performance of SMEs and policy framework are the key drivers of the performance of SMEs but in Zimbabwe there has been policy shifts and

inconsistencies that have rendered SMEs ineffective due to lack of resources, capacity and the general government support. If the pattern of poor SME performance is not addressed, the economic situation in Zimbabwe will continue to deteriorate and sink deeper into worse economic situations. It is against this SME performance gap that this study seeks to design a strategic framework which can be implemented by the SMEs in Zimbabwe in order to improve the economic situation through improved SME performance.

1.4 Aims of the study

The aim of this research study is to design a strategic framework that can be implemented by the Zimbabwean SMEs and this knowledge can be disseminated to other African States and improve the SME operations.

1.5 Objectives of the study

1.5.1 The Primary objective

The prime objective of the research is to produce a strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement to improve the performance of SMEs. In order to address the stated primary objective, the following secondary objectives were put forward:

1.5.2 Secondary objectives

1. To assess if the government policies positively influenced the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe
2. To assess the extent to which government framework provide adequate resources on the SMEs in Zimbabwe
3. To identify what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance
4. To recommend policy changes towards resource adequacy for SMEs in Zimbabwe

1.6 Research Questions

The primary research question in this study is stated as follows: Have the government policies and resources improved the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe?

The specific secondary research questions to be answered are as follows

1. Are government policies effective to influence performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe?
2. To what extent does government framework provide adequate resources on the SMEs in Zimbabwe?
3. What should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance?
4. What policy recommendations would be made towards resource adequacy for SMEs in Zimbabwe?

1.7 Definition of key concepts

1.7.1 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

The term SME, as expressed by Ayyagari (2015), covers a wide range of definitions and measures, varying from country to country and between regions. The same sentiment is echoed by Hidayet et al. (2010), who state that there is no universally accepted definition for SMEs, as different countries use various measures or parameters of size, depending on their level of development and purpose. The Malaysian definition, for example, focuses on the society and takes into cognisance the total number of employees, total number of assets and how much capital the organisation possesses (Hashim and Abdullah, 2000). In the People's Republic of China there is no agreed standard definition of SME, as there are over ten and different government departments use different definitions while operating in one country (Vandenberg et al., 2015). The European Commission (2012) defines SMEs as non-subsidary, independent firms, which employ less than a given number of employees (Vandenberg, Chantapacdepong and Yoshino, 2016). Schneider (2003) comments that the EU and a large number of the Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), transitional and developing countries set the upper limit of number of employees in the SMEs between 200 and 250. The views of Schneider (2003) fit into the Zimbabwean context of SMEs. Musarurwa (2015) narrows down their definition in Zimbabwe and affirms that the SME Act declares them as those that are "registered in terms of their legal status" and "employing anywhere between six to 100 workers". This definition concurs with the Zimbabwean Ministry of SMEs (2016), which states that a small business entrepreneur is registered and has less than fifty employees, while a medium business entity employs up to one hundred people. This study adopts the definition of the Zimbabwe Ministry of SMEs,

which is relevant to this study and has been stated in the context of the Zimbabwean environment. Moreover, this research has considered registered and legally operating SMEs in Zimbabwe.

1.7.2 Strategic framework

The term strategic framework is composed of two concepts, strategy and framework, that are blended together. Strategy is the plan that the business will follow to achieve its vision through strategic objectives that must be achieved in order for the strategy to be executed (Darbi, 2012; Kaplan and Norton, 2008; Niven, 2014). The strategic perspective involves the measures that are cascaded down the layers of the organisation that will drive the execution of the business strategy, as well as monitor the content and validity of the strategy (Franco-Santos et al., 2007). On the other hand, a framework is developed to address a specific research problem or opportunity (Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins and Van Wyk, 2005:82). A framework guides the implementer in developing an action plan and helps an organisation to identify an appropriate set of measures to assess their performance (Kennerly and Neely, 2002). It is critical to note that when executing a project, analysing all the factors and inter-relationships among objectives that influence a business's performance is a complex and resource-intensive process. (Raymond et al., 2011). For instance, it is a complex task to figure out what the best metrics are for any organisation and the framework simplifies this process. Some examples of popular frameworks are: the Balanced Scorecard, Performance Prism and European Federation for Quality Management (EFQM) (Neely, 2007; Tatiicchi et al., 2010). Frameworks differ in their management perspective; for example, the Balanced Scorecard is strongly strategically orientated, while the Performance Prism is stakeholder orientated (Neely, 2007; Raymond et al., 2011). A framework guides the designer in deciding which objectives to choose, as it enables the choice of measures that will support the objectives. The Sustainable Development Working Group (2017) states that a strategic framework sets up the programme of operation that is carried out by an institution in a specified time frame. It states that this framework is the source of the institution's vision, mission, and objectives and can be broken down into various work plans, the annual, monthly and the daily work plans which are derived from the strategic plan and act as the roadmap for the institution's operations. Montreuil, Jean-Marc Frayret and D'Amours (2000), state that a strategic framework is based on the collaborative vision that enables the organisation to

collaboratively plan, control and manage day-to-day contingencies in a dynamic environment. It therefore provides a guided long-term plan from which an institution will operate in order to achieve organisational objectives.

1.7.3 Policy

According to O'Toole (2003: 266), policy is defined as "the connection between the expression of governmental intentions and actual results". The definition of policy adopted by Succar, (2009), states that policy refers to the written principles or rules that are intended to guide decision-making through generating "research, talents, standards and best practices for the purpose of safeguarding benefits". Dye (2008:1) states that "policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do". On the other hand, Ekepenyong and Mbah (2019) state that a policy is a statement of intent, and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. Aluko (2004), defines policy as a guide to action, a means to an end, and not an end in itself and it is an instrument of management. Policy has further been elaborated by Megahed (2015) as mandates, protocols, guides, including for formats, standards, codes, manual criteria, and recommendations. This author goes further to say that policy is a means towards meeting objectives set by stakeholders, including contributing to analysis, management and control.

Thus, a policy is a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions, control and achieve rational outcomes. It is a statement of intent and is implemented as a procedure or protocol to set the stage for the performance of institutions and designed to favour some sections of the economy to boost it and create more employment (Otugo et al., 2018). Policies are generally adopted by a governance body within an organisation that provides an innovative environment to industry (Nurul, 2016). They can assist in both subjective and objective decision-making processes. Enacted to assist in subjective decision making, they usually assist senior management with decisions that must be based on the relative merits of a number of factors; as a result they are often hard to test objectively, for example, work-life balance policy, and thus emphasis is placed on providing accurate, timely, and reliable data to support decision-making (Berry, 2013). In contrast policies to assist in objective decision-making are usually operational in nature and can be objectively tested, for example, password policy.

The term policy may apply to government, private sector organisations and groups, as well as individuals. Presidential executive orders, corporate privacy policies, and parliamentary rules of order are all examples of policy. It is different from the organisational rules or laws; while law can compel or prohibit behaviours (for example a law requiring the payment of taxes on income), policy merely provides a guideline to actions toward those that are most likely set to achieve a desired outcome and that demonstrate a relationship between utilisation of resources and performance of new businesses (Pergelova and Angulo-Ruiz, 2014). A national policy context is inclusive of a vision and mission, strategic objectives and the primary agencies that would collaborate to provide the national data for development (Scott and Rajabifard, 2017).

Policy, or policy study, may also refer to the process of making important organisational decisions, including the identification of different alternatives, such as programmes or spending priorities, and choosing among them on the basis of the impact they will have. Policies can be understood as political, managerial, financial, and administrative mechanisms designed to reach explicit goals. In public corporate finance, a critical accounting policy is one for a firm or company or an industry that is considered to have a notably high subjective element, and that has a material impact on the financial statements. Policy can therefore be viewed as a broad statement that provides general guidelines and objectives that are stated as goals and the means to achieve the goals.

1.7.4 Performance

Performance is defined as the accomplishment of a given task measured against present known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed (Lee, Lee & Pennings, 2011). According to the Baldrige criteria, “‘Performance’ refers to output results and their outcomes obtained from processes, products, and services that permit evaluation and comparison relative to goals, standards, past results, and other organisations” (BPIR, 2019). It is therefore clear that ‘performance’ implies that there must be a goal or objective associated with each measure against which actual achievement is compared (Harbour, 2009). The performance of business processes directly affects the reliability of the processes and therefore, has a direct impact on stakeholder satisfaction. Process management, in addition, promotes the integration of the different company functions (Garengo et al., 2005).

It is therefore clear that 'performance' implies that there must be a goal or objective associated with each measure against which actual achievement is compared (Harbour, 2009)

Organizational performance is a measure of a company's success in achieving its goals which can be measured based on variables of quantitative and qualitative (Swierczek & Ha, 2013). Quantitative performance measures are commonly used by large corporations such as financial outcomes - like Return on Equity (ROE), Return on Assets (ROA) or Return on Investment (ROI), production (the amount of goods sold, operating expenses ratio), marketing (number of customers), and efficiency (Zhang & Zhang, 2012). Qualitative performance measures such as discipline level, achievement of goals, perceptions of leadership on organizational performance, individual behaviour in the organization, and effectiveness (Kantur, 2016). Performance of the company is defined as a firm's ability to create action and acceptable results (Pearce & Ensley, 2014).

Benson, Saraph and Schroeder (2011) stated that the performance of the SMEs can be seen from the satisfaction of the owner/manager (the dependent variable) on: profit, turnover, and business development. Jusoh and Parnell, (2008) state that SME performance involves the ability to combine all the resources and competencies acquired from sensing, adoptive, adaptive, networking and innovative capabilities, including the alignment of external knowledge with internal knowledge to meet the goals and objectives of the firm. According to Raymond et al. (2011) performance as conceived by a SME owner or manager could be grouped into four dimensions which are personal performance (Owner's inheritance, quality of life, recognition in community); economic performance (greater profits than peers, growth of business); enduring performance (survival of the business in the long term, financial health of the business) and sustainable performance (Quality of life provided to employees, investment in society). (Raymond et al., 2011), the performance dimension seen by most SME owner/managers as the strongest measure of success was endurance: the ability of the business to weather economic crises and staying in business over the long term

1.8 Significance of the study

Should this study achieve its aim to establish a new strategic framework to enhance the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe, it will significantly contribute towards their higher

performance. This will be a strategic framework that Zimbabwean SME owners can implement in order to exploit the full potential of their enterprises. The improved performance would also serve the community at large with the provision of goods and services, employment opportunities for the nation and more business to banking facilities. In addition, it would contribute to the body of knowledge, through the insights gained from SMEs that are currently operating in the poor economic conditions of the country, and provide areas for further study.

Moreover, the findings would influence the legislature to directly support SMEs in order to improve their performance. The results, therefore, would provide insights for policymakers and all SME stakeholders on possible ways to enhance the performance of their economies. This strategic framework could be developed and duplicated in other African states and developing countries so that the performance of their SME sector can be improved. It will provide a framework for how government policies can integrate the resource adequacy as a priority agenda item in all planning and implementation schedules.

1.9 Organisation of the study

The study consists of ten chapters. Each chapter has three sections; an introduction, the main body to be discussed and a conclusion that sets the stage for the following chapter. An outline of each is as follows:

1.9.1 Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study

The first chapter introduces the study and provides the background information. It details the information related to the research problem and the significance of the study. It stipulates the aim, objectives and the research questions that are answered by the study. It summarises the research design and concludes by giving an outline of the study format, which includes describing the problem statement, research questions and assumptions. It concludes by outlining the format of the study, focusing on the introduction, theoretical framework, literature review, presentation of results, analysis and discussion of results, conclusions and recommendations.

1.9.2 Chapter 2: The nature of the SME policy framework in Zimbabwe

The second chapter gives the context of SMEs in Zimbabwe. It outlines the role of government policies in SME performance and looks at the Indigenisation Policy as a tool for empowering the disadvantaged sections of the community. It gives an account of the evolution of the SME policy framework in post-independent Zimbabwe. It then gives a detailed account of the IDP and the IEP which were crafted as the tools of economic transformation. It then looks at the effects of the Zimbabwe SME policy framework and concludes with the evaluation of Zimbabwe's SME policy framework.

1.9.3 Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

The chapter focuses on the various theories that underpin the study. It provides an in-depth review of theories aligned to it and then develops a conceptual framework that guides it. It discusses in general the theories that are linked to the study and then focuses in detail on the theories that are adopted. The resource based view theory, the entrepreneurship development theory and the institutional theory were adopted and blended, as they have some aspects that reflect government policy and the performance of SMEs. The three selected theories are integrated to develop the conceptual framework of this study. The last section discusses the conceptual framework developed from the adopted theories.

1.9.4 Chapter 4: Extended literature review aligned to objectives

The chapter reviews the literature on government policies and how strategies have been implemented the world over to support the performance of SMEs. The literature was aligned to the objectives of the study, which sought to assess if the government policies positively influenced the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe, the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources to them and identifies what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance.

1.9.5 Chapter 5: Research design and methodology

This chapter provides the methodology used for data collection and analysis. The research adopted the positivist paradigm, and a cross-sectional research design was used because it is more appropriate than other expensive and time-consuming methods. Also employed is a sequential exploratory strategy, which is ideal for this study as it provided answers to the

research questions and explored the “what” part of the research. The target population consisted of all the registered SMEs in Zimbabwe. Deliberate sampling and cluster sampling techniques were used and the interviews and questionnaires were the research instruments used to collect data. Content analysis and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) were used to analyse data.

1.9.6 Chapter 6: Presentation of qualitative and quantitative results

This chapter documents the results of the findings from the interviews and the questionnaires. The gathered information from the interviews is grouped using the main theme and various smaller themes that were generated from the collected data. The themes generated from the interviews were used to develop questionnaires which tested the generalisability of the findings. These findings from questionnaires were recorded and the response rate of the respondents was noted. The findings were then grouped in three sections: Responses on the effects of government policies on SME performance; responses that support, obtained from the government; and responses on what should be incorporated in the strategic framework for SMEs.

1.9.7 Chapter 7: Analysis and discussion of results

This chapter consists of an analysis and discussion in three sections: the government policies and its influence on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe, the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources to the SMEs and what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance.

1.9.8 Chapter 8: Proposed strategic framework

This chapter presents a recommended new strategic framework which can be used for the development of SMEs in Zimbabwe. It is a tool that enhances their performance, focusing on a government policy framework that embraces resource adequacy as a key driver that promotes SME performance in Zimbabwe.

1.9.9 Chapter 9: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter marks the conclusion of the study and is a synthesis. It is guided by the objectives of the study, providing general remarks and detailed recommendations that can be employed for the improvement of SMEs in Zimbabwe and can be adopted by other developing nations.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter provides a snapshot of the early stages of the research. Basically, it dealt with the general issues of the study, which are a product of the researcher's focus, and are supported by the relevant literature. It gives the reader the flow of the study and the summary of the chapters to be covered prepares the reader for what is covered in detail in the later stages. The next chapter gives a detailed discussion of the role of government policies in SME performance in Zimbabwe and looks at the Indigenisation Policy as a tool for empowerment. It then discusses the effects of the Zimbabwe SME policy framework and concludes by evaluating it. The chapter looks at the SMEs policy framework in Zimbabwe which focuses on IEP as a tool for empowerment and the IDP as a tool for economic transformation.

CHAPTER TWO: THE ZIMBABWE SME POLICY FRAMEWORK AS A TOOL FOR EMPOWERMENT

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Role of government policies on SME performance
- 2.3 The Indigenisation Policy – the tool for empowerment
- 2.4 The Sustainable Development Goal Number 8 on SME performance
- 2.5 The Africa Agenda 2063
- 2.6 Entrepreneurship and Economic growth
- 2.7 The Global Competitiveness Index Ranking of Zimbabwe's institutions and policies
- 2.8 Evolvement of SME policy framework in Zimbabwe
- 2.9 The Indigenisation and Empowerment Policy (IEP) of Zimbabwe
- 2.10 The Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy (IDP)
- 2.11 The effects of the Zimbabwe SME policy framework
- 2.12 Evaluation of the Zimbabwe SME policy framework
- 2.13 Nexus between SME Policy framework and Entrepreneurial Mindset
 - 2.13.1 Comprehension of the Entrepreneurial mindset
 - 2.13.2 Feasibility Analysis
 - 2.13.3 Business Plan
 - 2.13.4 Business Models
 - 2.13.5 Value chain Strategies
 - 2.13.5.1 The backward and forward integration
 - 2.13.5.2 Horizontal and Vertical Integration
- 2.14 Conclusion

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the study by documenting the background information regarding policy and its importance to the government, the research problem and the significance of the study. This chapter presents the nature of the SME policy framework in Zimbabwe, looks at the IEP tool for empowerment and the IDP as a tool for economic transformation. The chapter is divided into the following sections: The Indigenisation Policy as the tool for empowerment, the evolvement of the SME policy framework in Zimbabwe, the Indigenisation and Empowerment Policy (IEP) of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy (IDP), the effects of the Zimbabwe SME policy framework and conclusion.

2.2 Role of government policies on SME performance

The government, through its policies and legislation, provides the environment in which all the business of the economy is established. Policy is described as “the connection between the expression of governmental intentions and actual results” (O’Toole, 2003: 266). A policy outlines the intended actions and it is carried out as a procedure and according to its contents. Aluko (2004) asserts that policy is a guide to action, a means to an end, and not an end in itself and an instrument of management. Enudu (2019), citing Appleby (1986), sees policy as “one of the most important tasks in the administration of business, because the work of planning and determination of objectives become effective when expressed in policy form”. Government policy is a broad statement of general guidelines and aspirations expressed as goals and how such goals can be achieved; it elaborates the actions that the government takes within its administrative roles.

The government carries the mandate that holds the establishment, support and growth of the SME sector in any nation. Nurul (2016) advocates that government policy constitutes the blueprint that emphasises the government plan and initiative to their course of action and the effective government policy would facilitate the access towards tangible and intangible economic open innovation of SMEs. This view was echoed by Sahrom et al. (2016), who assert that government policy that emphasises the

government's plan and its effective, therefore facilitates the performance of SMEs. The government has the power to craft policies that support their performance.

Mac and Bhaird (2010) allude to the fact that the recognition of the role played by the SME sector in the economic contribution in any nation has led to the increased attention to the sector by both the policy-makers and the academics. Policy-makers are appreciating the benefits associated with more internationalising of SME support initiatives that reduce barriers to their development (OECD, 1998; Bridge et al., 2003; DTI, 2004). The Asian Development Bank (2016) acknowledges that government policy, and the government itself, exerts a strong influence on the innovation capacity of SMEs; the government has a critical function in the innovation process, financial support, information and technology development, capacity building, human resources, market linkages, research and development programmes and access to key information. These attributes form the core components of a strategic framework that can provide improved performance of SMEs.

Before its independence in 1980, Zimbabwe was ruled by the British Colonial Government, which perpetuated the economic status of black people at a level below that of white people in, then, Rhodesia. The sharp contrast in entrepreneurship development between white and black people was caused by the colonial policies that were biased in favour of whites. Strict laws and regulations by the colonial government, such as the Town and Country Planning Act of 1946, the Vagrancy Act of 1960, the Urban and Council Act of 1973 and the Vendors and Hawkers bylaws of 1973 restricted the growth of SMEs before independence (Dhemba, 2019). In all these historical developments blacks were not considered as equal partners in the development of the economy, their participation was restricted to the provision of manual labour and this promoted the colonial agenda. It is against this backdrop that the post-independent Zimbabwe embarked on black empowerment policies aimed at redressing racial, economic and social imbalances, therefore the crafting of the IDP (2012-2016) and the IEP (2008) became the benchmarks of black empowerment through SME development.

Prior studies have offered several important insights into this matter, identifying government policy and the pivotal role government itself plays in the implementation, development, growth and sustainability of the SME sector. The government, as an institution, controls all the activities of SMEs through the flow of funds from government structures and financial institutions to them, the availability of opportunities both within and outside the market environment and the provision of financial support through loans, guarantees, and equity which have a great bearing on their performance. Considering the magnitude of the influence the government has on SMEs, it must be noted that, through its policies and legislation it has the capacity to both promote and to hinder the process of their development.

Government support policies for SMEs vary from region to region and country to country and from advanced nations to developing nations, due mainly to the level of industrialisation and cultural context (Eniola and Entebang, 2015; Quy, 2016). Considering the influence of the dormant power of SMEs in economic development programmes, governments of most countries, particularly African states, have invested a lot of financial resources, capacity building programmes, research and development centres and established policies that are inclined towards improving their performance (Oni and Daniya, 2012; Quy, 2016; Shariff et al., 2010). Haidari (2015) suggests government support policy of SMEs for efficient performance, and Shariff et al. (2010) confirm government policy as having an important role as a full moderator on their performance.

Policy makers have a wide range of approaches to SME policy formulation based on their objectives (Table 1). They employ various approaches, but the dominant one is guided by the main objectives of the policy and its intended outcomes. They may also adopt different approaches for different sections of the SME population based on sectors like the agriculture, retail or manufacturing. Table 1 below summarises the main objectives and specific goals that guide policy makers when developing SME policies.

Table 2.1 Objectives of SME policy

Overarching goal	Specific goal
Macro objectives	Creation of employment Economic development Export growth
Social objectives	Income redistribution Poverty alleviation in developing countries
Correction of market failures or inefficiency (static efficiency objectives)	Presence of externalities Market access barriers Asymmetric information Small number of competitors Information imperfection (lack of access to information about potential markets) Levelling the playing field
Dynamic efficiency objectives	Promotion of innovation

Source: Harvie and Lee (2005), <http://ro.uow.edu.au/commpapers/1052>

Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development /ERIA (2018) outlines three key approaches to SME policy development for the governments that provide a foundation for the policy to be effective in supporting entrepreneurs. They are summarised as follows:

1. SME development as a tool to improve market efficiency: This approach aims to ensure that all enterprises have equal access to markets and to promote dynamic competition. It aims at removing administrative barriers that may disturb competition, reducing information asymmetries, promoting easy entry-exit procedures and promoting entrepreneurship.
2. SME development as a structural challenge that requires targeted support: This approach calls for providing proactive, ongoing and direct support to enterprises until they have overcome most of their structural weaknesses. It highly

emphasises the establishment of new systems that overcome structural features that detract from SME growth, such as a lack of economies of scale and scope, a lower capacity to invest in human and physical capital, and weak research and development activity. It tends to target select groups of enterprises and sectors, which may change over time.

3. SME development as a tool to increase human welfare: The main aim of this tool is to increase social development and create additional employment opportunities. To achieve these results, the government mostly focuses on providing resources to support entrepreneurship, especially to the most vulnerable groups such as women and young people and on developing microfinance schemes. This approach generally targets micro and small enterprises, mainly the small enterprises which tend to be those operating in traditional, highly labour-intensive sectors, such as hospitality, construction, transport and small-scale manufacturing.

The broad guidelines provide the foundation for a basic policy formulation with the goal of supporting SME development. It is important to note that employment creation, poverty alleviation and the general improvement of community standards are the basic goals of any government, since it represents the people. Governments of emerging and developing economies adopt public policy as deliberate and purposeful measures to foster social and economic development such as the growth of the SME sector to promote employment creation, reduce poverty and promote economic growth (Edoho, 2014: 129). Public policies are expected to eradicate societal challenges confronting nations and SME development has been identified as a tool that allows people from all levels and skills to participate.

The EU has developed policies that support entrepreneurship development to enhance its economic position. Its SME policy is an instrument that is used by developing economies as a monitoring and evaluation tool to support SMEs and it is crafted based on ten principles of the Small Business Act for Europe (SBA), that provide a wide range of guidelines and implementation procedures of SME policies in the EU (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019). The policy document was crafted in 2006 by the OECD in consultation with other stakeholders that

include the European Commission, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the European Training Foundation (ETF) (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019).

A primary feature of the EU's New Skills Agenda (EC, 2016) is its focus on key competences, including entrepreneurship, which businesses increasingly need in their search for greater flexibility in fast changing economies. Entrepreneurship as a key competence refers less to skills for starting and growing a business and more to 'mindset'– the psychological and behavioural traits (e.g. creative thinking, problem solving, opportunity-seeking and risk assessment) typically associated with the entrepreneurial character. The EU has developed a culture that supports entrepreneurship as a key development sector in improving workers to be more innovative and adaptable, adding value to the workplace and the economy of its membership countries.

This broader understanding of entrepreneurship requires rethinking how schools, colleges, the teaching profession and the learning process are managed and developed (Gribben, 2013). The European Commission reinforced this with its policy commitments for lifelong learning (EC, 2018), particularly for developing vocational training in EU candidate countries (EU, 2015), and has developed tools to support education systems in developing entrepreneurship as a key competence (Bacigalupo et al., 2016). The Small Business Act for Europe set up policies that ensure total participation of all sectors of the community, including women. The EU recognised that economies suffer when women are under-represented among entrepreneurs; it made women's entrepreneurship one of its priority areas (EC, 2008). Its policy advocates for the total support of all players and stakeholders in the SME sector and has advocated for promotion of the entrepreneurship key competences across the general population.

The SME policy framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has a broad goal of providing an independent and critical evaluation of the SME operating environment and to benchmark this assessment against the goals and actions in the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development (SAP SMED, 2016-2025). It aims to provide guidance for policy reform and development of SMEs based on these findings. The economic motive behind these actions is to ensure that these enterprises are not marginalised and careful attention is paid

towards their performance. The policy framework should match its implementation and performance is measured against all the elements, starting with the policy formulation up to the output of SMEs

The economies of the Western Balkans and Turkey (WBT) have made some progress in improving the governance of enterprise skills through the provision of policies that support SMEs. Most have taken steps to collect information on skills needs, although institutional capacity needs to be strengthened to co-ordinate data collection and use it to inform SME skills policy and programming. This WBT economic bloc realised that if they are to maximise their entrepreneurial potential and meet the challenges of the EU Single Market, they will each have to build the human capital their businesses need (Wessels, 2011). Dimension 1 of The Small Business Act, supported by the EU's 2020 Entrepreneurship Action (EC, 2013), underlines the importance of entrepreneurial learning in building the entrepreneurial flair needed in a competitive business environment. Most WBT governments have renewed their strategic documents for adopting quality infrastructure legislation in order to compete with the EU, which has been strong on policies that support SMEs.

The developing nations have also adopted policies that support SMEs in order to improve their economies. Governments, in developing and implementing SMEs, always have the challenge of existing large firms that have been dominating the economy over a long time. The limitations of SMEs relative to large firms include: lower bargaining power, fewer resources to invest in technology and people and to ride out difficult periods, higher compliance costs, smaller networks, and limited managerial or technical skills (OECD/ERIA, 2018). These barriers have negative effects on the development of SMEs and can discourage entrepreneurs from undertaking new businesses or can cause SMEs to operate well below their potential. Advocates of SME policy argue that this may constitute a drag on productivity growth and they contend that if governments took measures to address these barriers they could produce a more flexible, resilient, competitive and inclusive economy overall, generating a stream of social gains that outweigh the direct cost of financing SME support programmes (OECD/ERIA, 2018).

The creation of government policies for SMEs vary from advanced economies to developing countries and from country to country, attributed to variations in social and custom values, and the extent of industry and business settings (Naudé, Szirmai, and Goedhuys, 2011). The government can come up with policies that can boost and support the growth of novel technologies, products, and solutions; on the other hand, government can appear to hinder SME firm performance when it introduces policy which can restrict the autonomy, as well as the entrepreneurial freedom in some form (Eniola, 2015). The Zimbabwean government, in introducing an indigenisation policy, had as the main agenda the empowerment of blacks through promotion of the SME performance and this triggered this research to establish the extent to which this broad objective was achieved.

2.3 The Indigenisation Policy – the tool for empowerment

The indigenisation policy has been adopted worldwide as a process of correcting the political, economic and social imbalances that have been caused by the colonial settlers. McNeil and Shauneen (2014) state that indigenisation acknowledges that the oppression through colonial domination and subordination prevailed for some time and should be eradicated through positive transformation. Indigenisation is a decolonising process, something that “exposes places where dominant structures must be re-made to embrace other than dominant ways of knowing and doing” (Sasakamoose and Pete, 2015:4). Indigenisation requires the return of control to indigenous people, communities, and establishing programmes for them to better govern themselves (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018). The principle of indigenisation calls for full participation of the local people in the areas that have been dominated by the white settlers. It has been successfully implemented by some nations and Zimbabwe can learn from their success stories.

Gang et al. (2014) argue that many countries have introduced policies that aim to improve the relative economic, political or social position of disadvantaged groups and examples include “Affirmative Action” (AA) in the United States, “Reservation” in India, and “Indigenisation” policies across the newly independent nations of Africa. Affirmative action policies are used to combat differences in groups in earnings and employment (Coate and Loury, 2013). The rationale behind these policies is that they redress past discrimination by giving preference in hiring and promotion to members of groups that have been discriminated

against in the past (Mor Barak, 2016). With respect to affirmative action policies in the United States, Holzer and Neumark (2005:471) note that “there seems to be little doubt that racial or gender preferences redistribute certain jobs in the labour market away from white men toward minorities and women”. While the degree, speed, and intensity of indigenisation has varied greatly across the post-Soviet states, it usually involved a move away from the Russian language (Pavlenko, 2008), the reorientation of foreign policy towards the West, or more recently, towards China (Whitel, McAllister, Light, and Löwenhardt, 2002; Ipek, 2007), and a replacement of ethnic Russian elites by ‘local’ ones (Kuzio, 2002).

Overall, affirmative action redistributes jobs and student slots towards minorities and females, though these effects are not very large and minorities who benefit from affirmative action often have weaker credentials; but there is fairly little solid evidence that their labour market performance is weaker (Holzer, 2007). The employment laws are generally referred to as Equal Employment Opportunity (or EEO) laws; they first began at the federal level with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.¹ set of policies and programmes in the US under which employers, universities, and government agencies take positive steps beyond non-discrimination to improve the labour market status of minorities and women (Holzer, 2007). However, the employment of lower-income minority groups—such as African American men—are urgently needed (Holzer et al., 2005). Several studies have demonstrated that affirmative action has shifted employment, especially within the contractor sector, from white males to minorities and women (Holzer, 2007).

The Columbia Centre on Sustainable International Investment (2014) states that, motivated by the increase in local content from 49% to 63% between 2009 and 2010, Indonesia modified its legislation from an initial target of 35% to higher rates. For example, the offshore oil and gas drilling local content targets have been raised from 35% to 45% and for land drilling to 70%, to be implemented in 2016. Companies offering shipping services have seen an increase in the sourcing of their components from 35% to 75% (Global Business Guide Indonesia (2014). Esteves et al. (2013) state that, in its 2014 Law on Hydrocarbon, Mexico has fixed a domestic content target of 25% for 2015, to be gradually increased to 35% by 2025 for shallow water projects. The The Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI (2014; 2015; 2016) confirms that in Bolivia, the National Constitution guarantees preference in acquisition of

materials from micro and small enterprises and productive community organisations. In this view, the principle of indigenisation has been successfully implemented by the cited nations. Thus, the adoption of the indigenisation and empowerment policy by Zimbabwe was a noble idea to empower its local people.

In India, protection of the domestic market was achieved by the Indian car industrial policy setting up challenges for firms such as requirements for higher local content (Miglan, 2018). This policy helped the development of basic capabilities in manufacturing and laid foundations of the auto component supplier industry, Kale (Dinar, 2012). The protection policies of the 1980s and 1990s encouraged acquisition of basic production capabilities Saripalle, Madhuri'' (2012). Local content requirements or indigenisation 47% of up to 70% forced OEMs and their suppliers to make significant capital investments and created a chain of world-class component suppliers. The process of indigenisation has also been recognised as a key regulation responsible for enhancing technological capabilities in India (Sagar, Ambuj. Pankaj, and Chandra, 2004). Indigenisation required modifying, designing to meet the local needs, sourcing components from local suppliers, and validating all components and subsystems for Indian standards (Miglan, 2018). The government set a target of 93% indigenisation within five years, and the company started to develop local vendors from scratch, attracted entrepreneurs by offering them land at its complexes and supplied electricity from its own power station (Kale, Dinar 2017). In addition, Suzuki engineers helped the new manufacturers with automation and management practices such as just-in-time manufacturing (Miglan, 2019). This process involved a collaborative effort between local suppliers and engineers from the parent company and led Indian firms toward a successful development of technological capabilities.

In Africa, indigenisation policies were developed by a number of nations to empower local people. At independence, in October 1964, Zambia adopted the socialist mode of economic development, ostensibly to redress colonial imbalances and bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth (OECD Investment Policy Reviews: Zambia (2012). Olayiwola and Adeleye (2005) stated that a general commitment to a policy of increased national economic control and the commitment was made in the Second National Development Plan, 1970-74: 113. The plan declared:

The government will seek to acquire, by law of necessity, equity participation in a number of strategic industries that will be specified from time to time. In order to ensure that the economic destiny of Nigeria is determined by Nigerians themselves, the government will seek to widen and intensify its positive participation in industrial development.

Ramdoo (2015a) states that Nigeria's Local Content Act (LCA) of 2010 provides for specific categories of activities to be procured locally and local content targets for some goods and services are set between 80% and 100%. Udah (2010) notes that the import substitution industrialisation policy was the first industrial strategy embarked upon by the Nigerian Government immediately after attaining independence. The objectives of this policy, among others, include lessening of overdependence on foreign trade and saving foreign exchange by locally producing items that were formerly imported such as detergents and household appliances.

At independence, the Government of South Africa put in place policies that empower black people. To increase the involvement of black citizens in economic activities, the government produced policies such as the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act of 2000, (RSA, 2000), which was implemented as a means to promote SMEs. To redress the imbalances in the distribution of the economy, the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) policy was introduced (Arya, Bassi, and Phiyega, 2008). One of the driving forces behind the BBBEE was to improve SME access to finance (DTI, 2007). The B-BBEE Act (53/2003b:4) describes this action as: "...the economic (empowerment) of all the black citizens who included females, employees, young people, disabled people, and the habitants of the rural areas through a diversified integrated socio-economic strategy which includethe following activities:

- a) increasing the number of black people that manage, own and control enterprises and productive assets;
- b) facilitating ownership and management of enterprises and productive assets by communities, workers, cooperatives and other collective enterprises;
- c) human resource and skills development;

- d) achieving equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce;
- e) preferential procurement; and
- f) investment in enterprises that are owned or managed by black people.

The policy was adopted by the government to empower its citizens. Black economic empowerment is the key transformation tool of the South African Government's effort to overcome the legacy of apartheid racial discrimination and was a necessary intervention to redress the programmed exclusion of the majority of South Africans from full involvement in the economic development of their country (Department of Trade and Industry, 2003: 6; Sanchez, 2011: 5). This was to alleviate any imbalances of the poor masses that had been kept from any economic upliftment and engagement (South Africa, 2004). All the B-BBEE aims were established under the umbrella of indigenisation. Zimbabwe and South Africa share a lot of common economic features, which can easily be duplicated in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe drew a lot of lessons from the success story of the South African empowerment policies; hence, the crafting of the empowerment programmes of Zimbabwe to benefit the local people.

2.4 The Sustainable Development Goal 8 on SME performance

In 2015, the United Nations agreed to pursue the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to determine the set of targets to be achieved by 2030. The development goals are an integral part of the 2030 agenda, which is an official declaration adopted by UN members and the Global Action Plan for achieving sustainability in all countries (The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015). Goal 8 reads like this: "To promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all." (Kaltenborn et al., 2020). Produced as the higher level of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs form the fundamental implementation strategy of a collective vision for global development, seeking a "reinvigorated global partnership" to deal with a wide range of psychological, social, economic and environmental issues (UN, 2015).

The UN established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from ecological, social, and economic perspectives (UN, 2015). Sustainable development is described as "a future

trajectory where generations are placed at the same status of welfare as present living generations.” Of great significance to this study is Goal 8, which has been sections 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 1nd 8, 10 that focus on SMEs. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) sections are as follows: Goal 8. Promote a sustainable and inclusive economic development, complete and effective employment and decent work for all:

1. 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries
2. 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors
3. 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
4. 8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all

Sustainable Development Goal 8 sets GDP as a measure of growth and it is one of the indicators used to assess the contribution of the SMEs to the economy of the countries used in the research study. Given that SMEs account for more than 70 % of the total manufacturing establishments in much of the developing world (Chittithaworn, Islam, Keawchana, and Yusuf, 2011; Jenkins, 2009; Krake, 2005), they are the key drivers of the economy of any nation (Arbor and Quartey, 2010; Bakiewicz, 2005; Jenkins, 2009; Poole, 2018; Sakolnakorn, 2010). The SDGs provide a broad global framework that can be used to evaluate their performance across all nations. Rai, Brown and Ruwanpura (2019) point out that the SDG Goal 8 has twelve targets: at least 7% gross domestic product growth per annum in the developing nations; diversification, technological upgrading and innovation; and growth of SMEs through provision of adequate financial resources. These indicators can be used as the benchmark of economic development by most countries, especially the developing nations of the world. These enterprises are the vehicles through which economic development can be achieved, as

stated by Ngetich and Kithae (2020): SMEs have been identified the world over as the stepping stones for industrialisation.

The major role the SME sector plays in the achievement of these objectives in developing countries has been described as the backbone of most economies in Africa. Nuwagaba, (2012) states that in Sub-Saharan Africa, SMEs, as the dominant contributing factor in the business sector account for 60% of the total number of enterprises and account for 41% of economic development in these nations (Tumwine et al., 2015). They are central in national development strategies aimed at stirring up economic activity, and reducing unemployment and poverty (Kiveu et al., 2019). A competitive SME sector is mandatory if a country is to attain vision 2030 (GOK, 2007). These enterprises generate significant income, employment, provide opportunities for developing and adopting appropriate technology and are a major source of innovation (Shiu and Walker, 2007). The achievement of at least 7 % gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries can be achieved if they prioritise and support the performance of SMEs, which have a great potential to drive the economy of the nation. The Zimbabwean government can gain some insights from the SDGs and pursue the objective of achieving this level of growth through a refocused strategic framework designed for Zimbabwean SMEs.

2.5 The Africa Agenda 2063

The African Union, in 2013, unveiled its Agenda 2063, which enshrines the Africa We Want. A Strategic Framework for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development. At the heart of this agenda are economic development paths, population movements, policy narratives and technology innovations (African Union Commission, 2015).it reflects the willingness of Africans to take ownership of and direct their future towards aspirations of poverty elimination, sustainability, and green and inclusive growth (Turner, Cilliers, and Ughes, 2014). The UNDP Africa Policy Brief (2017) states that Agenda 2063 underscores the importance of self-reliance and effective domestic resource mobilisation, reducing aid dependency, halting illicit financial flows, and gaining access to technology and innovation. The overall aim of the agenda is to encourage Africans to own their problems, take control of their resolutions, and build, by themselves, a prosperous continent (Mbaku, 2016).

The UNDP Africa Policy Brief (2017) elaborates that Agenda 2063 established seven aspirations and 20 goals, of which three are significant; Goal 2: Well-educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation; Goal 4: Transformed economies and job creation and; Goal 18: Engaged and empowered youth and children are ideal for the development of Africa and can be achieved through the development of the SME sector. The sector has great potential to improve the economy of many African states. African countries have been aspiring to industrialise their economies since their early years of liberation and this has led to the development of numerous regional and national economic development strategies that place significant emphasis on industrialisation (Colombo et al., 2017). Creating jobs and making development more inclusive is the thrust of the SMEs and Zimbabwe could tap from the Africa Agenda 2063 in its quest to improve the economy of the country through the development of a more focused strategic framework.

As a critical first step for African countries to make the right policy and planning decisions, Agenda 2063 notes that understanding the existing and emerging knowledge of technology systems is necessary (Mebratu and Swilling, 2019). In this regard, the most effective way to develop human resources, for example, in using information communication technology (ICT), is to increase its use in educational institutions and provide academic and training programmes to improve youth employability (Tshiyoyo, 2017). In Africa, the wide use of ICT in the public service has become an imperative for countries to improve operations, but access to information systems requires general literacy of citizens as well as computing skills (Song, 2006). A robust economic growth pathway that trickles down to people at lower-income levels should be supported by infrastructure systems that decrease the social divide through job opportunities and equitable access to education (Colombo et al., 2017). Africa, thus, has a unique opportunity to be a significant beneficiary of the 2063 programme because it has rich natural resources that need to be aligned with the goals of the agenda. Creating jobs and involving all the people in development programmes is the key for the successful implementation of this huge programme.

2.6 Entrepreneurship and economic growth

Literature has revealed that entrepreneurship is believed to be a critical part of economic growth and economic development (Nnyanzi et al., 2019). There is growing evidence showing

that entrepreneurship not only contributes to economic growth, but also to innovation; moreover, it increases the development of many nations through the production of more commodities and services, leading to the creation of new job opportunities (Bourne, 2011; Debus et al., 2017; Sabella et al., 2014; Yang and Li, 2011). Previous studies have indicated the positive relation between entrepreneurship and economic growth – the more active the entrepreneurship of the country, the more positive the growth of the economy (Carree et al., 2003; Martinez, 2005). Carree et al. (2002) state that entrepreneurship facilitates economic growth through increasing productivity and developing creative methods for the purchase and distribution of goods and services. These sentiments point to the fact that countries that have more active entrepreneurship activities will achieve a much higher economic growth than the countries that have limitations on such activities.

It is documented that the contribution of entrepreneurship to economic performance is by its introduction of innovation, effecting change, and fostering and improving competition (Wong et al., 2005). The significance of entrepreneurship has been confirmed by the EU's enterprise policy, which regards entrepreneurship as a key factor for growth, employment and personal fulfillment (EC, 2004); its relationship with economic growth can be observed in the newly created jobs, ease with which new enterprises get loans, increase of competition in the markets and the production of new high-quality items, all of which have a positive effect on economic growth (Naude, 2008). Minniti and Levesque (2006) state that the significance of entrepreneurship originates from its being a source of creativity, which transforms non-utilised resources to make them functional in the economic growth of a country. Jiang et al. (2010) state that an increase in the number of entrepreneurs generates a growth-improving variety effect and that a diminished overall quality of entrepreneurial ability undermines economic growth. Van Stel et al. (2005) also report the positive correlation between entrepreneurship and the per capita GDP growth in rich nations, but that this growth relationship in poor nations is negative. Adusei's (2016) research on twelve countries on the trend of their economic growth rate (%) (2004–2011) showed an average growth of 2.58 %, meaning the study countries have grown at an average rate of 2.58 %. This growth was far below when compared to the average annual growth rate of Latin America's seven largest countries, namely Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela, which together account for 93 % of the region's during the same period.

Kshetri (2011) argues that Africa, as the most resource-endowed continent, has the potential to improve its entrepreneurial activities; it has been estimated that Central African mines have about two-thirds of the world's cobalt. Moreover, the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon are the four major West African cocoa producers; the Ivory Coast alone produces about 43 per cent of the world's cocoa (Adusai, 2016). Besides having all these natural resources, African countries export mostly agricultural products such as cocoa, coffee, tobacco and cotton, mainly in their raw forms (Saez and Gallagher, 2009). Zimbabwe has the world's second largest platinum reserves as well as large deposits of other valuable minerals like gold and copper (Mutasa, 2009). In this regard, Zimbabwe needs to reposition itself and focus on entrepreneurship, which has been proved to have such great potential to transform rich natural resources into the business hub of the SADAC region.

2.7 The Global Competitiveness Index ranking of Zimbabwe's institutions and policies

The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), is a comprehensive tool that measures the microeconomic and macroeconomic foundations of national competitiveness. It has been used by the World Economic Forum's annual Global Competitiveness that benchmark the many factors underpinning national competitiveness with the goal of providing insight and to stimulate the discussion among all stakeholders on the best strategies and policies to help countries to overcome the obstacles to its improvement (Sala and Artadi, 2004). Competitiveness is composed of a number of institutions, policies, and factors that are used to classify the level of productivity of a nation. It is contained in the GCI through the inclusion of a weighted average of many different components that measure a specific aspect of competitiveness; these are twelve components forming the pillars of competitiveness: Institutions, Infrastructure, Macroeconomic environment, Health and primary education, Higher education and training, Goods market efficiency, Labour market efficiency, Financial market Development, Technological readiness, Market size, Business sophistication, and Innovation (The Global Competitiveness Report 2013).

The countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have significantly grown over the last 15 years, demonstrating growth rates of over 5% in the last two years, and the Southern Africa region exceeds the global average and exhibits a favorable economic outlook (The Global Competitiveness Index, 2013). Indeed, the region has bounced back rapidly from the global

economic crisis, when GDP growth dropped to 2.8 percent in 2009 (The Global Competitiveness Index, 2013). During this period, it is important to note that South Africa was ranked 52nd (2013), remaining the highest-ranked country in Sub-Saharan Africa and third-placed among the and Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) economies (The Global Competitiveness Index, 2013). However, the trend has changed in recent years, with more states in the Sub Saharan Africa being included in the GCI. The Insead (2016) reports that Sub-Saharan Africa had 19 countries listed, and the four upper-middle-income countries of this group occupy the highest rankings: Mauritius (46th), Botswana (63rd), South Africa (67th), and Namibia (76th), with Zimbabwe being ranked 116 out of 119 countries.

The performance of Zimbabwe on the GCI is among the worst performing nations. In 2008, it was ranked among the least competitive economies, second to last at 133rd out of 134 countries (The Global Competitiveness Report, 2008). In 2011, the country was ranked fourth to last at 136th overall, covering 139 economies from all of the world's regions (The Global Competitiveness Report, 2011). The report of 2013 shows that Zimbabwe remains stable in the 132nd position out of 144 economies from all of the world's regions (The Global Competitiveness Index, 2013). This trend has been fuelled by the institutional environment which is among the worst of all countries, with a complete absence of property rights (ranked last out of all countries at 134th), high levels of corruption (130th), and a lack of even-handedness of the government in its dealings with the public (129th) and basic government inefficiency (130th) (The Global Competitiveness Report, 2008). The INSEAD (2016) reports how Zimbabwe performed in other pillars related to the performance of SMEs out of 119 countries in 2017 as follows: Regulatory landscape (117th), Government effectiveness (116th), Business-government relations (109th) and Regulatory quality (118th) (INSEAD, 2016). The report of the GCI from 2008 to 2017 shows that Zimbabwe is not improving in its performance, hence there is a need to refocus on the performance of SMEs through a homegrown strategic framework. The poor performance of Zimbabwe is basically an issue of the government and its commitment to the policies that support economic growth and this study seeks to address such issues. It will thus be instrumental to policy-makers, as it clarifies the current economic environment in Zimbabwe and outlines the possible course of action that SMEs can take in order to improve the performance of the economy.

2.8 Evolvement of SME policy framework in Zimbabwe

In pre-independent Zimbabwe, SMEs suffered a number of setbacks and their existence was not even recognised. The colonial government, through its policies, disempowered the indigenous people from being entrepreneurs. The colonial policies favoured the white minority population and did not consider the development of black people. According to the New African Special Report (2013), the colonial powers used the following pieces of legislation to disempower the majority of black Zimbabweans:

1. **Charter of the British South African Company (BSAC):** The legislation created the legitimate colonisation of Zimbabwe and black people in the country lost ownership of the country leading to the beginning of disempowerment.
2. **The Public Health (Act No.19 of 192) (Chapter 328):** The Act was designed to protect the establishment of white businesses through relaxed standards for white-owned companies and highly stringent conditions for black-owned businesses, leading to harassment of black-owned small businesses. The businesses of black people continued to struggle and most of them failed to operate and eventually closed.
3. **The land apportionment (Act of 1930):** The Act favoured the white government which pushed blacks to the poor soils while whites enjoyed the fertile lands and left poor blacks languishing in poverty. The Act reduced black people to labourers on farms owned by whites, which the white farmers would pay a pittance as wages.
4. **The Factory (Act No 20 of 1948):** The Act established highly stringent registration conditions for black-owned factories and relaxed positions for white-owned factories.
5. **The Companies (Act No.47 of 1951):** The Act established stringent business registration requirements for indigenous black entrepreneurs, but white entrepreneurs got highly relaxed registration status. The indigenous black people were excluded from establishing their own businesses.
6. **Second Hand and Goods (Act No 25 of 1956) (Chapter 293):** The Act prohibited the importation of second hand goods into the country. Blacks were affected as they had very low income. The income tax Act No 5 of 1967 (Chapter 181) established a discriminatory tax system of which blacks were forced to pay the hut

tax, dip tank tax and others, whilst white people in the country would receive tax rebates and tax exemptions.

7. **The Food and Food standards (Act No.25 of 1971) (Chapter 321):** The Act established stringent registration conditions for black entrepreneurs and relaxed the requirements for white people.
8. **The Urban Councils and Regional Town and Country Planning (Act no. 22 of 1976):** The Act empowered the local government to regulate the type, location and activities of black-owned businesses and offered an open cheque to white people to operate any type of businesses with no limitation. The local government was also empowered to demarcate certain areas for whites only, such that blacks would be prosecuted if found moving around, thus limiting freedom of movement for black people.

The era before the independence of Zimbabwe marks the years of great suffering of the indigenous people in terms of establishing businesses and participation in the economy of the country (Majoni et al., 2016). It is from this historic economic segregation and suppression of the local people that the government of Zimbabwe enacted into law indigenous policies that focused on correcting the past errors and empowering the local people through SME programmes.

In post-independent Zimbabwe, it can be argued that SME policies have evolved through three phases from the time it attained independence in 1980 to date. The first period is between 1980 and 1990, during which the policy environment in which the SME sector was operating was highly restrictive. During this period, Majoni et al. (2016) states that the government made some effort to address some of the institutional concerns through the establishment of the Small Enterprise Development Corporation (SEDCO), the Venture Capital Company of Zimbabwe (VCCZ) and the Credit Guarantee Company of Zimbabwe (CGCZ). During this era, SMEs were overshadowed by the large-scale manufacturing industries that were the backbone of the manufacturing sector. The government did not show much effort toward supporting SMEs through its policies that were overshadowed by the dominance of the multinational companies like the Anglo American, Lever Brothers and American Motor Industry that were set up by the British colonisers and dominated the industrial sector.

The second phase is characterised by the advent of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) policy in 1991, which mainly focused on employment creation. When government launched the ESAP, it introduced policies that were meant to attract investment to the country. The ESAP, but to a lesser extent, recognised the function of SMEs in the economy, as they were regarded as an integral part of economic development and were earmarked to contribute to the creation of employment. The major policy statement of the ESAP was to improve the status of SMEs, as it clearly mentioned that the informal and the small-to-medium-scale formal business sectors of the economy together have the potential to make a major contribution to wealth and to employment creation (GOZ, A framework for Economic Reform 1991-1995). This drive proposed the first positive intention of the government to push forward the agenda of SMEs, but not much was achieved. This was caused by the fact that the government focused more on the existing industries, which had over a century of existence and had long developed a culture, strategy and vision which could not be easily changed over a short period of time. The second phase therefore did not achieve much result in improving SMEs in Zimbabwe.

The third and final phase of the SME policy was born out of the indigenisation policies that shifted all the economic focus to SMEs as the vehicle of black empowerment. Gukurume (2018) states that these policies were anti-investor economic policies, as they led to the closure and downsizing of the manufacturing sector, which was followed by a decade-long economic crisis (1999–2008). This view is echoed by Manyati (2015), who states that the indigenisation policies led to unprecedented growth of SMEs. It is important to note that at this point SMEs were considered as a major industrial institution that would replace the multinational companies that had since relocated to neighbouring countries.

2.9 The Indigenisation and Empowerment Policy (IEP) of Zimbabwe

The IEP of Zimbabwe was enacted into law in order to empower Zimbabweans to control the economy of the country. The Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act (IEEA) Chapter 14:33, Act 14/2007 provides the blueprint of the indigenisation process of Zimbabwean natives. The aims of the IEP in relation to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are as follows:

1. To ensure that at least fifty-one *per centum* of the shares of every public company and any other business shall be owned by indigenous Zimbabweans;

2. To promote equitable access to the wealth of the economy by indigenous Zimbabweans through the establishment of SMEs;
3. To nurture and develop a skills base for the economic empowerment of indigenous Zimbabweans;
4. To promote the use of local raw materials and value addition in economic activities;
5. To provide financial assistance to indigenous Zimbabweans for any of the following
 - a. Purposes: finance for business start-ups, rehabilitation and expansion to increase, enhance and facilitate the involvement and participation in the national economy of indigenous Zimbabweans;
6. To provide equal opportunities for all, including gender sensitive ownership and participation in the economy by indigenous Zimbabweans; and
7. To promote equitable access to the wealth of the economy by indigenous Zimbabweans.

The concept of empowerment is based on the idea that the resources and opportunities should be deliberately made available to local people so that they can participate in the growth and development of the economy. The indigenisation policy was targeting the people whose past genealogy originated in Zimbabwe and such people were economically disadvantaged; hence, the idea was to create a supportive environment that equipped them with information, resources and techniques for contributing to the economy of the country.

2.10 The Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy (IDP)

The Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy (2012–2016) was enacted in order to improve the economy of the country by supporting the SME sector. The IDP is the government's blueprint for what it intends to implement in order to develop SMEs. The policy supports the indigenisation policy and the following extract shows how the two complement each other:

1. The IDP fully supports Indigenisation and the Economic Empowerment Act (Chapter 14:33) and believes that the indigenisation and empowerment law should provide an ideology of hard work, productivity, fairness, accountability and transparency.
2. The IDP supports a model which is premised on the participation of a broad spectrum of the population, through the supply and distribution chain of the whole country's

‘economic cake’ to control downstream industries through the supplying of raw materials, services and other inputs.

3. The supply of raw materials and other critical inputs should immediately empower Zimbabweans by smoothening the ownership of the means of production and mainstreaming previously disadvantaged indigenous people into active participation in economy building.

The Zimbabwe IDP, focusing on SMEs, provides the following key government strategies for their development:

1. SMEs will be prioritised, promoted and supported as they are viewed as an important engine for employment creation and economic growth. Given the sector’s high labour to capital ratio, there will be a need to use the sector as a strategy for the quick turnaround of the economy at a relatively cheaper cost than that of conventional larger industries.
2. The intention is to develop and strengthen existing parastatals like the Small Enterprises Development Corporation (SEDCO) to be able to offer more support to SMEs.
3. Other strategies to be adopted during this period include infrastructural support; technology upgrades; quality control and improvement; research and development, market access and financing facilities.
4. Cluster development is planned, including the provision of capacity building for skills training of employees and setting up of common facilities such as testing laboratories and common-use machinery (e.g. lathes, grinders and industrial saws).

These policies were deliberately enacted in order to empower SMEs. Zimbabwe’s new economic era was now targeting black entrepreneurs to drive the economy. This implies that a lot was expected from SMEs in terms of job creation, production of goods and services and improving the economy of the country.

As stated, the concept of empowerment which was adopted by Zimbabwe is based on the idea that resources and opportunities should be deliberately made available to local people

so that they can participate in the growth and development of the economy. There is much of similarity between South Africa's B-BBEE policy and the indigenous policies in Zimbabwe which are essential to this study. Both policies focus on economic empowerment of black people, increased access to financial and human resources, access to economic activities, land, infrastructure, business ownership and skills development of indigenous people whose past was disadvantaged by the colonial settlers. As the indigenisation policies of the two countries mainly focus on economic empowerment, Zimbabwe can draw a number of lessons from the B-BBEE programme.

The same principles that were applied by the policy makers in other African states to develop indigenisation policies were adopted by Zimbabwe when it enacted its own indigenisation policies. The policies carry the same mandate and objective as those carried out by the indigenisation processes of Columbia, Indonesia and Bolivia. Canada, the USA, India, South Africa, Russia and China are other examples. However, the differences are in the periods of implementation, the timing of the programmes and the performance of SMEs. This study investigates how such a noble cause of helping local people who were disadvantaged to participate in the building of their economies through SMEs can be harnessed into a productive development in Zimbabwe.

2.11 The effects of the Zimbabwe SME policy framework

The implementation of Zimbabwe's indigenous policies saw the new era of SMEs being ushered in as the main economic drivers of the new economic dispensation in the absence of the multinational companies. The enterprises took the centre stage, and their value was stated by Wang (2016), who pointed out that in developing countries such as Zimbabwe, they are important for driving growth and economic development. This view is shared by Zvarivadza (2016), who states that most SMEs are born out of the people, or groups of people, with the vision to operate and run prosperous businesses (Zvarivadza, 2018). The implementation of the indigenous policies produced some notable results, as reported by the Fin Scope Survey (2012), as cited by Majoni (2016), that in Zimbabwe the SME sector contributes over 60% to the country's GDP and employs about 5.8 million people. Their positive role is an indicator of the success story of the implementation of the indigenous

policies. However, their success is embedded in the statistics only, since SMEs are still struggling.

The other side of the literature has it on record that despite the great expectation from the government, SMEs are still in difficulty. Chigora and Zvavahera (2015:34) discuss the challenges facing SMEs in Zimbabwe, and list them as

1. Lack of access to affordable finance
2. Cumbersome processes of setting-up the business
3. Poor infrastructure
4. Poor institutional structures
5. Limited formal avenues for pursuing interest-bearing investment options
6. Shallow stock market

These challenges are a clear indication that SMEs in Zimbabwe are struggling in their everyday operations. Although the indigenous policies were regarded by the government as the best tool to empower black people, enable them to participate in economic activities and eventually control the economy, they currently face a host of challenges. The circumstances under which SMEs are operating are unsupportive. These sentiments are echoed by Wadesango (2015), who lamented that the Zimbabwean SMEs are operating in an atmosphere which has high economic challenges and that does not provide stimulating conditions for any form of business growth.

From its own standpoint, the Government of Zimbabwe acknowledges that it has failed to sustain its economy and affirms that it is facing huge challenges to improve it. It asserted (2009) that the economy has been facing severe challenges, with the annual real GDP growth suffering declines averaging -5.9% since 2004; cumulatively, output declined by more than 40% during that period. The state of crisis in the economy of Zimbabwe was confirmed by the report published by Zim Asset (2013), which ascertains that Zimbabwe has experienced a deteriorating economic and social environment since 2000 and this has resulted in a deep economic and social crisis characterised by a hyperinflationary environment and low industrial capacity utilisation, leading to the overall decline in GDP by 50% in 2008. These sentiments expose the challenges facing SMEs and the economic environment they are

operating in. This highlights the need to carry out a study that provides a new economic dispensation for these businesses through crafting a strategic framework that can be implemented in Zimbabwe.

2.12 Evaluation of Zimbabwe's SME policy framework

The crafting of the indigenous policies to redress the dominance of the multinational companies was a noble idea. Some positive results of these policies brought are an increase in the number of SMEs established and the involvement of black people in entrepreneurship programmes. However, the policy framework failed to establish SMEs as the backbone of the Zimbabwean economy. That SMEs have failed to improve the economy of the country is shown by the drastically deteriorated economic situation in Zimbabwe since the establishment of the indigenous policies. This was alluded to by Block (2013), who stated that empowerment policy has negatively affected the ability of the Zimbabwean economy to attract foreign direct investment. These sentiments show the effects of the indigenous policies on the economy, which has greatly deteriorated. Against the backdrop of this policy implementation gap, it is recommended that Zimbabwe develops a strategic framework that aims to support and improve the performance of SMEs, bring the country back onto the economic map and compete with the likes of South Africa, Botswana and Zambia, who are performing well in the SADAC region. The development of a homegrown strategic framework that can be used by SMEs, as one of the key economic drivers, is recommended for the improvement of their performance.

2.13 Nexus between the SME policy framework and entrepreneurial mindset

2.13.1 Comprehension of the entrepreneurial mindset

McGrath and MacMillan (2000) have defined the entrepreneurial mindset as the ability to rapidly sense, act, and mobilise, even under highly uncertain conditions. People with this mindset not only have the ability to think of solutions and create opportunities, but they are able to function equally effectively on their own and with others (Palalic et al., 2000). It increases their ability to sense opportunities and mobilise the resources and knowledge required to exploit them and it determines how the entrepreneur will perceive, interpret, and consequently respond to situations (Gillin and Hazelton, 2020). This can be summarised as “the ability to sense, act, and mobilise under uncertain conditions” (Haynes et al., 2010: 217).

McMullen and Kier (2016: 664) stressed that this mindset is an “ability to identify and exploit opportunities without regard to the resources currently under their control”. From these views, entrepreneurial activity involves the ability to identify opportunities, mobilise resources, and process them, despite the risks encountered in the process; the entrepreneur will remain focused on the goal and the success that lies ahead.

Based on the combined understanding of these definitions of the entrepreneurial mindset, Cui, Sun and Bell (2019) identified four components it comprises: alertness to opportunity, risk propensity, ambiguity tolerance, and dispositional optimism, elaborated below:

1. Alertness to opportunity is conceived as an entrepreneurial cognition process with alert scanning and searching, alert association and connections, and evaluation and judgment related to the information of opportunity (Tang, Kacmar, and Busenitz, 2012). Many scholars agree that alertness involves a mindset based on several capacities and processes such as prior knowledge, skills of pattern recognition and information processing (Ardichvili, 2003).
2. Risk propensity is defined as a subject’s current tendency or willingness towards taking or avoiding risks (Pablo, 1997). It plays a critical role in opportunity identification and the success of entrepreneurial action. Individuals with a greater risk-taking propensity find it easier to perceive the overall opportunities around them (Foo, 2011).
3. Ambiguity tolerance is defined as the way individuals interpret, process, and respond to information about vague situations marked by a series of inconsistent, complex, unfamiliar or fragmented clues (Furnham and Ribchester, 1995). If entrepreneurs are highly tolerant with ambiguity, they view ambiguous scenarios as promising and challenging, instead of stressful and disappointing (Furnham and Ribchester, 1995).
4. Dispositional optimism is defined as “the global generalised tendency to believe that one will experience good versus bad outcomes in life” (Crane, Blunden and Meyer, 2012: 116). Optimism is not only associated with a good outcome, but also linked to satisfaction, which affects the evaluation of the chances and the subsequent entrepreneurial activities (Grichnik, Smeja, and Welp, 2010). In this regard, dispositional optimism is extremely important for entrepreneurs to motivate themselves to continuously achieve much higher goals.

An entrepreneurial mindset is the critical force driving the process of change and advancement to capitalising on any opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Robinson (2010) reviewed different perspectives of entrepreneurship and found that there was this inclination or intentionality for seeking and pursuing opportunities for development as the essence of an entrepreneurial mindset and this can apply across a wide range of human activity. Moreover, the organisational mindset of entrepreneurship sets out a framework of looking into how firms can build and sustain a healthy working environment that fosters creativity and innovation (Palalic et al., 2000). Entrepreneurship and an entrepreneurial mindset have taken a centre stage in most African states and have been acknowledged throughout the continent (George et al., 2016), and studies by Ndulu et al. (2007) indicate that, in Africa, it has made a huge impact on the economic development of most nations' growth. Zimbabwe can tap into these ideas and incorporate this mindset principle in the development of a new strategic framework.

2.13.2 Feasibility analysis

Moses and Chimezie, (2014) postulate that a feasibility analysis is a critical step in the business assessment process, and if it is properly articulated, it may be the best investment ever made. Onyegbu (2007) sees feasibility analysis as a study that helps in taking business management decisions to accept and modify, or to reject, a business project based on the analysis of the projects merits and demerits. In the same vein, Hofstrand and Holz-Clause (2009) state that a feasibility study provides a clear focus to the intended business and lays down other possible avenues, identifies alternative ways through investigations, selects reasons to abandon the developed business, provides supporting information that the business idea was thoroughly investigated and helps attract equity investment. Putting together the ideas of these scholars, a feasibility study refers to the critical analysis of the business idea, and evaluation of the viability of endeavouring such an enterprise. This step is very important when starting up a business, as noted by Onyesom and Jegbefume (2012), who stressed that without proper development of business ideas, skills and attitudes, the whole proposed intention becomes a misplaced development (Onyesom and Jegbefume, 2012). Feasibility analysis projects into the future of the business and predicts the success of the enterprise.

A feasibility study is a comprehensive pre-investment examination of all factors and issues surrounding a contemplated investment plan to determine its practicability and profitability (Moses and Chimezie, 2014). Hofstrand and Holz-Clause, (2009: 231) indicate that a feasibility study provides the answers to the question: "Should we proceed with the proposed business project?" and the process that subsequently follows points toward answering this question. Feasibility studies have developed into a business asset for entrepreneurs, financiers, investors, industrialists, bankers, suppliers and other business-related processes which have to be considered before investing (Moses and Chimezie, 2014). It is an analysis that helps the entrepreneur to establish the probability of the success of the business investment opportunities. Financial Standards (2005) elaborated that the primary value of one's business plan will be to create a written outline that evaluates all aspects of the economic viability of the business venture, including a description and analysis of its prospects. Adidu and Olaniyi (2006:241), in view of the value of a feasibility study in a business set-up, stated:

A good feasibility study helps to determine the viability of a proposed business and the risks associated with it, enables the entrepreneur to reject or accept a business before starting it, reveals if there is market for the proposed business and examines more on marketing requirements of the business ventures, guides the implementation of the business plan, helps in determining the sources of financing the business, reveals the machines, facilities and equipment needed for the proposed business, helps determining the number and nature of staff required for the work of the business and helps in identifying those factors that will create unusual high risks and probability of failure or loss.

To ensure the right decisions for a business, its take-off and management require a good feasibility study. This analysis is a tool that provides the future picture of the business; it boosts the confidence, skills and abilities of the entrepreneur to start a business; it is the compass that provides the direction of the possible success and a benchmark of the business.

2.13.3 Business plan

The business plan is a formal document, which describes and develops the opportunity of a business identified by the entrepreneur and the strategy defined to explore it. It is designed to improve the company's performance in the market (Chwolka and Raith, 2012; Gruber,

2007; Honig, 2004). The business plan also consists of a project that is the strategy that the company must follow to develop the new business (Fernández-Guerrero et al., 2012). Essentially, it evaluates the current situation of the company, presents its vision for the future by predicting expected future situations, after the development of the business (Delmar and Shane, 2004; Honig, 2004). The plan is designed with the purpose of defining the business concept and developing its ideas (Gruber, 2007). Planning supports the entrepreneurial process by enabling companies to make decisions regarding the various steps to be taken, including the fundamental decision whether they should actually enter the market, thus contributing to their survival (Chwolka and Raith, 2012).

The plan also has the fundamental goal of gaining financing for the development of the business, which is sometimes the only reason why entrepreneurs decide to draw up a plan (Bewayo, 2010; Bianchi et al., Fernández-Guerrero et al., 2012). Banks and investors typically require a business plan before investing in businesses (Honig, 2004), which acts as a support in the exploitation of an opportunity, allowing entrepreneurs to gather and analyse crucial information and to make forecasts about what the value created to the company will be (Chwolka and Raith, 2012; Honig, 2004). Banks and investors' requirement of a business plan before investing (Honig, 2004) gives them a perspective of the entrepreneur's ideas, allowing them to assess its potential and to assess if the expected revenues will be consistent with the actions planned for the business development. The financing is usually an important contribution, in the process from business plan to business survival, but if entrepreneurs have many resources they may choose not to write a business plan, since external financing will not be so important to the business startup (Burke et al., 2010; Delmar and Shane, 2004).

The role of the business plan in an organisation can be summed up as follows: Business planning usually takes place through systematisation of ideas, such as the business plan, a set of written documents modelling the future of an enterprise (Carvalho, 2009; Testa and Frascheri, 2015). It also helps people to initiate, maintain, and evaluate the actions needed to achieve the goal (Frese, 2009). It provides the roadmap for the business and provides the course of action to be taken by the entrepreneur and spells out the anticipated success story of the business. It is the guiding document of the entrepreneur from which the annual,

quarterly, monthly and daily operation plans are developed and sets the tone of the business and the anticipated achievements of the enterprise.

2.13.4 Business models

Business models illustrate how the entrepreneur designs the creation, capture, and exchange of value while exploiting business opportunities (Amit and Zott, 2001; Teece, 2010). They provide an analytical device to inspect how sustainably entrepreneurs strive for multiple forms of value and how these values are embedded in activities, structures, and relationships of the entrepreneur's emerging organisation (Laasch, 2018).

The concept of business models often refers to how business is done. It is a portrayal of the core architecture of the enterprise and the dominant thinking pattern (Teece, 2010). It has the ability to formalise strategic assumptions and 'tell a story', which makes everyone in the organisation aligned on common values and goals (Magretta, 2002). Business models are the interplay of value proposition (what value is offered and to whom), value creation (how value is created), value exchange (how value is exchanged) and value capture (how value is captured) in a coherent whole (Laasch, 2018).

The concept of a business model is also seen as a means to open up new business opportunities for sustainable entrepreneurs), as suggested by Charter et al. (2008), and as a means to stimulate organisational development. (as a precondition for moving tow. a business model is arranged by the interplay of deferent components with distinct functions (Foss and Saebi, 2017; Holzmann et al., 2017).

Scholars find agreement while defining a business model as the process through which an organisation creates, delivers, and captures value (economic, social, or in other forms) in relationship with a network of exchange partners (Osterwalder et al., 2005; Teece, 2010; Zott et al., 2011; Afuah and Tucci, 2001; Kulins, et al., 2016; Saebi, Lien and Foss, 2017). Business models are shaped by multitudes of differing institutional logic, combining numerous values, beliefs, and assumptions for value creation (Laasch, 2018; Ocasio, and Radoynovska, 2016; Randles et el., 2016). The business model design is defined as the sum of the decisions that weave together activities performed by the venture and its stakeholders, which constitute a key set of practices for the entrepreneur (Amit, and Zott, 2007; Amit, and Zott, 2010).

Business models and innovation are two concepts historically linked in the literature of technology management and entrepreneurship (Massa and Tucci, 2013). The business model has the potential to become an innovation in itself (Amit and Zott, 2012; Massa, Tucci, and Afuah, 2017). (Chesbrough and Rosenbloom, 2002), that is, a vehicle of innovation. Therefore, the business model can also itself be a source of innovation, the determinant of superior performance even in mature industries (Zott and Amit, 2007), or as Christensen (1997), as cited by Balocco (2019), claims, a “source of disruption”. Thus, the business model specifies how the actions of the entrepreneur under a variety of organisational logistics and networks, influences the development and performance of the entrepreneurial venture.

2.13.5 Value chain strategies

2.13.5.1 Backward and forward integration

Wattanapruttipaisan (2002) states that there is now greater scope and more opportunity for inter-firm linkages for enhanced collective efficiency, technological and innovation capabilities, and, therefore, competitiveness. In particular, the proliferation of complex networks of international production and cross-border supply chains has widened and deepened the potential and the avenues for SMEs. These businesses do not operate in isolation and are operating in an environment that has already established large firms, with which they interact, and form business linkages and partnerships. These linkages are based on the contractual arrangements between or among big firms and SMEs. These partnerships are typically industry-specific and involve production and marketing chains, especially for sub-contracting and outsourcing (Hussain 2000). They involve a lead firm (the large business) and one or more ancillary firms (the SMEs), wherein the business depends on the SMEs for timely service delivery, while the SMEs depend on the business for payments (Canare et al., 2017). These linkages create the backward and forward integration relationships. The primary benefit of forward and backward integration between the multinational companies, which are the big firms, and the local SMEs, is the development of global value chains.

Canare et al. (2017) state that SMEs have backward integration with big firms when they link with large businesses by buying inputs from them, and develop forward linkages with large firms by selling products and services to the big firms. Large firms and MNEs can also serve as suppliers of inputs for SMEs. These backward linkages with large firms can range from basic

supplies to leasing of machinery and equipment and providing local firms, including SMEs, with a wider market and supply source which will benefit small and medium businesses with technology transfer (OECD, 2002, 2005). Rothwell (1989) as cited by Harvie and Lee (2003), confirms that when large firms supply SMEs with equipment and machinery, they would have to be trained how to use or to maintain the product, along with the technology that comes with it.

Next to sub-contracting and outsourcing, this also includes contractual arrangements for granting a license to manufacture a product, joint ventures, strategic alliances, and consortiums (Canare et al., 2017). Sakai (2002) and the OECD (2005) identify technology partnerships as a critical connection that supports SMEs to evolve into large firms. This can be achieved through developing strategic alliances and partnerships in social networks. Another technology-related way by which SMEs benefit from large business partnerships is that big firms can provide resources needed to commercialise the small firm's technology (Alvarez and Barney 2001). The backward and forward integration relationships provide the mutual benefits between the SMEs and the big established companies and ushers in an international link to the domestic business entity.

2.13.5.2 Horizontal and vertical Integration

Other ways SMEs could forge links is through horizontal links between themselves (network relationships between firms at the same level of the supply chain,) and vertical links with larger manufacturing and service industries, between firms at different levels of the supply chain, typically, with suppliers or customers (Hussain and Planning 2000). The inter-organisational linkages, also known as the building blocks, of networks can be vertical (exchanges between firms at different stages of production), and horizontal (between firms of the same sector producing similar products) (Hadjimanolis, 2019). James et al. (2004) argues that this information exchange between large firms and small firms can occur both through vertical (supply chain) and horizontal linkages. These partnerships between SMEs and large firms are typically industry-specific and involve production and marketing chains, especially for sub-contracting and outsourcing, involving a parent firm (the large business) and one or more ancillary firms (the SMEs) (Canare et al., 2017).

Horizontal integration means close, real-time connectivity and cooperation within the enterprise's field of activity (Nagy et al., 2018). One peculiar form of networking is horizontal networking. Firms that produce similar products benefit the most from this. These linkages are sometimes created specifically to share information and technology (Canare et al., 2017). Scholars have extensively carried out research studies that focus on technology transfers between foreign organisations and local firms in the same business sector, creating technology spillovers because of the close linkages with foreign affiliates, commonly known as horizontal transfers (Jabbour and Mucchielli, 2007). Horizontal integration mostly involves the linkages between SMEs and helps to create the synergies between small enterprises and they share ideas, experiences and develop themselves through networking.

Vertical integration is developed between local SMEs and the larger companies. The comparative advantage for such a partnership is that it develops increased market access, enhanced investment flows, skills development and technological advancements (Hussain and Planning, 2000). The studies done by Mutura et al. (2016) revealed that vertically integrated farmers maximise returns on investments through value addition, complimenting their own produce from other sources as well as offering diversified products from the same material inputs. Vertical integration in the textile industry in Mauritius also stands out as an interesting and successful example. The success story of this vertical integration in Mauritius was summarised by Hussain and Planning (2000:231) as follows:

The textile industry within the Export Processing Zone is also linked to a vertical networking between Floreal Knitwear, the leading Mauritian firm, and the global textile multinational, Woolmark plc. Floreal Knitwear, the world's second largest manufacturer of Woolmark sweaters, has progressed from producing sweaters from imported coloured woollen yarn, to utilising coloured yarn produced within the Export Processing Zone. Explicitly, the advantages of vertical networking between Floreal Knitwear and Woolmark has resulted in product specialisation, and the beginning of horizontal integration of the textile industry in Mauritius.

This mutual linkage between the parent and ancillary firms produces an efficient relationship which leads to an increased market base development and trading in a variety of ways, which

includes allowing the timing and quality of inputs (both goods and services), allowing for expeditious adaptation to technological advances, removing the burden of rigorous post-delivery quality checks of all inputs and ensuring greater flexibility to respond to change and stimulate innovation through interaction (Hussain and Planning, 2000). The horizontal integration strengthens the relationships between firms at the same level of the supply chain, while vertical integration develops strong ties between firms at different levels of the supply chain, typically with suppliers or customers, and these links help the development of small businesses; when such relationships are nurtured, SMEs are the main beneficiaries of the business relationships.

2.14 Conclusion

From the presented facts, it can be concluded that the indigenous policies in Zimbabwe, to a lesser extent managed to empower black people, but to a greater extent failed to achieve their major objective of turning SMEs into an economic hub of Zimbabwe. There is need for the government to rethink and evolve a practical strategy that is easily accessible, implementable and user friendly to all the existing and potential entrepreneurs. Zimbabwe has great potential to improve the performance of SMEs if a more logical and well-planned implementation strategy is crafted. It is rich in natural resources like minerals, wildlife, soils and the savanna climate, which provides excellent farming conditions. It was once dubbed 'the bread basket of Africa', but this has since vanished from Zimbabwe. It can be revived through a positive development and a strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement to improve the performance of SMEs, which this study seeks to produce. The next chapter represents the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

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3.4.3 Juxtaposition of institutional theory and entrepreneurship within the fourth industrial revolution era

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3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theories that are linked to the public policies and SME performance, with the entrepreneurship development theory being the major theory of focus that has a strong relationship with SMEs in particular. Other theories that have been put forward by scholars in relation to public policies and performance of firms considered in this chapter include the knowledge spillover theory, institutional theory, resource based view theory, the technological acceptance model theory and the social learning theory.

The last section discusses the theoretical gap and critically analyses the coherence of the adopted theories that underpin the study and their implications for SMEs through the development of the conceptual framework that is used for the study. The entrepreneurship development theory, the resource based view theory and the institutional theory have been adopted and blended in this study, as they have some important aspects that reflect the government policy and the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The three selected theories were integrated to develop the conceptual framework.

3.2 The entrepreneurship development theory

Schumpeter's theory of entrepreneurship is understood today as the foundation of entrepreneurship development theory. Schumpeter's theory is centred around the idea that the concept of the entrepreneurship constitutes a key for development in the economic, social, and political, art and across all the spheres of life (Swedberg, 2007). The main focus of the theory, according to Schumpeter, is the entrepreneur who is described as "the Man of Action in the area of the economy who is an economic master and an innovative leader" (Schumpeter 1911:172). The diversity of this theory is discussed in detail later in this chapter under the multidisciplinary nature of the entrepreneurship development theory.

Entrepreneurship is an economic process that has been largely considered as a driver of economic growth, not only in advanced capitalist economies, but also in transitional and emerging economies (Stam, 2009). It is a fundamental driver of economic evolution, which is also a distinctly spatially uneven process, and provides an important explanation of the uneven economic development of regions and nations and, hence is a key element of evolutionary economics (Schumpeter, 1934; Witt, 1998; Grebel et al., 2003; Grebel, 2007).

The entrepreneurship development theory has been recognised as an important element in explaining regional economic development (Acs and Armington, 2004; Fritsch, 2008). Traditionally, entrepreneurs are seen as economic actors and their actions as the determinants of economic development (Schumpeter, 1934; Kirzner, 1997), but since this notion, there has been a multitude of changes that have occurred in the field of entrepreneurship, making the evolution of the theory of great significance to note.

3.2.1 The evolution of the entrepreneurship development theory

The work of Klepper set the tone of the evolution of entrepreneurship when he broke away from traditional approaches in both economics and strategy and ventured into a uncharted new territory which highlights the critical role of innovation and entrepreneurship in the evolution of firms and industries of regions and economies (Stam, 2009). In this process, Gort and Klepper (1982) documented what has now been widely adopted as the evolution of an industry through entrepreneurship with a four-stage life cycle, as postulated by Agarwal and Braguinsky (2014):

1. In stage 1, one or more major innovations by the product's first entrepreneur (or entrepreneurs) are commercialised.
2. In Stage 2, the period of sharp increase in both the number of entrepreneurs and total industry output is accompanied by real output price fall, which often accelerates toward the end of this phase.
3. In stage 3 and 4 the industry then makes a transition to maturity, often through a 'shake-out-like' process, during which the number of producers sharply declines and then stays constant, and the output development and price the decrease in price is less.

The evolution of the entrepreneurship phenomenon is characterised by new entrepreneurs joining the business world, and these 'newcomers' to the economy have an important role to play in the evolution of economic systems (Stam, 2009). According to Schumpeter (1942: 83): "The fundamental principle that ignites and sets in motion the capitalist system is derived from the new entries' goods, the new systems of business implementation or developing new markets all aimed at achieving the process of Creative Destruction which is the fundamental principle of capitalism." Through the creation of variations in products, processes, business models in the economy, these innovative new entrepreneurs' firms compete with the

established firms, which force the old ones to improve or change their production, to remain viable in the wake of the new competition (Schumpeter 1934: 1942). The creation of the variation is unevenly distributed over space and these new variations are thus created somewhere, but are not diffused automatically to all places and applications in which they might be of value; the entrepreneurs play a major role in this diffusion of new variations, as they fill the gaps in the market (Kirzner, 1997).

Nooteboom (2008) points out that variation and diffusion feed into each other and the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities feeds further opportunities (Holcombe, 2007). Any change by one entrepreneur alters the economic environment and provides opportunities for additional adjustments by other entrepreneurs, which is followed by entrepreneurial activity that will create wealth, and, in turn, increases the extent of the market systems (Stam, 2009). Another development is the creation of market niches that did not previously exist, which would provide opportunities for new entrepreneurs to enter and expand this market niche; entrepreneurial opportunities come into being because of initial acts of entrepreneurship that will have evolved – Metcalfe (2002) refers to this as the process “growth of knowledge”. The variation and diffusion of entrepreneurship linkages were elaborated by Holcombe (2007: 61), who argued that, “Bill Gates could not have made his fortune had not Steve Jobs discovered the great chance to develop and sell computers, and Steve Jobs could not have developed a personal computer had not Gordon Moore discovered the microprocessor.” The interrelatedness of these developments accounts for the value of variation and diffusion.

Variation and diffusion are followed by selection, which plays an important role in entrepreneurship, reflected in the fact that the newest entrepreneurs do not survive for a long time, and that even a smaller portion (often less than one out of ten start-ups) grows to some extent (Reynolds and White, 1997). Selection is generated by the decisions of external resource holders to allocate their resources among the new entrepreneurs (Baum and Silverman, 2004). These new entrepreneurs are affected by different selection environments. Most directly, there is competition in product-markets. Lack of competition might indicate an opportunity (a gap to be filled) and a constraint (with too high entry barriers) and stiff competition forces firms to diversify produce and sell efficiently in order to survive (Stam, 2009). For new entrepreneurs that need to reach a substantial size, selection in the capital

and labour market are important factors, as they need to attract finance and human resources in competition with other established organisations that need these resources in an environment with a limited supply (Stam, 2009). Competition is often within the local area, as more distant firms are less likely to compete for the same pool of human resources or product-markets than firms in proximity (Sorenson and Audia, 2000).

Entrepreneurship is a key element of evolutionary economics and the development of entrepreneurship over time has been largely considered as the driver of the economic evolution (Grebel, 2007). There are clear differences that can be observed within and between nations in the rates of entrepreneurship evolution and in their determinants (Bosma and Schutjens, 2008), and these differences tend to be more pronounced over time, showing path dependence in industry structure (Brenner and Fornahl, 2008). The evolution of the entrepreneurship development theory can be observed in industry structure, urbanisation, culture and the growth in knowledge and financial capital in the entrepreneurship system.

3.2.1.1 Industry structure

Entrepreneurship evolves over time, from the early stages when organisations are created as small businesses and those who create them are the entrepreneurs, and which later grow into firms and industries (Gartner, 1989). The industrial growth has led to rapid urbanisation, with culture playing a role in the explanation of spatial variation in entrepreneurship through its effect on the attitudes and values that people acquire through growth in knowledge and financial capital, these being considered as the main drivers of the modern entrepreneurs (Stam, 2009). New entrepreneur formation across regions can be identified by differences in the regional composition of industries and by differences from one industry to another in a specific industrial region (Stam, 2009). The industry structure of a region affects the overall new entrepreneur formation rates in a region, as industries differ in their degree of entry barriers and the extent to which entrepreneurial opportunities arise in various business sectors (Stam and Bosma, 2014). The current big industrialised nations have evolved from single industries into a hive of inter-related industries. Glaeser (2007) found that in some cases, both the industry structure and the regional context are favourable for new entrepreneur formation in a region; this was experienced in the South-East of the United Kingdom, which has both a favourable industry mix (especially construction, service, and

finance and related sectors) and favourable local conditions. In contrast, regions like Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales suffer from a combination of both an unfavourable industry mix and unfavourable local conditions for new entrepreneur formation (Stam, 2009). Often the industry mix component dominates the local conditions component in statistical analyses of determinants of regional firm formation rates (Fotopoulos and Spence, 2001).

3.2.1.2 Urbanisation

Urban areas have numerous advantages for entrepreneurship (Reynolds et al., 1994). Urban density is a hive of activity which leads to thick product, labour and real estate markets, and provides many opportunities for human interaction. In addition, cities provide an environment that facilitates more frequent meetings than in less densely populated areas (Jacobs, 1969), which increase the chances of new opportunities, collaborations and linkages that initiate the emergence of new entrepreneurs. Urban density also improves the chances of being in contact with more skilled individuals in the same, or related, knowledge domains; sharing information with these more skilled peers stimulates human capital accumulation in these environments (Glaeser, 1999) and leads to the creation and discovery of better quality entrepreneurial opportunities through comparative advantage.

Some authors have argued that the positive advantage of population density experienced in big cities might be a temporary measure, since in the 1990s they were associated with crime and an increase in positive social interaction (Glaeser and Gottlieb, 2006). However, urbanisation, with its high population size and density comes with great benefits to entrepreneurs, reflected in the large degree of heterogeneity in entrepreneurship rates in world cities (Acs et al., 2008). Another advantage derived from high population density is the availability of a large pool of customers as well as the inputs required (capital, labour, suppliers) to produce the goods or service systems (Stam, 2009). Cities provide the labour force and the market for the finished products.

Urban areas have high concentrations of educated entrepreneurs with business experience in their early and middle adult years, and in that way are sources of entrepreneurs (Glaeser, 2007). Among individuals, the preference for self-employment strongly decreases with advancing in age, and the probability of self-employment strongly increases in middle-age

(Blanchflower et al., 2001). Urban areas have a huge demand for entrepreneurship services, especially in retailing, as they demand a rich variety of services and consumer goods (Glaeser, 2007). Urbanisation positively affects diversification of consumer demand, which is the foundation of flexible specialisation theory (Piore and Sabel, 1984); the theory describes such trends in terms of the breakup of the mass market for standardised goods and services and the consequent creation of a variety of smaller niche markets capable of exploitation by new or small businesses which are generally described as the SMEs.

3.2.1.3 Culture

Culture provides an important explanation of spatial variation in entrepreneurship through its effect on the attitudes and values that people acquire. Social psychologists have claimed that an individual's attitudes and traits are not inherited, but are developed and shaped by their interaction with social environment systems (Stam, 2009). The perceptions about the desirability of becoming an entrepreneur are conceived and implemented according to the set of information available to each person (Lafuente and Salas, 1989). Culture is a function of groups, and it seems, especially national (Uhlener and Thurik, 2007), and to a lesser degree, regional cultures (Davidsson and Wiklund, 1997) have a great bearing on the establishment of new entrepreneurs. These cultures are not static and they change over time, but they tend to be very persistent (Beugelsdijk, 2007). The dynamic nature of cultures affects the distribution and activities of entrepreneurs.

The existence of a number of entrepreneurs in a region reflects the culture of entrepreneurship in that particular geographical area (Kristensen, 1994). In the same vein, the differences in culture affect the level to which people aspire and think about becoming an entrepreneur. This is a critical phase in the process of becoming an entrepreneur and it has been proven that the fear of failure discourages people from this aspiration (Arenius and Minniti, 2005; Vaillant and Lafuente, 2007). Cognitive theories have proposed that people acquire information and skills by observation of entrepreneurial activities by others and that might motivate them and decide to make entrepreneurship a career of choice (Forbes, 1999; Zander, 2004). A study by Nanda and Sorenson (2008) showed that an individual is more likely to become an entrepreneur if his or her workmates have been entrepreneurs before. They argue that peers affect entrepreneurship in two ways, by assisting co-workers' access to

important information and resources that help them to discover entrepreneurial opportunities, and by influencing co-workers' perceptions and attitude to be inclined to take up entrepreneurship.

Specific local cultures have effects on different types of entrepreneurship (Stam, 2009). Two distinct types of entrepreneurship are the 'self-employment' and 'career' life modes which have different positive effects on entrepreneurship; by contrast, a 'wage-earner' life-mode has a clear negative effect on entrepreneurship (Illeris, 2006). Stam (2009: 141), summarised the effect of the wage earner and the career life modes as follows:

The main feature of the wage-earner life-mode is the sale of one's labour at the highest possible price in order to obtain the highest possible remuneration. Such individuals have very little chance of setting up new businesses, except when they are 'forced' by unemployment. This life-mode is most common in regions of narrow industrial base and dominated by large externally owned firms. The dominant value of individuals with a career life-mode is the development of their career. They are well-educated and working in large private or public sector organisations and are capable of being entrepreneurs as they benefit from their skills, knowledge and expertise.

The career life-mode entrepreneurs are often technologically advanced, innovative and with good marketing capabilities, and are often concentrated in large metropolitan areas and smaller attractive cities (Savage et al., 1988). This career life-mode represents that of the creative class, which consists of individuals with relatively high levels of creativity in their work (Stam, 2009). A spatial concentration of the creative class has been shown to positively affect new entrepreneur formation rates (Van Aalst et al., 2006; Lee et al., 2004; Marlet and Van Woerkens, 2007) and the amenities in regions of high quality affect new firm formation rates, by attracting the creative class (Florida, 2002).

3.2.1.4 Growth in knowledge and financial capital

New knowledge generated by universities and research institutes creates opportunities for entrepreneurship, especially in highly technological industries. In most cases, large organisations are not able to fully recognise and appropriate these opportunities to

commercialise the knowledge. However, knowledge workers in these organisations can respond to the positions generated by new knowledge by being entrepreneurial and thus they can appropriate the expected value of their earned knowledge (Acs et al., 2005; Audretsch et al., 2006; Zucker et al., 1998; Feldman, 2001; Kirchhoff et al., 2007). The proximity to these new knowledge bases in society is an asset to entrepreneurial firms because they can access and absorb spillovers from knowledge-generating institutions (Audretsch and Lehmann, 2005; Audretsch and Stephan, 1996; Audretsch et al. 2005).

The degree to which technological change promotes new entrepreneurs in high-tech industries depends on the institutional environment systems (Stam, 2009). The institutional setting has a great bearing on the nature of technical labour markets, venture capital markets, and the structure of buyer-supplier ties that are highly relevant for new entrepreneurs (Chesbrough, 1999; Casper, 2007). This environment has an effect on the opportunity costs involved in resigning from a secure job at a university or research institute and venturing into entrepreneurship (Feldman, 2001). There is a positive correlation between a strong science base and high-tech entrepreneurship (Van Looy et al., 2011). The institutional environment thus acts as a mediating factor between investments in the knowledge base of a society and the knowledge spillovers exploited by entrepreneurs.

A major factor disadvantaging entrepreneurs in realising their business dreams is liquidity constraints (Evans and Jovanovic, 1989; Holtz-Eakin et al., 1994). This especially applies to new entrepreneurs that require large-scale investments for their initial activities. Small-scale entrepreneurs are often financed with bank loans or the support of the entrepreneur's family and friends, and the entrepreneur's own housing has proved to be the single most important source of collateral for bank loans (Black et al., 1996). Therefore, the general fluctuations in the local housing market can greatly affect the availability of financial capital for new firms and households in regions in which housing prices appreciate strongly are more likely to start a business than households in other regions (Hurst and Lusardi, 2004).

New entrepreneurs that require large-scale investments will opt for the venture capital market that provides financial capital and knowledge of developing a business in a particular industry. The provision of financial capital in general is mostly provided to the national scale,

while the provision of venture capital is provided to the regional scale (Gibbs, 1991; Zook, 2002). The supply of venture capital is not distributed evenly across regions, as shown by the venture capital market in the USA that is highly concentrated both in supply and investments on the east and west coasts of the country (Sorenson and Stuart, 2001; Powell et al., 2002), while in the UK it is highly concentrated in the southeast, in and around London (Mason and Harrison, 1999, 2002). This uneven regional distribution has also been identified in other countries (Martin et al. 2002). Venture capital markets are a relatively recent development in the entrepreneurship arena and are often interlinked with other investment intensive industries in particular regions (Braunerhjelm and Feldman, 2006). The venture capital support is mostly associated with the support of big companies at regional level.

3.2.2 The multidisciplinary nature of entrepreneurship development theory

There is no commonly accepted definition of entrepreneurship since it has evolved to be a multidimensional concept and the definition used will depend on the focus of the research under study (Ingridl et al., 2010:4). These sentiments were echoed by Latypov et al. (2019), who posited that entrepreneurship is an interdisciplinary phenomenon that simultaneously refers to economics, sociology, psychology and philosophy. This multidisciplinary nature of entrepreneurship was elaborated on by Jean-Baptiste (1832), as cited in Latypov et al. (2019), who believed that an entrepreneur can be a farmer, a manufacturer or a merchant or a person who undertakes to produce some product at his own risk, at his own expense and in his favour from any discipline of choice. According to the Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS) report, as cited by Fiore et al. (2019), entrepreneurial skills include such abilities as creating new products and services, managing innovation within a firm, commercialising a new idea or development, building up a professional network and identifying new business opportunities. The diversity of the entrepreneurship phenomenon implies that there is no one particular discipline, culture or subject that can claim ownership of the concept, as it cuts across all spheres in life.

In education, entrepreneurship courses are often offered in business and management and it has been close to a century since the first entrepreneurship course was created at Harvard Business School in 1947 (Katz, 2003). Since then, the number of entrepreneurship courses has increased significantly all around the world, covering many fields of study (Katz, 2003,

Fretschner and Weber, 2013; Torrance et al., 2013). The number of entrepreneurship courses increased from just a handful in the 1970s to more than 2200 courses, in over 1600 schools, at the beginning of the 2000s (Katz, 2003), to more than 5000 in 2008 (Torrance et al., 2013). This increase has been necessitated by the reality that universities are now fostering entrepreneurial skills among their students as part of their so-called third mission (Rasmussen and Sorheim, 2006; Rideout and Gray, 2013; Siegel and Wright, 2015). The increase in the number of courses offered in entrepreneurship at universities is an indicator of the diversity and multidisciplinary nature of entrepreneurship.

The current popularity of entrepreneurship has led to an increase in the demand from students for entrepreneurship courses (Fiet, 2001; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003), not only from students from business and management schools, but also from science and technology, engineering, design and architecture, humanities, natural science and law schools (Rideout and Gray, 2013). As stated by the GUESSS reports, there has been a great decrease in the number of students not wanting to attend entrepreneurship courses, from 62.4% in 2014 (Sieger et al. 2014) to 55.4% in 2016 (Sieger et al. 2016). This evidence proves that entrepreneurship interest is growing across the various disciplines at higher institutes of learning and the increasing number of these courses depends on the fact that entrepreneurship education is the key towards promoting entrepreneurial skills (Dou et al. 2019).

The European Council has placed high emphasis on entrepreneurship education and announced to all its affiliates that it should be a priority area for strategic sustainable, economic development (Curth et al., 2015). The policies developed in Europe, as stated by Sánchez and Sahuquillo (2016), elaborate that entrepreneurship is now being taught in Spanish primary schools. The European Commission has recently supported two centres to focus on entrepreneurship education: Entrepreneurship Education Ecosystems in Engineering, and the Technology (E4T) Erasmus project, which are aimed at providing graduates from the engineering school with a desire to become involved in businesses and in entrepreneurship (Varano et al. 2018). In the light of the multidisciplinary nature of entrepreneurship, the government of the Netherlands has supported the creation of centres

for entrepreneurship in its universities to direct, organise and facilitate multidisciplinary, institution-wide entrepreneurship (Chatzichristou et al., 2015).

3.2.2.1 Social entrepreneurship

According to this definition: social entrepreneurship is a process which includes an innovative combination of resources to pursue opportunities that can lead to social change and meet social needs in a community (Mair and Marti, 2006). It is thus underpinned by social objectives to improve the wealth and well-being of communities, rather than just the individual (Cant, 2007). The primary goal of social enterprises is sustainable social development that plays a pivotal role in addressing key issues and that leads to social and economic well-being in the community (Khangarot, 2019). Social entrepreneurship, as a multidimensional construction, implies the expression of virtuous business behaviour to achieve a social mission, a unity of coherent purpose and action in the face of moral complexity, and the ability to recognise opportunities for social change (Mair and Marti, 2006). Thus, there is general agreement that this category of entrepreneur pursues opportunities to create social value and social change (Mair and Marti, 2006; Peredo and McLean, 2006). As stated by Brinckerhoff (2000), these entrepreneurs have the capacity to add value to current services and the ability to take reasonable risks for the clients they serve by providing both social and financial returns on their investments. Social entrepreneurship has the development of the local community and the general welfare of the people as the main objective of its operations. Both the innovation process and the utilisation of resources in the pursuit of opportunities to promote social change and provide the social needs of the community are important (Mair and Marti, 2006 as cited by Virgen et al., 2020).

A social entrepreneur is “any person, group, network, institution, or a group of organisations that focus on a large-scale change through developing economies of production” (Light, 2006: 50). They are “social change agents” who “create and develop social value without considering the limitations in the resources” (Sharir and Lerner, 2006: 3). Zahra et al (2009 :519-520) as cited by Nandan, London and Blum (2014:211), summarises the social entrepreneurship concept by describing the behaviour of entrepreneurs as follows:

Social entrepreneurs encompass the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social value by creating new

ventures or managing existing organisations in an innovative manner. The “social bricoleur” discovers and addresses small scale local social needs; the social constructionist reforms and diffuses innovations to the broader social system; and the social engineer recognises systemic problems in the social structures.

A social entrepreneurship is a process that involves the innovative use and combination of resources to seek opportunities to catalyse social change and address social needs. (Mair and Marti, 2006). Consistent with the entrepreneurial concept, social entrepreneurs exhibit characteristics and leadership qualities that focus on the desired social change (Shaw and Wilson, 2002; Stupnytska, Alvey, and Lees, 2000). Social entrepreneurial activity is produced through an intersection of innovation, proactivity, and risk taking and these three primary components form an entrepreneurial orientation (Miller, 1983; Mort, Weerawardena and Carnegie, 2003). The innovative disposition of social entrepreneurs supports and engages creativity and novelty; proactivity pertains to their ability to seek opportunities for identifying and fulfilling future needs; and risk-taking refers to their desire to explore into the unknown (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Miller, 1983; Miller and Friesen, 1982). Social entrepreneurs satisfy social needs and sustain the process in a manner that reduces social problems with an intention of promoting social change. They innovatively combine social needs with social assets and create social impact (Perrini, 2006). Social innovation, entrepreneurial spirit, and social change are the important aspects of social entrepreneurship, which can be used with a blend of human relations with an ultimate goal of helping the local community (Khangarot, 2019). Social entrepreneurship involves a variety of stakeholders that are in the local community, which include government agents, non-governmental organisations, local leaders, traditional and cultural leaders, citizens and communities who must collaborate to solve social problems.

3.2.2.2 Economic entrepreneurship

Classical economic theory regards the entrepreneur, along with the other main determinants of economic development such as climate, government, politics, plagues and wars; and is regarded as an ‘external force’ (Shane and Venkataraman, 2002). The entrepreneur is now regarded as a major player in economic development process. In the economic sphere, the entrepreneur is defined as an individual who is able to identify, seize and take advantage of

opportunities, searching for and managing resources so as to transform opportunities into successful businesses (Filion, 1991; Timmons, 2004; Shane, 2005). Dudkin as cited by Latypov (2019), summarises the value of entrepreneurship in the economic discipline as:

Entrepreneurship is a system of management, in which the main role is played by an entrepreneur who rationally combines a variety of factors of production and organises the process of reproduction on an innovative basis, economic risk and economic responsibility for the final results in order to obtain entrepreneurial income.

When looking at the current state of the entrepreneurship field as it is reflected in education, the majority of entrepreneurship programmes are being offered at faculties of business administration and economics and are of course targeted at business students (Levie, 1999). Three main types of entrepreneurship courses offered at most institutions of higher learning may be distinguished. The first deals with the start-up of new business (Gartner, 1985), which will typically use standard textbooks (Bygrave, 1994; Stevenson et al. 1989; Dollinger, 2003; Kuratko and Hodgetts, 2001) defining entrepreneurship as a process, but narrowing it down to the sources and discovery of ideas and the stages of opportunity evaluation, writing a business plan, accessing resources, starting up, and managing growth. The second type of course focuses on entrepreneurship as a process of pursuing opportunities that may take place in different contexts, only one of which is the business start-up (Brush et al., 2003; Hornsby et al., 1999). A third category consists of courses focuses on small business management, whereas the other two approaches are more concerned with the early stages of the entrepreneurial process. This third approach is more related to managing the existing firm and managing growth (Brand et al., 2007). This has led to the development and support of SMEs as key players in the economic development of many nations as they are leaders in employment creation, contribution to the GDP and the general improvement of communities.

The economic world defines entrepreneurship as self-employment and this is consistent with the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Project's definition of entrepreneurship, as any attempt at a new business or new venture establishment, such as self-employment, a new business enterprise, or an increment of an existing business entity, by sole traders, groups of people, or established businesses' (Reynolds, Hay and Camp, 1999). In fact, SMEs are often seen as the 'seedbeds' of the entrepreneurship process, or as one of the key 'drivers' of

entrepreneurship (Acs, 1992:38). Entrepreneurship research and small business research are synonymous, and in Africa, the relationship between entrepreneurship and small business research is even much closer because SMEs are a dominant feature on the continent to a greater extent than elsewhere in the global village (Naude and Havenga, 2007). The size distribution of organisations in Africa is not evenly balanced because the large proportion of very small enterprises than can be found elsewhere (Bigsten et al., 2001; Tybout, 2000). Entrepreneurship implies the running and maintaining of business entities by individuals and results in the creation of employment and economic development of a country.

3.2.2.3 Psychology of entrepreneurship

The most important drivers of entrepreneurship research came from economics, psychology and sociology, as stated by Schumpeter (1934) and McClelland (1967), who have been credited by scholars as the ‘fathers’ of the field of entrepreneurship research. Currently, as stated by some scholars, research in entrepreneurship has focused mainly on financial outcomes, such as profit or sales (Mayer-Haug et al., 2013), but the psychological aspect of the entrepreneur, such as life satisfaction, strain, or work-life balance, are crucial for the success of a business. The psychological perspective regards individuals as being the major objects of the entrepreneurship process, and this view has been the turning point leading to the mainstreaming of psychology in the broad field of entrepreneurship in the years 1980 to 2005 (Kirchhoff, 19910). Psychologists make important contributions to entrepreneurship through advancing our understanding of the drivers of the entrepreneurial career choice and entrepreneurial success from the perspective of psychology, which, as a discipline, is focused on understanding both intra- and inter-individual processes of action (Gorgievski and Stephan, 2016). The psychology of entrepreneurship provides the dimension of career choice based on the individual’s selected path of business life.

More recently, some scholars have acknowledged the importance of a psychological perspective because “entrepreneurship is fundamentally personal” (Baum et al., 2007). Entrepreneurship is defined by the action of the entrepreneur who is starting a business (Gartner, 1989), elaborately, entrepreneurship involves discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). The two scholars concur that entrepreneurship involves actions. From a psychological perspective, business plans have an

action-regulating function that help to initiate and maintain action (Frese and Zapf, 1994; Gollwitzer 1999). Psychology asserted itself and argued eloquently that actions need to be learnt within the psychological context and actions are necessary to initiate a successful business plan (Rauch and Frese, 2000).

There are number of broad areas of the psychology of entrepreneurship, which correspond to broad domains of psychology, which have been rated according to their frequency as follows: careers perspective, personal differences, health and well-being, cognition and behaviour, and entrepreneurial leadership. The largest number of studies have explored entrepreneurship from a careers perspective, which investigates how individuals transition in and out of entrepreneurship as an occupation (Chevalier, Fouquereau, Gillet, and Demulier, 2013; Niessen, Binnewies, and Rank, 2010), and the factors underlying the career choice for entrepreneurship as opposed to other employment options (Chan et al., 2015). This line of career choice investigation examines the influence of the individual's family and social environment, early entrepreneurial or leadership experience, and attitudes towards entrepreneurship alongside personality variables (Obschonka et al., 2010; Schmitt-Rodermund, 2004).

The second area of the psychology of entrepreneurship is the personal differences approach, which seeks to understand 'who' becomes an entrepreneur and to predict entrepreneurial success and survival (Gorgievski, and Stephan, 2016). It focuses on personality traits, that is, typical ways of thinking, feeling and behaving. Traits relevant to the tasks involved in entrepreneurship show stronger relationships with business creation and performance as compared to broad traits such as the 'big five' personality dimensions, which are self-efficacy, achievement motivation, proactive personality, and innovativeness which are most strongly related to entrepreneurship (Frese and Gielnik, 2014).

The third largest research area concerns the health and well-being of entrepreneurs, which investigates both predictors and outcomes of their mental and physical health and well-being (Gorgievski, and Stephan, 2016). Using between-individual designs, the entrepreneur's job has been characterised as "activating", meaning, both demanding but also providing high autonomy and decision latitude (Stephan and Roesler, 2010). Because of this, entrepreneurs as compared to other occupational groups often experience positive mental and physical

health. This is supported by Totterdell et al. (2006), who state that self-employed workers experience more strain during periods of high demand and low control as compared to periods with lower demand and high control (Totterdell, Wood, Wall, and Totterdell, 2006).

The fourth area of the psychology of entrepreneurship concerns cognition and behaviour, focusing on the role of mental processes in entrepreneurial decisions and action, which is in the cognitive psychology tradition (Gorgievski and Stephan, 2016). Studies in this area also address the connection between entrepreneurs and their immediate environment, as shown by the studies by Huang, Frideger and Pearce (2013), which found that pitching a business idea with a non-native accent negatively influenced evaluators' decisions to invest in a new firm. Gorgievski and Stephan (2016) conclude that studies on cognitive and behavioural processes have the potential to provide important insights by opening up new avenues between personality and performance outcomes, as well as studying processes that link the entrepreneur to his or her environment.

In the fifth research area in the psychology of entrepreneurship, conceptual contributions highlight linkages between entrepreneurship and leadership research (Cogliser and Brigham, 2004). This domain involves investigating entrepreneurs and their employees, how different leadership styles and practices of individual entrepreneurs relate to firm performance outcomes and the leadership concepts that are well-established in organisational behavioural research, including transformational, transactional, empowering, and directive leadership (Bernhard and O'Driscoll, 2011; Ensley et al., 2006; Hmieleski and Ensley, 2007). Other research areas focus on entrepreneurship-leadership practices, for example, entrepreneurial vision and its link with the strategic orientation of the firm and firm performance (Ruvio, Rosenblatt, and Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2010). The psychology of entrepreneurship is indeed a broad area that covers a wide range of themes that enriches the field of entrepreneurship.

3.2.2.4 Technology entrepreneurship

In the recent years technological innovation has taken the grand stage across the global village and through the Internet, information and technological communication (ICT) has brought the whole world together. Digital technologies and their applications are systematically altering established practices and making new ones emerge in different realms

of society. The field of social sciences in general, and management in particular, together with several examples that span a variety of fields are the main beneficiaries of technological innovations (Fini et al., 2017). Technology entrepreneurship focuses on the development and commercialisation of technologies by small- and medium-sized companies, open source businesses, analysis firms adopting a business model that encourages open collaboration, and economic development in a knowledge-based society (McPhee, 2016). Digital technology has penetrated through all systems and it is being used in every sphere of life.

Digitalisation affects individual and team behaviours, organisational strategies, practices and processes, industry dynamics and competition among entrepreneurs (Droll et al., 2017). The recent advent of remote sensing, mobile technologies, novel transaction systems, and high-performance computing offers opportunities to understand trends, behaviours, and actions in a manner that was not previously possible (West et al., 2006). The collaboration between management and ICT has ushered in a new era of business performance analysis through ICT as a valuable support tool for management-related issues by transforming data into information valuable for decision-making (Fini et al., 2017). It has penetrated all the business systems and it is regarded as a basic tool for the success of any business.

There is a close collaboration between entrepreneurial firms and universities and to investigate how data science techniques are applied to shed light on processes that were largely unknown (Fini et al., 2017). Social entrepreneurs make use of modern technology that includes the Internet, social media networks and mobile appliances to promote and disseminate their ideas and products to the general public (Nandan, London and Blum, 2014).

The tourism industry is one of its main beneficiaries of Information and technological communication. It combines entrepreneurship and strategic management interests; the tourism and hospitality industries in particular have profoundly benefitted from the ICT development, where there is a large amount of data usage by online searches, accommodation bookings, discussions, image and video sharing on social media produced by tourists and companies and online reviews (Fini et al., 2017). Tourism destinations are defined in tourism management literature as complex amalgams of “products, amenities and services delivered by a range of highly interdependent tourism firms that include transportation,

accommodation, catering and entertainment companies and a wide range of public goods such as landscapes, scenery, sea, lakes, cultural heritage, socio-economic surroundings” (Mariani, 2016: 103). Within this sector, for example, the destination management organisations facilitate interactions and local partnerships between tourism firms for the development and delivery of a seamless experience that might maximise tourist satisfaction and the profitability of local enterprises. Over the last three decades, globalisation in travel and increased income allocated to travel has intensified competition between tourism destinations and among companies (Mariani and Giorgio, 2017). The comparative advantage of technology development in ICTs (Mariani et al., 2014) has led to the development of many different intermediaries (e.g., travel blogs, travelogues, online travel review sites, social media) for the clients to express their opinions and evaluation of the destinations and tourism services in real time. The value of ICT is emphasised by Mariani et al. (2017), who state that data science techniques are used to collect, analyse, process (through online-analytical processing), report and visualise data about market trends, segments, evolution of bookings and occupancy rates, display offers of accommodation and transportation services and assemble accommodation, transportation and other leisure activities.

Another important aspect of ICT development is the virtual network. Virtual networking is complementary to real world interactions and facilitates the establishment of new connections and the development of trust relationships (Fini et al., 2017). Evidence from research suggests that virtual communication exchanges tend to shift from explicit, more codified knowledge at the beginning of the relationship, towards tacit, more detailed knowledge exchange when the collaboration relationship matures (Hardwick et al., 2013). However, Polanyi (1967), as cited by Fini et al. (2017), points out that the narrower channel of virtual communication may restrict the transfer of tacit knowledge and that this is best shared in face-to-face interactions. Despite the shortcomings, the virtual network enhances communication and the development of businesses.

Informal network ties can be captured by exploiting the wealth of data stored and exchanged on social network sites, making largescale collection of high-resolution data related to human interactions and social behaviour economically viable (Fini et al., 2017). There is increasing evidence of the growing use of Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and other social

network sites by entrepreneurs, which all have the capacity to help them initiate weak ties (Morse et al., 2007) and manage strong ones (Sigfusson and Chetty, 2013). Digital entrepreneurship is moving towards the inclusion of technology such as 3D printing, information technology such as artificial intelligence and blockchain and social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter in its programmes, since they are important for many start-ups and add to the emerging debate on digital entrepreneurship as a distinct research field (Nambisan, 2017; Balocco et al. 2019).

3.2.3 The ontological perspective of the entrepreneurship development theory

Ontologies provide formal models of domain knowledge that can be exploited in different ways (Suárez-Figueroa, García Castro, Villazón Terrazas, and Gómez-Pérez, 2011). The application and benefits of ontologies is not restricted to the realm of artificial intelligence; it is also found at a corporate level and in educational contexts.

The concept of ontology can be best understood as a reference model, as expressed by Duce and Hopgood (1990: 41), who summarise it as follows:

The two words 'reference' and 'model' establish the overall intent. A 'reference' is something which can be described as an authority. A 'model' is a standard or example for imitation or comparison. It provides a system on which to base an artifact. Duce, Giorgetti et al. (1998) see reference models as "a basis for a new type of pattern which exhibits significant advantages over previous approaches; a basis for explaining deficiencies in existing systems and showing ways of overcoming these; as a framework within which systems may be compared and new systems designed".

Ontology is the study of the modes of existence of that which exists; entrepreneurship exists, and consequently, scholars must ask about the nature of its existence (Shaw et al. 2011). An entrepreneurial ontology is based on the process of establishing as an entrepreneur, rather than being one (Weber, 1930). The ontological premise of becoming is mirrored in the view that entrepreneurship is a form of behaviour (Drucker, 1985) and role-performance (Weber, 1930), following a process (Gartner, 2008). This entrepreneurship ontology, as reflected in

research studies of entrepreneurial narratives, has provided five key dimensions: intuition, belongingness, fluidity, learning and awakening.

Intuition is acknowledged as an entrepreneurial quality (Schumpeter, 1934). The dimension of intuition is manifest in the belief that being an ethical entrepreneur is a philosophy, not a set of policies and the entrepreneur contends that, "Policies are not best practices. Rather they are tools that lead to best practices." (Power, Di Domenico and Miller, 2017). Intuition, according to Weber (1930), is the spark that sets off the entrepreneur's creation and this "ideal type" of entrepreneur must be an ethical being. As such, intuition becomes an ethical quality; hence, Schumpeter (1934: 85) concludes, "...the success of everything depends on intuition." It is suggested that the emphasis on experience and intuitive judgement making becomes a fundamental part of an entrepreneurial ontology (Power, Di Domenico and Miller, 2017).

Entrepreneur describes this intuitive form of entrepreneurial behaviour as follows: "When you find yourself blazing the path on your own, then ethics becomes more of a gut-check in an innovative, entrepreneurial pursuit of your dreams" (Power, Di Domenico and Miller, 2017). However, Fennell (2006) warns that intuitionism is problematic, offering scope for disagreements between relevant stakeholders. To counteract the ethical shortcomings of intuitionism, collectivism and consensus are required, as found in the second dimension of entrepreneurship ontology, namely, belongingness (Power, Di Domenico and Miller, 2017).

Belongingness is the psychogenic element of entrepreneurial ontology. A psychogenic need can be defined in terms of affiliation and the desire to become part of a specific culture (Solomon, Bamossy and Askegaard, 2002). Belongingness generates the affiliation that strengthens social legitimisation of one's behaviour, which Anderson and Smith (2007) see as an initial requirement for ethical entrepreneurship. The ethical dimension of belongingness is based on the premise of peer commitment, which can be defined as ethical actions in support of the group that an individual belongs to (Plinio, 2009). Peer commitment is mirrored in social contract theory, a deontological ethical perspective that is grounded in voluntary participation in society with a common goal based on the individual adherence to collective objectives (Fennell, 2006). Rousseau (1993) states that social contract should be seen as an analogy for broader requirements for societal well-being. The issue of belongingness is moulded around communal goals and depicts the behaviour of a voluntaristic social contract

theory for ethics. The ethical entrepreneurship in tourism, for example, has collective objectives set out in global norms such as the UN Millennium Goals or the United Nations World Tourism Organisation Global Code 23 of Ethics, which suggests that belongingness requires a rationale; this leads to the third dimension for an ontology for ethical entrepreneurship: learning (Power, Di Domenico and Miller, 2017).

Continuous learning is part of any entrepreneurial practice, regardless of an entrepreneur's years of experience (Kirzner, 2003). While intuition has been described as an innate condition and belongingness as a psychogenic condition, learning becomes a practical condition for an entrepreneurial ontology (Power, Di Domenico and Miller, 2017). Continuous learning is deeply rooted in the entrepreneurial environment and is the process by which the Weberian ideal type is constructed (Rogers, 1969). In Weber's view, this should be through the process of theoretical differentiation. In practice, this learning is done through continuous trial and error, which is the case for ethical entrepreneurship, which operates in an environment of constant change (Brenkert, 2009). Knowledge is gained from previous experiences (Kirzner, 2003) and this view is also reflected in personal construct theory (Kelly, 2003). In this regard, intuition and learning are not contradictory, but show a mutually beneficial effect. This practical dimension of learning is process orientated, linked to the fourth dimension for an ontology for ethical entrepreneurship, which is fluidity.

Fluidity deals with the nature of an ever-changing entrepreneurial environment (Brenkert, 2009). A feature of ethical entrepreneurship, it requires that 'becoming' an ethical entrepreneur describes the phenomenon more accurately than 'being' an ethical entrepreneur, as echoed by the research done by Power, Di Domenico and Miller (2017), who observed that entrepreneurship is a step-by-step process, one that reflects Weber's (1930) notion of a 'calling' for entrepreneurship, rather than a static state of 'being'. Fluidity is also mirrored in Schumpeter's (1934) assertion that entrepreneurship is a dynamic process. Researchers have also shown that fluidity is associated with a cycle of discovery, arbitration and commitment, and this cycle requires social legitimisation to perform in an ethical venture (Anderson and Smith, 2007). The final element of the ontology for ethical entrepreneurship is rooted in a specific point in time: awakening.

Awakening indicates the trigger moment of an orientation towards ethical entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs describe that an awakening leads them to engage in ethical entrepreneurship; the moment of awakening can trigger the development of a new ethical entrepreneurship business philosophy (Power, Di Domenico and Miller, 2017). Research has discovered that awakening refers to an event that has occurred during the entrepreneur's life, triggering a shift in the entrepreneur's thinking. It is thus deeply rooted in personal construct theory, emphasising the relationship between personal constructs and human experiences (Botterill, 1989). The findings by some scholars denote that awakening is associated with ethical entrepreneurship's intuitive element, which is a form of value pluralism, seen to be a pre-requisite for ethical entrepreneurship (Wempe, 2005). Miller and Collier (2010) call this the emergence of a holistic approach to entrepreneurship, which disrupts the current status quo, as highlighted by Power, Di Domenico and Miller (2017) who explain that an entrepreneur competes with the core industry and disrupts it from the inside by doing something better, something that is good for business and for society.

3.2.4 The epistemological perspective of entrepreneurship development theory

Epistemology is how we know and the theory is a set of propositions used to explain certain phenomena and a methodology is a set of rules and procedures for research (Tennis, 2008). Some common terms that are associated with epistemic stances are: pragmatic, positivistic, operationalise, referential, instrumental, empiricist, rationalist and realist, and each of these terms points to what kind of knowledge can be created through research, how it is gathered and how it is presented (Hjorland, 2004). Epistemology is defined by Webster as, "the theory or science of the method and grounds of knowledge, especially with reference to its limits and validity" (Brown, 1973). The epistemology of entrepreneurship can be drawn out for a variety of theoretical and practical issues; one example is that the epistemology of entrepreneurship reduces the likelihood that it will ever be possible to routinise breakthrough innovations (Diamond, 2012). Entrepreneurship always tries to know its orientations with the existing knowledge of entrepreneurship and the Schumpeterian-set foundations form the basis of entrepreneurship epistemology (Fogel, 2004).

The epistemology of entrepreneurship, as stated by Arila (1996), is centred on the three main processes of innovation, development of products and services, or new processes and risk-

taking. Most scholars have defined entrepreneurship based on these three philosophies, widely considered as the foundation of entrepreneurship epistemology. One of the widely accepted definitions is proposed by Miller (1983), according to which entrepreneurship is the tendency towards innovation, proactiveness and risk-taking. Fraser (1937), as cited by Dana (2007), associated entrepreneurs with the management of a business unit, profit taking, business innovation and risk bearing. According to Mani (2017: 10), entrepreneurship may be understood as, “not just about starting a new business but it is to prepare graduates with life-long skills such as ability to take risk, innovate and take responsibility of their own destiny”. Fry (1993) introduces the term intrapreneurship, as a process which, through the induction of entrepreneurial culture within an organisation and encouragement, support and appreciation, offers creative and innovative ideas for products, services and processes. Gautam and Singh (2015) summarise the epistemology of entrepreneurship through a description of an entrepreneur:

An entrepreneur is an individual who can turn an idea into action, which presupposes creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the skills to plan and manage projects to achieve goals. In this sense, entrepreneurship education can be defined as the process of professional application of knowledge, attitudes, skills and competences, a concept that goes far beyond the purpose of teaching students to become independent entrepreneurs.

The cited scholars concur that an entrepreneur is an individual who can turn an idea into action, which presupposes creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the skills to plan and manage projects to achieve goals (Dieguez, 2018). This view brings into the picture three dimensions of entrepreneurship epistemology which are innovation, proactive and risk taking.

3.2.4.1 The innovation dimension

Innovativeness refers to the inclination to pursue new products and services (Lumpkin and Dess, 2001; Zahra and Covin, 1995). This notion is echoed by Pearse (2003), through reviewing the literature of intrapreneurship and discovering that most of the definitions employed define it as an innovative activity in an organisation. Innovation is a fundamental concept,

which entrepreneurship and its related research have always focused on. Moghadam (2005) believes that intrapreneurship is a process which leads organisational activities toward creativity, innovation, risk-taking and leadership. In this definition, the concept of innovation is an integral component of intrapreneurship. Entrepreneurial organisations have certain characteristics, the identification and promotion of which lead to innovation, result in their optimal performance (Razavi, 2013). Entrepreneurship and innovation are thus two concepts that are interrelated and interlinked.

Major breakthrough innovations almost always arise from individual entrepreneurs or small start-up firms, rather than from large incumbent firms (Baumol, 2005; Christensen and Raynor, 2003; Darby and Zucker, 2003; Gilder, 1993; Klein, 1977). For example, Baumol (2005) documented that a very large number of 'breakthrough' innovations have arisen from entrepreneurially-based small firms, rather than the research and development labs of large incumbent corporations. There may be multiple reasons for this. Christensen and Raynor (2003) have argued that disruptive innovations take a long time and much effort to develop, and initially do not generate sufficient profits to support a large incumbent firm's infrastructure.

Moreover, entrepreneurship is a dynamic process, while the traditional, routine based and cultural organisations are static in nature. Static structures are logical and impersonal, based on centralised decision making, formal rules and procedures and on simultaneous organisational duties, following a prescribed and uniform manner of executing formal and specialised tasks (Moghimi, 2004). On the other hand, entrepreneurial organisations avoid static structures and establish dynamic ones, because they increase innovation and entrepreneurship in an organisation. Dynamic organisational structures are always changing and flexible, with a minimum of hierarchy, only the necessary requirements and emphasis on horizontal structural development (Razavi, 2013). The aim of dynamic structures is to keep innovation and productivity in the organisation; empowerment is the driving force behind an organisational strategy that supports these types of structure (Cornwall and Perlman, 1990).

The research findings of Alken and Hitch also showed that organisations that are characterised by decentralisation and the absence of formal regulations are more favourable

for the innovation process (Agayi, 1999). This means that organisations can develop useful innovations by encouraging individuals to think and give them freedom and flexibility to follow their plans and creativity without placing them in the predicament of a bureaucratic hierarchy (Stoner, 1995). Entrepreneurship is necessary to ensure the survival of organisations through reconstruction operations, redefining the business concept and improving the needed capacity for innovation and quality in dynamic environments (Ecols and Neck, 1998). In the same vein, entrepreneurial universities are at the centre of innovation ecosystems in both developed and developing countries (Farsi et al., 2014; Salamzadeh, 2018), and play a critical role in improving them (Kawamorita, et al. 2020). The subject of static and dynamic structures introduces the synonymous nature of the terms entrepreneurship and innovation and universities provide the opportunities for research and development to link entrepreneurship and innovation. Pinchot (1990) believes that if an individual in traditional organisations behaves as an independent entrepreneur, whose activities create a new unit in the organisation, provides products and services and new processes and achieves new markets with new sources, it leads to growth and profitability; this is called entrepreneurship.

3.2.4.2 The proactive dimension

The concept of proactiveness has been adopted as part of the concept of entrepreneurial orientation (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Miller and Friesen, 1978). Empirically, it has been of particular importance to explain the success of the organisation of business owners (Krauss et al., 2005; Rauch et al., 2009; Van Gelderen et al., 2000). It entails the tendency to take the initiative and achieve the advantage of a 'first mover' (Covin, Green, and Slevin, 2006). Maryono et al. (2020) states that being proactive implies having a long-term orientation, which helps entrepreneurs to anticipate and prepare for potential opportunities and threats. Proactiveness was also defined as the anticipation and implementation of innovations ahead of others (Kearney and Meynhardt 2016).

Entrepreneurs are proactive, as they are involved in the implementation of new ideas in the business. A proactive personality makes elaborate planning desirable and is related to entrepreneurial success (Crant, 1995). Kickul and Gundry (2002) found interesting associations between proactiveness and entrepreneurial activity. It is key because

entrepreneurs have to identify and exploit new business opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Therefore, an entrepreneurship aligned firm actively innovates through new products and services, acts proactively in order to keep in touch with new consumer needs, positively responds to new competitors, and delegates responsibility to their employees for effective decision-making (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). As stated previously, firms with high levels of entrepreneurial orientation actively innovates to respond to competitor moves, acts proactively in identifying changing consumer needs, and undertakes risk positively related to competitive aggressiveness (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996).

Proactive planning increases the active performance of business owners and it implies that they determine their environment to a certain extent by anticipating future demands and preparing how to meet them (Frese, 2009). Thus, proactive planning allows the person to cope with the inherent insecurities of being a business owner by making good use of scarce resources, and to stay on track, ensuring that the goal is not lost or forgotten (Locke and Latham, 2002). Studies done examining the issues around proactive planning within a longitudinal design (Escher et al., 2002; Krauss et al., 2009; Van Gelderen et al., 2000) have indicated that the pre-planning process and elaborate planning are linked to success. This has been empirically proven to be true in Western countries, such as Germany (Utsch and Rauch, 2000; Zempel, 1999), the Netherlands (Van Gelderen et al., 2000), as well as in most African countries (Frese et al., 2007). Being proactive thus has positive impact in the entrepreneurship sector and it strengthens the performance of the firms.

3.2.4.3 The risk-taking dimension

In the entrepreneurial context, risk-taking implies to explore into new areas, to commit one's assets to the business, and to borrow money (Frese, 2009). Miller and Friesen (1978: 923) view it as "the extent to which managers are prepared to make large and risky resource commitments, such an undertaking has a reasonable chance of costly failure". Baird and Thomas (1985: 231) state that risk-taking entails "venturing into the unknown". Frese, (2009) has the following to say about the relationship between risk-taking and performance:

Risk taking is the only variable not being related to active performance; although one could argue that there is a certain risk when active performance is taken because it involves the process of venturing into an unknown territory and usually this is

accompanied by some kind of negative reaction of the environment when changes are suggested.

Each of the stated definitions points to the fact that risk-taking deals with the unknown future and the risk-taker is prepared to engage with a new territory which may have unknown results, but is driven by the hunger for success.

From the epistemological point of view of the entrepreneurship, Lumpkin and Dess, (1996) state that risk-taking refers to the drive to invest in entrepreneurial initiatives with an uncertain outcome, as well as to operate in an anticipating manner. Morris and Paul (1987) argue that this dimension should be defined as calculated risk-taking, as there are main underlying factors that have effects on risk-takers, as stated by Razavi (2013: 123):

It is noteworthy that lack of long-term plans, strategic analysis and necessary skills for doing economic calculations fuelled its intensity and lack of sufficient information by the managers of advertising agencies caused numerous examples of organisations which despite organisational and individual entrepreneurial spirit are suffering organisational death. Despite the necessity of risk-taking for entrepreneurship and its development due to the weakness in economic, cultural and political infrastructures the imposed risk-taking on business owners has been the main cause of business failures.

Khandwalla, (1976) as cited by George and Marino (2011), found that entrepreneurial firms tended to take more risks than other types of firms and were more proactive in searching for new business opportunities. An entrepreneur takes business-related risks and is proactive in developing new, innovative solutions for current markets as a means to stay ahead of the competition and maintain a competitive advantage (George and Marino, 2011). The sum total of a firm's radical innovations, proactive strategic action, and risk-taking activities are manifested in its support of projects with uncertain outcomes.

3.3 Knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship

Döring and Schnellenbach (2006: 377) define knowledge, "as comprising all cognitions and skills that individuals utilise to solve problems, draw conclusions and understand incoming information". This definition is echoed by Witt et al. (2007: 3), who acknowledge that knowledge only becomes effective and economically relevant, when it is accessed and

processed by human mind. Knowledge spillovers mostly occur in cases where knowledge is dispersed unintentionally. When knowledge is identified as a public good or a private good, it can only take the characteristics of a public good if it can be codified and thus be potentially accessed by all users (Franz, 2010). The example of this is the published scientific knowledge which is made accessible to any user willing to get the knowledge from the freely accessible published documents (Witt et al., 2007).

Knowledge spillovers are also easily available through things like conference participation, technology conference memberships, patent filings, and publications, in which the flow of tacit knowledge requires closer interaction between, for example, an entrepreneur and an external collaborator, for the knowledge to spill over (Audretsch and Feldman, 1996; Audretsch and Caiazza, 2016). However, when considering knowledge as a private good, the person who transmits the knowledge may either try to keep it secret to gain profits from its use, or may try to sell it on the market (Franz, 2004).

Knowledge spillovers originate from the positive influence of an external piece of knowledge due to its no excludability and no exhaustibility (Arrow, 1962; Grossman and Helpman, 1991; Romer, 1990), that is, one party's use of a particular piece of knowledge neither precludes others from using the same knowledge nor extinguishes the value of the knowledge. The concept of knowledge spillovers can happen between organisations at a regional and international level (Jaffe, Trajtenberg, and Henderson, 1993; Krugman, 1991). Many scholars define knowledge spillover as direct or indirect transfers of knowledge (Gast et al., 2017; Gilbert et al., 2008). Building on this broad definition, knowledge spillover is sharing information of value and focuses on documenting information sharing among entrepreneurs (Ferreira et al., 2019). Acs et al. (2009; 2013) define its theory in the context of entrepreneurship as showing contexts with greater knowledge that offer more entrepreneurial opportunities. Knowledge spillover can result from the commercialisation process (Hong et al., 2019), the establishment of new organisations from knowledge and ideas (Huosong et al., 2019), and the entrepreneurship process to achieve the goals (Acs et al., 2013). It involves the sharing of information which results in the growth of businesses.

Trippl and Maier (2007: 4) refer to individuals who fluctuate between firms as “knowledge spill-over agents” and the diverse dimensions of the knowledge and the means of its transmission are the main causes of the dispersion of entrepreneurial knowledge. The concept of spreading knowledge among firms has become the foundation of the knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship. In the last two decades, a new dawn of research has emerged, connecting knowledge spillover theory and entrepreneurship theory, leading to a new knowledge base of the knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship (Acs et al. 2013). With his famous book *Innovation and Industry Evolution* Audretsch (1995) initiated the debate about the importance of small and entrepreneurial firms in creating innovations and fostering growth and wealth. Currently, this debate has been established as an independent field of academic research, namely, the knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship, involving scholars from different fields and countries. Entrepreneurship processes depend on new and existing knowledge in order to support the economic improvement of a nation (Welter et al., 2019). This theory of entrepreneurship holds across a variety of institutional and industrial contexts and for both developed and developing countries (Audretsch and Belitski, 2013). It explains how entrepreneurs use information and why investment in a firm’s own knowledge should not undermine an entrepreneur’s collaboration on knowledge with external partners (West and Bogers, 2014; Roper et al., 2017) and access to knowledge spillovers (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2007; Hall and Sena, 2017).

3.3.1 Practical insights of the knowledge spillover theory

The knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship addresses the issue of knowledge commercialisation (Acs et al., 2009a; Audretsch and Keilbach, 2008; Audretsch, 1995), which had remained silent and unconsidered in the original spillover theory. Knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship demonstrates how entrepreneurs utilise the information and why the investment in an organisation’s own knowledge base should involve the participation of an entrepreneurs’ knowledge with external partners (West and Bogers, 2014; Roper et al., 2017) and access knowledge spillovers (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2007; Hall and Sena, 2017). According to the theory, as viewed by Acs et al. (2009), start-ups are one way of diffusing and changing knowledge into societal utility. These scholars summed up the theory as one important source of entrepreneurial opportunities, namely, those that are generated by entrepreneurs through the use of commercially valuable but underexploited knowledge

created by others (Acs, Braunerhjelm et al., 2009; Agarwal et al., 2010; Braunerhjelm, Acs, Audretsch, and Carlsson, 2010).

The research studies in the domain of knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship addressed its impact in society, in particular, economic growth (Audretsch, 2007, 2009, Audretsch et al., 2006). Audretsch et al. (2006) state that those contexts rich in knowledge will be identified by a greater degree of uncertainty, leading to greater entrepreneurial opportunities. The theory proposes new knowledge and ideas as a source of entrepreneurial opportunities (Acs and Armington, 2006; Audretsch et al., 2006). The ideas and knowledge created in one organisational context, such as a firm or university research laboratory, but left uncommercialised as a result of the uncertainty inherent in knowledge, sets the tone for and acts as a source of knowledge, generating entrepreneurial opportunities (Audretsch et al., 2006). It provides a focus on the generated entrepreneurial opportunities emanating from knowledge investments by incumbent firms and public research organisations, which have not yet been fully appropriated by them (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2007).

3.3.2 Critical analysis of knowledge spillover theory

3.3.2.1 The uncertainty theory of entrepreneurship

Arrow (1962), as cited by Audretsch and Keilbach (2007), stated that knowledge is completely different from the traditional factors, or resources, available for economic activity, in that it consists of two fundamental principles of “non-excludability”. This means the inability to exclude others from accessing knowledge, which implies that the use of ideas by someone else does not preclude others from using that same knowledge. These suggestions about knowledge are supported by Griliches (1992), who states that, unlike investments in general resources like financial resources, investments in knowledge have a great potential to spill over for commercialisation by third-party firms that do not pay for the full cost of accessing and implementing those ideas. In this regard, the critical distinction between the organisation’s resources of knowledge and the traditional resources is the high propensity for knowledge to spill over (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2007). The preoccupation with the non-excludability and non-exhaustibility of knowledge, first identified by Arrow (1962), also included the dimension of uncertainty by which knowledge differs from the traditional factors of production. Audretsch and Keilbach (2007) state that the uncertainty aspect involves the

greater degree of uncertainty, greater extent of differences, and the greater cost involved in transacting new ideas, which are more highly uncertain as compared with the traditional resources of organisations such as physical capital which is more predictable.

Arrow (1962) stressed that when it comes to innovation, there is uncertainty whether the new product can be produced, how it can be produced, and whether there is high demand for the perceived new product in the market. Thus, an important implication emanating from Arrow's (1962) view is that as knowledge becomes more important as a source of competitive advantage, the degree of uncertainty involving economic activity also increases. This idea led to the development of the uncertainty theory of entrepreneurship. This uncertainty theory, as stated by Alvarez (2003), makes a clear separation between uncertainty and risk. Risk is calculable, and an expected value which can be pre-determined by projections into the future through the distribution of incomes. In contrast, under uncertainty, no projections or distribution of outcomes can be made. In this regard, Alvarez and Barney (2007) elaborated that a high level of uncertainty makes it difficult, and even impossible, for firms to make any predictions of the expected value to various outcomes. According to Alvarez (2003), decision-making under uncertainty is likely to initiate the entrepreneurship process through the creating of a new organisation or firm.

Decision making under risk conditions triggers the operating firm to calculate expected outcomes as well as the expected losses and to plan for the future, but the decision-making process under uncertainty is associated with organisational inertia (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2007). The inertia inherent in decision-making under uncertainty conditions in the business operations reflects what has been termed as the knowledge filter (Acs et al., 2004; Audretsch et al., 2006). Confronted with uncertainty, the decision-making process tends to maintain the status quo rather than opting for new ideas for which no expected value and commensurate probability distribution corresponding to possible outcomes can be calculated (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2007). The new ideas and knowledge are defined by uncertainty; they may not be investigated and pursued and will remain uncommercialised by incumbent firms. The knowledge filter is the fundamental principle for the development of the new knowledge.

3.3.2.2 The research and development effect of the spillover theory

Cohen and Levinthal (1990) state that entrepreneurs that invest in research and development increase the capacity to adapt knowledge developed in other organisations and are able to appropriate some of the profits gained to external investments in new knowledge. Cockburn and Henderson (1998) worked on this concept and suggested that firms that are connected to the community of open science are able to increase their investment in research and development by absorbing knowledge spillovers. According to the endogenous growth theory, research and development investments and knowledge spillovers are capable of generating high degrees of innovation, increased productivity and higher growth (Romer, 1990). Research and development workers who move between firms are capable of diffusing knowledge and improving the matching of individuals' heterogeneous knowledge, thereby generating more innovation.

According to the endogenous growth theory, research and development investments and knowledge spillovers can be expected to generate innovation, increased productivity and higher growth (Romer, 1990). In addition, Xu et al. (2019 : 83) assert that "knowledge spill-over is facilitated by a number of factors that include research and development, trade and traffic condition, labour force mobility, enterprise knowledge absorptency, market mechanism flexibility, time lag of knowledge spill-over, and changes of factory site besides trade cost and space-time span" (Xu et al., 2019: 83). It can be assumed that technology and research and development investment may provide greater returns to knowledge spillover, as a high absorptive capacity is required to recognise, adopt, combine and assimilate external knowledge. The relevance of technological advantages when using spillovers is due to difficulties in adopting knowledge spillover without specific training and ex ante knowledge.

3.3.2.3 Labour mobility and spillover theory

The knowledge-based theory of entrepreneurship posits individual mobility as a focal mechanism through which knowledge created in established organisations flows to newly founded firms (Agarwal et al., 2007; Franco and Filson, 2006; Saxenian, 2006). Knowledge-based theories suggest knowledge flow as the basic principle that links labour mobility to entrepreneurship performance (Agarwal, Audretsch, and Sarkar, 2007). The early contribution to the value of the labour mobility in entrepreneurship was provided by Almeida

and Kogut (1999), who observed that inter-firm mobility of engineers in Silicon Valley exerted a strong influence on firms' learning processes. The studies by Oettl and Agrawal (2008), concur with these early researchers, as they claim that knowledge flows grow both to the firm receiving employees and to the firms that lose workers. Knowledge accumulation and spillover effects are mechanisms by which highly mobile individuals enter entrepreneurship (Agarwal et al., 2004). The scholars thus concur that labour mobility plays a major role in promoting the entrepreneurship innovation through knowledge transfer.

More recently, Kaiser et al. (2015) and Braunerhjelm et al. (2014) found a positive co-relationship between labour mobility and innovation, measured as patent applications. Hoisl (2007) posits that labour mobility generates better matching and extended networks, which increases knowledge flow between firms. Labour mobility may also positively affect entrepreneurship through similar mechanisms (Braunerhjelm et al. 2014). Ejermo and Jung (2014) showed that the theoretical model provides the insights that labour mobility plays an important role in promoting intrapreneurship and knowledge transfers across firms and this is particularly strong for more educated workers and workers engaged in research and development. Frederiksen et al. (2016), argued that highly mobile individuals have less incentive to search for jobs in established firms, resulting in increased mobility into entrepreneurship. This situation places entrepreneurship at an advantage of absorbing the highly skilled personnel leading to the development of the entrepreneurship sector through transfer of knowledge.

Braunerhjelm and Thulin (2017) have argued that the mobility of knowledge workers, who are generally referred to as the research and development workers (R&D), is due to both their educational and functional occupation data which has a positive impact on firms' innovation output. Thus, employing R&D workers with experience from an innovating firm not only has a statistically significant effect on the firm's performance, but the effect is also economically important for small firms, and R&D workers leaving a firm to join a patenting firm yield quite strong effects on innovation (Braunerhjelm and Thulin, 2017).

The studies by Boschma et al. (2009), critically assessed the effects of labour mobility on the performance of Swedish firms. The data compared the similarity of the human capital

embodied in the firms' workforce and in the new in-migrating employees. The authors noted that there was a vast difference in production performance between the new entrepreneurs as compared to those who had the firm's established knowledge base. These results were supported by the studies done in the same country by Ejermo and Jung (2014), who showed that Swedish inventors tend to be better educated than the ordinary worker and that their quality of education has improved significantly over the years. The study focused on the labour mobility of highly educated workers who are more directly involved in producing new knowledge within firms.

Another dimension of labour mobility discovered by early researchers is the idea that knowledge flows are geographically influenced (Jaffe et al., 1992; Audretsch and Feldman, 1996; Almeida and Kogut, 1999; Agrawal & Cockburn, 2003; Thompson and Fox-Kean, 2005). It has been shown through research that firms are likely to patent more in regions that are characterised by high labour mobility (Kim and Marschke, 2005; Thompson and Fox-Kean, 2005). The geographical dimension of knowledge flows through interregional and intraregional mobility influences innovation output through the interaction of skilled labour. Geography has been known to provide a platform on which new economic knowledge can be produced, harnessed and commercialised into innovations. This model of knowledge production has been found to provide a better explanation for spatial units of observation than for firms in isolation of spatial context (Frederiksen et al., 2016). Geographical mobility as a mechanism for knowledge spillover in entrepreneurship is primarily studied from the network or internationalisation perspectives, and alludes to the notion that entrepreneurs starting businesses in their local environment can draw on local resources and relationships (Stuart and Sørensen, 2003) or how immigrants and expatriates who move from, or back to, their home country set up businesses in new regions (Saxenian, 2006). Geographical mobility is an important aspect that is related to the movement of workers that results in the sharing of knowledge.

The social network perspective studies of transnational entrepreneurship and on entrepreneurial opportunity discovery, as stated by Frederiksen et al. (2016), identify two types of mechanisms for how geographical mobility triggers entrepreneurship:

Firstly, moving out of their original location exposes individuals to new types of opportunities, which they may be able to recognise and develop. The movement from far away may enhance the possibility for bringing new skills and ideas into a context that may value such “foreign” and different products or services (Davidsson, 2004). Secondly, a diverse geographical background with time spent in a number of locations provides opportunities for building an expanded social network in terms of “weak ties” to a variety of potential customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders.

According to knowledge spillover entrepreneurship, the geographical contexts, or regions, that are rich in knowledge, have the ability to generate more entrepreneurial opportunities, and therefore exhibit higher rates of observed entrepreneurship (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2007). Geographers, political scientists and sociologists argue that the diversity in the culture of a region and the linkages between implementers have overlying effects on the overall differences in innovative performance across regions, even holding knowledge inputs such as R&D and human capital constant (Malecki, 1997). In view of this, Saxenian (1994) has argued that a culture of greater interdependence and exchange exists among individuals, such as in the Silicon Valley region which has contributed to a superior innovative performance than is found around Boston’s Route 128, than where firms and individuals tend to be more isolated and less interdependent. Geographical mobility plays a very important role in promoting the innovation and performance of firms.

3.3.2.4 Technological change and spillover theory

Technological change is central in explaining economic growth. This was highlighted by Acs et al. (2008), who elaborated that the rate of per capita GDP growth equals the rate of technological change on the steady state growth path. More innovations are experienced in regions of high technology where opportunity industries are located, than in areas of low technology opportunities (Scherer, 1965). Higher internal investment in technology becomes a connection link for incoming knowledge spillovers (Cassiman and Veugelers, 2006) to entrepreneurial activity, thus accelerating the magnitude of knowledge spillover emanating from entrepreneurial firms. Cumming et al. (2019) build from the idea, stating that new digital and ICT has the ability to transform the nature of uncertainty and risk inherent in entrepreneurship (Nambisan et al., 2018).

The traditional starting point in the literature on innovation and technological change for most theories of innovation has been the firm (Baldwin and Scott, 1987; Cohen and Levin, 1989; Scherer, 1984; Griliches, 1979). Malecki (1997) is regarded as the first scholar to note the importance of skilled labour as a mechanism for knowledge transfer in technology based industrial clusters. The role of technological knowledge, as stated by Minola et al. (2019), integrates various theories like the resource-based view into the knowledge spillover theory through drawing a link between technological knowledge and performance of entrepreneurial firms. Jorgenson (2001) argues that increased technological change had a greater stake in entrepreneurial activity, particularly in the 1990s.

Adoption of digital technologies has further changed the internal environment of knowledge exploration and exploitation (Li et al. 2016). The knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship stands as a relevant theory addressing complementarities between internal investment in knowledge and knowledge spillovers originating from investment in technology and big data (Obschonka and Audretsch, 2019). Audretsch (2020) carried out empirical research and noted that previous theoretical and empirical research emphasised the value of technology in the marketing space and how in-house knowledge investment and knowledge sourcing from external partners is aligned and coordinated in three different notions. The first notion of strategic alignment elaborates that investment in technology and knowledge spillover theory of entrepreneurship increases firm productivity and also changes a firm's structures and capabilities to support the successful commercialisation of new ideas. The second notion states that alignment is a two-way process where internal knowledge investment in technology and knowledge spillovers (Roper et al., 2017) act as mutual drivers of information based knowledge and new opportunity identification (Qian et al., 2012). The third alludes to the strategic alignment of technology and knowledge within a firm further improving its absorptive rate (Cohen and Levinthal, 1989; Mowery, 2009) to sustainable adaptation and change in an organisational set up (Audretsch et al., 2019).

Scholars view higher internal investment in technology as the key driver of knowledge spillovers (Cassiman and Veugelers, 2006), promoting entrepreneurial activity that supports the knowledge spillover emanating from entrepreneurial firms. Technology and R&D investment provide greater returns to knowledge spillovers, as a high absorptive capacity is

required to recognise, adopt, combine and assimilate external knowledge (Audretsch et al., 2020).

3.4 Institutional theory

Institutional theory has become popular and risen to prominence among scholars as a vibrant theory that has been synthesised and contrasted with various approaches in explaining the actions by individuals and organisations (Dacin et al., 2002). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) posited that institutional theory explains that organisational strategies or actions are the reactions to the pressure from external environments. The theory states that an institution's environment is a strong force that can influence the development of structures in a firm more than any other forces. The term 'institution' broadly refers to the formal rules set, agreements, and the behaviour of organisations in following these laws (Jepperson, 1991). The same sentiments are shared by a group of scholars who have described an institution as having socially approved and relatively stable rules, norms, values and beliefs that prescribe what kinds of behaviour are considered appropriate in a society or industry (Berger and Luckmann, 1991; Scott, 2008; Jepperson, 1991; Meyer and Rowan, 1977). When organisations integrate institutions into their practices, stakeholders like regulators, politicians, industry associations, customers, and the wider public will grant them a 'public license to operate' that will drive similar behaviour across organisations in an industry (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Scott, 2008).

Scott (1995: 33) state that, "Institutions are a product of cognitive, normative, and regulative structures and actions that support stability and relevance of social behaviour. Institutions are set in motion by various carriers, cultures, structures, and routines and they function at various levels of jurisdiction" (Scott and Davis, 2008). These three pillars are established in entrenched institutional systems, with legislators placing emphasis on regulative, sociological and normative factors. Institutions are the fundamental principle underlying the institutional theory. The characteristics are derived from the guidelines such as regulatory structures, governmental agencies, laws, courts, professions, and scripts and other societal and cultural practices that guide the implementers into conformity (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, 1991). The government is the main player as a regulatory institution.

3.4.1 Components of institutional theory

Institutional theory is developed around the concept of institutional isomorphism. Certain practices become increasingly widespread in industries and as they are continuously applied over time, they become routine and persistent, such that they are no longer questioned and are taken for granted and institutionalised (Scott, 2008; Jepperson, 1991; Berger and Luckmann, 1991). This act of homogenisation is known as institutional isomorphism, defined as “a constraining act that forces one aspect in a population to align uniformly with other units that are experiencing the same environmental conditions” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991: 66). DiMaggio and Powell (1991) identified three mechanisms through which the pressures toward homogenisation are exerted: coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism.

Coercive isomorphism stems from formal and informal pressures for compliance. The pressures exerted can be highly visible, formal, and forceful rules that schools are required to develop, such as individual learning plans for students with special needs (Hanson, 2001). This is echoed by Mushtaq (2020), who stated that coercive isomorphism results from the formal and casual weights upheld by associations that control assets and authenticity (Mushtaq, 2020). The pressures can be relatively invisible, informal, and subtle, but no less powerful, such as local school board beliefs that men are better suited than women to manage the tasks of a high school principal position (Hanson, 2001). Coercive isomorphism is concerned with the pressure from the environment that seeks compliance to the stated rules and regulations of the institution.

Mimetic isomorphism occurs when one educational organisation consciously models itself after another that it believes to represent a higher level of success and achievement in the public eye (Hanson, 2001). It is a way of forming an association to gain status and authenticity. In this manner, associations follow the lead of increasingly effective others, because of the conviction that their duplicated activities will be bound to produce positive results. In advanced learning, these could be expanded confirmation rates, improved positioning, or upgraded notoriety (Mushtaq, 2020). Hanson (2001) explains that the intention to mimic is constantly encouraged and reinforced by (a) educational consultants who vigorously (and profitably) spread the latest news about exciting things taking place on the other side of the fence, (b) academic conferences that function as supermarkets for new ideas, and (c) the

rapid movement by administrators between schools or districts near and far. Mimetic isomorphism involves the duplication of the best practices that are offered by the environment that set up good examples that are emulated by the related organisations.

Normative isomorphism in industries is associated with professionalisation; for example, the definition of professional standards or extensive training (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Wilensky, 1964). It originates from professionalisation, which is imagined as the impact of formal learning, especially in colleges and the standard working groups where affiliations are the daily practice (Mushtaq, 2020). Moreover, it is rooted in the processes of professionalisation in which the values, codes, and standards are imposed by universities as well as professional certification and accreditation agencies. These agencies also act as gatekeepers, determining who gets into the profession, further reinforcing normative expectations and order on the behaviour of teachers and administrators (Hanson, 2001). Organisations respond to the environmental constraints in order to achieve the learning process. In this regard, the institutional theory provides the lense which helps scholars to investigate the learning systems at public institutions.

3.4.2 The role of institutional theory in the learning environment

Institutional theory is used to understand how the environment influences the capacity of an organisation to learn effectively in order to achieve sustainable performance (Crews, 2010). According to Geels (2004), learning refers to the reproduction or transformation of cognitive, normative and regulative skills through imitation or the exchange of experiences within the environment. Formal learning does not occur in a 'vacuum', but it is embedded in social contexts. This articulation has led many scholars to adopt the social environment in explaining the learning process (Anderson et al., 2009). The theory of Illeris (2007: 28) encompasses three dimensions for learning and two fundamental processes. Today, learning has moved to the top of the business priority list in terms of sharpening skills, enlarging the leadership pipeline, and stimulating employee incentives (Xing et al. 2018). Every organisation has to reassess its learning environment and a fresh vision needs to be implemented to create a conducive learning experience that touches everyone involved in the learning system (Olivier and Page, 2017).

According to Havav (2017), institutional theory is based on the assumption that an institutional environment influences the performance of organisations. It is traditionally concerned with how groups and organisations manage to survive and operate legally by conforming to the rules (such as regulatory structures, governmental agencies, laws, courts, professions, and scripts and other societal and cultural practices that push people to conform, as mentioned) and norms and values of the institutional environment (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 1997). The theory provides a lens through which researchers can identify and examine influences that promote sustainability and acceptance of organisational practices, including factors such as culture, religion, social environment, regulation (including the legal environment), tradition and history, and the economic environment, which are supported by the available resources (Baumol et al., 2009; Brunton et al., 2010; Hirsch, 1975). The institutional perspective argues that organisations are open systems whose internal processes are affected by the institutional environment in which they are embedded (Scott, 2008).

Scott (2007) is well known for the formulation of three categories of institutional forces that constitute the environment: the regulative, normative and cognitive pillars. The regulative pillar involves the capacity to establish rules, monitor compliance to them and, even manipulate sanctions, rewards or punishments to influence future behaviour (Scott, 2001). It plays a stabilising role by prescribing actions through formal and informal rules that establish, monitor, and sanction activities (Bogler, 2001). Regulative systems are often involved with compliance, but recent studies by law and society and organisational scholars suggest that such programmes and legislative initiatives often have greater effects through the normative and cognitive processes they set in motion than by means of their coercive mechanisms (Edelman and Suchman, 1997; Luoma and Coodstein, 1999). Regulative institutions include policies and other formal instructions that are supported by an authority of enforcement (Scott, 2008). They are informative and well stated and they form the formal 'rules of the game'. Specialised actors, like regulators, inspect conformity to regulative rules and, when necessary, provide rewards or punishment to influence future behaviour. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) named this process coercive isomorphism. Institutions control behaviour by means of the stimulated regulations and through monitoring and enforcement. The regulatory position emanates from government policies, and industrial agreements and

standards. These rules provide guidelines for new businesses and lead to SMEs complying with the laws and regulations of the government.

The normative pillar emphasises values and norms about how educators should pursue valued ends through legitimate means (Carvalho, 2017). Normative institutions include values, notions of what is desirable and norms that define how to pursue values (Scott, 2008). These institutions may be explicit, as with standard operating procedures, or implicit, such as unwritten expectations. The norms and values are often role specific because we have different expectations of people in their family role versus in their professional role (Verweijen, 2019). The normative pillar stresses normative rules that introduce well stated evaluative and obligatory issues to be observed by the community. Normative systems basically consist of values (what is preferred or considered proper) and norms (how procedures are to be executed, in line with those values) that follow ground rules to which people conform (Scott, 2007). Some societies have norms that facilitate and promote entrepreneurship and its financing, while some societies discourage it by making it difficult and tough, even if it is mostly done unknowingly (Baumol et al., 2009). Values specify what is desirable or preferable together within the societal standards, which specify how things should be done, defining the legitimised meaning of the values adopted or the accepted actions (Scott, 2001).

The cognitive pillar provides the mirror through which people view reality and gives them meaning as they navigate their world (Bogler, 2001). This pillar has become increasingly important in entrepreneurship research in terms of how communities embrace entrepreneurs, inculcate values, and create an entrepreneurship culture that is accepted and encouraged by the society (Bosma, Acs, Autio, Coduras, and Levie, 2009; Harrison, 2008; Li, 2009). In the light of the cognitive pillar perspective, Carvalho (2017) had this to say:

The cognition, actions and interactions of change elements are decided by institutions which include norms, routines, common habits, established practices, rules, laws and other related processes. Institutions include those who craft and reinforce rules on the implementers as well as those who react to the interactions between them (such as contracts), and include more formal rules (patent laws or specific regulations) as well

as more non-formal ones (traditions and conventions). Institutions shape the cognition, actions and interactions of agents, which include norms, routines, common habits, established practices, rules, laws and the like.

Cognitive institutions constitute the nature of reality and the ways in which the rules and regulations are conveyed. In this sense, the cognitive aspect in institutionalism means that knowledge defines the way in which an individual interprets reality (Tolbert and Zucker, 2006). The cognitive pillar, summarised by Scott (2007), and supported by the more recent developments at the turn of the century in social science (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991), provides a model of individual behaviour based on constructed rules and meaning that limit appropriate beliefs and actions. The cognitive pillar places emphasis on the existence of and the interaction between actors, while the symbols, words, signs and gestures shape the meaning that we attribute to objects and activities (Carvalho, 2017).

3.4.3 Juxtaposition of institutional theory and entrepreneurship within the fourth industrial revolution era

In the fourth industrial revolution era, classical theories such as institutional theory, may need reshaping. In the disruptive digital environment that drives the major evolvement of technological singularity in the transformation process, where block chain may play a central role in the internet of things and artificial intelligence, the issues of trust will become prominent (Carter and Koh, 2018). This new technological movement will also require rethinking and a shift in mind-set of how products are manufactured and services are produced, distributed or supplied, sold and used in the supply chain and it will drive significant structural theoretical evolution and revolution for operations and supply chain management (Spath, 2013).

The fourth industrial revolution was conceived in the Germany's manufacturing industry in the early 2000s regarding the current changes, because humans have finally established the computing capacity to store massive amounts of data, which, in turn, can enable machine learning (Gleason, 2018). It refers to the confluences of technologies ranging from a variety of digital technologies such as 3D printing, the internet of things, advanced robotics to new materials like bio- or nano-based, to new processes like the data driven production, artificial

intelligence, and synthetic biology (OECD, 2016). These technologies have the potential to revolutionise operations and supply chain management (Brennan et al., 2015; Holmstrom et al., 2016; Ruflmann et al., 2015; Fawcett and Waller, 2014; Waller and Fawcett, 2013). The fourth industrial revolution is not merely about integrating technologies, but it is about the whole concept of how future customer demands, resources and data are shared, owned, used and recycled to make a product or deliver goods and services, quickly, cheaper, efficiently and more sustainably (Spath, 2013).

This has resulted in the creation of what are called cyber-physical systems (CPSs). This was outlined by the US National Science Foundation in 2006, with the hosting of several workshops on artificial intelligence and robotics and the declaration that CPS would be a major area of research (Gleason, 2018). Cyber-physical systems are computer-based algorithms that deal with physical processes which involve computers and networks that monitor and control the physical processes of machines and artificial intelligence in a feedback loop whereby one informs the other (Gleason, 2018). Rajkumar et al. (2020: 46) provide a useful explanation of what these complex systems are and their broader implications:

Cyber-physical systems (CPS) are physical and engineered systems whose operations are monitored, coordinated, controlled and integrated by a computing and communication core. Just as the internet transformed how humans interact with one another, cyber-physical systems will transform how we interact with the physical world around us. Many grand challenges are faced in the economically vital domains of transportation, health-care, manufacturing, agriculture, energy, defense, aerospace and buildings. The design, construction and verification of cyber-physical systems pose a multitude of technical challenges that must be addressed by a cross-disciplinary community of researchers and educators.

The fourth industrial revolution officially sounded the alarm that labour costs were about to be disrupted and the way we live and work would be permanently altered by the introduction of CPSs. The world was alerted that increased economic development is not matching the increased demand for jobs.

The Mckinsey Global Institute (2017) released a report which measured the likelihood of automation in 54 countries which covered 78% of the global labour market. It revealed the scale of the impact of the fourth industrial revolution. In agriculture, 50% of current jobs, forestry, fishing, and hunting, representing 328.9 million employees, are potentially automatable. In manufacturing, 64% of current jobs are in the automatable division, representing 237.4 million current employees. In retail trade, 54% of current jobs, representing some 187.4 million current employees are automatable. It is anticipated that in China 395.3 million employees are in potentially automatable jobs, making up 51% of the labour force, in India, 235.1 million employees are working in automatable jobs, and in the United States, 60.6 million, or 46% of the workforce, are currently in automatable jobs.

Peters (2017) has argued that education by itself will be insufficient to address problems of technological unemployment. Traditional undergraduate education through information transfer is no longer a viable form of education to ensure employment and a career in the context of the fourth industrial revolution (Gleason, 2018). Lawyers, radiologists, architects, and accountants will all see significant changes to how they work and in some areas there will be a much smaller demand for human labour. Today the technology is new, but it is advancing very fast; driving trucks, cars, or lawn mowers is no longer a human job, and this has significant implications for economies all over the world. In the past, production has relied on machines to make core human labour more productive, but we now face a future in which humans may no longer be needed for production at all (Gleason, 2018). The new dispensation implies that entrepreneurship will be a function of artificial intelligence and the human institutions will have little of the effect they had during the industrial revolution. Xing et al. (2018) showed the industrial developments that have taken place over time as follows: Knowledge Formulation (First Industrial Revolution: steam mechanisation) → Knowledge Distribution (Second Industrial Revolution: electrification, mass production) → Knowledge Evolution (Third Industrial Revolution: computerisation, internetisation) → Knowledge Mutation (Fourth Industrial Revolution: cyber-physical systems, artificial intelligence robots).

3.4.4 Link between institutional theory and the entrepreneurship process

There is growing scholarly recognition that entrepreneurship is intimately linked to the institutional context in which it occurs (Bruton et al., 2010). Institutions encompass notions

of culture, legal environments, tradition and history and economic incentives, which organise social interaction by constraining and enabling activities and decisions (Greenman, 2013). Being different from individualistic perspectives, resource-based and rationalistic perspectives (Tolbert et al., 2010), the core premise of the institutional practices of entrepreneurial programmes is that prevailing values, rules, expectations and material infrastructure in countries often shape entrepreneurial activities (Jain and Sharma, 2013). Institutional theory applied to entrepreneurship suggests that entrepreneurs must conform to existing institutions in order to gain endorsement and legitimacy and resources from important referent audiences and stakeholders (Su et al., 2017). Entrepreneurs aim to secure essential human and financial resources through convincing potential sources of the resource constituents of the legitimacy, appropriateness and functionality of their proposed programmes relative to one or more socially constructed systems of evaluation (Suchman, 1995; Tolbert et al., 2010). By structuring the attention and action of entrepreneurs, customers, suppliers and investors, institutions forge a shared sense of social reality (Thornton et al., 2011). Common institutional factors that have a great influence on entrepreneurial activities are market conditions and property rights (Foss and Foss, 2008), family structure (Bika, 2012), formal policy (Murdock, 2012) and the availability of capital (Audretsch and Thurik, 2000).

Even though the institutional theory-led entrepreneurship research has grown over the past decade, most of it has been centred on entrepreneurship in developed countries (Su et al., 2017). However, in recent years, a number of studies have investigated institutional influences in developing countries. In his seminal book, De Soto (2000) argues that entrepreneurs can be discouraged from formally registering and starting businesses if they are forced to comply with too many rules and procedural requirements, are expected to report to an array of institutions and have to spend substantial time and money fulfilling documentation requirements. For example, recently in Tanzania it required 28 days at significant cost to register a new business and even longer in other Sub-Saharan African countries (World Bank, 2018).

3.4.5 Critical analysis and repositioning of institutional theory in the gig economy

Digital platforms are rapidly changing the economy and their overall impact has been compared to the fourth industrial revolution. The platforms are best explained in a generic sense, that is, as mediating social and economic interactions online (Kenney and Zysman, 2016). Most outstanding platforms have enabled individuals to link and trade directly, bypassing traditional corporations – generally called “peer-to-peer” platforms (Frenken and Schor, 2017). The first wave of digital platforms dealt with the sharing of digital content such as music and movies; the second wave is concerned with the selling of second-hand goods, for example, eBay; and the third which has populated the global village is social media such as Facebook (Frenken et al., 2018).

The institutional logics platforms are corporations that organise markets, by readjusting the institutional logics of both the market and the corporation in a new way through an institutional-logics perspective and developing new platform-based rationale of economic exchange (Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury, 2012). Recently, the world has witnessed the rise of sharing-economy platforms enabling individuals to rent out consumer items and homes (for example, the Drivy, Peerby, Airbnb) and gig-economy platforms where individuals provide personal services ranging from taxi rides, cleaning jobs and tutoring (for example Uber, Helpling, Taskrabbit). The rapid growth and impact of these platforms have had a great effect on the economy of many nations (Frenken et al., 2018). However, gig workers must take cognisance of the fact that its not only the operating costs and risks that they need to concentrate on, but they must also conform to the temporal rhythms of customer demand, which can reduce their autonomy substantially (Ravenelle, 2019; Rosenblat, 2018; Schor, 2020). The online gig economy represents a conjunction of three major transformations: from local to remote, from full time to temporary flexible, and from permanent to casual (Kässi, 2019).

The rise of online gig work has ushered in a new era in the employment sector where the workers, instead of undertaking full-time employment at the premises of a single employer, are engaged with a number of clients at varying hours remotely from their homes or co-working spaces. This mode of working is becoming more common in some countries and occupations, so much so that both in the research literature as well as among policy makers,

the existing economic statistics are not considered the best option for measuring the online gig economy. Its exponential growth and development renders it difficult to record its full extent and to establish its impact compared to other programmes (Abraham et al., 2017). As gig-economy platforms are expanding into many sectors including education, care and delivery, a comprehensive approach to platforms may be desirable without denying sectoral and national specificities.

3.5 Resource based view (RBV) theory

The resource-based view (RBV) has its intellectual roots in the works of Penrose (1959), who focused on the role of resources in enabling or constraining organisational growth. For more than 50 years, researchers have developed Penrose's insights, and as the RBV has evolved, scholars have concentrated on "strategic resources" (Amit and Schoemaker 1993). The RBV has grown into one of the most influential theoretical perspectives in organisational sciences (Barney, Wright, and Ketchen 2001). Its central premise is that firms compete on the basis of their resources and capabilities (Peteraf and Bergen, 2003). Rantakari (2010) defines this theory as one where the outsourcing decision is based on the client company's abilities to invest in internal capabilities and thus sustain competitive advantage. The RBV, as suggested by Lacity and Will (2008), deliberate on the resources that are possessed by a firm are the primary determinants of its performance, and may contribute to a sustainable competitive advantage of the firm.

The main thrust of the RBV theory is that the competitive advantage of a firm is found in its ability to apply its internal resources. According to Penrose (1959), there is a close relationship between the firm's various resources it works with and the development of the skills, experience and technical know-how of its management and entrepreneurs. The RBV argues that firms possess resources, a critical input which enables them to achieve competitive advantage, and a further subset which leads to superior long-term performance (Barney, 2018; Grant, 1991; Penrose ,1959; Wernerfelt, 1984). Barney (2018) defines resources as "all assets, capabilities, organisational processes, firm dimensions, information, knowledge, that are controlled by an organisation that enable the firm an opportunity to explore its own strategies and come up with an implementation programme that improves its efficiency and effectiveness,".

Researchers and scholars interested in the RBV have used a variety of different terms to explain factors around a firm's resources, including competencies (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990), skills (Grant, 1991), strategic assets (Amit & Schoemaker 1993), assets (Ross et al. 1996), and stocks (Capron and Hurland, 1999). Assets are defined as anything tangible or intangible the firm can use in its processes for creating, producing or offering its products (goods or services) to a market, whereas capabilities are repeatable patterns of actions in the use of assets to create, produce, or offer products to a market (Sanchez et al. 1996). Assets can be classified as inputs to a process, or as the outputs of a process (Srivastava et al., 1998; Teece et al., 1997). In their physical and tangible form they can be information systems hardware, network infrastructure; or in their intangible form, software patents, strong vendor relationships and so forth (Hall, 1997; Itami and Roehl, 1987; Srivastava et al., 1998). Different from the tangible and the intangible assets, capabilities change and alter inputs into outputs of greater worth (Amit and Schoemaker, 1993; Capron and Hurland, 1999; Christensen and Overdorf, 2000; Sanchez et al., 1996; Schoemaker and Amit, 1994).

3.5.1 Components of RBV theory

Resources form the basic component of the RBV theory. They are defined as stocks of available factors that are owned or controlled by the firm (Peteraf and Bergen, 2003). These resources are converted into final products or services by using a wide range of other firm assets such as technology, management information systems, incentive systems, and trust between management and labour (Amit and Schoemaker, 1993). Capabilities are distinguished from resources, as they reflect a firm's capacity to deploy resources. In contrast to actual resources, capabilities are based on developing, carrying, and exchanging information (Lin et al., 2013). There is general consensus among organisational capability scholars that it is not the capabilities alone, but rather their application and use that enables the firm to implement the programmes they need to execute, which provides advantages to the organisation (Porter, 1991; Stalk et al., 1991). Kumar and Kumar (2017) point out that just the availability of these resources alone is not sufficient to gain a competitive advantage and to create value, and firms must be able to effectively manage their resources and build unique capabilities to gain an advantage and realise value creation (Yeazdanshenas, 2014). Value creation occurs as firms exceed their competitors' ability to provide solutions to customers'

problems, while at the same time maintaining or improving their long-term financial performance, thereby producing wealth for their owners (Morrow et al., 2007).

According to the RBV, “strategic” resources are described as those that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable, and are the key differentiators between firms that have advantages and those that do not (Barney, 2018). The significance of strategic resources in a firm was further elaborated upon by Barney (2018: 121) when he pointed out their three main features as follows:

Strategic resources are those resources that (1) have value, such that they can be leveraged to increase customer value or cut costs; (2) are rare, such that competitors do not have access to the same or a very similar resource to compete away the value; and (3) are difficult to substitute and/or imitate, which allows the organisation to stay ahead of competitors.

To provide sustained competitive advantage, a resource must have four qualities which the RBV composes as heterogeneous resources; they can be classed as valuable, rare, in-imitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) (Mweru, and Maina, 2016). Studies by Talaja (2012) acknowledge that a company that possesses VRIN and exploits its capabilities has the edge to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and above-average performance. These sentiments are echoed by Barney (2018), who states that the key to the RBV is that sustainable competitive advantage can be achieved by applying resources and capabilities when these are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable, in addition to there being an appropriate organisation in place.

The study by Barney (2018) suggests that value-creating strategy is a solution to outperforming competitors, or reducing one’s own weaknesses. This is achieved by having a resource that must enable a firm to employ another factor, and this factor requires the costs invested in the resource to remain lower than the future rents demanded by the value-creating strategy. This idea was seconded by Cardeal and Antonio (2012), that an attribute creates value and becomes a resource if it enables the exploitation of opportunities or the neutralisation of threats according to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

analysis (SWOT). Their studies (Cardeal and Antonio, 2012) concluded that certain resources may have the potential to create valuable services, the value of which will remain latent until the firm has developed the operational skills needed to deploy them. In contributing that to the understanding of outsourcing, Solli-Sæther (2006) clarifies the value generation potential of an outsourcing relationship consists of three factors:

1. A key client characteristic is an understanding of how to manage resources that a firm does not own.
2. A key in the vendor-client relationship is the formal (contractual) aspect of the relationship.
3. A third factor shaping the outsourcing value proposition is the vendor's own capabilities.

From an outsourcing vendor's perspective, there are many potential opportunities and benefits for the client. A resource must be rare among the firm's present as well as potential competitors; as long as the number of firms possessing this resource is less than the number of firms needed to generate perfect competition, then the firm will enjoy the competitive edge. As Barney's findings reveal, the resource should be adequately rare to potentially create competitive advantage.

Not only must the firm's resources be unique, but they also should not easily be duplicated. If the resources accumulated by a firm can easily be reproduced by competitors, even though they are the basis of competitive advantage for the firm, then the advantage will not last long (Mweru, 2016). Rantakari (2010) concurs that a resource may be imperfectly imitable due its dependency on unique historical settings, its relation to competitive advantage being causally ambiguous and its social complexity. Specifically, resources or capabilities that are valuable and difficult to imitate by competitors thus provide the potential for competitive advantage (Kumar and Kumar. 2017).

Non-substitutability indicates that there are no strategically equivalent substitutes that are valuable, and they are either imitable or not rare (Barney, 2018). If potential competitors can easily replicate and produce another firm's resources, then it does not provide a means for sustained competitive advantage. Rantakari (2010) believes the RBV in outsourcing, built from

an organisation that lacks valuable, rare, inimitable and organised resources and capabilities, shall seek for an external provider in order to overcome that weakness. Mweru and Muya (2016) conclude that a firm's specific way of cooperating and coordinating resources causes the heterogeneity among the related firms in an industry. However, the inability to leverage distinctive internal and external competencies in the operational environmental situations eventually affects the performance of the business.

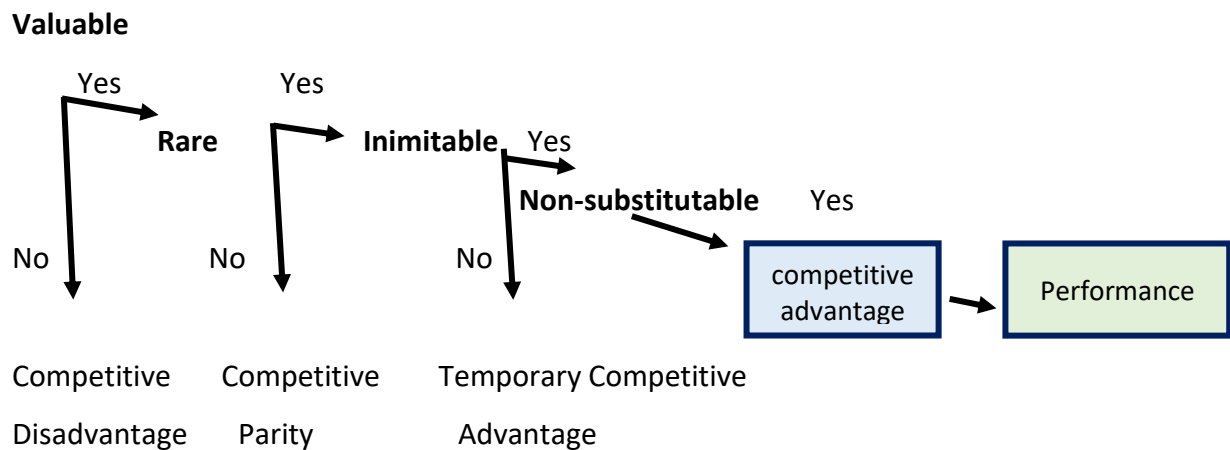


Figure 3.1: Features of RBV and its results Source: Talaja, (2012) and Barney, (2018)

3.5.2 The role of RBV theory in addressing the societal gap within the entrepreneurship/ACT fraternity

A resource-based perspective focused on the abundance of financial, human, and social capital may determine an entrepreneur's willingness to address both the social objectives and the economic objectives (Shepherd and Wiklund, 2005; Sieger et al., 2011). However much of the research has been done on human and economic resources, but less attention has been placed on social resources. A cluster of scholars have shared the same sentiments that financial, human, and social capital exert significant influence on both commercial and non-commercial entrepreneurial activity (De Clercq et al., 2013; Estrin et al., 2016; Hörisch et al., 2017; Kachlami et al., 2017). The RBV theory provides the lens that can be used to address this societal gap in entrepreneurship. Although the role of societal resources in entrepreneurship has been overlooked by scholars, entrepreneurs are embedded in a set of environmental characteristics and they cannot act independently of the situation in which they find themselves. This calls for more comparative (social) entrepreneurship considerations in the entrepreneurship process (Stephan et al., 2015).

Social categorisation refers to clustering of individuals who share important characteristics (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell, 1987), which leads to the development of social capital. This is a focus of the societal lens used to examine the interplay between the various elements related to entrepreneurial team formation (Lazar et al., 2019). Entrepreneurial teams play a key role in investment decisions, growth trajectories, and overall venture success (Agarwal, Campbell, Franco, and Ganco, 2016). Scholars have extensively examined the relationship between entrepreneurial team characteristics and outcomes, which, in turn, impact entrepreneurial performance (Mol, Khapova, and Elfring, 2015; Delgado García et al., 2015). Firm capability is the capacity for a team of human resources to undertake some task or activity (Mweru and Muya, 2016); productive activity requires the cooperation and coordination of teams of resources. Grant (1991) explains that these resources are the source of a firm's capabilities embedded in the societal resources. Cooperation and coordination of entrepreneurial teams is required in any productive function or operation in any firm (Mweru and Muya, 2016).

Social capital is an intangible resource, which describes "relational resources, occurring in cross-cutting personal ties" (Runyan et al., 2006: 461). It refers to network resources, measured as the number of owners of respondents' businesses (Hechavarría et al., 2017). With more social capital, entrepreneurs can overcome resource constraints, improve their efficiency, and develop new strategies, competencies, or growth (Thornton et al., 2011). It also generates trust and reciprocity among the members of a firm, and it allows entrepreneurs to benefit from important information and knowledge transfers (Runyan et al., 2006). Both social capital and entrepreneurial skills are resources that support SMEs to enhance their performance. Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) conceptualised social capital as the expectations for action within a group or organisation that affect the economic goals of its members. Coleman, (1988) suggested that social capital exists in firms and communities for special purposes. It can serve as a valuable resource for small business owners and it helps to increase the number of local consumers who are served by the business (Runyan, 2016). Social capital is demonstrated from social structures comprised of relationships (Putnam, 1995). Close ties can create trust and expectations, and determine expectations among trading partners (Gulati, 1995). Like the economic version of capital, social capital is a productive resource for businesses (Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1990). Its value is derived from its

focus on the positive outcomes of sociability (Portes, 1998). Social capital theory provides a means to explain the interaction of local consumers and small business owners, as Putnam (1993) reveals, that there is a positive relationship between the amount of available social capital in an environment and the area's economic wealth status. Social capital has been established to have a positive influence on local consumer attachment to a community (Miller and Kim, 1999).

Networks are critical for entrepreneurship, because a rich network provides access to emotional support, start-up skills, and entrepreneurial experience (Austin et al., 2006; Danis et al., 2011; De Clercq et al., 2010; Meyskens et al., 2010b; Montgomery et al., 2012). A resourceful network is important for any entrepreneur especially for socially oriented ones, due to their limited access to standard resources or formalised support, as Montgomery et al. (2012: 376) note, "much of social entrepreneurship appears as collaborative and collective, drawing on a broad range of support, cooperation and alliances to build awareness, gain resources and, ultimately, make change." With a strong network with a high reputation, entrepreneurs can mobilise resources to adopt social value creation goals (Mair and Noboa, 2006). Therefore, the extent to which an entrepreneur emphasises social goals for the business should be positively influenced by the availability of social capital.

3.6 The social learning theory

The social learning theory was first developed by Bandura who asserts that behaviours are learned through the two modes of direct experience and observation (Bandura, 1977). The theory further states that people learn various behaviours through attention to, observation of, and imitation of role models (Bandura, 1977, 1986). The theory is particularly applicable to social relationships, as "the actions of others can also serve as social cues that influence how others will behave at any given time" (Bandura, 1977: 11). Moreover, not only does it specifically acknowledge that human thought, affect, and behaviour are all influenced by observation and direct experience, but also that people use symbols to create, to communicate, to analyse conscious experience, and to engage in foresightful action. Bandura (1977) asserts that behaviour is an interactive function of individual cognition, the environment, and an individual's enacted behaviour. He states that, "Most of the behaviours

that people display are learned, either deliberately or inadvertently, through the influence of example” (Bandura, 1977: 5).

Thus, because social learning theory indicates that new behaviours can be learned through observing and imitating a model (Bandura, 1977), it is expected that through a mentoring programme learners will observe and imitate their mentors, learning behaviours and attitudes that may lead to higher self-concept, which is a person’s self-perceptions that are formed through experience and the observation of one’s environment (Marsh and Martin, 2011). By observing role models’ behaviours, and the outcomes of these behaviours, individuals establish their knowledge about the causal relationships between these behaviours and consequences, which directs their imitation of such behaviours (Liu, Kwan, Fu, and Mao, 2014; Resick, Hargis, Shao, and Dust, 2013).

Furthermore, Bai, Lin and Liu (2019) state that social learning through role modelling is an individual learning process, specifically, as one learns from the behaviour of another person that one finds credible and attractive. Notably, this learning process happens within an individual’s mind over time as an individual observes the target and this process is more likely to occur when the role model’s behaviours concern ethical conduct and when the role model is from higher levels in an organisation (Brown et al., 2005). Social learning through modelling can happen through the influence of a single role model on a single individual, that is an individual-level perspective of social learning, or through the collective process, that is the team context (Bai, Lin and Liu, 2019).

In the learning process, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-concept are similar in that they involve a cognitive analysis of one’s own behaviour. Self-concept is slightly different from self-efficacy and self-esteem in that it deals with both the cognitive and the affective (Choi, 2005). Self-esteem and self-efficacy are basically cognitive; self-esteem deals with oneself, while self-efficacy focuses on the comparison of oneself to past performance (Choi, 2005). Perceived self-efficacy refers to the strength of one’s belief that one can successfully execute the behaviours required (Bandura, 1982). These self-beliefs influence what people choose to do, how much effort they apply, and how long they will keep on pursuing their goals in the face of real or perceived challenges (Frayne and Latham, 2014). Self-concept is a complex issue,

but one researched benefit of high self-concept is academic achievement (Choi, 2005; Neemann and Harter, 2012). Choi (2005) discovered that people with a higher self-concept performed much better than those with low self-esteem.

The foundation of Self-Perception Profile for Children was originally designed to measure a child's perception of themselves across six domains of life: scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioural conduct, and global self-worth (Keith and Bracken, 1996). However, self-concept becomes more diverse as a person grows older and thus Neemann and Harter (2012) came up with more instruments that deal with young people and adults

The social learning process has a strong effect on entrepreneurial learning, which is a community-related phenomenon. Entrepreneurial learning is a behavioural and social process where a person interacts with other people trying to recognise and act on opportunities (Rae, 2007). Entrepreneurial learning is not only conducted in the educational setting, but the acquisition of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills is also involved in gaining social experience in the real world (Royo et al, 2014). A social learning process theory by Wenger (1998), proposed that an individual must actively be involved in a practising community and in constructing their identity at the same time; this shapes what they do, who they are and how they interpret what they do in the community. This social participation, as a process of learning and knowing, is characterised by the integration of four components: meaning (learning as experience), practice (learning as doing), community (learning as belonging) and identity (learning as becoming) (Royo et al., 2014). This foundation is closely related to what has been proposed by Rae (2007), that entrepreneurship learning contains the social learning process that connects individuals with the social context as they develop their entrepreneurial identity and capability through their living environment.

Rae (2007) states that the entrepreneurial learning model consists of three major themes, which are divided into several sub-themes. The three major themes are personal and social emergence (becoming an entrepreneur); contextual learning (how people use their experience to find and work on opportunities); and the negotiated enterprise (how entrepreneurs interact with others to create ventures). The theory offers an opportunity to

study the creation of meanings as a part of an entrepreneur's life as a whole, not only as a part of their business-related intentions (Hjorth et al., 2008). According to Rae, (2007) the theory of social learning helps to explain how entrepreneurs see themselves and how others see them, and how this changes through a process of social learning and developing an entrepreneurial identity through their communities. To reiterate, Wenger (1998) stresses that "learning as becoming" an identity can shape what people do, who they are and how they interpret what they do in their communities of practice.

Through actively constructing knowledge rather than simply absorbing it, entrepreneurs are active participants in their development. Their identity formation begins as early as their teens and plays a significant effect on their entrepreneurial learning (Royo et al., 2014). Social participation in community, industry and other networks are some of the mechanisms for entrepreneurs to learn through experience and may develop their ability to recognise opportunities (Rae, 2007). It is widely recognised that when entrepreneurs make everyday judgments in uncertain conditions, they rarely use exhaustive analyses (Holcomb et al., 2009). This generates the question of how entrepreneur personality traits, which include extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, orient them to their context of learning and provides to changing market conditions (Corbett, 2005).

Rae (2007) described the entrepreneurial process as closely related to negotiated enterprise, since a business venture is not enacted by one person alone, but is dependent on the outcome of negotiated relationships with other parties including customers, investors and co-actors such as employees or partners. boundaries without considering the nationality of their firms (Royo et al, 2014). This context of learning requires persons with a "diverging" learning style such as being imaginative and understanding people in order to view concrete situations from different situations (Kolb, 1984). Through social interaction and combining skills and interests, social learning has enabled SMEs to create new cross-border business opportunities (Royo et al, 2014). Social learning theory is a lens that can be used to explain the importance of developing economic links among the SMEs at micro level and with other organisations at macro level with the aim of growth and diversifying business processes. The performance of SMEs does not depend on a few designated factors, but on a wide range of factors: the

political, social, cultural and economic factors that work together to promote the success of SMEs.

3.7 Theoretical gaps and the conceptual framework

Ibrahim et al. (2016) state that most of the previous research conducted on SME performance has focused on the advanced economy and the findings may not be applicable in the context of less developed countries. This view highlights a research gap and the need for more research to be conducted on SME performance in these countries. As result of this gap, this study developed a conceptual framework to unpack the challenges being faced by SMEs through blending the resource based view theory, the entrepreneurship development theory, and the institutional theory. To provide the setting for understanding how government policy affects the performance of SMEs, it draws insights from the three theories.

The RBV theory has been widely used by researchers in management studies. It emphasises on the strength of the resources of firms as the main contributor to their performance. Moreover, the theory is rooted in the fact that institutions should establish their own resources and protect them as the primary foundation upon which their competitive advantage is buildt (Crook, 2008). It is from this strength of the theory that the SMEs in Zimbabwe would benefit; that is, from the perspective of availability of resources as a key driver for their success. The RBV provides the resource lens for the study in which all forms of resources that are linked to firms will be considered.

Even though the RBV has been adopted by several scholars to explain the performance of organisations, there is a gap in the literature regarding the model that still needs to be explored further. The theory is prescriptive, as it limits itself to resources only. The success of SMEs can be attributed to several factors that are interlinked and work together for the success of an organisation, other than the sole uniqueness of resources; the RBV thus has limited prescriptive implications. Resources are not a fixed entity, but a dynamic input that is continually experiencing changes as the global village advances, and, currently, technology is considered as one of the major resources for development. Ritsumeikan (2005) has argued that the capability of the SME owner to strategise the application of the skills acquired and interaction with other stakeholders are the main resources for the success of an organisation,

but that these attributes have been overlooked by the theory. The dynamic factors of technology, entrepreneurial strategies and skills and marketing skills which are developed beyond the RBV model are included in this study to address this prescriptive gap. This theoretical gap is further addressed through the blending of the RBV, institutional theory and the entrepreneurship development theory, leading to the establishment of new knowledge in the study of SMEs.

The entrepreneurship development theory provides insights into the pathway that Zimbabwe can take to improve the current economic crisis created by the closure of industries in Zimbabwe. A major contributor to this crisis is that some foreign-owned companies, among them Zimplats, Angloplats and Rio Zimbabwe, have decided to freeze new investments in Zimbabwe, citing uncertainty owing to the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act. This is devastating news to thousands of young Zimbabweans who would have benefitted from the investments by these mining giants through employment opportunities (The Financial Gazette, 2013). The entrepreneurship development theory provides the economic lens which can be used to turn around the status of the economy of the country. Scholars allude to entrepreneurship as an economic process that is largely considered to be a driver of economic growth and entrepreneurs are seen as economic actors, their actions being the determinants of economic development. The entrepreneur is now regarded as a major player in the economic development process.

As stated by Acs (1992), the entrepreneurship development theory views SMEs as the 'seedbeds' of entrepreneurship and one of the key 'vehicles' of economic development. Naude and Havenga (2007) affirm that the relationship between entrepreneurship and small business is much closer because SMEs are a dominant feature in Africa more than in any other region worldwide, where entrepreneurship is synonymous to small businesses. The weaknesses of entrepreneurship development theory lie in the fact that it does not provide the practical solutions and the implementation process that Zimbabwe should undertake to reverse the economic crisis. This gap can be addressed by the RBV theory, which brings on board the component of resources as a factor that improves performance.

As past research and scholars have not discussed the effects of the indigenous policies on SME performance, this study postulates that the institutional theory could provide an

explanation of the factors that motivate high performance of SMEs through these policies. Based on the institutional theory, the three pillars: the regulative, institutional and cognitive, are the lens for the analysis of the impact of government involvement in SME performance and are delineated as follows:

1. Regulative pillar: This constitutes the pressures that originate from the government that crafted the indigenisation policy and expectations of high performance and the act of attaining business efficiency.
2. Institutional pillar: This constitutes the pressures arising from the need of SMEs to conform to industrial norms, particularly the social and consumer pressure and competition from neighbouring countries.
3. Cognitive pillar: This constitutes an act of survival under the harsh economic conditions of Zimbabwe, uncertainty and dealing with pressure to replicate competitors' best practices, especially from neighbouring South Africa.

The Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act [*Chapter 14:33*] emphasises that all businesses have an obligation to produce or manufacture goods that meet national and international standards.

This research argues that institutional theory has the potential to explain the motivation factor behind the high performance of SMEs, derived from three pillars mentioned above, namely, government, consumer, and competitor factors. The pillars are adopted in this study, as they address the government-related issues. The selected features of the institutional theory link very closely to the Zimbabwean situation. Some aspects of the theory provide answers to the reasons for the actions of the Zimbabwean government in implementing the indigenous policies. In particular, the theory provides an understanding of the importance of regulative structures, such as laws and policies that affect the performance of SMEs, and provides insights on how the government provides access to critical resources through support programmes, and of the importance of legitimacy in the function of SMEs. The theory is not adopted in its totality for this study, as it has its own shortcomings, some of which have been raised by scholars.

The institutional theory has faced criticism from researchers. According to Mariotti et al. (2014: 1353), the institutional adaptation of accepted social norms and a value system by

organisations, “depicts firms as passive participants that respond to external pressures and expectations”. This view is criticised by some scholars, because firms are dynamic organisations that can respond and they execute tasks based on their own resources and capabilities (Barney, 2018; Martínez-Costa et al., 2008). The criticisms of the theory indicate that there is a research gap that needs to be explored further, as the theory is anchored on external motivation. This study will bring new knowledge, as it addresses these shortcomings of the theory through the addition of internal motivation as a key component for high performance of SMEs. This research addresses this research gap by focusing on the intrinsic motivation issues that can be employed by SME operators for high performance of their enterprises. It sets the foundation to scrutinise the internal motivations of SME performance, which the institutional theory is silent about, and produce a strategic framework that includes the significance of internal motivation as a major factor for high performance.

As stated, the conceptual framework produced by this study is based on an integration of the RBV theory, the entrepreneurship development theory and the institutional theory. The diagram in Figure 3.3 below provides a graphical representation of the conceptual framework and the adopted sections of the three theories as they are blended together to produce a new framework. It is a culmination of some of the various theories discussed above, forming the basis of this study; and is followed by a critical narrative of how the framework relates to the study.

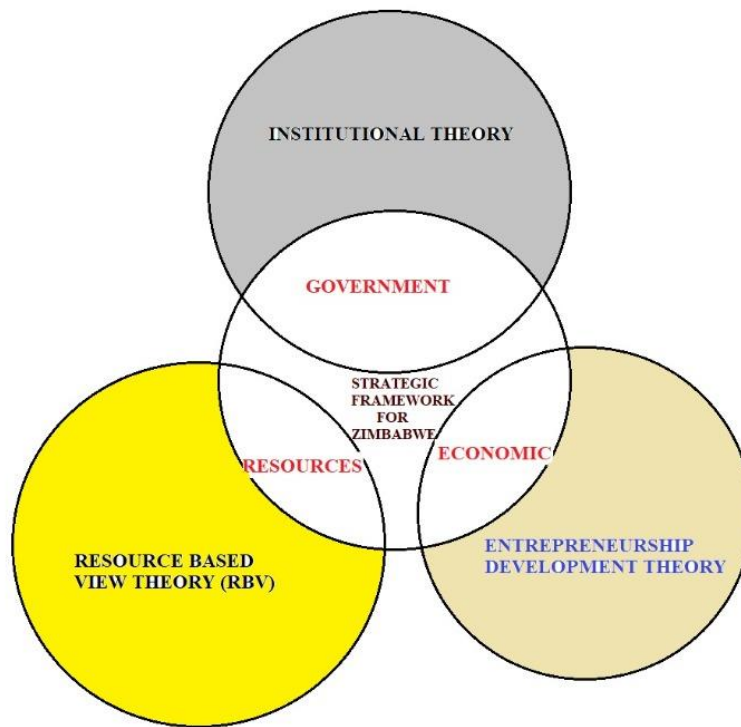


Figure 3.2: The conceptual framework (Developed by the researcher for study purposes.)
(Source : Researcher's own work)

The three theories as shown above that have been adopted in this study are well positioned to guide the investigation into the issues around the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The the positive aspects of the three theories are adopted and guided the research in developing a strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement to improve the performance of SMEs. As discussed earlier, the entrepreneurship development theory addresses the issues that are directly concerned with the economic roadmap that Zimbabwe can take to address the economic problems. The RBV theory focuses on the practical solutions that need to be undertaken by the country and this includes the actual implementation process of SMEs that operate in the social realm of communities. Institutional theory provides great insights for entrepreneurship and the broader management of SMEs. The management aspect of the theory deals with the government regulations regarding SMEs and provides the lens that the policy makers can utilise in order to focus on the improvement of their performance, but realising that the global village is now operating towards the fourth Industrial revolution era.

3.8 Conclusion

All the discussed theories have a common view that the economic development of any nation is built upon its entrepreneurship capacity, which is influenced by the government policies. In Zimbabwe, SMEs and their operations are controlled by the resources (RBV theory), the government (institutional theory), and the economic crisis in Zimbabwe (entrepreneurship development theory). The government plays an important role in their development, as it sets the legal operating framework, and its policies are thus key to development. The three theories adopted by this study, provide the theoretical lens through which the research can examine the government policies and its support of SMEs. The next chapter represents the literature review, which focuses mainly on government policies and their effects on SME performance. In addition, it examines the SME policies from the Asian tigers, the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and selected African states.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXTENDED LITERATURE REVIEW ALIGNED TO THE OBJECTIVES

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4.5.6 The National System of Innovation (NSI)

4.6 Conclusion

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the theories that are linked to the study and then focused on the theories that underpin the study. It first discussed the entrepreneurship development theory, the knowledge spill-over theory, the institutional theory, the resource based view theory, the technological acceptance model theory and the social learning theory. The three theories that were adopted and blended to produce the conceptual framework of this study are the resource based view theory, the entrepreneurship and the institutional theory.

This chapter presents the extended literature review aligned to the objectives of the study. It provides a critical review of literature that is related to the stated objectives. The broad sections covered in the chapter include: SME performance and economic contributions, the influence of government policy on SME performance, the government resources for SME performance and the attributes of an effective SME strategic framework. It provides critical discussions on the government policies and their effects on the performance of SMEs. The related literature draws from the selected nations whose economies have been greatly supported by the performance of the SME sector. The selected nations are from the European Union, the Asian states (India, Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea) the developing nations, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), and some African states. The chapter gives an overview of the role of government in the performance of SMEs with the following principal themes based on the research objectives of the study: SME performance, influence of government policy on SME performance, effects of government resource support on SME performance and attributes of an effective SME policy framework that is resource oriented.

4.2 SME performance and economic contributions

The government of the day provides the economic environment in which all the firms in a country would operate, following the government roadmap. The government policies provide the framework that guides the economic activities of the county and they show the main thrust of the government's strategic plan for the economic development of the country. These policies, and the degree to which they support SMEs, have a great influence on the performance of these entities.

The importance of the SMEs in economic development has been overlooked for a long period and the focus has instead been placed on the large firms that have had a long history of supporting the economy. The dominant approach to industrial economic development in the later part of the 20th century assumed that a small number of large established firms were the major source of economic growth (Audretsch et al., 2007). Scholars went on to emphasise that most governments focused on efforts to ensure the “national firm champions” were as efficient and productive as possible by laying special legislation tax incentives and protective regulations to reduce costs and competition. This view overlooked the role of new firms which comprised mostly SMEs as a major source of innovation and job creation and completely ignored the role of entrepreneurs in the economic development process.

However, in the recent years the results of research have indicated that SMEs are now a major contributor to the economic development of many countries. Recognition by policy makers of the importance of SMEs in the industrial economic process did not occur until the 1980s, following the Birch (1979) discovery that the majority of new jobs in the USA were being created by SMEs which was contrary to the prevailing wisdom that large manufacturing firms were the main job generators (Audretsch et al., 2007). This discovery ushered in a new era on the role of SMEs in the economy as a major player in employment creation and a contributor to the GDP of many nations. The great contribution of SMEs has spread worldwide and SME policy was adopted as the key for economic development in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Small and Medium Enterprises performance is globally regarded as an important force driving the economic growth and employment creation in both developing and developed countries (Ariyo, 2008; Kpleai, 2009; Birch, 2011; Storey, 2014). Edom et al. (2015) emphasise that SME performance occupies a place of pride in virtually every country or state because of the significant role they play in the growth and development of various economies. They have been referred to as “the engine of growth” and “catalysts for socio-economic transformation of any country” (Ariyo, 2008). Given its sizeable contribution to economic performance and social well-being, a robust SME sector is thus critical to the prosperity of any economy (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019)

Culkin and Smith (2000) argue that SMEs make up the largest business sector in every world economy, a view supported by Abdullah and Bin Dakar (2000) as cited by Eniola and Ektebang (2014), who confirm that governments around the globe are increasingly promoting and supporting SME growth as part of their overall national economic development strategy. Wang et al. (2011) state that SMEs are a pivot of economic development in industrialised states, as they are in the developing world, and in many developed nations more than 95% of all enterprises are within the SME sub-sector. The key roles of SMEs include mobilisation of domestic savings for investment, significant contributions to GDP and GNI, harnessing of local raw materials, employment creation, poverty reduction and alleviation, enhancement in standards of living, increase in per capita income, skills acquisition, advancement in technology and expert growth and diversification (Ifekwem, 2019). In summary SME performance plays an in the performance of the economy of any nation and the performance of SMEs require support and close monitoring by the government.

The role of the SME sector in economic growth of any country has in fact been acknowledged by both the government and growth experts (Adeyemi et al., 2017). It has not only been perceived as the seedbed for indigenous entrepreneurship, but it also utilises and employs more labour per unit of capital than large enterprises (Farouk and Saleh, 2011; Eniola and Ektebang, 2014). Small and Medium Enterprises primarily drive employment creation, poverty reduction, riches creation, reduction in wage disparities and distribution of income (Kraja and Osmani, 2013; Majama and Magang, 2017; Tiemo, 2012). Table 4.1 summarises the importance of SMEs in the various economies of the world. It shows their contribution in the fields of employment, export earnings and GDP.

Table 4.1 Importance of SMEs to the economies of the world

	Country	Employment %	Export earning %	GDP
1	UK	53	27	52
2	USA	52	30	50
3	India	79	38	40
4	Hong Kong	78	37	51
5	Japan	70	40	68
6	Nigeria	75	3	10

Source: Fan, (2003:231).

It is important to note that in Nigeria, the leading economic giant of Africa, while SMEs contribute 75% towards employment, they account for only 3% and 10% of the export value and GDP respectively. These figures are far too small if they are compared with the respective figures of the UK and USA. This implies that there are gaps in the study of SMEs in Africa that should be investigated and to arrive at homegrown solutions that can improve their performance in export value and contribution towards the country's GDP, following the examples set by the developed nations like the UK and the USA.

4.2.1 Economic contributions of SMEs in Europe

Small and Medium Enterprises performance has played a significant role in the development of the EU economy. Lucian et al. (2004), mentioned that SMEs accounted for more than a third of total EU exports and they represented 81% of firms exporting outside the EU. They further observed that Italy, France, Spain and Germany accounted for more than 50% of total EU SME exports. This highlights their importance as a generator of export value in many EU countries. Examples can also be drawn from the EU pre-accession economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey), where SMEs account for close to three quarters of those employed in the private sector, and generate two thirds of private sector added value (EU, 2014). On average, SMEs contributed 60% to the annual value added and their overall contribution to total

employment within the non-financial business economy in the EU-27 in 2005 was 67.1 % (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD 2019).

In 2013 across the EU twenty-eight member states, some 21.6 million SMEs in the nonfinancial business sector employed 88.8 million people and generated €3666 trillion in added value; expressed another way, 99 out of every 100 businesses were SMEs, two in every three employees worked in SMEs and SMEs accounted for 58 cents in every Euro of added value (EU, 2014). This indicates a huge contribution of SMEs towards the European economy. Medium-sized enterprises account for almost two thirds of the total increase from 2008 to 2013 in the added value generated by SMEs in the EU twenty-eight member states (EU, 2014). They contributed significantly to European job creation and economic growth and in 2017, 24.5 million SMEs in the EU made up 99.8% of all non-financial enterprises, employed around 95 million people (66.6% of total employment) and generated 56.8% of total added value (European Commission, 2018). The Western Balkans and Turkey SMEs, together, make up 99% of all firms, generate around 65% of total business sector added value and account for 73% of total business sector employment (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019). The statistics indicate that SMEs in Europe occupy a key position in the economic development of the member states and, as a major contributor to the economy, its governments continually provide maximum support to the SME sector.

4.2.2 Economic contributions of SMEs among the Asian Tigers

It has been put on record that the Asian great nations such as India, Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea have robust SME sectors contributing between 70 to 90 % employment and an estimated over 40 % contribution in their respective GDPs (SBC, 2015). The SME sector in Asian countries is the backbone of their economies, as it dominates in all the production sectors and creates most of the Asian wealth.

4.2.2.1 Contributions of SMEs in Japan

Tuan and Rajagopal (2018) have stated the importance of the role SMEs play in economic development, job creation, wealth, as sources of innovation and in poverty reduction. These sentiments have a bearing on the contribution of SMEs to the continually growing economy of Japan. The country builds its giant industrial strength on SMEs, which form the core of

business in Japan. As stated by Aliogo and Eneh (2017), they employ 37.2 million workers or 81.4% of the total manufacturing added value. As the backbone of the Japanese economy, more than 99% of businesses in Japan are SMEs, they employ almost 70% of the workforce and account for more than half of economic output (Yoshino and Taghizadeh-Hesary, 2015).

In 1994, out of a national total of 6.53 million private companies, SMEs accounted for nearly 6.47 million or 99%, and of the 54.16 million people employed nation-wide, 41.42 million or 76.5% were employed by SMEs (Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Japan), 2000 (Bernasconi, 2005). Close to 70% of the value of exports of the products in Japan are from SMEs (ADCG, 2000), showing their strength in the economy of Japan.

4.2.2.2 Contributions of SMEs in South Korea

The SME sector in South Korea is small, but has a big stake in the economy of the country. It employs 88 % of the total workforce, accounting for 99 % of the total number of companies and they make up 50 % of the country's GDP (SBC, 2015). These figures are supported by Majoni (2016), who states that SMEs in South Korea contribute over 52 % to the economy's GDP and employ 12.6 million people. The Small and medium business cooperation was formed to assist the SME sector to grow.

Liang et al. (2017) further elaborated the role of SMEs in South Korea by mentioning that there are about three million SMEs accounting for 99.9% of all Korean enterprises with their 10.5 million employees accounting for 87.5% of the nation's employment in 2015. In total, the SME industrial output value is 49.4%, showing that their development and contributions act as a key factor in the growth of South Korea's economy. According to the 2017 employment statistics report of Statistics Korea, SMEs created 2.5 million jobs during 2017, accounting for about 93% of the increase in Korea's total employment that year (Lui et al., 2019).

4.2.2.3 Contributions of SMEs in Malaysia

Small and medium enterprises play a vital role in the Malaysian economy and are considered to be the backbone of the industrial development in the country (Bhuiyan et al., 2016). Musa and Chinniah (2015) postulate that the Malaysian SMEs have evolved from a commodity-

based to a manufacturing sector, producing a variety of consumer goods. Since the 1970s, Malaysian SMEs have been playing a remarkable role in contributing to the national economy (Bhuiyan et al., 2016). They make up the foundation of the economy, in 2015, representing 97.3% of the total business establishments, contributing 36.3% of total GDP, 65.5% of the total workforce and 17.6% of total exports (SME Corp. Malaysia, 2016). Yuan et al (2020) state that in Malaysia, the service, manufacturing and construction sectors are mainly contributed to by SMEs at 98.2%, 95.4% and 87.1% respectively. These numbers present their importance as the primary contributors to the development to the economy.

According to Census Report on SMEs 2011, there was a total of 645 136 SMEs operating in Malaysia, representing 97.3% of total business establishments (Musa and Chinniah, 2015). The report showed that 90% of these establishments were in the service sector, 5.9% in the manufacturing sector and 3.0% in the construction sector. From the economic perspective, in 2014, SMEs in Malaysia have contributed 35.9% of GDP, 65% of employment, and 17.8% of exports, compared to 32% of GDP, 59% of employment, and 19% of exports in 2010. In 2020, SMEs are expected to achieve an 8% growth rate, and contribute as much as 41% of GDP, 65% of employment, and 23% of exports (Zaidi, 2017). The statistics are suggesting the contributions of SMEs to GDP, employment, and exports in Malaysia will continue to increase in the future (SME Annual Report, 2016).

The SME sector contributed 99.2% in 2015 to the overall business establishments in Malaysia and the SMEs also accounted 32 % of GDP and 19 % of exports (Bhuiyan et al 2016). Further, SMEs employed about 56% of the country's workforce and the value added products are expected to worth RM120 billion in the manufacturing sector in 2020 (Bhuiyan et al 2016). They have to be competitive for their business survival; and innovation is an effective strategy to develop competitive advantage (Hussain and Idris, 2010). In Malaysia, SMEs are on track to contribute 41% to the country's GDP by 2020 compared to 32% in 2012, and they are now suppliers for multi-national companies (MNCs) in the global chain (Musa and Chinniah, 2015).

4.2.2.4 Contributions of SMEs in Indonesia

Small and Medium Enterprises in Indonesia provide the main economic activities. In 2017, SMEs in Indonesia contributed 99.99% of the total business units, 97.02% of the total

workforce, 60% of the total GDP, 14.17% of the total non-oil and gas exports, and 58,18% of the total investment (Feranita et al., 2019). In Indonesia, SMEs have a large role in creating jobs and improving community welfare (Japhta, 2016). The number of SMEs generally reached 99.9% of business units in 2015 in Indonesia and absorbed 89% of the workforce (Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2018).

SMEs provide the main essential services for the country, which include employment creation, community development and contribution to the GDP. It is because of this great contribution of the SME sector that the government of Indonesia has always provided programmes to develop the SMEs.

4.2.2.5 Juxtaposition of Asian scenario and recapitulation of Zimbabwe SMEs

It has been put on record that the great Asian nations such as India, Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea have robust SME sectors, contributing between 70 to 90% towards employment and an estimated over 40% to their respective GDPs (SBC, 2015). In Japan, for example, out of a national total of 6.53 million private companies in 1994, SMEs accounted for nearly 6.47 million, or 99%, and of the 54.16 million people employed nationwide, 41.42 million, or 76.5%, were employed by SMEs (Bernasconi, 2005). Close to 70% of the value of exports of the products in Japan are from SMEs (ADCG, 2000). The literature about SMEs in Japan shows the economic power of SMEs. These figures are examples, and Zimbabwe can tap into these success stories and realign its SME policies and develop a strategic framework that is performance oriented.

In Malaysia, SMEs contributed 35.9% of GDP, 65% to employment, and 17.8% of exports in 2014, compared to 32% of GDP, 59% to employment, and 19% of exports in 2010. In 2020, SMEs are expected to achieve an 8% growth rate, and contribute as much as 41% of GDP, 65% to employment, and 23% of exports (Zaidi, 2017). In Indonesia, the number of SMEs generally reached 99.9% of business units and absorbed 89% of the workforce (Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2018). These figures show that the SME sector is the key economic player in the country. The literature on both Malaysia and Indonesia show the high performance of SMEs and Zimbabwe could rewrite its own economic situation by adopting the successful programmes that have been implemented in these Asian states.

The Asian states provide examples of the practical experience and technical knowhow of supporting the SME sector. The Zimbabwean government can draw useful lessons from the Asian states and improve the performance of its SMEs. Zimbabwe needs to give special focus to its SMEs and develop a comprehensive strategic framework that it can support. The SMEs in Zimbabwe are capable of creating jobs, contributing to the GDP, producing goods for export and competing with products on the international market.

4.2.3 The economic contributions of SMEs in BRICS

The potential for growth and development of the world economy, at present and for the coming decades, resides in fast-developing countries. Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS countries) have displayed this potential for dynamic change (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). The BRICS countries are now playing a major role in alleviating the current global crisis whilst revealing new and alternative progressive paradigms (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). In this regard, this research provides evidence from the five nations which form the BRICS on the contributions of SMEs in the development of their economies.

4.2.3.1 Contributions of SMEs in Brazil

Brazil has recorded a high performance of its SME operations in terms of employment creation and contribution to the country's GDP. Since 2010, the number of micro and small firms in the country has been significant, official statistics suggesting that in 2010 there were 3,319,742 formal establishments in Brazil and that they generated 20% of GDP. Together SMEs represent 99% of the firms contributing to 52.2% of total formal employment in the country and almost half (43%) of total wages in the Brazilian economy. When it comes to absolute values, the production generated by these SMEs quadrupled in ten years, jumping from R\$ 144 billion in 2001 to R\$ 599 billion in 2011. The total numbers the SMEs amounts to 8.9 million small enterprises (Sebrae, 2014). The SMEs in Brazil thus play an important role in the economic development of the country. Their performance continues to grow from one financial year to the next due to continued support, research and development programmes that have been prioritised by the government.

4.2.3.2 Contributions of SMEs in Russia

Russia inherited from the Soviet Union an economy that was largely dependent on large enterprises that were mainly involved in mass production. However, recently SMEs are taking an influential position in the contribution towards the economy of the country. The focus on SMEs in the economic development of the country is elaborated on by Zaborova and Markova (2019), who have pointed out that the current policies of the government and municipal administrative institutions tend to pursue programmes aimed at engaging young people into entrepreneurship activities and creating optimal conditions for this purpose. Russian SMEs contributed 20-25 % of GDP in 2011 and it is expected that by 2020 this number will reach 30 % (OPORA Russia, 2011). This tendency shows an increasing role of SMEs and the importance of their development for economic growth and enhancement of Russia's competitiveness in the global market (Shirokova Vega, 2013). The focus on SMEs by the Russian government has paid dividends because they are increasingly supporting the economy of the country.

The growth of innovative business activity is a strategic goal of Russian Federation development and is one its national goals and strategic objectives for the period up to 2024 (Dubrova, Ermolina and Esenin 2019). The promotion of innovative SME activity that may contribute to the increase of national product competitiveness in the global market plays a crucial role. These sentiments were echoed by Pinkovetskaia (2017), who stated that in Russia, as of 2017, there were 5.6 million SMEs, employing 18 million workers and they produced 20% of Russia's GDP. The SMEs in Russia thus play a major role in supporting the economy of the country which was dominated by large companies with a history of high performance.

4.2.3.3 Contributions of SMEs in India

In India, 95% of industrial units (3.4 million) are in the small-scale sector with a 40% value addition in the manufacturing sector (Li, 2004). Enterprises of this type provide the second highest employment level after agriculture and account for 40% of industrial production. These units contribute 35% to India's exports, and thus Indian SMEs are fundamentally important to the Indian economic system (Aliogo and Eneh, 2017). These figures are matched by Gbandi and Amissah (2014), who state that SMEs in India account for 39% of manufacturing output and 33% of the country total exports.

The key highlights of the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) sector, as stated by Agarwal (2019) in India, are as follows:

- MSMEs account for about 45% of India's manufacturing output.
- MSMEs account for about 40% of India's total exports.
- MSMEs employ about 73 million people in more than 31 million units spread across India.
- MSMEs manufacture more than 6,000 products ranging from traditional to high tech items.

The statistics show that SME performance is a huge force in the BRICS business sector. Agarwal (2019) further states that the SME sector not only plays a critical role in providing employment opportunities at comparatively lower capital cost than large industries, but also helps in industrialisation of rural and backward areas, reducing regional imbalances and assuring more equitable distribution of national income and wealth. These findings by early researchers concur that SMEs are a major contributor to economic growth; hence, this research can draw lessons from the successes of India.

4.2.3.4 Contributions of SMEs in China

China has transformed over the years to become the world's second largest economy and it now boasts of several large manufacturing and high-tech industries as well as large and competent SMEs (Muzapu et al., 2016). The government of China has taken positive steps in increasing their interest in the informal sector as a panacea to addressing the issues of high unemployment (Harvey and Lee, 2003; Hussain, Millman, and Matlay, 2006; Chen, 2006). The rapidly developing Chinese SMEs, especially the privately owned enterprises, are currently the dynamic facet of the Chinese economy (Lee, 2006). One of the important reasons for their growth is the implementation of a strategy which encouraged SMEs to develop according to their unique nature and circumstances (Rajesh et al., 2015). The Chinese government made great investments in SMEs in terms of policy development, implementation and monitoring and it has reaped huge dividends from its effort. An evaluation of the Chinese SME policy framework explains the effect of a well-crafted, implemented and supported SME policy in terms of their performance.

In China, the focus of policies in the mid-2000s was to improve the operating environment of SMEs and the Chinese SMEs Promotion Law, which came into effect in 2003, was a milestone in policy and law specific to SMEs (Rajesh et al., 2015). Some of the recent initiatives taken by the Chinese government to promote SMEs include:

- Income tax policies for small enterprises: the government lowered the tax rate from 33% to 18% for those enterprises with an annual profit of less than RMB 30,000 (approximately USD 3,600), and to 27 % for those with an annual profit of between RMB 30,000 and RMB 100,000 (approximately USD 12,000).
- Taxation policies to promote employment: if a new urban job agency in its first year of operation find jobs for urban residents, of which more than 60 % are unemployed workers, it is eligible for an exemption from business income tax for three years.
- Taxation policies for high-tech enterprises: these enterprises are exempted from enterprise income tax for two years, counting from the year they begin operations.
- Taxation policies for service industries: new enterprises engaged in transportation, post and telecommunications, consultation, information and technological services are all exempted from income tax for one year from the date of establishment.
- Fiscal policies: since 1999, the Ministry of Finance's innovation fund for technology-based SMEs supports and encourages technological innovations. Financial and credit policies proactively support the business initiatives of SMEs.

Since 1992, the Chinese government has focused mainly on enhancing the overall quality and competitiveness of the domestic SME sector (Chen, 2006). By the mid-2000s, private SMEs had become the backbone of the local economy in some areas and regions. Today's SMEs in China are the big beneficiaries of the government's SME policy developments. Previously, SMEs adhered to outdated practices and they were also subjected to external coercion by government to concentrate their efforts on heavy industries (Muzapu et al., 2016). Small and medium enterprises are currently equipped with unique attributes: relatively little start-up capital, a fast yield on investments, flexible operating structures and systems, and the capacity to adapt and respond quickly to market changes (Chen, 2006). In China, SMEs are now regarded as the key drivers of the economy and have placed the country as one of the world's leading economies.

4.2.3.5 Contributions of SMEs in South Africa

Rogerson (2011) emphasised the important role played by SMEs in economic growth, job creation and poverty alleviation, especially in developing countries. Therefore, SMEs have become established as supporting the economic growth in most African countries. In this regard, the South African government has placed a high priority on supporting SMEs (Garwe and Fatoki, 2012).

Maas and Herrington (2006) have argued that SMEs play a critical role in resolving South Africa's developmental problems and thus the sustainability of SMEs is very important for its economy. These sentiments are anchored on the reality that the pre-independent apartheid government never gave black people a chance to be entrepreneurs and participate in the economic activities of the country. The involvement of black people during the apartheid period was through the provision of cheap labour, with no stake in ownership, decision making and creativity in the economy. The apartheid government took advantage of the disempowered, voiceless black people.

In the post-independent South Africa, over 90% of the businesses are in the SME sector and they contribute over 50% of the GDP and more than half of the country's labour force is in this sector (Kongolo, 2010). They are responsible for employing a large number of workers and are also responsible for nearly 43% of the total salaries and wages paid (Lingthelm, 2013). Nieman and Neuwenhuizen (2009) further suggest that 55% of workers employed in the formal sector in South Africa are employed by SMEs. The national statistic estimate provided in 2015 revealed that nearly three quarters of economically active South Africans are employed in the SME sector sub-Saharan Africa (SSA, 2014).

4.2.3.6 Juxtaposition of BRICS scenario and recapitulation of Zimbabwe SMEs

The BRICS bloc provides Zimbabwe with several opportunities to improve the performance of its SMEs. These countries have the potential for growth and development and are capable of changing the world economy and capturing the biggest markets in the global village. Gu et al. (2016) state that the emerging markets, especially the BRICS, have been a powerful catalyst for trade and investment and poverty reduction globally over this period, notably helping to boost growth in the Asian, Latin American and African regions. The main characteristic that

the BRICS have in common is their status as emerging economic powerhouses and their shared idea that they are important rising powers that should play a more prominent role in global affairs (Mottet, 2013). Zimbabwe can benefit from its commonly shared characteristics with the BRICS in terms of their goals and from its proximity to South Africa.

This 'shifting wealth' phenomenon has underpinned the basic agenda of the BRICS as a political association working to shift global governance norms and arrangements that already exist, such as the United States of America (USA) and the European Union (EU) and bring on board the new configuration of world economic and political power (Gu et al., 2016). India developed a robust programme for SMEs which can be duplicated in Zimbabwe. It has an extensive institutional network for the promotion of small-scale industries (SSIs) (Muzapu et al., 2016). This network cascades from the national level down to the district levels in an attempt to bring every institution and stakeholder on board; the government identified a number of the different institutions (Muzapu et al., 2016). In order to promote export of SSI products and be competent on the international stage, the Indian government set up programmes to promote SMEs, which include export promotion of small-scale sector products which received the utmost priority, helping SMEs in marketing their products by organising international exhibitions and organising workshops for organising ISO-9000 certification and awareness about quality. Zimbabwe can draw lessons from the Indian government which has given full support to SMEs, which are now competent at international level. Zimbabwe's rich natural resources can be used as a source of raw materials and inputs for the development of the SME sector.

The Chinese government focused mainly on enhancing the overall quality and competitiveness of the domestic SME sector (Chen, 2006). In this endeavour, the government unveiled the financial aid for technology-based SMEs and technological innovations. The financial and credit policies that were established proactively supported the SMEs and their performance was high, which made huge contributions to the country's GDP. The Zimbabwean government can also make huge investments in its SMEs and reap huge profits and improve its economic situation.

As the South African government has used SMEs as a means of empowering its citizens, their development is the driving force behind black empowerment. In terms of B-BBEE, one of its primary objectives is to improve their access to finance (DTI, 2007). These sentiments are supported by Juggernath (2013), who stated that B-BBEE creates provisions for SMEs to access finance. The B-BBEE policy also focused on human resources and skills development for the SME owners and operators. These policy support frameworks provide the roadmap which Zimbabwe can follow in its endeavour to improve the performance of SMEs. The literature from the BRICS provides the policies that are applicable to the Zimbabwean environment and if they are selectively extracted and blended they would produce a comprehensive policy framework which can be implemented in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has much to learn from the BRICS and South Africa provides a more appropriate example as it resembles Zimbabwe in many ways, including the similarity in the adoption of the black empowerment policies, and a common climate and geographical location.

4.2.4 The economic contributions of SMEs in African states

Small and medium enterprises play an important role in economic growth and development of developing countries (Ahmed, 2018). In the African economic giants such as South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and Kenya, the SME sector is estimated to contribute over 70 % to employment, and 30 to 40 % to GDP (Munyanyiwa 2009). According to the economic survey of 2013 in Kenya, the SME sector accounted for 74.2 % of the total persons engaged in employment and contributed up to 18.4 % of the country 's GDP (Republic of Kenya, 2013). Small enterprises in Ghana are said to be a characteristic feature of the production landscape and have been noted to provide about 85% of the manufacturing employment of Ghana (Steel and Webster, 2017; Aryeetey, 2001 as cited by Abor and Quarterly, 2010). These are indications of the effectiveness of the SMEs in African states. Abor and Quarterly (2010) emphasise that SMEs have a crucial role to play in stimulating growth, generating employment and contributing to poverty alleviation, given their economic weight in African countries. This section focuses on Nigeria, Botswana, Malawi and Ghana and describes the contribution of SMEs towards the performance of their respective economies.

4.2.4.1 Contributions of SMEs in Nigeria

In Nigeria, SME influence is widely recognised, especially in the creation of employment. Specifically, they provide, on average, 50% of both Nigeria's employment and industrial output (Eniola and Ektebang, 2014; Nwankwo et al., 2012). Eniola (2014) emphasises that SMEs account for over 90% of Nigerian business, 95% of its formal manufacturing activity and 70% of its industrial businesses.

Additionally, not only do SMEs make huge contributions to the economy of Nigeria through GDP, export earnings, employment and development opportunities, but they also contribute to the increase of potential entrepreneurs and offer linkage development of large industries (Aremu and Adeyemi, 2011; Eniola, 2014; Osotimehin et al., 2012). Ebiringa (2011) identifies five key areas in which SMEs contribute to Nigeria's economy and listed them as follows:

- A strong catalyst for technological development; hence, aids in reduction of the development gap (which is largely a technology gap) between Nigeria and the advanced countries.
- A major source of employment, since their modes of operation are more labour intensive.
- A major source of domestic capital formation through their mobilisation of private savings and channelling of such in productive investment.
- Aid the process of redistribution of income.
- Constitute a critical source of specialisation for most large organisations operating in the economy.

The SMEs in Nigeria have a number of roles in both the economic and socioeconomic areas of the country and their contribution has made a great impact in the development of the country's economy as well as on the welfare of the general population that benefits from the SME sector.

4.2.4.2 Contributions of SMEs in Botswana

In Botswana, SMEs dominate economic activity and these sentiments are echoed by Rapitsenyane (2014), who states that most manufacturers in Botswana are SMEs. They play a major role in the growth of the economy, as affirmed by Veskaisri et al. (2007), contribute

to the GDP and create employment to a significant number of members of the public. Small and medium enterprises are said to form the base of industrial structures. According to Balasundaram (2009), they facilitate the process of industrialisation in most countries irrespective of their stages of development. In Botswana, Nkwe (2012) argues that SMEs are vital in achieving economic and social development goals. The author maintains that SMEs contribute to poverty alleviation, employment creation and generation of potential entrepreneurs in Botswana.

For the period of 2005/06 the informal sector workers In Botswana were estimated to be 156,515, which accounted for about 20% of the labour force. In 1995/96, employment in the informal sector was 57,950, which was about 11% of the labour force (CSO, 2007). The statistics show that employment in the informal sector doubled during the two periods which is an indicator of a big growth in the sector. The SMEs in Botswana have been used as a tool to empower the disadvantaged members of the community, especially women and the youth. Most informal enterprises are owned by women and even employees in the informal businesses are mainly female (CSO, 2008). In the same vein, the SME sector also plays an important role in developing the Botswana economy in the fight against poverty and unemployment. This explains the reason why the majority of informal businesses are owned by women (63.7%) and the majority of informal sector employees (56.2%) are females (CSO, 2008).

4.2.4.3 Contribution of SMEs in Malawi

Small and medium enterprises in Malawi play an important role in the growth and development of its economy. Chetama et al (2016) states that SMEs in Malawi are considered as significant contributors towards job creation, development and economic growth. These sentiments are echoed by Edoho (2015), who agrees that entrepreneurship and MSMEs have driven innovation that has stimulated economic growth, created wealth and generated high-skill jobs in Malawi, making them an integral part of the economic affairs of the country.

Zidana (2016) states that in Malawi, 50% of global Gross Value Added (GVA) is contributed by SMEs, and the findings of 2015 show that 41% of them employed 1,050,320 people, which confirms their pivotal role in the economy. More recently, Ndola and Moto (2019) stated that

Malawi has about 987,480 SMEs, and 758,118 SME owners employing about 1,050,320 people with a revenue of about MK 326 billion. Kambewa et al. (2007) state that SMEs in Malawi contribute 13% to the export sector of the country. They have an important stake in the development of the country's economy.

4.2.4.4 Contribution of SMEs in Ghana

In Ghana, SMEs dominate industry and have the potential to accelerate economic development, wealth creation, and poverty reduction (Awiagah, 2015). The statistics from Ghana indicate that SMEs are the main contributors to the economic areas that include employment creation, GDP contribution and community development programmes (Awiagah, 2015). In support of this view, Peprah et al. (2016) state that SMEs have been proven to be game changer when it comes to innovation, employment, and wealth creation.

As an indication of their strong influence on the economy of the country, Abor and Quartey (2010) state that SMEs in Ghana account for about 92% of businesses and about 85% of manufacturing employment, while contributing about 70% of GDP. These figures were supported by the Capacity Development Centre Ghana (2012), which stated that 92% of companies registered are micro, small and medium enterprises. Small and medium enterprises are noted to contribute not less than 70% to the GDP of Ghana and therefore have significant impact on economic growth, income and employment. There is empirical evidence on what they can achieve for the economy in Ghana when they are supported and well managed.

4.2.4.5 The influence of Kenyan SME policies on performance of SMEs

In recognition of the important role by the SME sector, the Government of Kenya (GOK) prepared the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (Government of Kenya, 2004), which prioritises investment in the micro, small, and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) (Osoro and Muturi, 2013). More recently, the government has outlined its economic development policy in the Vision 2030, which aspires to make Kenya a globally competitive and prosperous nation by the year 2030 (GOK, 2008). It has therefore committed to industrialise by the year 2020, and if this is to be achieved, the Kenyan

government has an obligation to encourage the (MSMSEs) sector to play a major role in providing additional jobs (GOK, 2007).

The Kenyan Economic Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation is based on the idea that the development of MSMEs constitutes one of the main pillars in this endeavour, as they are expected to serve as the breeding ground or seedbed from which large firms will emerge (GOK, 2008). The Kenyan policy paper on the development of these enterprises, the Wealth and Employment Creation for Poverty Reduction, emphasises that the assistance of SMEs for their growth and development is a priority (GOK, 2004). The Youth Enterprise Development Fund and the Women Development Fund (GOK, 2007) identified the provision for training, the creation of an enabling environment, improvement of the necessary infrastructure, provision of extension services, establishment of rural business centres for information dissemination and research as the main drivers for the development of SMEs.

4.2.4.6 Contribution of SMEs and inclusivity in Zimbabwe

Small and medium enterprises have become increasingly important to Zimbabwe's economic growth. In the country's situation, the contribution of SMEs to its economic development is regarded as crucial for the achievement of the broader development objectives of poverty alleviation, spreading employment to rural areas, improving the situation of women and increasing indigenous ownership of investment in the economy (Nyoni, 2002:1). Magaisa and Matipira (2017) state that SMEs in Zimbabwe complement the efforts of large corporations in the production of goods and services, they fill the gap that is not covered by large firms and they account for more than 90% of the economy. Nyoni (2002) states that this sector in Zimbabwe is also a major role player in national development, employment creation, uplifting of the standards of living for urbanites, and thus the promotion of urban economies. Nyoni (2002) argues that the Zimbabwean government has identified SMEs as the engine for national growth and a vehicle for economic development because they contribute more than 50% of the GDP of the country. This is supported by Chirwa (2015), who states that in the Zimbabwean context, SMEs contribute positively towards job creation and economic growth. Given the number of retrenchments due to the economic downturn Zimbabwe has experienced since 2000, SMEs offer the best alternative means of livelihood for the majority of people in the country (Nyoni, 2000). As noted in the Zimbabwe National Budget Statement

(2013), they employ more than 60% of the country's work force and contribute about 50% of the country's GDP. As conventional sources of employment are shrinking, due to the closing of multi-national companies, formal employment opportunities in Zimbabwe are becoming very scarce and SMEs are increasingly filling the gap and significantly contributing to the economy.

4.2.4.7 Juxtaposition of African states and recapitulation of Zimbabwe SMEs

The economies of most African states are being supported by SMEs. Statistics indicate that they represent, on average, over 90% of the enterprises and 50% to 60% of employment in most African countries (Ahiawodzi and Adade, 2012). In the African economic giants such as South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and Kenya, the SME sector is estimated to contribute over 70 % of employment, and 30 to 40 % to GDP (Munyanyiwa, 2009). Zimbabwe has the capability to join these giants and improve the performance of its SMEs. Their high performance recorded in other African states can be achieved in Zimbabwe if the government shows commitment to supporting them. Zimbabwe has the great potential to be counted as one of the African giants in the SME sector if it utilises its highly educated citizens as well as its natural resources such as minerals, farming soil, vegetation and wildlife reserves.

As a study by the International Finance Corporation shows SMEs in Nigeria are a very important part of the economy, with approximately 96% of Nigerian businesses being SMEs, representing about 90% of the manufacturing industrial sector (Oyelarín-Oyeyinka, 2010). Ebiringa's (2011) outlines five key areas in which SMEs contribute to Nigeria's economy and which the government has supported achieving results. Zimbabwe can follow this strategy and improve the performance of SMEs.

A total of 92% of the Malawian population is involved in the SME sector in the form of self-employment, family or individual businesses (Ndala and Moto, 2019). In Ghana, SMEs dominate industry and have the potential to accelerate economic development, wealth creation, and poverty reduction (Awiagah, 2015). Abor and Quartey (2010) state that SMEs account for about 92% of businesses in Ghana and about 85% of manufacturing employment, while contributing about 70% of Ghana's GDP. Most manufacturers in Botswana are SMEs. These African states send a clear message of success to the Zimbabwean government that

SMEs have the potential to change the economy of a country and the high performance of SMEs is achievable. The evidence from African states should be used by Zimbabwe as a beacon of hope in its endeavour to improve the performance of SMEs.

4.3 The influence of government policy on SME performance

The development of a sound government policy for SME growth is an indispensable component of the strategy of most economies and holds significance for the growth, development and performance of SMEs (Ifekwem, 2019). Small and medium enterprises which lack government support policies have restricted access to improving their growth and performance. Government policy is reflected in strategic plans and policy memos and it is translated and carried out through rules and regulations, manuals, requests for proposals, contractual agreements and enforcement actions (Ifekwem, 2019). The advancement of SMEs in the developed nations has been achieved by the policies that supported the performance of SMEs. It is in this vein that the government policy has a great bearing on the performance of the SMEs.

Wakili (2006) reiterates that government support policies on SMEs are strategies or programmes it and the regulatory agencies employ to influence and determine decision making process that foster economic growth by ensuring that the environment is adequately protected for business operations. The government should have well established structures to ensure that its policies are implemented and monitored using the tools it will have developed.

4.3.1 The effects of European policies on SME performance

The EU economies have made significant improvements in developing a more SME-friendly policy environment (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019). In a broad perspective, the EU SME policy has continued to reduce the administrative burdens on SMEs by streamlining registration processes and extending the scope of digital public services, strengthening its legal frameworks for insolvency, and further simplifying their public procurement procedures to reduce barriers to SME participation (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019). The favourable SME policy that was implemented by the EU has made great strides in improving SME performance in the region. The EU thus set a standard on the importance of crafting policies that support

SMEs. Schmiemann (2008) pointed out that on 7 February 2008, the EC launched the Enterprise Europe Network, a support offering a one-stop service to assist enterprises to develop their full potential and innovative capacity. It includes more than 500 contact points spread across Europe, aiming to

- assist companies to go international by promoting cross-border trade and investment
- build technology partnerships and promote innovation
- help small businesses with technical issues
- overcome the knowledge gap regarding different sources of EU financing

Moreover, the Enterprise Europe Network is part of the commission's integrated policy for promoting entrepreneurship and growth of enterprises. Its aim is to support SMEs from all sectors to take greater advantage of the opportunities offered by the single market. Recently, it was reported (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019) that the EU policy makers have developed SME monitoring tools and the following key programmes will be monitored:

- Enhancing regulatory conditions for SMEs to contribute to their competitiveness; governments need to intensify their engagement with the private sector in cutting red tape and when developing new policies affecting SMEs
- Expanding regional co-operation over SME development to help economies make better use of their resources and reap the benefits of enhanced economic integration; doing so would also underpin economic integration efforts, contributing to enhanced intra-regional trade, as well as the creation of knowledge-sharing networks
- The Small Business Act for Europe has recognised that economies suffer when women are under-represented among entrepreneurs; it made women's entrepreneurship one of its priority areas (EC, 2008[9])
- Supporting SMEs to scale up to enhance their productivity; SMEs in many of the region's economies have barely grown in terms of their share of employment or value added compared to large enterprises; a co-ordinated policy approach is needed to help SMEs further improve their productivity and to scale up.

The implementation of policies by the Western Balkans and Turkey (WBT) is a perfect example of the success story of the EU SME policies that have been crafted and implemented

successfully. All the economies of this region have well-developed SME strategies in place and they are implementing them according to implementation plans (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019). They have continued to reduce the administrative burden on SMEs by streamlining registration processes and extending the scope of digital public services. These economies have also strengthened their legal frameworks for insolvency, and further simplified their public procurement procedures to reduce barriers to SME participation (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019). A well-developed SME policy that addresses the needs of the local entrepreneurs will produce a high performing SME sector as demonstrated by the EU policy makers.

4.3.2 Role of Asian Tiger policies in SME performance

The experience of the 'Asian Tigers' has proved that poverty can be reduced by 20% in two decades by developing and growing sustainable MSMEs and have proved that national economies are grown and poverty reduction achieved through their development. The critical business development services (BDS) and special government patronage or deliberate market support (practised in many Asian countries) has made the SME the centre of economic development in these countries (Adebisi, 2014). Through their policies, they have thriving SMEs that can be used as world-class examples on how to establish a successful SME sector. China and Japan provide a detailed account on the role of Asian governments in the performance of their SMEs.

4.3.2.1 Role of Japanese policies in SME performance

Japan's SMEs have improved their performance because the country is recognised as having a strong focus on policy that is centred on innovation. Honjo and Harada (2006) emphasise that the SME Creative Business Promotion Law in Japan, that was introduced to support SMEs that are pioneers in new areas of business through entries, research and development and commercialisation of research, has resulted in a high growth in the performance of SMEs. Pergelova and Angulo-Ruiz (2014) argue that the manufacturing extension programmes in Japan are provided by 262 Kohsetsushi centres (public industrial technology research institutes), which offer a range of services to Japanese SME manufacturers, including technology guidance; technical assistance and training; networking; testing, analysis and instrumentation; and access to open laboratories and test beds.

4.3.2.2 Role of South Korean policies in SME performance

South Korea has invested a great deal of resources in the SME sector and its strong belief in it and has developed policies that support its performance. Its support of the SME sector has contributed to the high economic growth as well as lower mortality rate of SMEs in the country (Majone, 2016). Its policies have provided SMEs with easy access to financial resources and its policy framework has facilitated their growth.

Despite the fact that the South Korean government recently faced a recession, with no signs of recovery in the labour market and a high unemployment rate, it focused its policies on employment for SMEs (Lui et al., 2019). In fact, the South Korean government is presently undertaking favourable measures toward SMEs, that include introducing subsidies to create more jobs (Lui et al., 2019). It has remained resolute in its support for SMEs ensuring the high contributions that have been recorded from the SME sector.

4.3.2.3 Role of Malaysian policies in SME performance

The Malaysian government made a commitment to support the performance of SMEs. After drawing up policies that promote the development of SMEs, the government went a step further to financing them. It delegated the banks to be the main providers of the financial resources (Bhuiyan et al., 2016). Most SMEs in Malaysia are able to access these resources and this gesture has been the pillar of strength for the sector.

4.3.2.4 Role of Indonesian policies in SME performance

The SMEs in Indonesia are given priority by government policy makers. These policy interventions designed to support them are very popular, given the role of SMEs in the economy in Indonesia (Feranita et al., 2019). The government-initiated knowledge and technology transfer programmes have provided training programmes and expertise transfer, as well as physical equipment (machinery and tools) to SMEs (Handoko et al., 2019). The government policies of Indonesia thus support SMEs towards the high contribution of the sector to the economy of the country.

The Indonesian government has a strategy to improve the performance of SMEs through its ministries. Government-initiated knowledge and technology transfer in Indonesia is normally

completed through government ministries and their associated agencies, inter-ministry departments and local government (Handoko, 2019). The ministries include the Ministry of Research and Technology, Ministry of Cooperation and Small to Medium Enterprises, Ministry of Industry, and Ministry of Trade (Handoko, 2019). They work in collaboration and the atmosphere has promoted the growth of SMEs.

4.3.3 The policies developed by the BRICS and SME performance

The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries have developed policies that support the performance of SMEs. The Indian and government has recorded great success in the development of SMEs that made small businesses the major providers of employment, community development and the overall performance of the economy.

4.3.3.1 Brazilian government SME support

The Brazilian SME policy, beginning in the early years of 2000, has focused on the collective treatment of small and medium firms in local productive systems (LPS), which involves the design of policies that support joint activities, fosters knowledge flows and mobilises local productive and innovative systems (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). Arroio and Scerri (2014), further pointed out that LPS represents a practical unit of analysis and investigation that goes well beyond traditional views based on individual organisations, SMEs or economic sectors, comprising both the territorial dimension and economic activities. This approach expands the sectoral system of innovation perspective and it promotes the human capital development as the key resource for the performance of SMEs. It considers research and development, education, training, financial support as key drivers of their performance. This is the perspective that Brazil adopted for its SME development programme.

Reflecting an international move towards recognising the need to develop a systemic approach to the promotion of innovation and competitiveness of SMEs and individual agents, policies in Brazil have focused more clearly on clusters of firms and SMEs (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). In particular, policies to promote technological and industrial development, agglomeration of enterprises and the best use of the collective advantages generated by their interactions with the surrounding environment, can effectively contribute to the strengthening of their chances of survival and growth and represent an effective source for

sustainable competitive advantages of SMEs (Cassiolato et al., 2003). The Brazilian SME policy has focused on the SME sector as a whole and made use of the comparative advantages of the related sectors and how they can share ideas and develop the sector and not individual success.

An interdisciplinary research network, Research Network on Local Productive and Innovative Systems (RedeSist), was set up at the Economics Institute of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro in 1997 (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). Its establishment was an important milestone in the development of the conceptual basis and methodology for the analysis of policies to promote innovation in SMEs (Cassiolato et al., 2003). The approach developed by RedeSist, known as the Local Productive and Innovative System framework, has been successfully used in more than 120 empirical studies in different parts of Brazil in the areas of manufacturing, agriculture, services, and creative and cultural industries (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). The success story of SMEs in Brazil is as a result of the government's support for its programmes.

4.3.3.2 Russian government SME support

The post-Soviet Union economy was supported by a large business enterprise that depended on mass production, an environment that could not support the development of SMEs. Upon realising their importance, the Russian government developed policies that support SMEs. The Forecast for Long-term Social and Economic Strategic Development of the Russian Federation up to 2030 (2013:06) stresses that, "small and medium-sized enterprises are the integral and necessary component of any developed economic system". This policy statement became the driving force behind the high performance of SMEs in Russia.

The growth of business innovative activity is a strategic goal of the Russian Federation development aims, since it is included in its national goals and strategic objectives for the period up to 2024 (Dubrova, Ermolina and Esenin 2019). The promotion of SME innovative activity that may contribute to the increase of national product competitiveness in the global market plays a crucial role. The urgent task is the diversification of the Russian economy, and thus the state interest in supporting entrepreneurship has intensified (Pinkovetskaia et al., 2019). The best solution for Russia was to develop a policy that aimed to strengthen SMEs, a step towards diversification of the economy which saw the rise of the SME sector.

4.3.3.3 Indian government SME support

The Indian government has made great strides in developing promotional policies for its SMEs. It has developed an extensive institutional network over time for the promotion of small scale industries (SSI) (Muzapu et al., 2016). This network begins at the national level and cascades down to the district levels in an attempt to bring every institution and stakeholder on board. The different institutions identified by the government are the Small Industries Development Organisation, Small Industries Service Institutes (SISIs), National Small Industries Corporation, National Institute of Small Industries Extension Training, Small Industries Development Corporation and State Financial Corporation and District Industries Centres (Muzapu et al., 2016). These institutions assist small firms across several functions including marketing, exporting, importing, adopting technology and the like.

To meet the challenges of international competition and to promote exports of SSI products, the following promotional schemes are being implemented:

- Small Industries Development Bank of India schemes for technology development and modernisation of SSI units.
- SISIs organised workshops on ISO-9000 certification and awareness about quality; Establishment of tool rooms providing tooling, dies, moulds and fixtures to small-scale units at a very low cost enabling SMEs to produce quality goods to meet the requirements of the markets.
- Process-cum-Product Development Centres taking up jobs from SSIs for specific product and process development to improve the quality and reduce cost of products and enhance marketability of goods.
- Government assisting SMEs in marketing their products by organising international exhibitions, sponsoring delegations from different SSI sectors to various countries and providing pertinent information related to sales opportunities available in international markets.
- Government prioritising export promotion from small-scale sector; every policy formulated for achieving growth in exports have a number of incentives available to small-scale exporters.

- National Awards for Quality Products given to outstanding small-scale units to encourage them to produce 'quality goods'.
- New technology upgrading scheme for industrial clusters recently commenced; it includes a diagnostic study of the clusters, the identification of technological needs, types of technological interventions and the wider dissemination of information and technology within them. Recently, the Indian Government raises the capital subsidy given to SMEs by 15 % for technological upgrades.

India's SME policy has played an important role in their performance. The policies focus on the needs of the SMEs and the government has taken it upon itself to market their products. In fact, the government has a policy programme that addresses all the areas of the SMEs, which has been a huge support to their growth, development and performance.

4.3.3.4 Chinese government SME support

China has employed institutional changes that are intended to spur entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial finance; one such example is the creation of the Growth Enterprise Market (GEM) board in 2009. It provides a public trading platform for the shares of China's high-growth, high-volatility ventures that are not yet qualified for the main board in Shanghai or Shenzhen. Zhang (2005, 2007) reveals that the implicit deposit insurance system (IDIS) is a key component of the Chinese specialty in the banking industry, which enables Chinese banks of different types to attract voluminous deposits from households; these savings are, in turn, used by the state to finance national economic development of which the SMEs are at the heart.

Since 1992, the Chinese government has focused mainly on enhancing the overall quality and competitiveness of the domestic SME sector (Chen, 2006). In this endeavour, the Ministry of Finance's innovation fund for technology-based SMEs has supported and encouraged technological innovations since 1999. The financial and credit policies that were established proactively supported SMEs and their high performance made huge contributions to the country's GDP. According to the World Bank, China contributed 0.5 percentage points to the global economic growth of 3.9% in 2006, and during this period, it was already the world's

fourth largest economy, after the United States, Japan and Germany, with a total GDP of 2,720 billion (Aguilar, 2015).

4.3.3.5 South African government SME support

The South African government has viewed SMEs as a source of employment, as stated by Rust (2006), and to combat increasing unemployment, the creation and support of SMEs is needed. It is evident that for B-BEE to succeed in South Africa, full support of small businesses has to be implemented. The B-BEE policy focused on human resource and skills development for SME owners and operators. This meant that research and development was considered as a main policy item for the development of SMEs. The government would provide a variety of courses to equip SME operators that included technical training, financial management training, strategic planning and marketing. The trainings would empower the indigenous people, who would professionally run their organisations. The South African government has given SMEs priority as a tool of black empowerment, making their development the driving force behind it.

4.3.3.6 The critical success factors for Zimbabwe

Based on the literature concerning the BRICS, Zimbabwe can identify the critical factors which can be adopted and implemented by SMEs in order to improve their performance. The general trend in the BRICS bloc is that they supported the policies that they developed and great success of SME performance was achieved. The government policies on SMEs were given first priority by these different nations and their economies recorded an increase in the GDP contributions by SMEs.

The Brazilian SME policy for example was based on the local productive systems (LPS) concept that was designed to expand the SME sectors with innovation and human capital development as the key resource for the performance of SMEs (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). Innovation and competitiveness of SME programmes in Brazil have focused more clearly on clusters of firms and SMEs (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). This is the perspective that Zimbabwe can adopt for its SME development programme, as it has proved to be effective and positive results were achieved in Brazil.

From the Russian government policies, the Forecast for Long-term Social and Economic Strategic Development of the Russian Federation up to 2030 (2013: 06), stresses that “small and medium-sized enterprises are the integral and necessary component of any developed economic system”. The policy emphasised that the government targeted the high performance of SMEs in Russia. Zimbabwe can tap into the positive development framework of the Russians and improve the SME sector and its performance. The BRICS bloc have demonstrated successful policies that have been developed and supported by governments. The commitment of governments has produced positive results and Zimbabwe can identify the programmes that can be aligned with its environment and make the high performance of SMES achievable.

4.3.4 The African policies and performance of SMEs

African countries have crafted policies that support the advancement of SMEs. In developing countries, the concern for the role of SMEs in the development process continues to be at the forefront of policy debates (Cook, 2001) because they comprise a majority of the business population in most countries, and therefore play a crucial role in the economy (Mitchell and Reid, 2000). Hansen et al. (2015) attributes local content policies and programmes: in Tanzania, the Mining Act of 2010 stipulates that certain parts of the exploration cycle are reserved for companies that are solely owned by Tanzanian citizens and there are provisions to promote backward and forward linkages. Chaminuka (2015) proposed that in Southern Africa previous studies have also shown that a number of policies were adopted to promote SMEs as soon as the countries attained independence.

4.3.4.1 The influence of Nigerian policies on the performance of SMEs

The development of SMEs as an essential element in the growth strategy of most economies holds significance for Nigeria (Udechukwu, 2003). Government support policies act as a moderator on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria to strengthen the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and contemporary marketing (Ibrahim and Mustapha, 2019). In this regard, the federal government of Nigeria announced the reduction of taxes for SMEs to thrive and to promote inclusive economic growth; through the Nigerian Customs Services the Nigerian government banned the importation of goods that can be sourced and produced in Nigeria (Wakili, 2016). This policy aimed at encouraging the indigenous SMEs to strengthen

their market potential, which would subsequently improve their productivity and performance (Omonobi and Bivbere, 2016). The Nigerian government showed its support of SMEs through crafting policies that would provide a fertile environment for the performance of SMEs.

4.3.4.2 The influence of Botswana's policies on the performance of SMEs

The government of Botswana has designed several policies to support the performance of SMEs. The policy of financing SMEs began in 1982 with the establishment of the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) (AFDB/OECD, 2005). Its main objective was to stimulate investment in sustainable economic activities, to further support enterprise development (Khanie, 2018).

The Botswana government encouraged research and development on its policies in order to improve its delivery. The Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA) is an independent trust, which started operations in 1995 as a non-governmental policy research institution with a mission to inform policy and build capacity through research and consultancy services (Khanie, 2018). The trust is part-funded by the Government of Botswana, as it supports it to be more objective in its policy creation, implementation and evaluation.

4.3.4.3 The influence of the Zimbabwean policies on the performance of SMEs

The Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy and the Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy were enacted in order to improve the economy of the country by supporting the SME sector. These policies were deliberately enacted to empower SMEs. The country's new economic era was now targeting the black entrepreneurs to drive the economy. This followed the new economic dispensation in Zimbabwe, following the land redistribution programme which led to the death of the formal industry. The policies of Zimbabwe were inclined towards the SME sector. The collapse of the formal industries and the demand of intermediate technologies by small-scale farmers have provided opportunities for informal business enterprises to produce and supply these agricultural technologies to the new crop of farmers that emerged following the agrarian reform of 2000, widely known as the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) (Makate et al., 2016; Mujeyi, Mutambara, Siziba, Sadomba, and Manyati, 2015). The policies targeted the SMEs as the provider of the economic recovery path.

Magaisa and Matipira (2017) emphasise that the National Policy and Strategy for SMEs outlines the framework and sets out strategies for the implementation, coordination and monitoring of SMEs to enhance the growth and development of the sector. The main objective of the creation of the policy framework was towards the creation of sustainable jobs, reduction of poverty, growth stimulation and foreign currency earnings generation. There was an objective of creating an enabling environment to double the number of small businesses in Zimbabwe. The SMEs took the centre stage and their value was stated by Wang (2016), who pointed out that in developing countries such as in Zimbabwe, SMEs are important for driving growth and economic development. This view was shared by Zvarivadza (2016), who stated that most SMEs are born out of the people or groups of people with the visions to operate and run prosperous businesses (Zvarivadza, 2018). The implementation of Zimbabwe's indigenous policies saw the new era of SMEs being ushered in as the main economic drivers of the new economic dispensation in the absence of the multinational companies

4.3.4.4 The influence of Malawi's SME policies on performance of SMEs

The government of Malawi has placed major emphasis on the development of policies that support SMEs in the country. Ndola and Moto (2019) state that the government of Malawi recognises the contribution made by micro, small and medium enterprises in stimulating competition, providing employment and distributing wealth. There have been attempts by the Malawian government to develop the entrepreneurial mindset in the population through the revamping and restructuring of public organisations entrusted with national entrepreneurship development such as the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurial Training Authority (TEVETA), the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Institute (SMEDI) and the Malawi Rural Development and Enterprise Fund (MARDEF) (Ndala and Pelser, 2019).

Malawi embarked on a programme promoting public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) that offer entrepreneurship education and training which are registered by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) with the sole purpose of spurring entrepreneurship development in the country through the provision of entrepreneurship

education and training (EET) (Delaney, Harrington and Toker, 2019). The programme targeted the improvement of SME performance through entrepreneurial education.

The government has supported exchange programmes with China in order to develop the SME sector. As reported in the Africa Report (2018), the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Henry Mussa, stated:

One of these paths is the establishment of technical colleges. But bearing in mind that the labor market is limited, we encourage people to open [their own] businesses and the trip to China was to expose some of the SMEs to what and how advanced countries manage [these businesses], The government established colleges where the youth and SME owners will be trained in various business and vocational skills, and this will ultimately put money into their pockets and also improve the country's economy.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) (2015), across the country, a broad range of support programmes targeting SMEs is being provided by different government departments and institutions, as well as the private sector (Ndala and Pelser, 2019). In Malawi, government policies have provided the environment for the development of the SMEs.

4.3.4.5 The influence of Ghana's SME policies on performance of SMEs

The government of Ghana has provided a fertile ground for the development of the SMEs. Their significance to the Ghanaian economy is clear, as the government support has exhibited great influence on behaviour intention and substantially influenced the performance of SMEs (Awiagah, Kang, and Lim, 2015). Its policies and initiatives played a remedial role through subsidies and tax incentives to facilitate SME exposure to information technology and stimulate the adoption and use of e-commerce.

The SME development in Ghana, according to Abor and Biekpe (2006), is based on the idea of SME promotion that dates back to 1970, though very little was done at the time. In recent years the government's key institutions were set up to assist SMEs, and prominent among them are the Office of Business Promotion and the Ghana Enterprise Development Commission (GEDC). The main objective of the GEDC was to assist Ghanaian businessmen to enter into fields where foreigners mainly operated. It had packages for strengthening small

scale industry in general, both technically and financially (Kayanula and Quartey, 2000). The Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) instituted in 1983 has broadened the institutional support for SMEs, and the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) was established within the Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology to address the needs of small businesses (Peprah, Mensah and Akosah, 2016). The government of Ghana provided the supporting environment for the success of SMEs; hence, their huge contribution to the economy of the country.

4.3.4.6 The influence of Kenya's SME policies on performance of SMEs

Small scale enterprises play an important role in the Kenyan economy and are accorded high priority in the development policy (GOK, 2007). The economy of Kenya grew by an average of 4.3% in the year 2009, with SMEs contributing significantly to this growth, and offering employment to many people both in the rural and urban areas (Osoro and Muturi, 2013). Small and medium enterprises dominate the manufacturing sector in Kenya; about 85% of manufacturing firms are small, contributing only about 20% of the sector's GDP (Kippra, 2017). This is supported by Osoro and Muturi (2013), who stated that SMEs contribute immensely to economic development and wealth creation through employment creation, estimated at 3.2 million people in 2003, generation of income, increasing productivity, facilitating technological transfers and creation of market linkages, among other benefits. The statistics have shown how Kenyan SMEs contribute to the economy by creating jobs and reducing unemployment (Chu et al., 2007). There are over 41,000 formal SMEs which account for 75% of all formal enterprises (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2013). These formal SMEs employ 42% of the Kenyan workforce (Douglas, Douglas, Muturi and Ochieng, 2017). Further statistics indicate that there has been a tremendous increase in the SME share in Kenya's GDP from 13% in 1993, to 18% in 2003, and 20-25% in 2011-2016, and constitutes over 85% of employment opportunities (Ombongi and Wei Long, 2018). Kenya is the most industrialised country in the East African region and its manufacturing sector, supported by SMEs, constitutes 14% of GDP (World Bank, 2016). These enterprises cut across all sectors of the economy as a major source of employment and income (GOK, 2005). Over 98% of all businesses are SMEs, contributing about 25% of GDP and 50% of formal employment (Ministry of Industrialisation and Enterprise Development, 2015; Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

4.3.4.7 The learning and experience curve effects from African counterparts for Zimbabwe SMEs

It is generally agreed by scholars that SMEs contribute significantly to economic development of all nations and they are associated with discovering new markets and exploiting them to their advantage (Muriithi, 2017). Consequently, they are considered to be at the heart of founding new ventures and a source income and employment for millions of Africans, which means that SMEs are central to wealth creation by stimulating demand for goods, investment and trade (GEM, 2006). Without SMEs, many African governments would experience financial and developmental constraints, all which would only worsen living standards of low income persons often served by the sector (Santrelli and Vivarelli, 2007). Zimbabwe can draw lessons from the literature, that SMEs are a force to be reckoned with in the economic development of a country.

In Africa, SMEs account for more than 90% of businesses and contribute about 50% and GDP (Fjose et al., 2010; Kamunge et al., 2014). In Kenya, SMEs contribute 40% of the GDP, over 50% of new jobs and account for 80% of the workforce (Mwarari and Ngugi, 2013). In 2003, SMEs offered employment to 3.2 million Kenyans (Kauffman, 2005). Similarly, SMEs accounted for 70% of Nigerian industrial jobs and 95% of the manufacturing sector (Kauffman, 2006), while in Ghana they account for 70% of all businesses and employ 70% of the total workforce (Government of Ghana, 2003; World Bank, 2006). The sector also amounts to 97% of businesses and 18% of the workforce in Zambia (Parker, 2006). The Zimbabwe government has to provide support to its SMEs so that they can contribute to the country's GDP, employment creation and general business development, as noted in other African states like Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana.

The main cause of failure of African SMEs is lack of government support. Muriithi (2017) states that it is notable that most African governments give very little support to SMEs, thereby neglecting a vital economic trigger, but they should form pillars of development. The government is a key player in the successful development, growth and performance of SMEs. The role of African governments in their performance was pointed out by Muriithi (2017):

Kamunge et al. (2014), summed up the role of the government by stating that depending on the regulatory frameworks put in place, it can easily crush or promote the small business economy (Kamunge et al., 2014). It is notable that an unfavourable tax system, unfair competition, complicated rules and regulations and punitive environments crippling and negatively obstruct SME growth (Krasniqi, 2007). These legal requirements vary from one country to another and affect the performance of SMEs. It takes 100 days to establish a business in Kenya, 220 days in Ghana and 350 days in Nigeria to obtain all business licences (Benzing and Chu, 2012). The tax paid by the businesses also differs, with Kenya requiring 51% of total profit, while Ghana demands 33% and Nigeria 30%. Besides taxes, it has been found that SMEs in Africa face lengthy and costly delays during numerous procedures and clearances demanded by various regulatory frameworks (Agbali and Ukaegbu, 2006). The stringent measures that are put in place by the governments discourages development and negatively affect SME implementers.

The differences in the registration process would definitely mean that motivation of SME operations and their continued growth will differ across the continent. However, countries like Kenya and Nigeria have put in measures meant to support SMEs, especially in the informal sector, and they have also reduced government interference in business operations (Benzing and Chu, 2012). Kenya, is singled out as having put different mechanisms in place intended to increase access to youth, women's groups and SMEs by making special funds accessible through public initiatives and financial institutions (Business Daily, 10-21-07; The Nation, 10-22-07). Zimbabwe can learn lessons from these developments in other African states. Positive lessons from Kenya can be duplicated, especially supporting vulnerable groups of society such as youth and women. The positive results on the performance of SMEs is an indicator of the government's power to influence this.

Zimbabwe has to take cognisance of the reality that SMEs in Africa are operating under difficult and unsuitable conditions. They face many challenges that deter their growth (Nikolić, Dhamo, Schulte, Mihajlović and Kume, 2015). This is observed by Kamunge et al. (2014) and Beck, Asili, Luc and Vojislav (2006), that besides their positive role in development, SMEs face many obstacles that restrict their long-term survival. The rate of business failure in Africa is alarming, with only a few businesses surviving a few months to one year (Kenya

National Bureau of Statistics, 2007). Adcorp (2014) states that the mortality rate of SMEs among African countries remains very high, with five out of seven new businesses failing in their first year. Chad has also been named as a country with a failure of 65% and one of the most difficult countries to do business in due to unfavourable regulatory frameworks (World Bank, 2012). In Uganda, for example, one third of new business start-ups do not go beyond one year of operation, while in South Africa, the failure is between 50% and 95%, depending on the industry (Willemse, 2010). A study by Yeboah (2015) also revealed that 75% of SMEs in South Africa do not become established businesses, causing the country to have the highest failure rate in the world. Despite these disturbing statistics, SMEs dominate the South African economy, and their contribution cannot be ignored (Sawers et al., 2008). This scenario brings in another learning point for the Zimbabwean government, that the success of SMEs requires a great deal of support, patience, research and development and implementation of innovation processes, including value creation and addition of the goods and services produced.

4.4 Government resources for SMEs

The government, as the architect of policies, has a mandate to commit its support to them through resources so that they make an impact in the communities that they serve. The resources that support the performance of SMEs can be defined as financial and human resources, and knowledge and skills.

Government financial support has been identified as one of the major resources that support the performance of SMEs, and their access to finance is a key aspect. There is a strong relationship between bank loans and SME performance. The lack of access to credit and capital is a major barrier to their development. It prevents them from acquiring new technology that would make them more productive and more competitive (Devi, 2013). It has been shown that smaller firms with high growth rates typically require more external financing in order to reach their growth objectives (Cassar, 2004). In addition to financial resources, in this era of globalisation equipped with improved technology, especially in the areas of IT, in a highly competitive and dynamic business environment the only way to survive and remain successful and also have a competitive advantage is to be entrepreneurially inclined, strategically positioned and market oriented (Ibrahim and Mustapha, 2019).

4.4.1 The USA government and SME support

The government financial support of SMEs plays an important role in their performance. Support through loans, guarantees, and equity shows that it affects their performance. Studies done in the USA examined the impact of government financial support measures such as government loans, guarantees and government equity on firms' overall performance and results reveal that they have a direct (Fernando et al., 2014). Micro finance programmes have proven to be effective tools for the elimination of poverty and for stabilising incomes and consumption in both developed and developing economies across the globe (Hameed, 2019). Monitoring of SMEs through government agencies is the key to the success of SMEs in the USA.

The US government prioritised micro loan programmes as a key financial avenue to assist the SMEs. Over the last two decades a host of new micro loan providers have emerged along with third-party organisations who provide support services to micro loan borrowers in response to a national mandate to eradicate poverty and build up the middle class through the creation and growth of small businesses in America (Hameed, 2019). Microfinancing providers now include stand-alone micro-lenders, community development banks, federal and state governmental agencies, credit unions and mutual fund associations, Certified Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), conventional banks who for competitive and regulatory reasons have developed micro-loans products, and for-profit wholesalers and consultants who work directly with financial institutions in providing micro-funds to their clients (Islamic Finance in the United States, 2018). In the US, the influence of government support on the small businesses has shown that financial support produces a positive impact on the performance of SMEs.

The US government also supports \$4 billion in Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) debentures to support new businesses; and \$18 million in direct loans, for intermediaries to provide small loans to emerging entrepreneurs. In international comparisons among OECD countries, the US consistently ranks among the top in direct government support for business innovation as a percentage of GDP (OECD 2012), which further speaks of the importance of new and small business growth in the US support policies. Given the key role of entrepreneurship in the American economy and the enhanced recognition for the importance

of support for new and small businesses, the US provides a perfect example of establishing the impact of government financial support on the performance of SMEs.

4.4.2 The European Union governments and SME support

Credit guarantees “remain the most wide-spread instrument in use across countries” to ease SME access to finance (OECD, 2018b: 317), and are particularly relevant “in those countries where a network of local or sectoral guarantee institutions is well established” (OECD, 2013 :215). Access to finance is crucial not only for existing microenterprises, but also for those who are eager to create a business in order to escape poverty or unemployment and contribute to job creation (OECD, 2018b). Microfinance is typically tailored to micro-enterprises and people who would like to become self-employed but are facing difficulties in accessing traditional banking services

The EC has made serious commitments towards providing resources for SMEs, a number of schemes being put forward to support them. Credit guarantee schemes (CGSs) are an important policy instrument to alleviate the financial constraints of SMEs. Brault and Signore (2019) argue that these schemes play a central role in the set of policies designed by the EC to support European SMEs since the early 2000s, and in this regard, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and Multi-Annual Programme for enterprises and entrepreneurship (MAP) programmes represent two major developments of the EU-level credit guarantee scheme, the SME credit guarantee (SMEG) facility. The EC schemes provide access to finance by the SMEs which are not able to obtain financial support from the banks.

Kraemer-Eis et al. (2019) point out that the European Investment Fund (EIF) plays an important role in alleviating problems experienced by SMEs in accessing finance and through a wide range of financial intermediaries, such as banks, leasing companies, guarantee funds, mutual guarantee institutions, promotional banks and others. The EIF effectively provides both financing to SMEs and guarantees for SME financing. Torfs and Gvetadze (2016a) further state that apart from EIF guarantees for security of SME financing instruments, it offers guarantees and counter-guarantees for portfolios of microcredits, SME loans or leases. In that process, the EIF manages and implements several mandates on behalf of the EC, but also of national and regional managing authorities (Kraemer-Eis, 2014).

4.4.2.1 Albanian government support of SMEs

The government of Albania provides a good example of how it has supported the access to funds by SMEs, having realised that there are low levels of financial literacy, particularly amongst SMEs, which meant that the operators would struggle to access financial support. Less than 14% of the adult population is deemed to be financially literate, according to survey of 2015, compared to an average of 27.5% in the European region. Due to this low financial literacy rate, it is very difficult for small firms to obtain information about financing or training opportunities, as no centralised platform exists. The government placed the following corrective measures in order to improve access to finance by SME operators:

- Increased efforts to reduce informality among micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which is considered a key obstacle for SME access to finance. Measures include reforming the tax regime and strengthening enforcement procedures, and introducing cash registries to automatically recognise trade activities.
- Increased awareness of alternative financial instruments to increase the uptake of non-bank financing. This could be done through a central information platform (for example online) that is easily accessible by most SMEs.
- Improved reliability and accessibility of registers for securities over immovable and movable assets. Systems should be easily accessible to users and ensure records are up to date and reliable to encourage lending against such collateral.
- Broadened available credit information, including information from retailers and utility companies that could help small businesses build a credit history to ease their access to finance. This could be done by encouraging the establishment of a private bureau.

These measures would increase the number of SME operators, who would have access to the financial schemes provided by the government.

4.4.3 The Asian Tiger governments and SME support

The Asian states maintain a leading role in the performance of SMEs. This is achieved through developing policies that are linked to the needs of the community and the governments providing adequate support to SMEs. The Asian countries have invested huge financial support in the sector and have reaped big dividends, as reflected by the contributions of the SMEs in their respective economies.

4.4.3.1 Japanese government SME support

Pergelova and Angulo-Ruiz (2014) state that the government support in Japan was found to influence competitive advantages based on innovation and human capital. The support for SME access to finance is seen as a way to stimulate entrepreneurship growth and job creation, including providing more opportunities for employees to develop their knowledge and restoring a healthy middle class (Pergelova and Angulo-Ruiz, 2014). The Japanese government set up an Asian Monetary Fund (AMF) in 1997 to monitor the region's economies and provide assistance to SMEs and provide information on the possible measures to improve on their performance.

4.4.3.2 South Korean government SME support

The South Korean government has provided a huge support of SMEs. It placed emphasis on the financing of SMEs. South Korean government provides structural adjustment funds. These funds offer loans necessary for the restructuring of less competitive SMEs to recover their competitiveness, and providing loans for facilities and operation to promote re-starting up based on knowhow of successful or failed entrepreneurs (Majoni, 2016). The same government also provides emergency stabilisation funds. The fund offers loans to create a stable business environment for SMEs which are temporarily struggling due to difficulties in production, sales and natural disasters (Lui et al., 2019)

Bank loans are the largest supplier of funding to the sector. South Korea government invested one trillion Korean won (approximately US\$750 million) in the Industrial Bank of Korea to expand that bank's investment foundation and increase the amount of SME lending up to 12 trillion Korean won (approximately US\$9 billion) (Liang et al., 2017). According to OECD (2012) data, SME loans account for more than 80% of all loan. Indirect funding comes in the form of

bank loans, credit guarantee South Korea has put in place SME training centers like the SBC (Majoni, 2016). In support of this view, Liang et al., (2017) argued that the role of the Centre is to train SME in all issues that are related to business and the centers provide working space and monitor SMEs from start up to upgrade.

4.4.3.3 Malaysian Korean government SME support

The government of Malaysia, through various programmes, made a commitment to support the performance of SMEs. The commercial banks are the main source of finance for Malaysian SMEs with about 70.4% working capital being financed by them on the other hand, Islamic banks provided running capital of about 11.3%. (Bhuiyan et al 2016). Musa and Chinniah (2015) assets that many SME development programs have been introduced to grow local SMEs, focusing on areas like Innovation and Technology Adaptation, Human Capital Development, Access to Financing, Market Access and Infrastructure by Malaysia government. The government support of SMEs through financial resources has resulted in the SME sector being the backbone of the Malaysian economy.

4.4.3.4 Indonesian government SME support

The performance of MSMEs depends on adequate funding (Ganbold 2008). To mitigate risks associated with lending to SMEs, the government established the Credit Guarantee Scheme which is one of the solutions for overcoming barriers to accessing credit for MSMEs (Yoshino and Taghizadeh-Hesary 2018, Li and Lin (2017). The conventional banking system is the main source of financing MSMEs in Indonesia. Against a backdrop of weaker intermediation, MSME credit growth accelerated from 6.8 % in 2015 to 8.0% in 2016. Besides financing from conventional banks, sharia banks (Islamic banks) also have a strategic role in developing MSMEs and the Sharia banks are one of the financial resources for micro, small, and medium enterprises (Bank Indonesia 2016).

The Indonesian government has taken several initiatives to improve the performance of SMEs. Micro, small and medium-sized firms (MSMEs) are a key source of employment and economic growth in Indonesia. To mitigate risks associated with lending to SMEs, the government established the Credit Guarantee Scheme which is one of the solutions for overcoming barriers to accessing credit for MSMEs (Yoshino and Taghizadeh-Hesary 2018).

The Credit Guarantee Scheme objectives in Indonesia are to both participate in and encourage the implementation of a policy and government program both in the economy sector and in terms of national development by providing loans from credit guarantee institutions for MSMEs (Li and Lin 2017). The CGS policy implementation is considered effective in increasing MSME growth (Gai, Lelasi, and Rossolini 2016). In 2001, banks were asked to establish self-determined targets for SME lending and report them, this replaced a 1992 regulation that required at least 20% of their loans to be directed to SMEs and over the years, banks have channelled an increasing share of their liquidity to the MSME sector Mourougane, (2012).

4.4.3.5 SME support in Zimbabwe: learning curve from ASEAN SMEs

Zimbabwe has the great potential to accelerate the label “Made in Zimbabwe” products Value addition and value creation can be useful tools to enhance the performance of SMEs. The value creation process could be described as a spectrum ranging from core value, to added value, to future value (Moller and Torronen, 2003). Lepak et al. (2007) defines value creation as the “process” (how value is created) and the “content” (what is of value). These sentiments were shared by various scholars who elaborated that value creation is divided into content (what is value) and the process (how this value is created), firstly, we consider “What is value?” as a question of worth, and intimately linked with the divergent perception of project success (Kreiner, 2014; Laursen and Svejvig, 2016). When we studying project risk management literature through the lens of value creation, content is often assumed to be the project output, success, or benefits, while process is described as the best practices for performance (Willumsen et al. 2019).

Prim 2007) identified the three broad categories of value creation strategies are growing consumers’ human capital, reducing demands on consumers, and focusing on member-specific human capital in multimember households. Moller and Torronen (2003) emphasised that most value-adding process takes place in an incremental fashion in relatively established relationships, which enables the actors to form reasonable estimates of their functional and economic value. Value creation involves innovation that establishes or increases the consumer’s valuation of the benefits of consumption, when value is created, the consumer either will be willing to pay for a novel benefit, will be willing to pay more for something

perceived to be better, or will choose to receive a previously available benefit at a lower unit cost, which often results in a greater volume purchased (Prim, 2007). Value creation, rather than value appropriation, lies at the heart of effective firm strategies and strategies that focus on creating new value undoubtedly lead to some of that value spilling over to other firms and to society as a whole (Moran and Ghoshal 2016).

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries have adopted the value addition and value creation processes to grow the economies of the member states. The ASEAN countries touted SMEs as the engine of economic growth and development, the backbone of national economies, the highest employment-generating sector, and a potential tool of poverty alleviation by creating self-employment avenues (Tambunan, 2008). Small and medium enterprises also play an irreplaceable role in promoting technological innovation and invigorating the national economy and China and the ASEAN countries are increasingly aware of the important role played by SMEs in promoting international economic and trade cooperation, promoting complementary advantages, enhancing bilateral trade, promoting economic restructuring, reducing poverty and narrowing the gap between rich and poor (Liao and Luo, 2020). The ASEAN countries developed two tools that they used in order to achieve high performance of the SMEs: The ASEAN Policy Blueprint for SME Development for SME Development (APBSD) 2004-2014 and the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development.

The ASEAN Policy Blueprint for SME Development for SME Development (APBSD) 2004-2014 aims to accelerate the pace of SME development and enhance the competitiveness and dynamism of ASEAN SMEs by facilitating their access to information, market, human resource development and skills, finance, and technology (Rafaelita 2013). The APBSD 2004-2014 is summarised in table 4.2:

Table 4.2: ASEAN Policy Blueprint for SME Development

Program Activities	Area	Program Area Activities
Human Resource Development and Capacity Building		Entrepreneurship development program Enhancing SME sector skills in management & organisation on a self-reliant basis Fostering SME capabilities for inter-firm networking & linkages Tracking & benchmarking SME capabilities, dynamism & competitiveness
Enhancing Marketing Capabilities	SME	Setting up regional & sub regional networks of interlinked, online clearing points or trading houses for SME businesses -Enhancing SME capabilities in & reliance on ICT & e-commerce -Tracking & benchmarking SME readiness as subcontractors & compliance to non-negotiable subcontracting preconditions or compliance requirements on the demand side
Access to Financing		Capacity building for improved SME access to financing -Financial institutional capacity building for improved SME financing -Widening & deepening SME access to credit
Access to Technology		Small and medium enterprises technology upgrading & transfer of innovative technologies
Creating Conducive Environment		Simplification, streamlining & rationalisation of procedures for SME registration & process for SME support services -Fine-tune policy & regulatory framework for SME development -Promotion of public-private synergies & partnerships for SME development & integration

Source Aldaba, (2013)

Building on the progressive work under the APBSD, the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development aims to further enhance the competitiveness and flexibility of SMEs in moving towards a single market and production base in ASEAN (Rafaelita 2013). The key policy measures and activities are summarised in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development

Programme area	Program area Activities
Facilitation	Small and medium enterprises financial facility in each member country - Feasibility study of SME credit systems for enhancing SME access to bank lending and loan guarantee in ASEAN -Regional SME Development Fund
Facilitation	on -Multi-media self-reliant system toolkit package -Technology transfers and licensing within SME sector through dissemination of concrete good practices -Hyperlink national SME Portals - Small and medium enterprises service center with regional and sub-regional linkages in AMSs -Dissemination of information on regional & international opportunities in trade & investment to SMEs
Technology Development	-Sharing of information on technology availability for SMEs in AMSs -Developing key performance indicators (KPIs) on SME Innovation -Development of technology incubators to nurture & support techno-entrepreneurs from infancy to take-off & commercialisation stages
Promotion	-Identification of top 1000 ASEAN SMEs -ASEAN SME Innovation Awards -Promoting ASEAN SMEs to the international market -Dissemination of information on SMEs trade fairs & festivals & facilitate SMEs' participation in these events
Human Resource Development	-Common curriculum for entrepreneurship in ASEAN -Regional program for promotion of internship scheme for staff exchanges & visits for skills trainings

Source: Aldaba, (2013)

Zimbabwe can adopt the ASEAN countries strategy and refine it so that it is applicable to the Zimbabwean environment. Zimbabwe needs to develop a strategic framework that can accelerate the production of goods labelled “Made in Zimbabwe” that will not only be enjoyed

by the indigenous people but by the rest of Africa and beyond. Zimbabwe has an excellent Education system that can be used a springboard for a successful investment into the new economic dispensation for the country.

4.4.4 The BRICS and SME support

The BRICS denomination was originally used to connect the dynamic emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa as continental countries bearing a strategic position in the continents of the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Africa (Arroio and Scerri, 2014). Moreover, it is the recent performance of these economies and their macroeconomic indicators that make them more and more the focus of surveillance and analysis. IMF (2011) states that the BRICS countries display a growing economic importance. In 2000, the five countries accounted for 17.1% of the world Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in public–private partnership (PPP). The support of SMEs by the BRICS is a symbol of success for the bloc and India and Japan will provide evidence of the value of the support of the governments in order to improve the performance of SMEs.

4.4.4.1 Brazilian Government SME support

The Brazilian experience brings to the fore the importance of national policies to orient, regulate and support SME performance. Arroio (2014) states that in Brazil, the policy approach prioritising the collective treatment of SMEs from 2003 has led to the development of an interesting array of instruments to improve access to credit. As regards the collective treatment of SMEs, perhaps the most innovative conceptual and policy making approach is provided by the Local Production System (LPS) perspective adopted in Brazil since 2004 (Arroio 2014). The LPS approach that provides a policy framework which seeks to foster sustainable and coordinated development at national, regional and local levels. LPS refers to any productive agglomeration involving economic, political and social agents localised in the same area, performing related economic activities and presenting consistent articulation, interaction, co-operation, and learning processes. Important lessons have been gained from the Brazilian experience in implementing policies based on this collective approach.

Brazil provides an interesting case study because the Brazilian SME support service (SEBRAE) which extensive system to provide business assistance to SMEs (Aces, 2008). SEBRAE provided

US\$ 1.1 billion financial support for SMEs in 2007 and the SME sector employs the majority of the labour force in Brazil (Cravo et al., 2014). The Innovation funds, equity financing and venture capital are most commonly used to promote technological development of SMEs, BNDES (2011) state that the venture capital market in Brazil is the result of state supported operations and the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) is at the forefront of the venture capital promotion. The main public and private banking institutions participate in the Working Group on Local Productive Systems and have implemented specific credit (Arroio 2014).

4.4.4.2 Russian government SME support

The Russian government has made great strides in supporting the SMEs which were being overshadowed by the well-developed enterprises which were efficiently operating and had a culture of producing quality goods in large quantities. In its support for SMEs, the Russian government introduced the “Opora Russia”, the organisation aimed at the support of SMEs (Tsukanova, 2019). The concept was established in order to improve the performance of SMEs so that they can support the economic development of the country.

In line with its efforts to improve the performance of SMEs, the Russian government introduced the tax relief benefit scheme for SME operators. The introduced steps related to tax preferences for SMEs (e.g. the exemption from 18% VAT for exported goods) or simplification measures were undertaken by Russian government to incentivise SNE operators (Tsukanova, 2019). According to the Russian Public Opinion Research Centre (2016) there has been an increase in the number of entrepreneurs who have taken up start-up plans to be involved in SME business activities. This is an indication of the effective infrastructure created to support entrepreneurship in Russia. The support given by the Russian government has positively influenced the performance of SMEs which are steadily increasing their contribution to the country's economy.

4.4.4.3 Indian government SME support

The Indian government has been very supportive in providing resources to the SMEs and this has assisted the small businesses to develop. The government supplied the funds for SME development, assisted in SME trainings and encouraged the use of renewable sources of energy in the rural areas to support the poor. Miglani (2019) stated that in the 1980s, the

Indian government-funded training programs and cluster building also led to changes in supplier relations, enabling vendor development and effective supply chain management and more liberal import policies were introduced in 1986 when importers of capital equipment were allotted about 50% increase in their foreign exchange quota.

An initiative specifically targeting the SMEs in the manufacturing sector was set up and National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project (NATRIP) under the Automotive Mission Plan 2006–2016 (AMP, 2016), costing US\$ 388.5 million was established to enable the industry achieve parity with global standards. The NATRIP project, initiated in 2005, was set up to enable the industry to adopt and implement global performance standards and provide low- cost manufacturing and product development solutions (Miglani, 2019).

The government provided the funds for research and development (R&D). Miglani (2019) states that the concept of upgrading the SMEs involved the capacity of firms to make better products, more efficiently, and move into more skilled activities and the government has been encouraging R&D in this sector by offering tax cuts on such expenditure. The NATRIP project, initiated in 2005, was set up to enable the industry to adopt and implement global performance standards and provide low- cost manufacturing and product development solutions (Ray, Saon, and Miglani, 2018). Among Indian companies, M&M and Ashok Leyland have made significant investment in R&D centers and technology development and testing centers and have ventured abroad (Brighton et al, 2005). Agarwal (2019) provided the following Indigenous Structures to finance Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India

- Chit Fund
- National Industrial Development Bank of India (NIDBI)
- Micro-Financing
- Small Industry Development Bank of India (SIDBI)
- Grameen Banks
- Cooperative Banks (similar to Fund Banks in US / Europe)
- Invest India Start-Up Initiative
- Pradhan Mantri Mudra Loan Yojana (PMMY) Scheme

- Examples – Lijjat Papar, White Revolution (Dairy Milk & Amul)

4.4.4.4 Chinese government SME support

China has employed institutional changes that are intended to spur entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial finance and one such example is the creation of the Growth Enterprise Market (GEM) board in 2009 in China. It provides a public trading platform for the shares of China's high-growth, high-volatility ventures that are not yet qualified for the main board in Shanghai or Shenzhen. Zhang (2005, 2007) reveals that the implicit deposit insurance system (IDIS) is a key component of Chinese specialty in the banking industry which enables Chinese banks of different types to attract voluminous deposit from the households, and these savings are in turn used by the state to finance the national economic development of which the SMEs are at the heart of the Chinese economic development.

Since 1992, the Chinese government focused mainly on enhancing the overall quality and competitiveness of the domestic SME sector (Chen, 2006). In this endeavour, the Ministry of Finance's innovation fund for technology-based SMEs supports and encourages technological innovations since 1999. The financial and credit policies that were established proactively supported the SMEs and there was high performance of SMEs which made huge contributions to the country's GDP. According to the World Bank, China contributed 0.5 % points to global economic growth of 3.9% in 2006 and during this period China was already the world's fourth largest, after the United States, Japan and Germany, with a total GDP of 2,720 billion economies (Aguilar, 2015).

4.4.4.5 SME support of the South African government

The B-BEE is the fundamental policy for the development of SMEs in South Africa. In terms of B-BEE, one of its primary objectives is to improve SMEs' access to finance (DTI, 2007). These sentiments were supported by Juggernath (2013), who stated that B-BBEE creates provisions for SMEs to access finance. In view of these two citations it implies that the government had a great vision of empowering the local people through the financial resources which are a major component for the running a business. SMEs were viewed by the government as a source of employment as stated by Rust (2006) that to combat increasing unemployment the

creation and support of SMEs is needed and it is very evident that for B-BEE to succeed in South Africa a full support of small businesses has to be implemented.

Another aspect of resources that the B-BEE policy focused on was human resource and skills development for the SME owners and operators. This meant that the research and development was considered as a main policy item for the development of SMEs. The government would provide a variety of courses to equip the SME operators including the technical training, financial management training, strategic planning and marketing. The trainings would empower the indigenous people and would professionally run their organisations.

4.4.4.6 The expansion of BRICS intervention other emerging markets like Zimbabwe

There are a number of acronyms and groupings of emerging markets that have been developed, each trying to best represent the rise of other emerging countries along with the BRICS. The “Next 11” (Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, South Korea, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Turkey and Vietnam) is a regionally broad group of countries selected on the basis of their large populations that could potentially have a BRIC-like impact (Wilson and Stupnytska, 2007). The MIST (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey), grouped other large emerging markets apart from the BRICS that are more than one percent of global GDP, the EAGLES (Emerging and Growth-Leading Economies) which included South Korea, Indonesia, Mexico, Turkey, Egypt and put together large, fast-growing emerging markets to represent the countries that were expected to contribute most to the global growth Taiwan (Cardenas, et al., 2011). The CIVETS (Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa) were grouped together especially in order to represent large young populations and emerging markets (Mottet, 2013). However, all these classifications of emerging economies are problematic because they are outdated very quickly and do not reflect the diversity and differences within the groups of countries since their development is always evolving and changing hence the BRICS grouping has been regarded as a symbol of a changing world economy that has captured a remarkable transition in the global economy (Gu et al., 2016).

The BRICS grouping is one of the most recent economic groupings of nations representing different continents of the world, in terms of size, BRICS is the most substantial economic

integration of emerging markets of the world (Saji, 2019). The BRICS economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) generated almost 23 % of the world's GDP in 2015 and contributed over half of global economic growth since the group began its dialogue in 2006 (BRICS, 2017). The countries have a large population (almost half of the world population) and vast territories and these economies contribute around one-fourth of world GDP (Saji, 2019). Sergunin, (2020) reaffirms that the BRICS grouping is viewed in the academic community in two different ways:

- a) a revisionist force seeking to overthrow the existing international system, create an alternative world order, challenge the established Western powers and substitute the key financial institutions with new ones;
- b) a group of major emerging economies searching for ways and plausible options to expand their currently limited capacity to set the agenda on a global scale, influence the decision-making process and promote changes in the international financial and economic architecture that will create a more favourable international environment for the development of the emerging and developing countries.

Within the development domain BRICS has prioritised three central issues: cooperation for progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), support to infrastructure development in Africa and its industrialisation within the framework of NEPAD, and mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS countries and other emerging economies and developing countries (Chenoy et al., 2016). The BRICS Durban Summit of 2012 agreed that the BRICS Multilateral Infrastructure Co-Financing Agreement for Africa should promote co-financing arrangements for infrastructure projects across the continent (BRICS, 2012). South Africa is both a recipient of energy and renewable energy investment under the BRICS programme. With well-developed energy investment climate provisions such as the Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (IPPPP), national and international public and private investment has flowed in (Renwick et al., 2018). In addition, the country is also actively engaged in the promotion of energy cooperation and renewable energy across Sub-Saharan Africa and the wider continent, synchronising policy and practical initiatives such as the Southern African Power Pool (IRENA, 2013). South African

government is now exporting power to the neighbouring countries and Zimbabwe is a major beneficiary of the project.

The Indian Government policy is committed to expanding and intensifying its relationship with Africa as is the Indian private sector, this includes further cooperation on renewable energy as Africa increases its participation in the India-led solar organisation, International Solar Alliance, underpinned by a US\$2 billion line of credit for African solar development from India (Times of India, 2018). China has increased its trading partnership with African states. China's trade with Africa amounts to more than US\$220 billion a year, and there are more than 3000 Chinese companies working in Africa, ranging from large state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to small and medium private enterprises (Gu et al., 2016). China is the fourth biggest investor in Africa, while India is the fifth largest investor (Chaudhury, 2015).

4.4.5 The African states and SME support

The success story of the SMEs in Africa is as a result of the government commitment to the performance of SMEs. The African economic powerhouses, Nigeria and South Africa for example have invested huge financial resources in the SME sector and positive results have been achieved. The success story of the government's SME policies lies in the effort of the African states to provide financial support to the SMEs and to be able to make follow up programmes on the SMEs and give the operators technical assistance so that they are on track of their mandate and to remain competent at all times.

4.4.5.1 Nigerian government SME support

Nigeria placed more emphasis on the financial support given to the SMEs. In recognition of the crucial roles played by SMEs with respect to economic growth and development, succeeding governments in Nigeria had various initiatives aimed at promoting the welfare of SMEs in the country (Ifekwem, 2019). The most tangible among the different incentive packages that varied with almost every change in government leadership was the focus on enhancing the financial opportunities for the SMEs with the aims of increasing credit facilities to the SMEs (Omorogbe 2011). Some of the support institutions and opportunities created by the government to enable SMEs access funding in the past 30 years include the following:

- Mandatory Credit Guideline in respect of SMEs (1970)

- Small Scale Industries Credit Guarantee Scheme (1971)
- Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (1973)
- Nigeria Agriculture and Co-operative Bank (1973)
- Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry (1973)
- Rural Banking Scheme (1977)
- The World Bank Assisted SME I (1985) and The World Bank Assisted SME II (1990) Second – Tier Security Market (1985)
- Peoples Bank (1989)
- National Economic Reconstruction Fund (1992)
- Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Loan Scheme (1992)
- Family Economic Advancement Programme (1997)
- African Development Bank – Export Stimulation Loan Scheme (ADB-ESL) in 1988
- Bank of Industry (BOI) - being merger of NIDB, NBCI and NERFUND) in 2001
- Nigerian Agricultural Co-operative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB) - being merger of NACB, Peoples Bank and Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) in 2002
- Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) in 2004.
- Microfinance banks
- Small and Medium Enterprises Credit Guarantee Scheme for SMEs 2010

The above stated programmes were designed to provide support to the SMEs in Nigeria. This accounts for the government's commitment to its SME policies and the government actions proved to be the source of the success of the SME sector in Nigeria.

4.4.5.2 Botswana government SME support

The government of Botswana has over the years implemented a number of financial assistance programs to provide support for SMEs as well as encourage entrepreneurship and the policy of financing SMEs began in 1982 with the establishment of the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) (AFDB/OECD, 2005). The main objective of this policy was to stimulate investment in sustainable economic activities, to further support enterprise development (Khanie, 2018)

The Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) in 2001 was introduced after the introduction of the Small Medium Micro Enterprise (SMME) Policy. The goal of CEDA is to provide loans to businesses at subsidised interest rates and in addition, government funding schemes such as the Youth Development Fund and the Women Economic Empowerment Programme were established to provide finance to among others, small and medium enterprises (Khanie, 2018). Other institutions such as the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) were also launched to promote entrepreneurship and businesses development through training and mentorship (LEA, 2009).

4.4.5.3 Zimbabwean government SME support

The government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Industry and International Trade, and in conjunction with the Ministry of Youth Development, Gender and Employment Creation established a Policy Document for the support of Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs). In 1983, the government of Zimbabwe, through an Act of Parliament, chapter 24:12, established the Small Enterprises Development Corporation (SEDCO), a leading development finance institution for the promotion and development of SMEs in the country (SEDCO, 2016). SEDCO is a parastatal which falls under the Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development (MMSMECD). The Corporation has six branches across the country and SEDCO offers basic support to SMEs which include various training to help SMEs develop, start up and achieve professional management of their businesses. According to SEDCO (2016) the Corporation offers training to all SME's at all the branches countrywide, and vital capacity building trainings have been offered to numerous SME's and have helped them to improve the management of their businesses. However, these efforts have failed to improve the performance of SMEs.

Various government support programmes have been put in place for the SME sector. These programmes are supported by institutions such as the Small Enterprise Development Corporation (SEDCO), Zimbabwe Development Bank, Credit Guarantee Company of Zimbabwe, Agricultural Development Bank (Agribank), and the Venture Capital Company of Zimbabwe, however, this support has been piecemeal and uncoordinated (Nyoni, 2002:3-4). In Zimbabwe, access to capital is one of the most prominent obstacles to the start – up of new businesses SMEs in Zimbabwe frequently lack adequate collateral and legal status and are

continuously exposed to shocks that have always characterised the Zimbabwean economy, especially during the reign of the former President Mr Mugabe (Nyoni and Bonga, 2018).

Small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe are operating in a policy environment that is saturated with a huge lack of resources. Small and medium enterprises are unable to identify sources of technology appropriate to their specific activities and the Scientific Industrial Research and Development Centre (SIRDC) and the Centre for Innovation and Enterprise Development need to strengthen their programmes to assist SMEs (Magaisa and Matipira, 2019). The SME sector in Zimbabwe is, furthermore, experiencing problems such as a lack of appropriate management skills to run their business entities, access to loans, inhibiting legal frameworks, access to markets, quality products and registration bureaucracy (Masuko and Marufu, 2003:29). Small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe lack the necessary human resources skills, marketing skills, financial management skills and general management skills to ensure the continued survival of the sector in the country. Insufficient management skills therefore have a negative effect on the growth of the SME sector in Zimbabwe (Zindiye et al, 2012). The related literature revealed that there is a great need for Zimbabwe to re-think about its support to SMEs performance and come up with a home grown policy framework that is resource oriented which is the main objective of this study.

4.4.5.4 Malawian government SME support

The government of Malawi has continued to provide financial assistance to the SMEs. The continued search for more affordable financing platforms that cater for the needs of SMEs at varying levels of development and capital requirements has led to the emergency of platforms that enables non-bank institutions, entities and individuals to provide direct lending to firms and individuals alike (Zidana 2016). According to the Reserve Bank of Malawi, Financial Supervision Annual Report (2015) banks are the most important source of external finance for the SME sector especially business loans and overdrafts. These efforts has seen more SMEs being registered and have contributed to the economy of the country.

The support of the SMEs in Malawi was further stated by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism Henry Mussa, as reported in the Africa Report (2018), “Again, if the youths need additional money to expand their businesses, government will provide them with soft loans.

All in all, we are there for them because they have shown that they are important since most of them employ other people”. These sentiments show the government’s commitment to the development of the SMEs through the engagement of the youths.

4.4.5.5 Ghanaian government SME support

The government established the environment for the operation of civic groups to support the SMEs. Support programs from external bodies such as Austrian Import Program, (1990), Japanese Non-Project Grants, (1987-2000) and Canadian Structural Adjustment Fund and Support for Public Expenditure Reforms have been involved in SME financing in Ghana (Domeher et al, 2017). The establishment of the microfinance and small loans center by government in 2006 sought to promote SMEs by implementing government microfinance programs that will provide small loans and business advisory and training services to SMEs (Domeher et al, 2017). The support of SMEs from both the government and non-governmental organisations improved the performance of SMEs and the support accounted for the development of the SME sector.

The Ghana Industrial Policy Document which was set within the context of Ghana’s long-term strategic vision of achieving middle-income status by 2020, through transformation into an industry-driven economy capable of delivering decent jobs, provides some detailed strategic action plans for SMEs (Government of Ghana (GOG), 2016). Domeher et al, (2017) echoed the same sentiments by stating that the Government of Ghana has a strategy to promote SME growth as part of the overall economic development agenda and has played a significant role in financing SMEs through various support programs such as direct lending schemes and credit guarantee programmes. The government illustrated a great support to the performance of the SME sector.

4.4.5.6 SME support of the Kenya government

The Kenya Government has placed the SME performance as a high priority for its economic development. GOK (2007) states that SMEs are central in national development strategies aimed at stirring up economic activity, reducing unemployment and poverty and a competitive SME sector is mandatory if the country is to and attain vision 2030. Some of the programmes implemented to improve the performance of SMEs included the provision for

training, the creation of an enabling environment, improvement of the necessary infrastructure, provision of extension services, establishment of rural business centers for information dissemination and research (Osoro and Muturi (2013)). The Kenya Government's support of SMEs has paid the dividends as indicated by the SMEs sector contribution on the country's GDP.

Besides the commercial banks, the donor communities, private sector organisations and the government have continually provided financial and technical support to small and medium enterprises. In addition, a number of related efforts and support growth have been directed towards this sector to enable it to create job opportunities, which will improve the overall economy and assist in poverty reduction (GoK, 2008). The Kenya Government has a special plan to support the SMEs through the bank loan facilities. The commercial banks in Kenya have special products for SMEs, in most cases offered along with other normal banking facilities for Cooperative bank of Kenya its financial support ranges between KES 15,000 (US\$ 208) to KES 300,000 (US\$ 4, 110) repayable in six months Mwobobia (2013).

4.4.5.7 Collaborative role of the public and private sector

Businesses operations do not function in isolation but they interact with both the public and private sector and the collaboration of the two sectors determine the success of organisations. Morgan (2006, 21) state that "collaboration occurs over time as organisations interact formally and informally through repetitive sequences of negotiation, development of commitments, and execution of those commitments". Collaboration leads to the formation of relationships and cooperation between firms. Hanna and Walsh (2008) found that the motivation of small firms to develop relationships is related to overcoming resource constraints. Firms may collaborate with customers, suppliers, service providers and competitors in the private sector, as well as with customers, actors in research and development and universities in the public sector (Reijonen, et al., 2018). The author did a research on the relationship between the public sector and the private sector and found out the collaboration can produce the following nine positive attribute:

- "brought a product/service that is new to the market"
- "improved the production process of an existing product/service,"
- "developed a new feature for an existing product/service",

- “developed a new usage of an existing product/service”,
- “reorganised relationships with other firms and/or private/public sector actors”,
- “shared information and experiences”,
- “developed marketing and distribution channels”,
- “developed technology” and
- “collaborated in public procurement.”

Studies have shown further that inter-organisational collaboration with a variety of partners improves innovative performance (Soosay et al., 2008). Soosay et al. (2008) revealed that SMEs collaborate with their customers and suppliers in various ways ranging from knowledge and information sharing to making joint investments, and that these activities support continuous innovation. Ansu et al. (2016) states that successful public–private collaboration depends crucially on three factors: The ability to effectively coordinate the government position through one agency with sufficient power; the achievement of sufficient embeddedness of public agencies in the realities of the private sector through formal and informal linkages; and the credibility of the organisations enabling the private sector to speak with one voice.

The collaboration of private and public partners leads to a coordinated networking system. According to Moore (2009: 191 “the concept of networked government includes effective coordination across government organisations and the integration of both for profit and non-profit sector organisations into production systems designed to achieve public purposes” The most successful models of public–private collaboration in Asia have been based on the collaboration of public and private sector relying on well-established trust (the head of the JEC was a former politician, whereas the private sector was represented on the board of directors of the parastatals) (Rojid, et al., 2010). This facilitated key initiative for economic transformation such as the setting up of an export processing zone, the building of the first hotels, renegotiation of the sugar protocol, the creation of a national airline and the establishment of a stock exchange (Rojid 2010; Treebhohun, and Jutliah 2014).

Firms collaborate with customers, suppliers, service providers and competitors in the private sector, as well as with customers, actors in research and development and universities in the

public sector (Nieto and Santamaria, 2007; Zeng et al., 2010). Even though the establishment of successful collaborations is a challenge Ansu et al. (2016) explained that despite the difficulties in establishing effective public–private collaboration, much can be done by putting in place a strong agency that effectively coordinates the government position; ensuring public agencies develop formal and informal networks and information-sharing platforms with the private sector; and incentivising collective action in the private sector. The coordinated approach will yield positive results in policy making, information dissemination and implementation of government policies across the nation.

4.5 The attributes of an effective SME strategic framework

An effective SME strategic framework is designed to assist on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes that aim to improve the performance of SMEs. There are a number of strategic frameworks that have been designed by a number of governments, stakeholders and international organisations and have been successfully implemented to improve the performance of SMEs and other organisations. Examples have been drawn from the European Union, Asian countries, BRICS and some African states.

4.5.1 Goal Programming model

Agarwal, Yadav and Iyer (2010) Goal Programming model is identified as multi-criteria technique providing satisfying solutions that overcomes the deficiency of the single objective framework using accounting proxies for multiple objective framework. The steps involved in the development of a firm strategic framework for decision making is outlined as follows:

- Management participation;
- Analysis of objectives, goals and policies using accounting proxies;
- Formulation of a goal programming model;
- Testing the model and solution and
- Final implementation of the solution.

Agarwal (2018) states that the Goal Programming strategic framework for multi-objective capital structure decision using accounting proxies has been tested on an Indian Agricultural Firm and the framework supports the fulfilment of multiple objectives and constraints simultaneously. The model may prove to be highly beneficial for firms in achieving an

optimum or satisfying practical solution to capital structure decisions incorporating multiple goals in a systematic and scientific way in today's complex and dynamic business world with accounting information (Agarwal, Yadav and Iyer 2010).

4.5.2 EU Green Action Plan for SMEs

An example of good practice of a strategic framework is the Green Action Plan for SMEs that was crafted by the European Commission. The European Union adopted a Green Action Plan (GAP) for SMEs in 2014, with the goal of helping SMEs to improve their green performance and take advantage of opportunities presented by the global transition to a greener economy (European Commission, 2017). Its objectives and actions are grouped in five thematic areas:

1. **Greening SMEs for more competitiveness and sustainability.** Actions to help SMEs reduce production costs and increase productivity through better resource efficiency, supported by information, advice, access to finance and technology transfer mechanisms.
2. **Green entrepreneurship for the companies of the future.** Support for SMEs in accessing opportunities in the environmental goods and services market through the development of eco-innovation clusters and the facilitation of business partnering for skills and knowledge exchange.
3. **Opportunities for SMEs in a greener value chain.** Support for SMEs in entering circular economy activities such as re-manufacturing, repair, maintenance, recycling and eco-design by addressing value chain barriers, promoting collaboration and promoting new business models based on efficiency and the reuse of materials and/or waste.
4. **Access to new markets for green SMEs.** Growth-supporting actions to help SMEs access new markets by promoting a greener internal market, enabling access to international markets and facilitating green technology uptake in partner countries.
5. **Governance.** Monitoring and evaluation, co-ordination between EU member states and SME stakeholders, and consultations on SME policy developments.

With its holistic approach to supporting the greening of SMEs, the Green Action Plan demonstrates the benefits of co-ordinating action to reduce duplication and enhance impact and the approach could also be replicated at the national level and in other nations (European Commission, 2017). The Green Action Plan is expected to raise awareness among SMEs of

the benefits of resource efficiency, the improved productivity and competitiveness stemming from the circular economy and the existence of a range of resource efficiency actions that can be accessed under different EU programmes (European Commission, 2017)

4.5.3 The Guanxi Chinese SME strategic framework

The rapidly developing Chinese SMEs, especially the privately owned enterprises, are currently the dynamic facet of the Chinese economy and are a product of a strategic framework that targets high performance of SMEs. By the mid-2000s, private SMEs had become the backbone of the local economy in some areas and/or regions and since 1992, the Chinese government focused mainly on enhancing the overall quality and competitiveness of the domestic SME sector (Chen, 2006). Today's SMEs are benefactors of these developments. One of the important reasons for the growth of Chinese SMEs is the implementation of a strategy, which encouraged SMEs to develop according to their unique nature and circumstances (Li, 2004).

Guanxi is the essence of the Chinese approach to business and is defined as the “existence of direct particularistic ties between one or more individuals” (Tsui and Farh, 2007). It is evident that guanxi relationships play major roles in the success of the development of local SMEs in China (Clegg et al., 2007). The following attributes were the main drivers of the Chinese SMEs strategic framework:

- Chinese dependency on this particular form of social capital means that internal management processes tend to be more flexible and dynamic compared to similar processes in the West, where the emphasis is on formal, explicit and information-loaded procedures (Gibb, 2006).
- The minimisation of transaction costs via informal relationship development is characteristic of the Chinese system. Connections between firms are highly personalised and fluid (Castells, 2000). In the start-up period, most of the town and village enterprises (TVEs) under observation aimed to create capabilities to minimise costs (Li et al., 2006).
- Their strategic intent was to develop cost minimisation capabilities rather than make short-term profits. Such capabilities to minimise costs help enterprises of this type

survive the competition from well-established international joint ventures and the Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) Chen (2006),

- In addition to the inherent low-cost advantages of SMEs generally, TVEs endeavoured to reduce further their operation costs by sourcing cheap materials, simplifying production processes and duplicating Western product designs. Most TVEs under observation produced no-brand products with cheap materials and competed on price rather than quality Chen, (2006).

4.5.4 Nigerian SME strategic framework

Osinbajo, (2015) laments that Nigerian economy faced by serious challenges due to negligence in SMEs sector for over four decades and the government and its stakeholders came up with a strategic framework to improve the performance of the SMEs. The following points were included in the strategic plan that was going to be implemented:

- An affirmative action to overcome the challenges (Wakili, 2016)
- Government commitment to diversify more on SMEs,
- the President of Nigeria reaffirmed at the 2016 Economic Summit Retreat in Abuja, Nigeria that more incentives to SMEs so as to prove themselves capable of manufacturing quality products good enough for export (Sotubo, 2016)
- The Federal government of Nigeria announced the reduction of taxes for SMEs to thrive and promote inclusive economic growth (Wakili, 2016).
- The Nigerian government through the Nigerian Customs Services banned the importation of goods that can be sourced and produced in Nigeria. This policy aims at encouraging the indigenous SMEs to strengthen their market potentials which will subsequently improve their productivity and performance (Omonobi and Bivbere, 2016)
- Consequently, the government of Nigeria resolves to engage more with SMEs and entrepreneurial activities towards ensuring viable economic development and wealth creation by supporting the sector (Osinbajo, 2015).

In view of the Nigerian government's commitment to improve the performance of the SMEs, a lot of positive results were recorded as stated by Okeke, Onuorah and Jakpa, (2016) that according to available statistics, SMEs provide gainful employment for about 90% of the

Nigerian population therefore, a well-developed and supported SME strategic framework will yield positive results.

4.5.5 Ghanaian industrial policy framework

Newman et al., (2016) alludes that in Ghana with respect to the industrial policy framework, the policy thrust of the external trade sector within the framework of trade liberalisation is to use trade policy to promote the international competitiveness of domestic enterprises; improve export competitiveness of such enterprises; diversify markets and increase exports; and accelerate economic integration with other regional and/or sub-regional countries/states. The industrial policy framework focused on the following major trade policy initiatives as the main guidelines for the implementation plan:

1. Maintaining competitive real exchange rates;
2. Improving the import/export regime;
3. Establishment of the Ghana Competition Commission to deal with unfair international trade practices;
4. Establishment of a National Agency for the Protection of Consumers;
5. Promoting new goods and services;
6. Taking full advantage of Preferential Access to markets such as Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), European Union-African Caribbean and Pacific (EU-ACP), and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) sub-regional trading blocs;
7. Engaging fully in multilateral trade negotiations;
8. Strengthening links between industrial and trade policies.

4.5.6 The National System of Innovation (NSI)

The central focus of the BRICs economic policies is rooted in the National System of Innovation (NSI) with a key focus on the innovation system, analysing on the role played by the state, the financing, direct investment and the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) performance (Arroio and Scerri 2014). Arroio and Scerri (2014) postulates that the NSI takes into account not only the role of firms, education and research organisations and science and technology institution (STI) policies, but includes government policies as a whole, financing organisations, and other actors and elements that influence the acquisition, use and diffusion of innovations. The emphasis is also put on the role of historical processes — which account

for differences in socioeconomic capabilities and for different development trajectories and institutional evolution — creating SI with very specific local features and dynamics and as a result, a national character of SI is justified.

According to Cassiolato and Lastres (2008), the broad perspective of NSI includes different, connecting sub-systems that are influenced by various contexts which include geopolitical, institutional, macroeconomic, social, cultural aspects and describes the three sub systems of the NSI as follows: The first sub system is the production and innovation sub-system which contemplates the structure of economic activities, their sectoral distribution, degree of informality and spatial and size distribution, the level and quality of employment, the type and quality of innovative effort. Second, there is a sub-system of science and technology which includes education (basic, technical, undergraduate, and postgraduate), research, training, and other elements of the scientific and technological infrastructure such as information, metrology, consulting, and intellectual property. Third, there is a policy, promotion, financing, representation, and regulation sub-system that encompasses the different forms of public and private policies both explicitly geared towards innovation or implicitly, that is, those that although not necessarily geared towards it, affect strategies for innovation. Finally, there is the role of demand, which most of the time is surprisingly absent from most analyses of SI. This dimension includes patterns of income distribution, structure of consumption, social organisation and social demand (basic infrastructure, health, education).

Arroio and Scerri (2014) acknowledges that the context of the national innovation system framework is built around the following school of thought and an understanding that:

- Innovation capacity derives from the confluence of economic, social, political, institutional, and culture-specific factors and from the environment in which they operate, implying the need for an analytical framework broader than that offered by traditional economics (Freeman 1982, 1987; Lundvall 1988);
- The number of firms or organisations such as teaching, training and research institutes is far less important than the habits and practices of such actors with respect to learning, linkage formation and investment. These shape the nature and

extensiveness of their interactions and their propensity to innovate (Mytelka 2000; Johnson and Lundvall 2003);

- Main elements of knowledge are embodied in minds and bodies of agents or embedded in routines of firms and in relationships between firms and organisations. Therefore, they are localised and not easily transferred from one place/context to another, for knowledge is something more than information and includes tacit elements (Lundvall 1988);
- The focus on interactive learning and on the localised nature of the generation, assimilation and diffusion of innovation implies that the acquisition of foreign technology abroad is not a substitute for local efforts (Cassiolato and Lastres 1999);
- National framework matters, as development trajectories contribute to shape specific systems of innovation. The diversity of NSIs is a product of different combinations of their main features that characterise their micro, meso and macroeconomic levels, as well as the articulations among these levels (Freeman 1987; Lastres 1994)

Arroio and Scerri (2014) argues that for the less developed countries (LDCs), the usefulness of the SI approach resides precisely in the two fundamental principles that (a) its central building blocks allow for their socio-economic and political specificities to be taken into account and (b) it does not ignore the power relations in discussing innovation and knowledge accumulation. It also takes into consideration their social, political and historical complexity, policy prescriptions are based on the assumption that the process of development is influenced by and reflects the particular environment of each country, rather than on recommendations derived from the reality of advanced countries (Cassiolato and Lastres 2008). It forms the foundation on which home grown strategic frameworks can be built and implemented emanating from the indigenous resources, ideas and locally produced innovative ideas. This study will borrow a lot of ideas from the FSI and develop a strategic framework for the Zimbabwean SMEs that will improve the performance of the SME sector.

4.5.7 The practical application impact of the SME strategic framework

The practical application impact of the SME strategic framework is based on the product transformation pipeline from upstream then the midstream down to the downstream and this completes the flow of goods and services. The upstream activities involve the suppliers,

logistics and procurement. The midstream involve the productivity or the conversion of raw materials into finished products. The final activities on the downstream include marketing, branding and other related activities.

The procurement process sets the beginning of the product transformation pipeline. All procurement activities are directed first and foremost to finding potential suppliers who meet to the greatest extent the requirements of manufacturing enterprises Korol and Yeliseyev, 2008). The procurement activity is specified and defined as the activity of an enterprise with competent suppliers for purchasing goods and proving services necessary to meet the effective demand of ultimate consumers of products, the success of which is based on building relations with suppliers that can ensure the improvement of the results of business activities, conditions and the expected effects of cooperation (Iastremska, 2018). In the present technological era, e-procurement is fast becoming popular and convenient for most businesses. E-procurement is understood as a technology designed to facilitate the acquisition of goods by a commercial or governmental organisation through the internet (Davila et al., 2003; Schoenherr and Tummala, 2007). The key factors influencing future procurement strategies include the list of alternative suppliers, the flexibility of supplies and contracts with suppliers. Therefore, these factors take into account the current situation characterised by the 30 risk of bankruptcy of many companies and the spectre of economic crisis (Kubiak, 2020).

Logistics and procurement activities are now considered as key important issues in terms of customer satisfaction. The logistics subsystem includes searching for and keeping reliable suppliers, negotiating terms of cooperation with them, their assessment, maintaining assumed stock levels, minimising stock costs, ensuring smooth flow of goods, cooperation and integration with other parts of the enterprise (Koliński, Małyszczek, and Trojanowska, 2016: 38). WebFinance, (2017) productivity is the measure of the efficiency of a person, system, or equipment in converting inputs to useful outputs hence it is the average measure of the efficiency of a production system. Stevenson, Operations Management, (2009) defined productivity as a summary measure of the quantity and quality of work performance with effective resource utilisation considered, which is expressed as the ratio of output to inputs. Productivity can be used as a measure of a manufacturing systems efficiency which leads to

increased competitive advantage (Levary, 1991). Teklemariam, (2004) states that productivity is linked with the utilisation of resources in the company and further states that productivity is considered as a measure of how organisations meet the following criteria:

- Objectives- to what degree do they achieve the organisation objectives
- Efficiency –how efficiently are organisation resources used to generate useful output
- Effectiveness –the achieved throughput compared to what is theoretically possible

The three main processes of entrepreneurship development process which are innovation, development of products, services or new processes and risk-taking as stated by Arila, (1996) are mainly conducted in the midstream. The horizontal and vertical linkages of the SMEs mostly occur at the midstream where the production of goods and services take place hence networking with all the stakeholders is very important. The development and application of the main entrepreneurship processes take place at this stage.

Marketing strategy research has always been driven by a fundamental desire to help marketing managers make better decisions (Reibstein et al. 2009; Varadarajan 2010). Using an appropriate marketing strategy is a critical element for business success and choosing an effective strategy requires knowledge of what various alternative marketing strategies exist and understanding how they work under varying environmental and organisational conditions. Varadarajan (2010: 119) elaborates the value of a marketing strategy in a business set up by stating that:

Marketing strategy is an organisation's integrated pattern of decisions that specify its crucial choices concerning products, markets, marketing activities and marketing resources in the creation, communication and/or delivery of products that offer value to customers in exchanges with the organisation and thereby enables the organisation to achieve specific objectives.

Morgan et al. (2019) state that the most important categories of marketing strategy are three fold which are: (i) inputs to marketing strategy including resources such as market knowledge, brand portfolios, financial resources, etc. and capabilities such as NPD, CRM, etc.; (ii) outputs of marketing strategy including customer "mind-set" and behaviour outcomes and marketplace and economic performance; and (iii) environmental factors distinct from

marketing strategy but that may impact marketing strategy phenomena and their relationships with other phenomena including internal factors such as organisational culture, size and external factors such as market characteristics, technology turbulence, competitive intensity, Other activities in this category include advertisement, warehousing, storage, distribution, retails and point of purchase.

It has to be noted that the product transformation pipeline from upstream through the midstream down to the last section of the downstream, the activities are interconnected and there is no break in between. The processes are interlinked and they relate to each other and effective organisation have well-coordinated flow of business procedures.

4.5.8 The pragmatic synthesis of the SME strategic framework

A framework consists of a set of simplified structures that are easy to understand and the organisations can adopt it systematically for effective implementation. (Yusof and Aspinwall, 2011). The synthesis of a strategic framework that is goal oriented emphasises the importance of the awareness of the community needs, identify lean drivers and barriers, identify appropriate tools, the involvement of all stakeholders, understand the entire supply chain activities to improve the performance matrices, and the benefits associated with participation in the implementation of the proposed strategic framework reward system for employees (Bhamu and Sangwan 2016). The pragmatic approach to the synthesis of a strategic framework prioritises the people who will execute the developed framework as the key players and they are the central point of consideration in the development of the strategic framework.

The development of a strategic framework in a business set up is fundamentally essential to allow the practitioners to clearly understand the critical elements and requirements needed for implementing the framework successfully (Jia Yuik and Puvanasvaran, 2020). Systematic literature review of the literature as stated by (Yusof and Aspinwall, 2000) proposes that a suitable strategic framework must satisfy the following set of characteristics criteria which are considered to be applicable to any situation to which the framework is focused on:

- (1) Systematic and easily understood
- (2) Simple in the structure
- (3) Having clear links between the elements or steps outlined

- (4) General enough to suit different contexts
- (5) Represent a road map and a planning tool for implementation
- (6) Answers “how to?” and not “what is?” the initiative approach
- (7) Implementable in all situations

Most of the developed strategic frameworks look solid and sound on paper but they lack the implementation plan and the monitoring of programmes. For example, Chin and Rafuse (2013), Gunasekaran and Lyu (2007) and Van Landeghem (2011) recommend that the implementation process of a strategic framework should start with training and educating all the stakeholders so that they are well informed of the intended goals of the framework. These sentiments were echoed by Mihaela (2020) who proposes that when developing a strategic framework for entrepreneurs, the practitioner’s journey begins with raising awareness, progressing to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset through training, enhancing entrepreneurial capacities in the implementation process, and finally to enhancing entrepreneurial effectiveness, which is performance related.

Overall, the established strategic framework, as stated by Chay (2013) should be understandable, has covered most of the critical elements required for implementation and is considered to be well incorporated into the monitoring and evaluation to suit the needs of the concept it is intended to address. These critical elements were cited by Jia Yuik and Puvanasvaran (2020) who elaborated that to validate a strategic framework, it should satisfy the following questions as guide lines for the evaluation process of the strategic framework:

- 1. Has the framework covered most of the essential LM implementation elements?
- 2. How understandable is this framework?
- 3. How feasible is this implementable framework for M&E SMEs?
- 4. Any comment on the features and/or drawbacks of this framework?
- 5. Suggestion for improvement (if any).

The practical guidelines in the synthesis of a strategic framework is hinged on the involvement and empowerment of the implementers who should be able to understand and adopt the strategic framework through simplified steps beginning with the broad goals of the strategic framework up to the monitoring and evaluation of strategic framework. Jia Yuik and

Puvanasvaran, 2020) proposed that the strategic framework synthesis is divided into four sequential stages which can be summarised as (1) Pre-implementation (Plan): lean problems identification and project planning (2) Implementation (Do): lean training and project implementation (3) Evaluation: Lean result (Check): lean result performance analysis and management review (4) Post Implementation (Act): continuous improvement and sustain a lean culture. These stages are sum up the process of developing s strategic framework. They provide the insight from which this study can tap from and develop a more practical strategic framework for Zimbabwe.

4.6 Conclusion

The performance of SMEs is determined by a number of factors that are interrelated and interdependent hence it is an outcome of a network of various inputs. The government policy provides the environment on which the SMEs operate and determines the future and sustainability of the small businesses. It is the responsibility of the government to nature its policies through the provision of the required resources of which access to finance by the SMEs is a key requirement of their success. The related literature has indicated that the success nations of the world like the USA and the European Union have thrived on sound SME policies. The Asian tigers and the BRICS are making huge investments in SMEs through sound financial support systems, training and skills development and full functioning research and development unit that support the SMES. A well-developed strategic framework provides the implementing guidelines and the National System of Innovation (NSI) which blends the socio-economic and political issues, power relations, innovation and knowledge and takes into consideration their social, political and historical complexity, policy prescriptions and reflects the particular environment of each country provides the template from which a viable strategic framework for the SMEs in Zimbabwe can be developed. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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5.3 Research Philosophy

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5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a critical review of the extended literature aligned to stated objectives of the study. This chapter discusses the research design and methodology that was adopted by this study, discussing the two research paradigms that were used in conjunction; a mixed methods approach in which both the qualitative and quantitative research designs were used and both positivism and the interpretivism were blended. This approach is supported by researchers who argue that paradigm differences are independent of, and hence, can be used in conjunction with one another in the service of addressing a question (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Morgan, 2007). The target population, sampling types and techniques and sample size are discussed. The data collection was done in two phases, and the instruments used in the research were interviews for the first phase and questionnaires for the second phase. Also discussed are the administration of questionnaires, reliability, validity and elimination of bias in the research and how they were handled. The ethical issues of the research methodology were observed and the researcher maintained a neutral position at all times during the research process. The methodology is broadly divided into four sections:

- Research paradigm and design
- Population, sampling and sample size
- Data Collection and Analysis
- Reliability, validity and confirmability

5.2 Research paradigm

The dominant research paradigms in social research studies that are considered as the foundation of research are critical thinking, positivism and interpretivist. The critical approach to social science emphasises the need to uncover hidden processes and structures within society and argues that it seeks to unearth multiple layers of social reality to reveal its true nature and thus facilitate transformation (Shiling, 2016). Hammersely (2013 :30) argues that critical researchers intentionally adopt ethical, moral, political standards to judge the situation and practice their research with a consideration of social, economic, political and cultural context for specific research's objects or events. Pham (2018) states that critical researchers should ensure strong self-awareness and understanding of the complexity of

social issues and nourish a vision that can benefit for a better way of teaching and learning. Thus, social scientists assume that it is possible to examine and explain the structure and meaning of social action. They argue that to detect the hidden structures in society, theoretical models need to be used. The critical paradigm was not suitable for this research as there were no hidden processes to be unearthed.

The term positivism was first coined by its founder, Auguste Comte, the French philosopher who believed that reality can be observed (Mack, 2010:6). This view is echoed by Rensburg (2010), who postulates that positivism is a systematic way of doing research that emphasises the importance of observable facts. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007:9) claim that, "Comte's position was to lead to a general doctrine of positivism which held that all genuine knowledge is based on sense experience and can be advanced only by means of observation and experiment." Rensburg (2010) also states that positivists argue that, since social phenomena exist in their own right, they are open to outside empirical observation; they believe that all knowledge is based on facts and therefore is a science of verification using the principle of generalising the findings from the sample which must be representative. According to Neuman (2003), cited in Tuli (2010:100), positivism sees social science as an organised method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity. Thus, positivists believe that different researchers observing the same factual problem will generate a similar result by carefully using statistical tests and applying a similar research process in investigating a large sample (Creswell, 2009 cited in Wahyuni, 2012:71). Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) further argue that positivism aims to provide explanations and to make predictions based on measurable outcomes, which means that the positivist researcher should be able to observe occurrences in the particular phenomenon they are studying, and be able to generalise about what can be expected elsewhere in the world. These beliefs have been pursued by quantitative researchers and have led to the use of the scientific method in social research. The positivist approach is quantitative because it seeks to test, prove and analyse data before generalising the findings. This research used the positivist paradigm in the second phase because it was most suitable, requiring observable facts which are quantifiable and can be analysed statistically through verification of government competence and support and the availability

of resources to establish the strategic solutions that Zimbabwe can implement in order to exploit the full potential of SMEs. To achieve this, the findings need to be generalisable.

Rensburg (2010) states that interpretivism is an approach to social science that emphasises the importance of insider viewpoints to understanding social realities. Creswell (2009) postulates that interpretivists argue that the purpose of research is to make social reality intelligible and that to reveal its inherent meaningfulness, actions need to be understood from within. Shilinge (2016) argues that there is no generalisation in the interpretivist approach, as researchers are interested in the context, believing that there are gaps in existing knowledge and glaring deficiencies in the literature. Interpretivism fills these gaps and deduces patterns of logic; it therefore moves from the general point of view to the specific (Rensburg, 2010). The view of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:21) best describes the role of the researcher in the interpretive paradigm. They assert that:

to retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated, efforts are made to get inside the person and to understand from within. The imposition of external form and structure is resisted, since this reflects the viewpoint of the observer as opposed to that of the actor directly involved.

Interpretivism is a qualitative research approach and it involves an in-depth understanding of social phenomena in order to interpret how the people concerned make meaning of their experiences (Addae and Quan-Baffour, 2015). Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) argue that interpretivists believe that researchers make meaning of their data through their own thinking and cognitive processing, informed by their interactions with participants; they and their subjects are engaged in interactive processes in which they intermingle, dialogue, question, listen, read, write and record research data. Rensburg (2004) shares the same sentiments when he argues that the interpretivist approach is qualitative because it involves interacting with people, speaking, interviewing people and making analysis as the conversation proceeds and it is not structured; the researchers make sense out of the discussions and develop the themes. Interpretivism was used in the first phase of the data collection process, which involved interaction with the respondents through interviews.

The research adopting both the positivism and interpretivist paradigms means the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study. Mixed methods research has been defined by Tashakkori and Creswell (2007:4) as that in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods in a single study programme. On the one hand, the quantitative research approach is described as a strategy that involves quantification in the collection and analysis of data; qualitative research approach, on the other, is seen as a research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2012:35). Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses and if they are blended together into a single study they complement each other.

Mixed methods research presents the researcher with many advantages and benefits. Venkatesh et al. (2013), cited in Caruth (2013:113) postulate the following seven benefits:

- Complementarity, which obtains mutual viewpoints about similar experiences or associations. The use of different methods from both the quantitative and qualitative divides enables the researcher to obtain various viewpoints which augments information elicited from either side.
- Completeness, which ensures that total representation of experiences or associations is attained.
- Developmentality, which builds questions from one method that materialise from the implications of a prior method; or one method presents hypotheses to be tested in a subsequent method.
- Expansion, which clarifies or elaborates on the knowledge gained from a prior method.
- Corroboration/Confirmation, which evaluates the trustworthiness of inferences gained from one method. This means that the findings obtained from quantitative data analysis can help to validate the qualitative findings.
- Compensation, which counters the weaknesses of one method by employing the other. The inherent weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research methods are adequately taken care of by either method.

- Diversity, which obtains opposing viewpoints of the same experiences or associations. Through the mixed methods research, the researcher is able to obtain different information from the different data collection tools employed; thus rich insight into the problem under investigation is enabled.

Neuman (2006: 177) supports the notion that there are benefits associated with mixing the two approaches when he argues that:

The well-versed prudent social researcher understands and appreciates each style on its own terms and recognises the strengths and limitations of each. The ultimate goal of developing a better understanding and explanation of the social world comes from an appreciation of what each has to offer.

A combination both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study enabled this study to elicit rich information on the topic under investigation. The strength of this approach was further emphasised by Addae and Quan-Baffour (2015), when they stated that a mixed approach enables a researcher to view the world through the positivist and interpretivist lenses and so gains a better understanding of the world in general and in the particular phenomenon under investigation. It is this rich package of a mixed approach, both positivism and the interpretivism, employing both the qualitative and quantitative methods, that enabled this research to select a wider and more diverse sample that allowed the collection of diverse information on the topic under study.

5.3 Research philosophies

The research philosophies that have been widely applied in research include epistemology, ontology, phenomenology, praxeology, doxology and axiology. They all have some aspects that are applicable to the performance of SMEs. The first mentioned, epistemology, as a philosophical concept to study the nature and essence of knowledge, could be applied as a spur to encourage further discussions among scholars (Forouharfar, 2018). It is derived from two Greek words, episteme and logos, which mean the knowledge of knowledge, and therefore goes to the very foundations of how knowing is shaped; in other words, it deals with the pivotal foundation stone of our understanding (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Epistemology is how we know. The epistemic statements about knowledge organisation are

about knowledge of concepts, acts such as representation, entities, and systems, and in so doing, we create knowledge, and our epistemic stance dictates what kind of knowledge that is (Tennis, 2008). In sum, epistemology is the claim on what knowledge is valid in research, in organising knowledge, and therefore what constitutes acceptable sources of evidence (presenting that knowledge) and acceptable end results of knowledge (Tennis, 2008).

Madni et al. (2001) assert that ontologies can ensure that multiple systems share a common terminology, which is the essence of knowledge sharing and reuse. Ontology is knowledge representation with a high degree of flexibility, which enables it to be easily adapted.

Ontology types are becoming extremely important in fields such as knowledge management, information systems, and semantic webs, where they play a key role in defining agreed terminologies between agents, by providing essential concepts, taxonomies, relationships and domain axioms (Fensel et al., 2011; Gašević et al., 2009). The ontology of The theory of entrepreneurship theory consists of a well designed language which is knit into a well crafted rigorous logical reasoning of the entrepreneurship process. Researchers have identified five key dimensions of entrepreneurship development theory: intuition, belongingness, fluidity, learning and awakening. These aspects form the domain of the entrepreneurship development theory ontology.

The purpose of phenomenological research is to describe a phenomenon using the participants' own words (Flowerday and Schraw, 2000). Some scholars have described this research more broadly, as "in-depth study of a specific phenomenon, group or individuals, or of perceptions of social phenomena" (Notter and Burnard, 2006:151). The researcher collects information from knowledgeable participants who are asked to describe the phenomenon, and then analyses themes and interprets the data so the results can be used to build a theory that can later be tested (Flowerday and Schraw, 2000). Phenomenological philosophy is qualitative in nature, as stated by Creswell (1998:15): "qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach in which the researcher attempts to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." It is thus anchored on the involvement of participants to explore a new or established area of research.

In this study, the purpose of phenomenological research was to explore and describe a phenomenon, such as instructional choice in the SME context, from the perspective of a target group made up of individuals who were selected based on their insight into the specific phenomenon being examined (Flowerday and Schraw, 2000). A semi structured interview format was utilised and the use of criterion sampling as elaborated by Creswell (1998) gave the researcher access to in-depth information on the target topic recorded from the perspective of a specific group of participants. This necessitated the use of informants who had considerable experience with the phenomenon. Participants were selected based on their ability to speak directly to the topic under investigation and this trait was adopted by this study in the qualitative phase of the research and involved the interviews as a data collection method.

Praxeology focuses on the routine operations of an individual within an established community in which repeated actions result in the development of a social order. It involves observations, interpretations, shared understandings and ratifications of participants to reconstruct the practical and meaningful constructions of their social reality (Schmidt, 2016). Kirzner (1960), as cited by Jakee and Pong (2003), states that praxeology is the study of the purposeful act that implies a teleological view of individual behaviour in that it assumes individuals have objectives and act in accordance with those objectives. Rothbard (2003) summarises the praxeology philosophy as follows:

Praxeology informs us that "utility" and "cost" are purely subjective concepts and therefore cannot be measured or even estimated by outside observers, it becomes impossible for such observers to weigh "social costs" and "social benefits" and to decide that the latter outweigh the former for any public policy, much less to make the compensations involved so that the losers are no longer losers.

Praxeology refers to empirical and reflexive operations which focus on situated, observable and meaningful social occurrences that are not only performed through talking, but also by tacit bodily movements and by the agency of material artefacts (Schmidt, 2016). Rothbard, (2003) asserts that praxeology is when the individual actor adopts goals and believes, whether wrongly or correctly, that the person can arrive at by the employment of certain means. The

philosophy follows the actions that have been decided and followed by an individual and the behaviour of the person as defined by their course of action that has been followed by their conscience.

Doxology, in the broad sense, is a philosophy referring to any prayer that contains glorification of God; for instance, the concluding remarks on the Lord's Prayer, "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory now and ever and unto the ages of ages", giving praise to God (Kolyada, 2018). Boswell et al. (2013) state that the worship leader is a pastoral role that teaches songs, readings, prayers, and spoken elements in praising God. Kolyada (2018) clarifies the philosophy of doxology, as "little doxology", which gives glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit and the "great doxology" which gives Glory to God in the Highest, which is also called the angels' hymn that is based on the angelic song from the Bible announcing to the shepherds the birth of Christ.

The last of the philosophies discussed is axiology. Pankina (2020) states that an object's value aspect characterises its axiology, which distinguishes between material and non-material values. The latter are the universal human values: life, health, family, well-being of the loved ones, freedom and independence, social status, self-realisation through work and creativity, education and personal development, material well-being, and stability; each individual and each community has their own hierarchy of values. Value as an absolute establishes one of the possible achievable goals of human sociocultural activity: beyond concrete personality and beyond historical moment. Values connect the past, the present and the future, provide objective and spatial environment with its semantics and axiological meaning, establish priority systems, criteria and ways of social acceptance and assessment (Gritsanov, 2007). Sociologists define value as a certain type of social relation that transfers the needs and interests of an individual or a social group to the world of objects, things and spiritual phenomena, imbuing them with social meaning (Yerofeyev, 1999).

The discussed philosophies play a pivotal role in research, as they deal with the people, their physical environment, spiritual beliefs, cultural settings and the values they attach to their communities. They provide a wholesome approach to research studies, as they delve into all

the circumstances that affect the progression of the human species from one level of development to another.

5.4 Research design

Research design, as advocated by Cooper (2003), constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Kothari (2004) explains the research design as the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; that it constitutes the collection, measurement and analysis of data and includes an outline of what the researcher will do from writing the hypothesis and its operational implications to the final analysis of data. The author further states that research design stands for advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in their analysis, keeping in view the objective of the research and the availability of staff, time and money. Most concur that research design provides the plan and framework of collection and analysis of data.

Kothari (2004) identifies three different research designs: hypothesis-testing, exploratory, and descriptive/diagnostic. Hypothesis-testing research studies (generally known as experimental studies) are those where the researcher tests the hypotheses and draws conclusions between variables; they require procedures that involve, data collection, and the use of hypothesis testing to make deductive inferences about characteristics of a population (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Usually experiments meet this requirement, hence, when we talk of research design in such studies, we often mean the design of experiments. Rensburg (2010) states that experimental research, as an example of quantitative research, involves unique ethical issues because researchers manipulate an experimental variable. This means that certain participants receive a particular treatment. True experimental designs are those research studies in which the researcher manipulates the treatment condition; that is, the researcher decides who receives which treatment. In experimental research the focus is on control and there are different ways of designing a study to ensure different levels of control (Rensburg, 2010). In an experimental design, observations can be structured and controlled. This research design was not applied to this research as there were no experiments that were taken and no group received special treatment conditions.

In exploratory research studies the main purpose is the formulating of a problem for more precise investigation or of developing the working hypotheses from an operational point of view. Creswell (2009) states that the major emphasis in such studies is on the discovery of ideas and insights, and generally, the following three methods are talked about: the survey of concerning literature; the experience survey and the analysis of 'insight-stimulating' examples.

Peffer (2007) mentions that descriptive research studies are those which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or group, whereas diagnostic research studies determine the frequency with which something occurs or its association with something else and most of social research comes under this category. In most of the descriptive/diagnostic studies the researcher takes out sample(s) and then wishes to make statements about the population on the basis of the sample analysis; the said design can be appropriately referred to as a survey design, since it takes into account all the steps involved in a survey concerning a phenomenon to be studied (Kerlinger, 1992). This study was a descriptive one and it matched the description made by Kerlinger (1992) because it identified a sample from the population under study, analysed it and then generalised the findings. This descriptive study followed the scientific procedure of identifying and selecting the sample, studying it and applying the results obtained to the SME population in Zimbabwe.

5.4.1 Quantitative method

Qualitative and quantitative research are the two basic approaches in social science research studies. Mouton and Marais (1989:157) define a "quantitative approach" as one used by researchers in the social sciences that is more formalised in nature, as well as explicitly controlled, with a more carefully defined scope, that is relatively close to the approach used by researchers in the natural sciences (translation). A quantitative researcher attempts to fragment and delimit phenomena into measurable or common categories that can be applied to all of the subjects or wider and similar situations (Winter, 2000). In quantitative research we intend to establish causal connections between things and our hypotheses are therefore constructed so as to be able to reflect such connections, and causal explanations identify a cause and effect relationship between phenomena (Golafshan, 2003). Rensburg (2010) acknowledges that in this approach, scientists investigate the cause and effect of events,

which, in the social sciences, is achieved by using a large number of respondents. Quantitative research has its roots in positivism and focuses on measurable aspects of human behaviour. Khotari (2004) states that it is based on the measurement of quantity or amount and it is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity.

5.4.2 Qualitative method

Qualitative research methods focus on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants, that is, it explores meaning, purpose, or reality (Hiatt, 1986). It is concerned with qualitative phenomena, that is, relating to the subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour. Qualitative research, as viewed by Mouton and Marais (1989:157), is the approach in which the procedures are formalised and explicated in a not so strict manner, but in which the scope is less defined in nature and in which the researcher does his or her investigation in a more philosophical manner. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). The most popular qualitative methods of data collection and analysis in business studies are interviews, focus groups, observation, case studies, games and role playing (Rensburg, 2010).

This research used both qualitative and quantitative approaches, blended together in order to accommodate respondents from the government and business sector well versed with the SME policy formulation and implementation procedures, and from the SME implementers who are involved in the production process. The blended approach provided an opportunity to obtain information from respondents who were able to freely express their ideas as well as from participants who were guided by a set of questions. This study therefore used the triangulation methodology since it used the two techniques. Methodological triangulation as defined by De Vos et al. (2005:362) as using multiple methods to study a single topic; for example, in this study quantitative (survey) and qualitative methods (interviews) were used in a single study. The advantages of triangulation are explained by Polit and Beck (2008:547–548), as their use of multiple methods or perspectives to collect and interpret data about a certain phenomenon and converge on an accurate representation of reality as a more

effective method. The triangulation method provided the best framework of collecting data for this research and it was a critical aspect in eliminating the bias issues of the study.

5.4.3 Cross-sectional research design

When looking at the time dimension in research, the types of research that have been put forward are cross-sectional, longitudinal and case study research. Van Rensburg (2010) argued that a cross-sectional study is non-recurrent in nature and is done at a specific point in time, whereas a longitudinal study is done over a longer period of time. Neuman (1997:29–30) elaborated on this, stating that in longitudinal studies a large number of units or cases are used to collect data and then the researcher looks for specific patterns. In other words, the focus is more on designated patterns across many units or cases. The longitudinal approach was not applied because of the length of time it requires in administering. Case study constitutes an in-depth investigation into interaction among factors influencing explanations or change, which are then analysed. Neuman (1997:300) states that case study research is also used to link the micro level to the macro level. On the micro level, the behaviour of individuals is studied so that it can be applied to social structures and processes on a large scale (macro level). This was not compatible with this study, which had an interest in all the registered SMEs in Zimbabwe, hence the geographical location was at macro level.

A cross-sectional research design was used in this study because the design allowed collection of information at one point in time (Saunders, 2007). It was more appropriate than other methods that are expensive and time consuming such as longitudinal research design. Thus, the choice of the method was based on its ability to meet the objectives of the study and also due to limited resources of time and budget.

5.4.4 Mixed Method Research (MMR) Design

Molina-Azorin and Cameron (2010: 96) defined mixed methods research designs as those that include at least one quantitative method (designed to collect numbers) and one qualitative method (designed to collect words). Stentz, Plano Clark and Matkin (2012: 1175) define mixed methods as a research methodology and design that involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction and mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches in collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of

studies to provide better understanding of research problems than either quantitative or qualitative method alone can achieve. Mixed methods research is a research methodology that involves collecting, analysing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a series of studies in order to investigate the same underlying phenomenon (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009: 267). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006: 15) proffered this definition:

“mixed methods research is defined as research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or programme of enquiry.”

In summary, what is evident from the above definitions is that mixed methods is a relatively recent research design that combines the underlying assumptions of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms to inform a research enquiry and guide the process of data collection and analysis within a single study or several studies (Jogulu & Pansiri, 2011; Stentz, et al., 2012). The mixed method research design has also been referred by other names like third path (Gerard & Taylor, 2004), the third research paradigm (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) and the third methodological movement (Tashakori & Teddlie, 2003).

Under a mixed methods research design, quantitative (QUQN) and qualitative (QUAL) methods can be combined either simultaneously (QUAL + QUAN) or sequentially (QUAL!QUAN or QUAN!QUAL), oftentimes with either the QUAN or QUAL aspect occupying a relatively dominant role as dictated by the research question (Morse, 2010; Morse & Niehaus, 2009). Kimmons, (2021) states that mixed-methods designs vary in the relative importance they ascribe to qual vs. quan methods, either prioritising qual (QUAL>quan), prioritising quan (QUAN>qual), or treating the two approaches with equal weight (QUAL=QUAN). This brings into the fold that mixed methods research have three different drives, as formulated by Johnson et al. (2007) which are qualitative dominant, quantitative dominant and mixed methods. Priority in mixed methods design is the relative weight assigned to the qualitative and quantitative research components (Albsoul, 2021).

Qualitative dominant (QUAL>quan), mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a qualitative view of the research process, while concurrently recognizing

that the addition of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects (Kimmons, 2021). In this instance qualitative is prioritized and researchers will need to carefully ensure that they are meeting expectations of qualitative rigor necessary for transferability, positionality, trustworthiness, and give limited attention to expectations of quantitative rigor (Albsoul, 2021).

Quantitative dominant (QUAN>qual), mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a quantitative research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition of qualitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects (Kimmons, 2021). The quantitative is prioritised and the researchers will need to more carefully ensure that they are meeting the expectations of quantitative rigor necessary for generalizability, predictive power and validity and give limited attention to expectations of qualitative rigor (Albsoul, 2021). Mixed-methods (QUAL=QUAN) is when the researcher places equal weight on both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Kimmons, 2021). The qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously (Kimmons, 2021). Equal priority is usually given to both forms of data and the results are then integrated in the final interpretation (Creswell, Klassen, Plano Clark, & Smith, 2011).

Mixed methods designs can be classified according to the order or timing of implementation of the data collection which are sequential explanatory design, sequential exploratory design and sequential transformative design (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Sequential explanatory design involves quantitative data that is collected in a first instance followed by qualitative data collection. Sequential transformative design implies that the order of data collection is determined by the theoretical perspective of the researcher. Sequential exploratory design implies that qualitative data is collected first followed by quantitative data collection (Kimmons, 2021). The mixed methods research presents the researcher with many advantages and benefits. The following benefits have been postulated by Venkatesh et al (2013) cited in Caruth (2013:113):

1. Complementarity - to obtain mutual viewpoints about similar experiences or associations. The use of different methods from both the quantitative and qualitative divides enables the researcher to obtain various viewpoints which augments information elicited from either side.

2. Completeness - to ensure total representation of experiences or associations is attained.
3. Developmental - to build questions from one method that materialise from the implications of a prior method or one method presents hypotheses to be tested in a subsequent method.
4. Expansion - to clarify or elaborate on the knowledge gained from a prior method.
5. Corroboration/Confirmation - to evaluate the trustworthiness of inferences gained from one method. This means that the findings obtained from quantitative data analysis can help to validate the qualitative findings.
6. Compensation - to counter the weaknesses of one method by employing the other. The inherent weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research methods are adequately taken care of by either method.
7. Diversity - to obtain opposing viewpoints of the same experiences or associations. Through the mixed methods research the researcher was able to obtain different information from the different data collection tools employed. This enabled the researcher to gain rich insight into the problem under investigation

Neuman (2006: 177) supported that there are benefits associated with mixing the two approaches when he argues that:

The well-versed prudent social researcher understands and appreciates each style on its own terms and recognizes the strengths and limitations of each. The ultimate goal of developing a better understanding and explanation of the social world comes from an appreciation of what each has to offer.

A combination both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study enabled the researcher to elicit rich information on the topic under investigation. The strength of this approach was further emphasised by Addae and Quan-Baffour (2015) when they stated that mixed approach enables a researcher to view the world in two lenses namely the positivist and interpretivist and as such the researcher gains a better understanding of the world in general and in particular the phenomenon under investigation. It is from this rich package of the mixed approach that this researcher is able to select a wider and more diverse sample that allows the collection of diverse information on the topic under study. The study used mixed research method following the sequential exploratory strategy.

5.4.5 Rationale for Adoption of Mixed Method Research

Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989: 259) identified five main purposes of conducting research using the mixed method approach namely:

1. Triangulation – using both qualitative and quantitative research methods to combine and corroborate research results from the data gathered in studying a similar phenomenon. This enhances the validity of inferences made from the results (Molina-Azorin and Cameron 2010: 97). Triangulation of research methods ensures that the weaknesses of one method are offset by the strengths of another method (*ibid.*). Triangulation seeks to obtain convergence, corroboration and correspondence of findings between quantitative and qualitative data (Bryman, 2006: 105; Cameron, 2011: 248). The researcher triangulated data collection using questionnaires and interviews in this study.
2. Complementarity – This means using results obtained from one research method to obtain elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of the results from one method with the findings from another method (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 22; Molina-Azorin and Cameron, 2010: 98) and to assist in the description or application of research findings. the rich themes from the interviewees were used to complement quantitative data.
3. Initiation – This is aimed at discovering paradoxes and contradictions and new perspectives that lead to reframing of the research questions or results from one method with questions or results from the other method (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 22). Findings from either qualitative data or quantitative data were applied to cross-validate findings from either of the two data sources.
4. Development – This entails using the research findings from one method to assist in shaping the design and implementation of another research method (Bryman, 2006: 105; Molina-Azorini and Cameron, 2010: 98). The questions developed for questionnaires were rephrased into open-ended questions in the interview guide in order to allow free flow of information from interviewees.
5. Expansion – The use of more than one method expands the breadth of the research process by using different methods for levels of research enquiry thereby increasing the validity of the process and the findings (Bryman, 2006: 105; Molina-Azorin and Cameron, 2010: 98). Diverse themes from interview data enhanced the findings on what is known

about SL attributes and EI competencies and their impact on managerial leadership performance.

The use of mixed methods research therefore ensures that the areas of weakness often associated with one research method be it quantitative or qualitative can be counter-balanced by the strengths of the other research method as Jogulu and Pansiri (2011: 689) pointed out, “use of mixed methods reduces overreliance on statistical data to explain social occurrences and experiences that are mostly subjective in nature.” Mixed methods designs can answer a broader and more complete range of research questions because the researcher is not confined to a single method or approach. The arguments presented in the foregoing definitions offered compelling reasons for the adoption of the MMR design for this study given the richness in the quality of data derived from the use of both quantitative and qualitative designs.

5.4.6 Sequential exploratory strategy

This study, in seeking to explore the extent to which an effective strategic framework contributes to the performance of SMEs, employed a sequential exploratory strategy. Mixed methods research designs are based on two main factors, dominance and sequence. Addae and Quan-Baffour (2015) argue that by dominance, the researcher asks the question which of the two approaches should take supremacy in the study and which approach over the other should be widely used in the study and decides on which of the approaches would be used in the initial stages and which in latter stages of the study.. As examples of the mixed research design approach, the following four suggested by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) are employed in research studies:

1. Dominant sequential mixed methods design: involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods at different stages of a study and where one approach takes precedence over the other. This can be depicted as follows: QUAN → qual or QUAL → quan or quan → QUAL or qual→ QUAN.
2. Equivalent sequential mixed methods design: involves use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods at different stages of a study and where both approaches have equal status: QUAN → QUAN or QUAL → QUAN.

3. Dominant simultaneous mixed methods design: involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods at the same time in a single study and where one approach takes precedence over the other: QUAN + QUA or QUAL + QUAN
4. Equivalent simultaneous mixed methods design: involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods at the same time in a study and where one approach takes precedence over the other: QUAN + QUAL or QUAL + QUAN.

This research followed the dominant sequential mixed strategy, which used both the qualitative and the quantitative research methods at different stages, of which the quantitative method took precedence over the qualitative method. The strategy consists of two phases of which the first phase uses qualitative data collection methods and analysis followed by the second phase which is quantitative in nature and builds on the information obtained in phase one (Creswell, 2009). The sequential approach was ideal for this study, as it provided answers to the research questions because it explored the “what” part of the research and opened up avenues for further study of SME performance (Rensburg, 2010). Creswell (2009) explains that basically the sequential exploratory study is divided into three stages of qualitative data collection and analysis, and the analysed data is used to come up with data collection instruments for the second phase which will be used further to collect data in the third phase. The first phase of this qualitative research involved in-depth interviews in order to develop a practical understanding of the strategic policies and how they impact SME performance. In the in-depth interviews the researcher looked for rich in-depth answers, which tapped deeply into the respondents own experiences, feelings and opinions (Lee, 2007). The second phase used the results obtained in phase one and developed a survey to test the generalisability of the findings. The researcher selected the key result findings from the first phase and used them in the second phase, which was quantitative in nature.

5.5 Study population

Population as viewed by Dooley (1990) is the total of all potential elements to which survey results are to be generalised. A Cooper (2003) point out that population is the total collection of elements about which we wish to make some inferences. Elliott (2013) alludes that

population is the group to which you wish to generalise your samples. In this study the target population consisted of all the registered Small and Medium Enterprises in Zimbabwe. There are 73 603 registered SMES with the Zimbabwean Government (Ministry of Women Affairs, Community SME Development, 2020). The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community and SME Development has offices in all the provinces that register SMEs under the main sectors which are agriculture, mining, manufacturing, Information Technology, retail and wholesale and food outlet. The provincial offices report to the regional offices that compile all the information for the national office. The Table 5.1 shows the regional population distribution of SMEs in Zimbabwe as compiled by the national office.

Table 5.1 SME Population Distribution

Region	Population
Bulawayo	9 834
Harare	17 249
Matabeleland	6 638
Mashonaland	39 882
Total	73 603

Source: (Ministry of Women Affairs, Community and SME Development, 2020)

5.6 Sampling Methods

“Sampling” involves the procedure of selecting the of elements of a universe that will be included in the study (David & Sutton, 2011; O’Leary, 2010). A “sample” is a set chosen from the population for participation in a study (Collis & Hussey, 2014; Malhotra & Dash, 2011; Zikmund *et al.*, 2013). Samples selected should be representative of the population regardless of the chosen research approach (i.e. quantitative, qualitative or mixed) and sampling methods selected and the researcher has no influence on the units chosen (McGivern, 2013:234). There are two types of sampling methods which are the probability and non-probability sampling methods.

5.6.1 Non probability Sampling

A non-probability method is a subjective procedure in which the probability of selecting participants from the population cannot be determined (Zikmund and Babin, 2010). Non-random sampling techniques include judgement, quota and convenience sampling (Salkind 2010). Rensburg (2010) implies that nonprobability sampling is less desirable than probability sampling especially if the objective of the research is to generalise and there is no formal procedure for generalising from the sample to the population, since the researcher cannot determine sampling error.

5.6.2 Probability Sampling

Rensburg (2010) emphasises that probability sampling ensures that every element in the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. Gilbert (1993:71) refers to an equal chance as a known, non-zero chance of selection. Random selection takes place when each element in the population has an equal, independent chance of being selected for the sample (De Vos et al 2005:196). The most commonly used probability sampling techniques are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling and cluster sampling.

5.6.3 The selected Sampling Method

Both methods were selected (Probability and non probability). The non probability method was selected in the study because it provided the researcher with data from the experts from the government and private sector who were knowledgeable with the SME operations in Zimbabwe. The elite group had hands experience with the SME sector and its operations. It allowed the researcher to identify and select participants who were able to articulate the SME issues both at policy level and implementation level. Probability sampling was used in the second phase because it involved a large group of participants from the SME implementers. The second phase used the themes developed in the first phase to develop the questionnaire. Probability sampling is based on random selection of the respondents which allows each respondent an equal chance of being selected.

5.6.4 Sampling techniques

The probability sampling should produce representative samples (McGivern, 2013; O’Leary, 2010) this is regarded to be the “gold standard” for sampling (Langdridge & Hagger-Johnson, 2009:516). Techniques of probability sampling include simple random, systemic random, stratified random and cluster sampling. Non probability sampling techniques include convenience, judgement, quota, maximum variation and snowball. The sampling techniques from both the probability and non probability designs are shown in table 4.3.

5.7 Sample size

The sample size, as proposed by Dooley (1990), is a representative group from the population, which serve as respondents. For the first interview phase, Mason’s (2010) recommendations based on an examination of interview-based qualitative PhD studies were followed; the sample size had a minimum of fifteen and a maximum of fifty (50) participants. For the purpose of this study, a total of sixteen participants were interviewed, taking four participants from each of the four regions of Zimbabwe.

Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) table was adopted to arrive at the sample size for the second phase, as shown in Table 5.1

Table 5.2 Population and sample size

Region	Population	Sample Size
Bulawayo	9 834	368
Harare	17 249	375
Matabeleland	6 638	364
Mashonaland	39 882	380
Total	73 603	1 487

Source: (Ministry of Women Affairs, Community and SME Development, 2020 and the researcher’s own work)

5.8 Data collection instruments

Khotari (2010) claimed that there are several methods of collecting primary data, particularly in surveys and descriptive research. Important ones are: observation method, interview method, questionnaires, schedules, and other methods which include warranty cards, distributor audits, pantry audits, consumer panels, mechanical devices, projective techniques, depth interviews and content analysis. This research used interviews in the first phase and questionnaires in the second, to solicit information from the respondents.

Interactive methods were used for collecting data, involving the subjects (Lee, 2007) through in-depth interviews and questionnaires. For the first phase, the interview guide was used as a data collection instrument to guide the researcher in the handling of the discussions and interviews. The interview guide was used to collect detailed information from the policy implementers. It had leading questions that helped the interviewer to keep track and remain focused on the subject matter under discussion and short questions to facilitate a detailed solicitation of data from the informants. The guide was written on a single page because a longer document would waste time in the interview when flicking through several pages and reading from the long list. It is of great significance to note that the whole process was rehearsed several times through pilot trials of the process using the directors from various manufacturing industries. The interview guide also provided a quick recall of the interview process that automatically results from repeated practise (Lee, 2007). The consent of the participants was sought on the use of the recording instruments and if participants did not agree, detailed notes were written down and a narrative report was produced soon after the interview.

In the second phase questionnaires were used to collect data from the participants. Kothari (2010) states that questionnaires are the most commonly used data collecting instruments for a survey, further describing them as consisting of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms and considering them as the heart of a survey operation. Verhoef (2004) proposes that the questionnaire is a method of gathering self-reported information from respondents through self-administration of questions in a paper and pencil format. Structured questionnaires were used in this study, and beforehand a pilot survey for testing the questionnaires was conducted. The participants wrote their responses

on the structured document that provided information of the themes developed in phase one.

5.9 Pilot study

A Pilot study is in fact the rehearsal of the main survey. A pilot, or a pretest, enables the researcher to assess the reliability and validity of the data to be collected (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012:451; Qu, Kim and lim, 2011:469) or the research instruments being used (Kim, 2016:14). Thus, it should provide enough evidence for performing a systematic appraisal of a questionnaire's performance (Rattray and Jones, 2007:237). It also aims to refine and mop out any ambiguous content of the questionnaire so that respondents will have no challenges when answering the questions and there will be no difficulties in recording data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012:451). The goals of the pilot study were to pick out any unclear information, check the questionnaire for reliability and validity, and any issues that might be raised by respondents, a process that helps to produce a refined instrument that is user friendly to all the respondents.

Open- and closed-ended question types in a structured questionnaire were used to gather information from the respondents. These were tested via the pilot study in which ten SMEs participated. The questionnaire was further revised on the basis of the feedback received from the pilot study. To enhance clarity and avoid ambiguity in the questionnaire, a detailed explanation and clarification of the process of completing it was given to the respondents before the main survey was conducted.

5.10 Administration of research instrument (questionnaire and interviews)

The distribution of questionnaires focuses on targeting the respondents in several ways such as personally by the researcher or agents (drop and collect), post, telephone, email (Malhotra and Dash, 2011; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012; Sekeran and Bougie, 2013; Zikmund and Babin, 2013) and through the internet (Bryman, 2012; Malhotra and Dash, 2011; Zikmund and Babin, 2013). The researcher visited the four regions in Zimbabwe after making prior arrangements with the contact persons in each region. Most of the SME operators in the urban areas are close to each other and it made them accessible in terms of communication and administering of the questionnaires. The researcher committed two weeks for the

administration of questionnaires and the use of a private vehicle ensured that no time was lost and the questionnaires were protected and safe.

Some of the questionnaires were distributed electronically through emails and in instances where COVID 19 restrictions were observed, and some were distributed in person by research assistants. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a participant letter which clarified ethical issues that included confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of participants. The letter also contained instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and instructions on how to submit the completed questionnaire. Thus, upon completion, participants either submitted electronically or in a dedicated receipt box. The researcher then collected the completed questionnaire. An email was sent to all participants reminding them to complete the questionnaire. This was done politely without coercing them, as participants were free to withdraw from the study without any negative effect to themselves and the study.

Mindful of the emergency of the COVID 19 pandemic, which has negatively hindered our daily activities, the participants were involved by following the World Health Organisation (WHO) regulations. The following WHO regulations (World Health Organisation, 2020) were adhered to:

- Wearing of masks will always be done and is part of a comprehensive package of the prevention and control measures that can limit the spread of COVID-19;
- Maintain physical distance of at least 1 metre (3.3 feet) from other persons, especially from those with respiratory symptoms (e.g. coughing, sneezing);
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, using an alcohol-based hand rub if hands are not visibly dirty or soap and water;
- Use respiratory hygiene, i.e. cover nose and mouth with a bent elbow or paper tissue when coughing or sneezing, dispose of the tissue immediately after use, and perform hand hygiene; Refrain from touching the mouth, nose, and eyes.

The researcher adhered to these regulations throughout the administering of interviews and questionnaires and acquired the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to prevent the spread

of COVID 19. In addition, sanitisers, masks and liquid soap were acquired and the services of qualified health personnel were engaged to assist in maintaining the WHO regulations during the data collection process. The health personnel maintained the health standards in the interview rooms and sanitised all the tools used in data collection. Participants for the phase one qualitative study, were invited for interviews through phone calls and emails. The health personnel were informed of the interview participants and visited them in advance to assess the interview room and ensure that the WHO regulations were adhered to. The participants for the quantitative study were invited by the researcher and the health officer after initial contact was made through telephone calls and emails using the regional SME database.

5.11 Reliability and validity

Joppe (2000:1) defines reliability as the extent to which results of a study are consistent over time, if the results are an accurate representation of the total population under study, and if the results can be reproduced under a similar methodology; then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. Witchen (2002) believes that reliability is important because it is a prerequisite for validity. Kirk and Miller (2006 41-42) identify three types of reliability in quantitative research, which relate to the degree to which a measurement given repeatedly remains the same, the stability of a measurement over time, and the similarity of measurements within a given time period. Validity is an indication of the extent to which a study's instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2011; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson, 2009; Sekeran and Bougie, 2013). Malhotra and Dash (2011:280) argue that the validity of a scale can be defined as the degree to which differences in observed scale scores mirror real disparities among objects on the characteristic being measured, rather than systematic or random error.

5.11.1 Reliability and validity in a quantitative study

Terwee (2016) states that the consensus is that the test-retest reliability of a questionnaire should be assessed by administering the questionnaire twice to the same group of people, using a time interval in which it is assumed that the people will not change the construct of interest. The questionnaires for the research were tested and retested in three provinces to check their reliability.

Voheff (2004) observes that validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (i.e., content validity, concurrent validity and construct validity). Joppe (2000) states that validity in quantitative research determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. Terwee (2016) states that validity in a research instrument allows one to hit "the bull's eye" of the research object. Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others. Johnson (2007: 283) argues that If the validity or trustworthiness can be maximised or tested, then more a "credible and defensible result" may lead to generalisability. Rensburg (2010) argues that in external validity the researcher can use the same measuring instrument if a similar study is undertaken elsewhere. The triangulation method was used in this research to test validity. Golafsnani (2003) postulates that triangulation is typically a strategy (test) for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings.

5.11.2 Reliability and validity in a qualitative study

Qualitative validity is when the researcher employs certain procedures to check for the accuracy of the findings, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Gibbs, 2007). Validity does not carry the same implications in qualitative research as it does in quantitative research, nor is it closely linked to reliability (examining stability or consistency of responses) or generalisability (Creswell, 2009). Gibbs (2007) suggests several qualitative reliability procedures that need to be adhered to by the researcher as follows:

- Checking transcripts to make sure that they do not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription
- Making sure that there is not a drift in the definition of codes, or a shift in the meaning of the codes, during the process of coding. This can be accomplished by constantly comparing data with the codes and by writing memos about the codes and their definitions (see the discussion on a qualitative codebook).
- For team research, coordinating the communication among the coders by regular documented meetings and by sharing the analysis

- Cross-checking codes developed by different researchers by comparing results that are independently derived

Miles and Huberman (1994), as cited by Creswell (2009), recommend that the consistency of the coding be in agreement at least 80% of the time for good qualitative reliability. Validity, as one of the strengths of qualitative research, is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

Triangulation has arisen as an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative approaches to evaluation in order to control bias and establish valid propositions because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate epistemology. Patton (2001: 247) advocates its use, stating that, “triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods and this can mean using several kinds of methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches”. This research, as mentioned, used both the qualitative and quantitative approaches which accounted for triangulation and thus accounting for reliability and validity.

5.12 Data analysis

Content analysis was used to analyse data collected in phase one. This is the analysis of already existing literature from different sources such as pamphlets, brochures, fliers and books, and any recorded or printed materials (Khotari, 2004). The gathered information was grouped using the main theme and various small themes that were generated from the study (Marmara, 2016.). As stated earlier, the themes generated from phase one of the research were used to develop questions which tested the generalisability of the findings.

The second phase of the study used questionnaires to solicit information and make use of statistical analysis methods that enabled the researcher to draw conclusions from the figures established. The completed questionnaires were gleaned to ensure that the data were accurate and consistent with the intended outcomes. The questionnaires were then recorded, processed and analysed, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21). Data presentations were done in the form of tallies, frequency tables, line graphs,

compound bar graphs and pie charts. The relationship between the independent and dependant variables was established using the multivariate regression analysis and the correlation analysis, which are critical tools in analysing statistical relationships. Correlation analysis determines the extent to which two variables are related positively or negatively from +1 to –1 respectively. Regression analysis will determine the extent of the relationship between the independent and the dependant variables.

5.13 Elimination of bias

Confirmability refers to the extent to which researchers strive to maintain objectivity and that they acted in good faith while limiting personal values and biases (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.398). Krefting (1991: 216) uses the term neutrality as synonymous with confirmability and quotes Guba (1981) as quoted by Krefting (1991: 216), who also views confirmability as synonymous with neutrality, defining it as “the degree to which the findings are a function solely of the informants and conditions of the research and not of other biases, motivations and perspectives”. This view is shared by Shenton (2004:72), who argues that researchers should ensure that their findings resemble the experiences and ideas of the respondents rather than the desires and expectations of the researcher.

In this research, bias was minimised through triangulation of data collection methods, the researcher’s consciousness of his or her own interests and preferred research methods over others and continuing to respect the human differences in culture, religion, norms, values, dress and language. However, in a natural setting, bias was difficult to eliminate completely and the researcher was guided by the operation plan, scientific analysis and interpretation of the findings to remain focused on the path of neutrality and maintain academic standards.

5.14 Ethical considerations

Ethical consideration is the fundamental basis of carrying out the data collection process in a manner that protects the participants, especially if the research involves human beings. Bliss, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013: 28) observe that the term ethics is developed from the Greek word ‘ethos’ meaning one’s character or disposition, which defines one’s morality, a term that comes from the Latin word, ‘moralis’, meaning one’s manners or character. Ethics in

research is intended to ensure that researchers abide with scientific conduct (Neuman, 2011: 144).

Saunders et al. (2012: 226) define ethics as standards of behaviour that guide a researcher's conduct in relation to the rights of people affected by the research study. Researchers are expected to operate within ethical principles or research ethics whenever conducting research that involves human subjects (Neuman, 2011: 143; Bless et al., 2013: 28; Leedy and Ormrod, 2014 :111). There is a wide range of research ethics that is contained in codes of ethics and the critical principles that are mostly observed are integrity and objectivity of the researcher; privacy of participants or respondents; informed consent; voluntary participation; and responsible data analysis and reporting, which are discussed briefly below (Saunders et al., 2012: 231-232). The main issues which the research must ensure are confidentiality, anonymity, privacy and harm.

Integrity and objectivity of the researcher

Research, like all other academic work, requires a high degree of integrity which encapsulates the honesty and truthfulness of the researcher. It demands accuracy in reporting while also avoiding deception, dishonesty, misleading others and misrepresentation of data and findings (Saunders et al., 2012:231; Leedy and Ormrod, 2014: 110). The declaration signed by the researcher is one method of indication that the study is original research.

Privacy and protection of participants

In this section the two ethical values that were observed are the right of respondents and informants to confidentiality and anonymity (Bless et al., 2013:32-33; Leedy and Ormrod, 2014: 109-110). Confidentiality refers to the protection of data obtained from participants and ensuring that it is kept in a secure place (Bless et al., 2013: 32). Anonymity, which is similar to confidentiality, requires researchers to conceal the identity of respondents and informants and never to reveal their sources, and, where necessary, to use codes and pseudonyms as proxy for actual names of participants or institutions (Bless et al., 2013: 32; Leedy and Ormrod, 2014: 110). In addition, research subjects should be protected from harm or maleficence (Bless et al., 2013: 29), whether physical or psychological, such as loss of self-

esteem, stress, embarrassment, and harm to career prospects or future employment (Neuman, 2011: 146; Leedy and Ormrod, 2014: 107). In both the quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures, the researcher assured in writing the right of respondents and informants of their anonymity and the confidentiality of the data they provided before they signed up and completed the questionnaire or participated in the interviews.

Informed consent

Before the participants engage in a research study, they should be fully briefed about the purpose of the research and the research procedure itself and all they are going to be asked to do or not to do, such as consenting to audio- or video-recording, as well as given assurance of anonymity and confidentiality of their data (Neuman, 2011: 149; Saunders et al., 2012:231). When they are aware of the request, participants should be requested to grant their informed consent in writing by completing an informed consent form (Fisher, 2010: 74; Leedy and Ormrod, 2014: 108).

Voluntary participation

This principle deals with informed consent and addresses the right of respondents and informants to voluntary participation, or of declining participation and withdrawing from the process midstream, or not answering certain questions if they do not wish to (Bless et al., 2013: 30; Leedy and Ormrod, 2014: 108).

Responsible data analysis and reporting

This calls for the observing of confidentiality and anonymity in the analysis and reporting of primary data in addition to the accurate reporting of findings and acknowledgement of sources used for secondary data used (Saunders et al., 2012: 232). Leedy and Ormrod (2014: 110) call for the reporting of findings in an accurate and honest manner without fabrication or plagiarism. Bless et al. (2013: 35) reinforce this view by warning against falsification or fabrication of data reporting as a serious ethical transgression.

To deal with the issue of informed consent and voluntary participation, a letter (Appendix 5) was attached with the questionnaire introducing the researcher, explaining the purpose of

the research and the right to voluntary participation. In addition, a section about these two issues was included on the first page of the actual instrument, requesting participants to confirm knowledge of the study and to accept or decline to participate. For qualitative data collection (interviews), participants were handed an informed consent form addressing the two issues and requesting them to accept or decline to be interviewed.

In the first phase, where interviews were conducted, the researcher started off the interview by briefly explaining the aim of the interview and emphasising the confidentiality, anonymity and the voluntary nature of the study. The interviewee was then given a consent form, which was signed off by both interviewee and the researcher. With the participant's permission, each interview was recorded. Each interview took a maximum around 30 minutes. Transcripts of interviews were prepared, and the information was kept confidential. The main purpose of this study was to provide an in-depth description and understanding of the human experience. The second phase involved data collection using questionnaires and the following considerations were observed when collecting information through questionnaires: the right to confidentiality of information provided, the right to anonymity, consent to the processing of information and its subsequent use, the right to refuse to be interrogated, and protection from harm in providing information.

The study was free from contradictions on ethical grounds and the study was performed in accordance with the Zimbabwe Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and ethical approval was granted by the Ministry prior to any data collection. The consent of the participants was sought and all the information provided by the participants was treated as confidential data. The respondents of questionnaires remained anonymous by not writing or signing their names on the questionnaire. Different sites in the country where the research instruments were administered were purposively chosen and data was collected, cleaned and analysed in an ethical manner in accordance with international practices in research. The participants for the interviews were assured that the discussions were purely for academic purposes and they were free to use any language of their choice and any recordings done were carried out with their consent. Permission to have the interviews was sought from the local authorities and prior arrangements and clearances were done.

5.15 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the research methodology, the paradigm and the design that was followed by the research. The Sequential Exploratory Strategy was used by the research and it employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Every stage of the research methodology involved the functions of the qualitative and quantitative methods. This approach assured the research gained a comparative advantage from the two data collection methods in that the shortcomings of one method were covered by the other. Data collection, presentation and analysis were guided by the two methods and this provided balanced results of the data and a more informative conclusion was achieved. The next chapter will give a presentation of the data collected in phase one of the sequential exploratory strategy according to the themes that emerged from the interviews.

CHAPTER SIX: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Tests used in the analysis

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6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research design and methodology that was adopted by this study. It identified the two research paradigms that were used in conjunction; the adoption of both the positivist and interpretivist schools of thought led to the mixed approach as the research design that was followed by the study. The current chapter presents the results of the data collected for the empirical study with the primary objective of developing a strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement in order to improve the performance of SMEs. This primary objective was serviced by four secondary objectives:

- (i) To assess if the government policies positively influenced the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe
- (ii) To assess the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources to SMEs in Zimbabwe
- (iii) To identify what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance
- (iv) To recommend policy changes towards resource adequacy for SMEs in Zimbabwe

The data were presented in two sections following the sequential mixed method. The first section presents the qualitative data obtained from the interviews (the participants are addressed as interviewees); the second section presents the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires (the participants are addressed as respondents). The structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data from ten interviewees who were from the four regions of Zimbabwe. They were recorded using an audio media-recording machine and transcribed and an analysis was done to develop themes using the NVIVO software package version 10. It is important to note that during the course of the interviews the Covid 19 regulations were in place, which includes wearing of masks, sanitising all the equipment that was used and maintaining social distance. This was followed by quantitative primary data collection, which was done through both emails and hard copies. These two methods yielded high returns, especially under the Covid 19 restrictions. The data was collated, coded, captured, cleaned and analysed using the IBM SPSS statistical analysis software version 22.

6.2 Tests used in the analysis

The data were presented in frequency tables and graphs and further analysed using different types of tests. The following tests were used in the analysis of the quantitative data:

Descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviations were used where applicable. These statistics give a summary about the sample being studied without drawing any inferences based on probability theory and helps in summarising data in the form of simple quantitative measures such as percentages or mean or in the form of visual summaries such as histograms and box plots (Kaliyadan and Kulkarni 2019). There are three major types of descriptive statistics: Measures of frequency (frequency, percent), measures of central tendency (mean, median and mode), and measures of dispersion or variation (variance, standard deviation, standard error, quartile, interquartile range, percentile, range, and coefficient of variation [CV]), providing simple summaries about the sample and the measures (Mishra et al., 2019). Descriptive statistics can be used to describe a single variable (univariate analysis) or more than one variable (bivariate/multivariate analysis). In the case of more than one variable, descriptive statistics can help summarise relationships between variables using tools such as scatter plots (Kaliyadan and Kulkarni, 2019). Frequencies were represented in tables or graphs. Other tests used to analyse data include Chi-square goodness-of-fit-test, Regression analysis, Binomial test, Pearson's and Spearman's correlation and a one sample t-test. A suitable analysis test was selected for appropriate questions that were used for collecting data.

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used to identify response options that are selected significantly more than others. This was applied to all the sections for which the responses were ordinal and categorical in nature. Where a 5-point Likert agreement was used, a one-sample t-test was used to test for significant agreement or disagreement. In this case, the average agreement score was tested against the central score of '3'. Spearman's correlation was used to test the monotonic relationship between an overall awareness measurement and performance. Regression analysis was applied to test the effect of all composite measures formed in the 2019 performance. The binomial test was used to test if a significant proportion indicated if they had received different types of support or not.

6.3 Data response rate

The questionnaire which was used to collect data was divided into four sections with the first section soliciting biographical information and the other three sections focusing on answering the research questions (Appendix 1). The first section comprised 11 close-ended questions exploring the demographic characteristics of respondents. Section two had 105 questions or statements that were formulated from the four primary objectives. A total of one thousand five hundred questionnaires were distributed through emails and hard copies. The hard copies were physically distributed to the participants who had no access to the internet. The distribution of the soft copies was done through the SME Association of Zimbabwe which has an online registered membership of over 5 300 SME operators.

From the 1 500 administered questionnaires, 526 were returned, which constitutes 35,07% of the total distributed questionnaires. Through the data cleaning process, 28 questionnaires were discarded because they were either spoiled or were incompletely filled, which means that a total of 499 valid questionnaires were available for analysis, as illustrated in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Response rate

	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage
Administered	1 500	100.0%
Returned	526	35.07%
Invalid	28	1.73%
Valid	499	33.27%

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The overall response rate was 35.07% of the mailed and physically administered questionnaires. Scholars do not have a consensus on what constitutes a standard response rate. Baruch (1999), states that the average response rate used as the basis for published academic studies is significantly less than 100 percent. The University of Texas, Austin (2010), states that the acceptable return for an online survey is a 30% response rate, which will provide adequate data for analysis. Denscombe (2007) states that there is no rule that is applied on the response rate. The above 30% response rate from this current study concurred

with the views of the cited scholars; hence, the researcher proceeded with the data analysis process.

6.4 Demographic data presentation

Table 6.2: Demographic data

Variable	Categories	N (%)
Gender	Female	124 (24.8)
	Male	375 (75.2)
Age	20-29	83 (15.6)
	30-39	247 (49.5)
	40-49	89 (17.8)
	50-59	63 (12.6)
	60+	17(3.4)
Race	Black	402(80.6)
	Coloured	97(19.4)
Qualification	Primary	11(2.2)
	Secondary	30(6.0)
	Certificate	288(57.7)
	Diploma	74(14.8)
	University graduate	96(19.2)
Sector	Agriculture	89(17.8)
	Mining	20(4.0)
	Manufacturing	255(51.1)
	IT	17(3.4)
	Retail and wholesale	1(.2)
	Food outlet	65(13.0)
	Other	52(10.4)
Location	Town	344(68.9)
	Growth point	82(16.4)
	Mining area	33(6.6)

	Rural area	16(3.2)
	Newly resettled farming area	24(4.8)
Designation	Owner	333(66.7)
	General employee	86(17.2)
	Manager	42(8.4)
	Senior manager	33(6.6)
	CEO	5(1.0)
Number of employees	1-10	334(66.9)
	11-20	161(32.3)
	21-30	4(.8)

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The data from Table 6.2 and the information from each of the sections was graphically presented and analysed.

6.5 Demographics analysis

Boyce et al. (2006) accentuate that by understanding the demographic characteristics the researcher is able to analyse a population's capacity to change its environment and its impact on global change in an increasingly variable world. Lee and Schuele (2010) state that understanding the characteristics of the respondents' variables such as age, gender, qualifications, designation and so forth is key to determining the representativeness of the sample in relation to the target population. This section presents the background information of the respondents used in this research. The main demographic characteristics and profiles relating to the respondents that were explored are show in table 6.2.

6.5.1 Gender distribution

From the 499 respondents, 75.2% (n373) were males and 24.8% (n124) were females. The data shows that the males dominated the respondents, as per the chart in Figure 6.1.

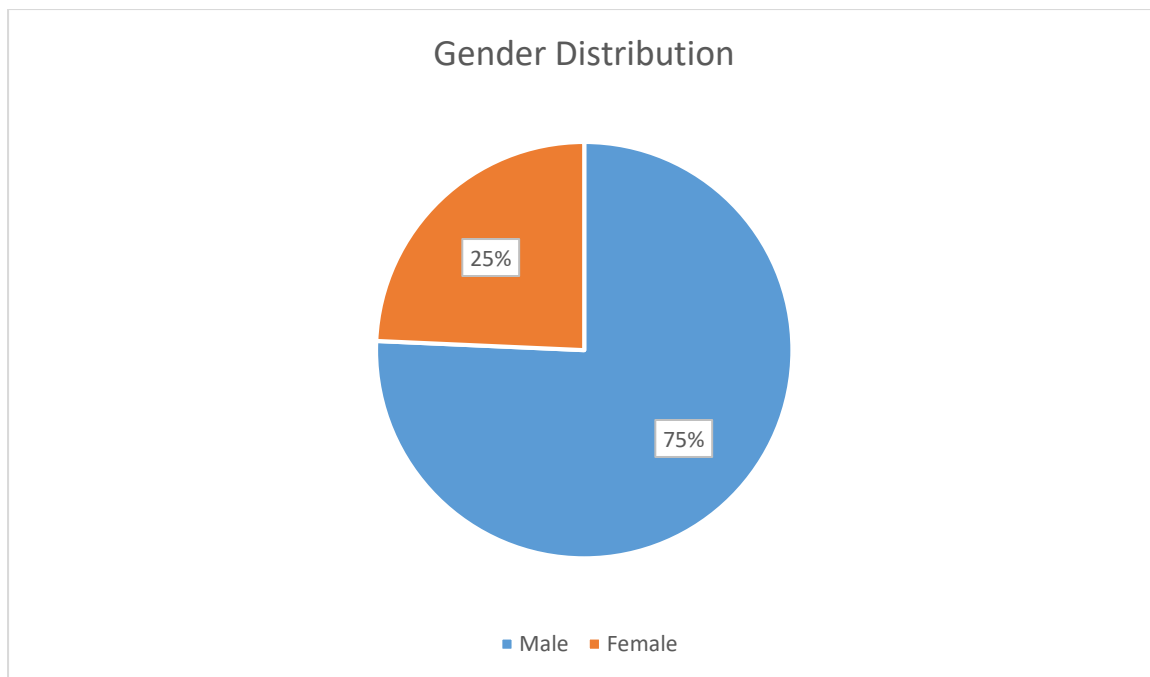


Figure 6.1 Gender distribution

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The findings show that the majority of the Zimbabweans engaged in SME activities are males. Very few females (25%) are SME entrepreneurs, which is an indicator of gender imbalance. The low percentage of women involved in entrepreneurial activities can be attributed to the fact that in most African states women are involved in agricultural production and gender inequality and lack of access to resources hinder them from following their ambitions and they end up pursuing other goals which are not in line with their priorities (McCaston and Rewald, 2005:17). It is for these reasons that the International Fund for Agricultural Development (2006:12) has programmes geared towards promoting women's activities in an attempt to address gender inequality, especially for women who live in poor communities. Agricultural Development (2006:12), with McCaston and Rewald (2005:17) concurring, states that one of the major causes of concern that has perpetuated poverty and hunger in developing nations is gender inequality. The new strategic framework should address this imbalance and provide affirmative action programmes for women and a quota system would encourage more female participation and inclusivity in SME programmes.

6.5.2 Age range distribution

The age distribution of the respondents is shown in Figure 6.2; the spread of the age groups indicates that the dominating age group in the SME sector in Zimbabwe is[incomplete sentence]. It shows a greater involvement of young people in SME activities compared to the older population.

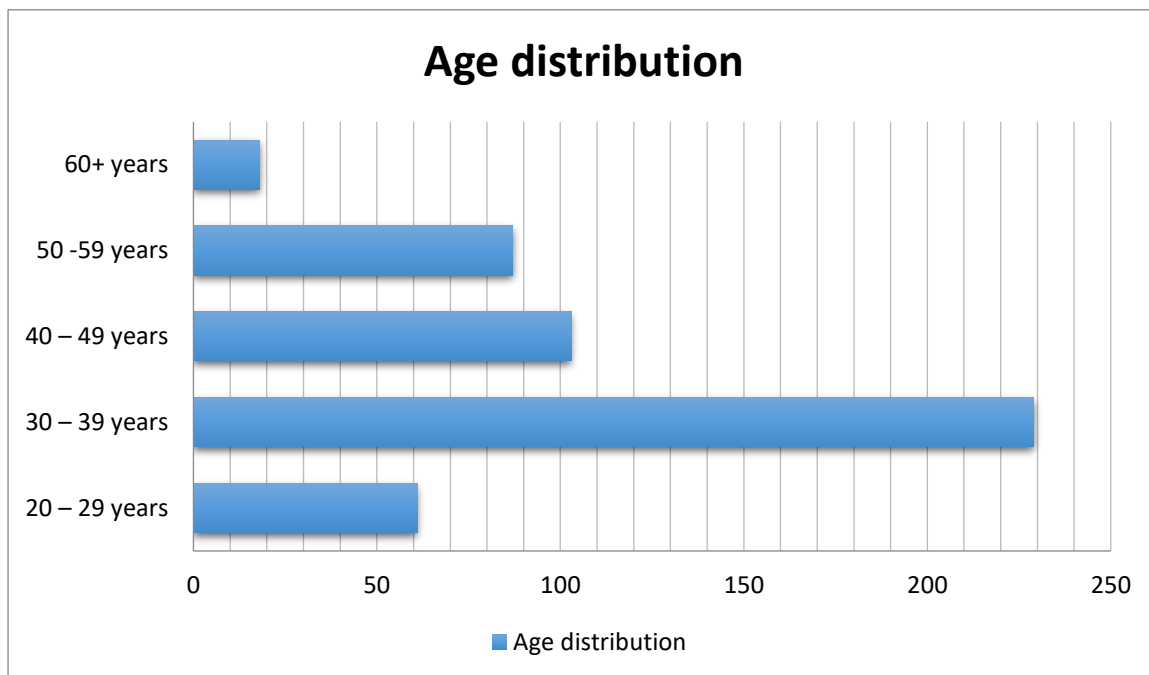


Figure 6.2 Age distribution

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The figure illustrates that the majority of the respondents, 49.5% (n247), are in the 30-39- age group, followed by the 40-49 age group, which has 17.8% (n89) of the respondents. These two age groups were followed by the 20-29 age group, which has 15.6% (n83) of respondents. The least number of respondents were in the 50-59 age group, with a 12.6% (n63) of the respondents, and in the 60 year-olds and above category, whose distribution was 3.4% (n17). The data indicates that the majority of the respondents with a cumulative value of 84% (n419), are below the age of 50. The findings are indicative of an SME sector that is dominated by relatively young entrepreneurs.

6.5.3 Race distribution

The distribution of the respondents by race is shown in the Figure 6.3.

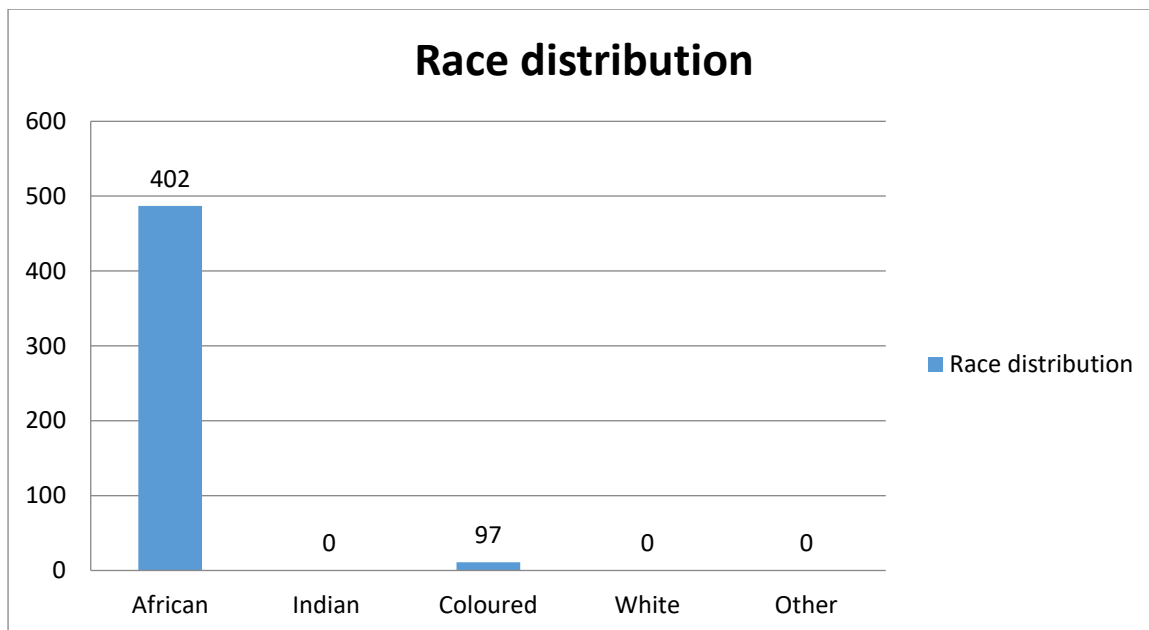


Figure 6.3 Race distribution

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The majority of the SME operators are of the African race with a response rate of 80.6% (n402) and the remaining 19.4% (n97) are coloured. The dominance of the African race means that the indigenisation and empowerment policy managed to target the intended beneficiaries, the black indigenous people. This group is composed of disadvantaged local people who needed assistance from the government in order to improve their lives.

6.5.4 Highest education qualification

The distribution of the highest education qualification, as shown in Figure 6.4, is vocationally trained respondents with certificates as the highest, representing 57.7% (n288), followed by university graduates with 19.2% (n96). Vocationally trained respondents with diplomas accounted for 14.8% (n74), those with high school qualifications 6.0% (n30), and least on the ranking, those with primary school level education at 2.2% (n11).

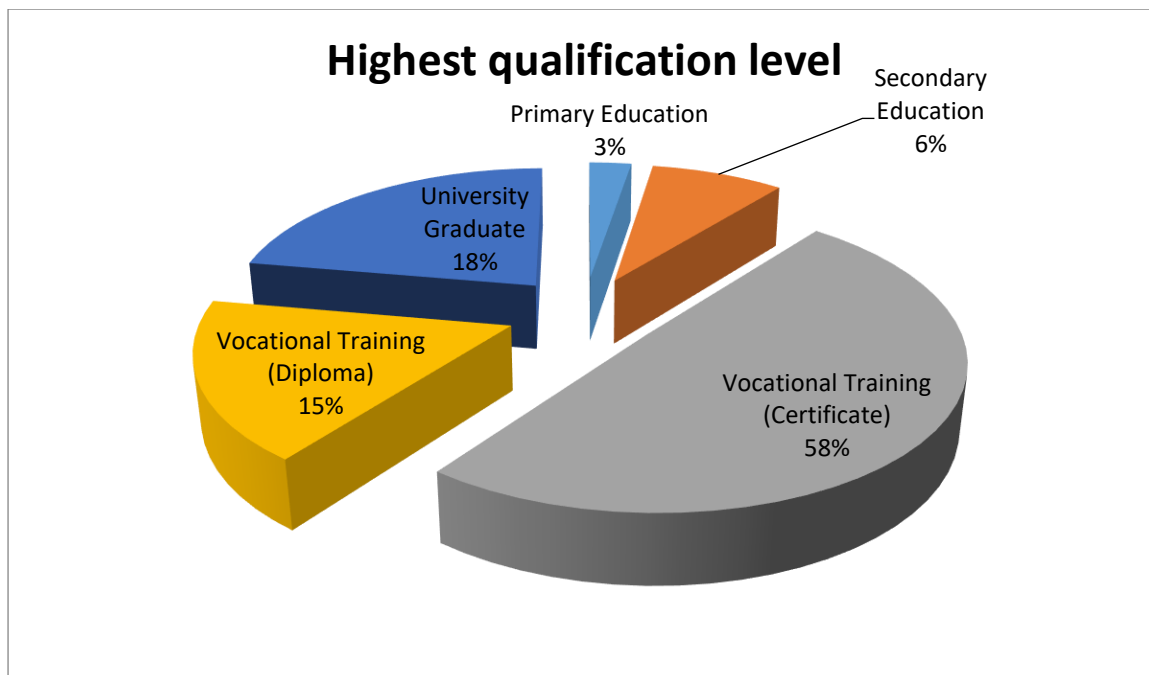


Figure 6.4: Distribution of educational qualifications

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The data shows that the respondents with a tertiary qualification represented 89% (n477) of the respondents. Considering this data distribution, it shows 100% literacy rate. These results confirm the findings of Majoni et al. (2016), who state that Zimbabwe is a country with one of the highest literacy rates in Africa. The Zimbabwean government can utilise the high literacy level to improve the skills and capacity of the SME implementers and turn the sector into a viable economic hub through creativity, innovation and scientific management of businesses.

6.5.5 Relationship between qualification and knowledge skills

Included in the demographic data acquisition process is the understanding of the relationship between SME operator qualifications and their knowledge and skills for the work in SME businesses. The main aim in this demographic factor is to establish whether it was an influencing variable for some of the variables covered in the questionnaire. Figure 6.5 below illustrates the distribution of the respondents who established that their qualifications equipped them with the adequate knowledge and skills for the work they do and those who indicated that there was no link at all between their qualifications and their organisational work.

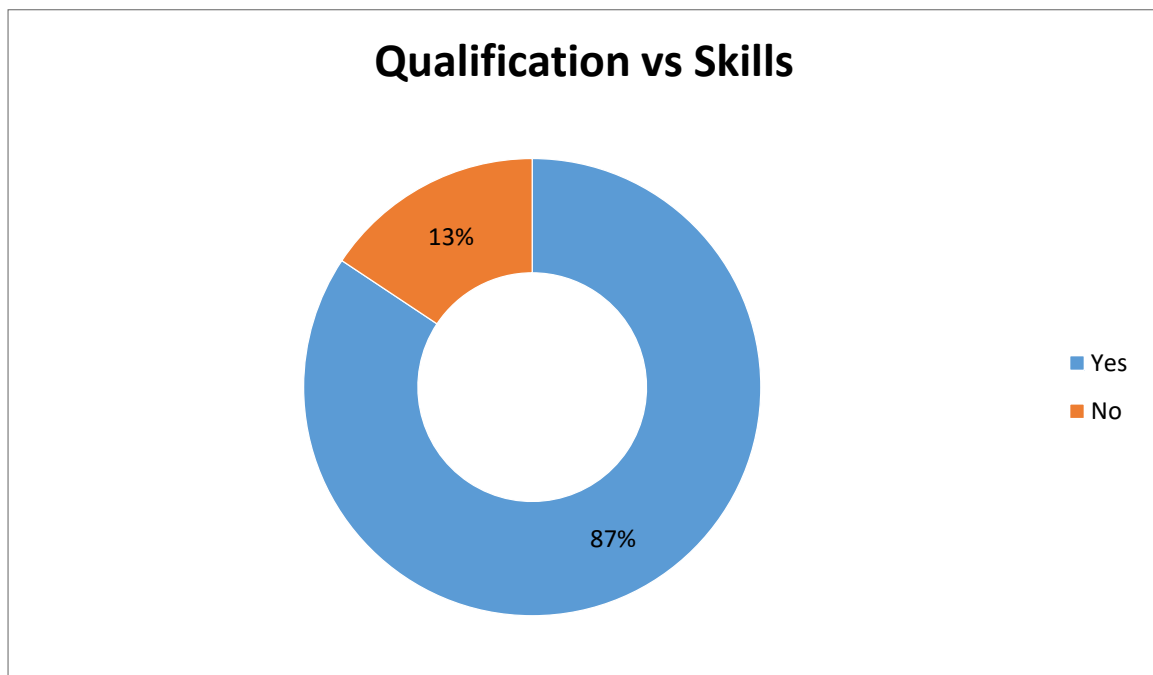


Figure 6.5 Qualifications and work performed

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The majority of the respondents indicated that there was a close link between qualifications attained and the work they do, as these constituted 87% (n434), while 13% (n65) indicated that there was no relationship between their qualifications and the work they performed.

6.5.6 Organisation sector

The demographic data provided vital information to determine the sectors SMEs operate in order to ascertain the dominant sector. Figure 6.6 illustrates the distribution of the SMEs in Zimbabwe among the various sectors.

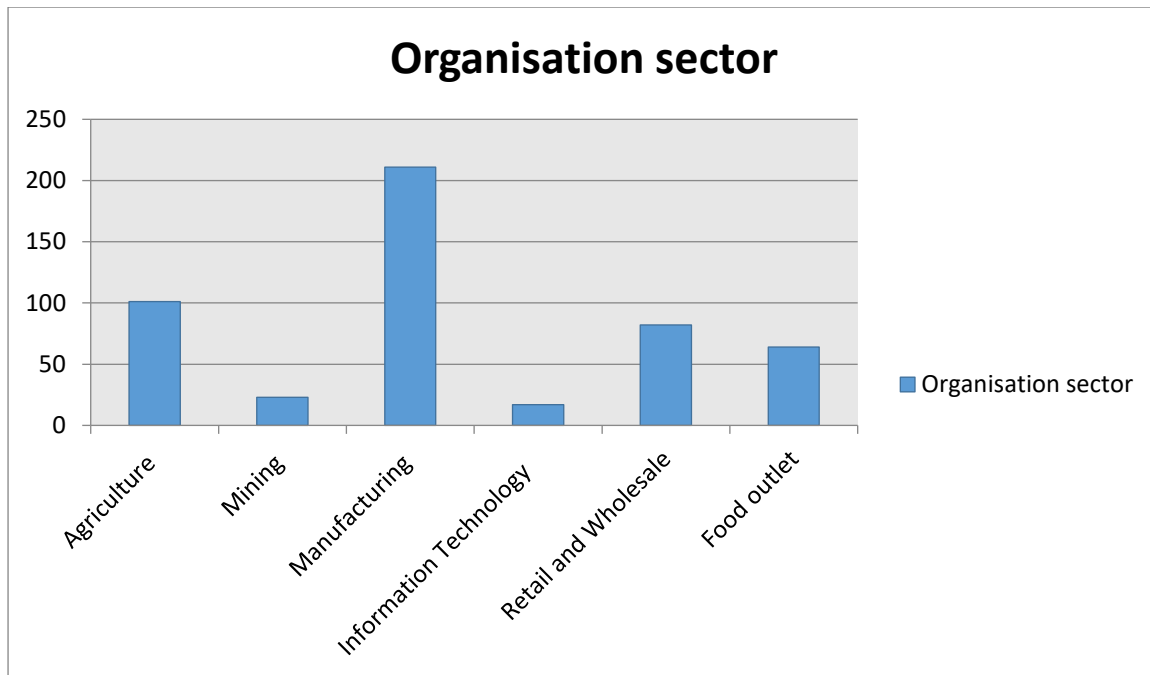


Figure 6.6 Organisation sector

(Source : Researcher's own work)

As illustrated in Figure 6.6, manufacturing comprised the majority of the respondents, constituting 51.1% (n255), followed by agriculture with a proportion of 17,8% (n89); in the third and fourth position were the food outlet and ICT sectors with 13.0% (n65) and 3.4% (n17) respectively. The least dominant sector was the retail and wholesale, which comprised 0.2% (n1). The number of respondents who were involved in other sectors represented 10.4% (n52). The dominance of the manufacturing sector has been recorded; for instance, in Ghana, where 85% of employees are in the manufacturing sector (Steel and Webster, 1991; Aryeetey, 2001 as cited by Abor and Quarterly 2010) and in Nigeria, 95% of the industries are in the manufacturing sector (Eniola, 2014). These findings imply that the manufacturing sector is the main activity of the SMEs.

6.5.7 Area of operation

Figure 6.7 revealed the distribution of the SMEs by their geographical location. The distribution helps to conceptualise the spread of the SMEs across Zimbabwe and shows their concentration. A comparison indicates whether the rural areas, the urban areas or the growth points dominate the SME activities in the country.

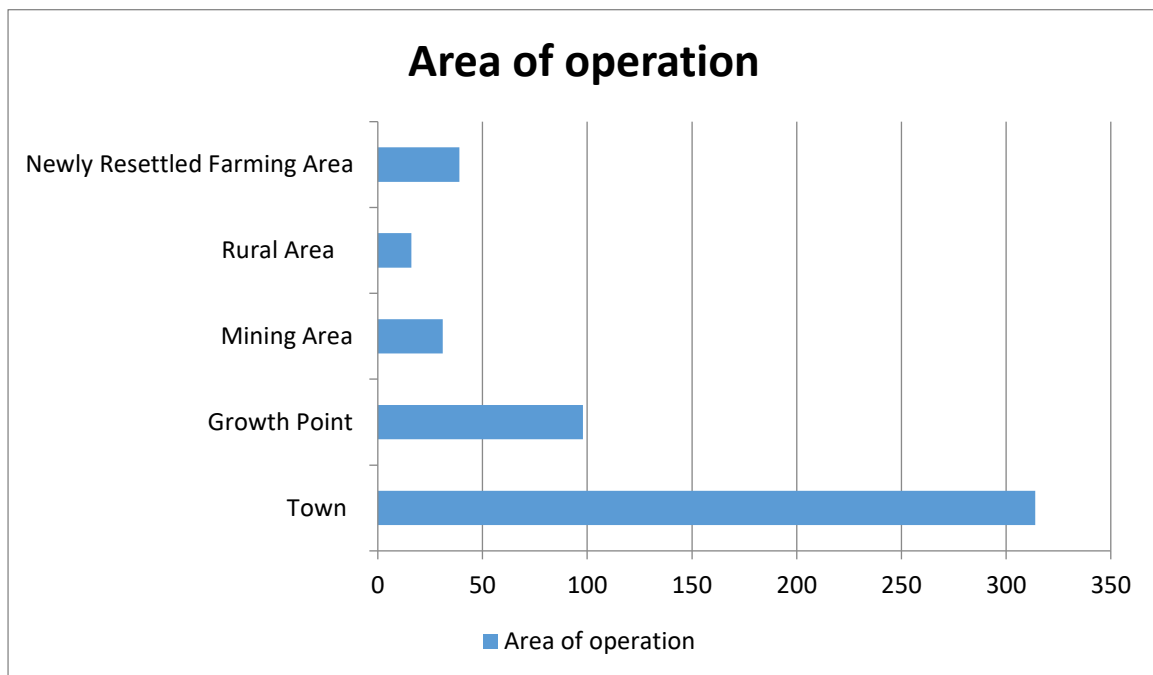


Figure 6.7: Area of operation

(Source : Researcher's own work)

From Figure 6.7, a 68.9% (n344) majority of SMEs were in the urban areas, followed by the growth points, comprising 16,4% (n82) of the respondents, the mining settlement area was third with 6.6% (n33). The least number of SMEs were in the resettlement areas and rural areas whose distributions were 3.2%(16) and 4.8% (n24) respectively. The findings demonstrate that most of the SME activity is concentrated in the urban areas. As stated by Reynolds et al. (1994), urban areas have numerous advantages for entrepreneurship and activity in urban density areas leads to thick product, labour and real estate markets, providing many opportunities for human interaction. In addition, cities provide an environment that facilitates more frequent meetings than in less densely populated areas (Jacobs, 1969). Cities, notably, are the economic hub of most nations.

6.5.8 Designation in the organisation

As part of further exploration of the demographic data, it was imperative to understand the designation of SME operators in the organisations, as this would reveal whether the owners or the employees are the main business operators. Figure 6.8 below illustrates the distribution of the respondents by designation in their respective organisations.

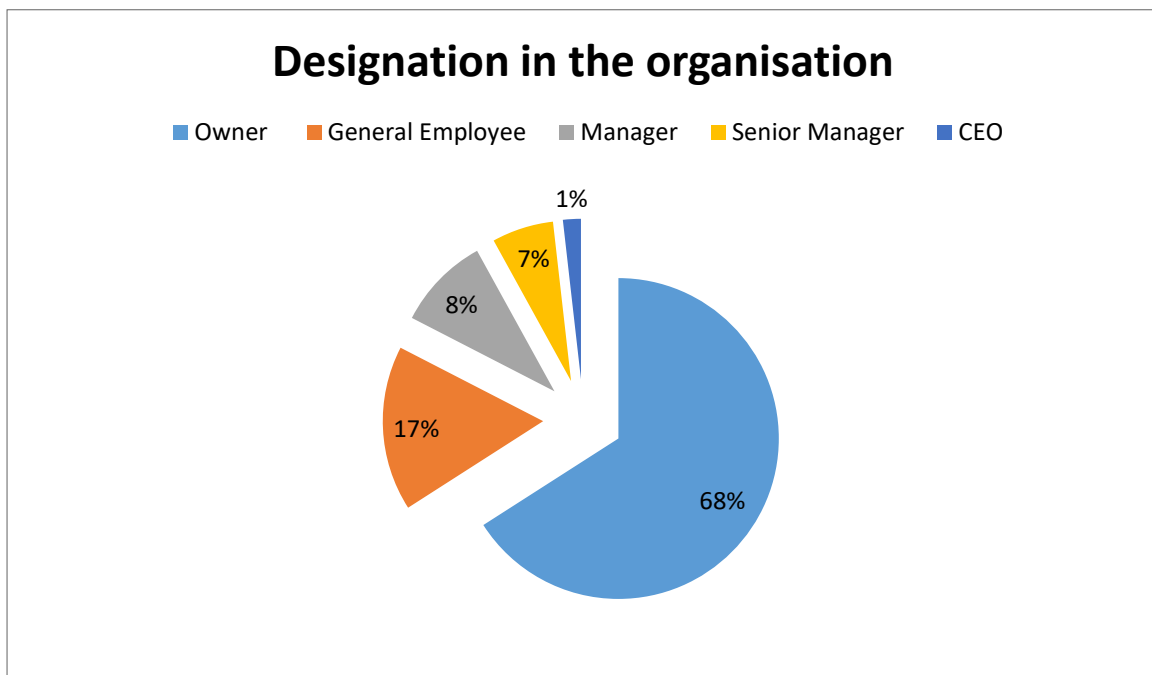


Figure 6.8 Designation in the organisation

(Source : Researcher's own work)

As shown in Figure 6.8, at 66.7% (n333), owners operate the majority of SMEs, followed by general employees with 17.2% (n86), and general managers with a proportion of 8.4% (n42). The least dominant were senior managers and CEOs, whose distributions were 6.6% (n33) and 1% (n5) respectively. These results concur with Griffith's (1998) assertion that the owners operate most SMEs as they provide employment for the people who have initiated the businesses.

6.5.9 Number of employees in the organisation

In an attempt to establish the average number of people working in an SME, the respondents had to indicate the number of employees in their respective organisations. The results are presented as in Figure 6.9.

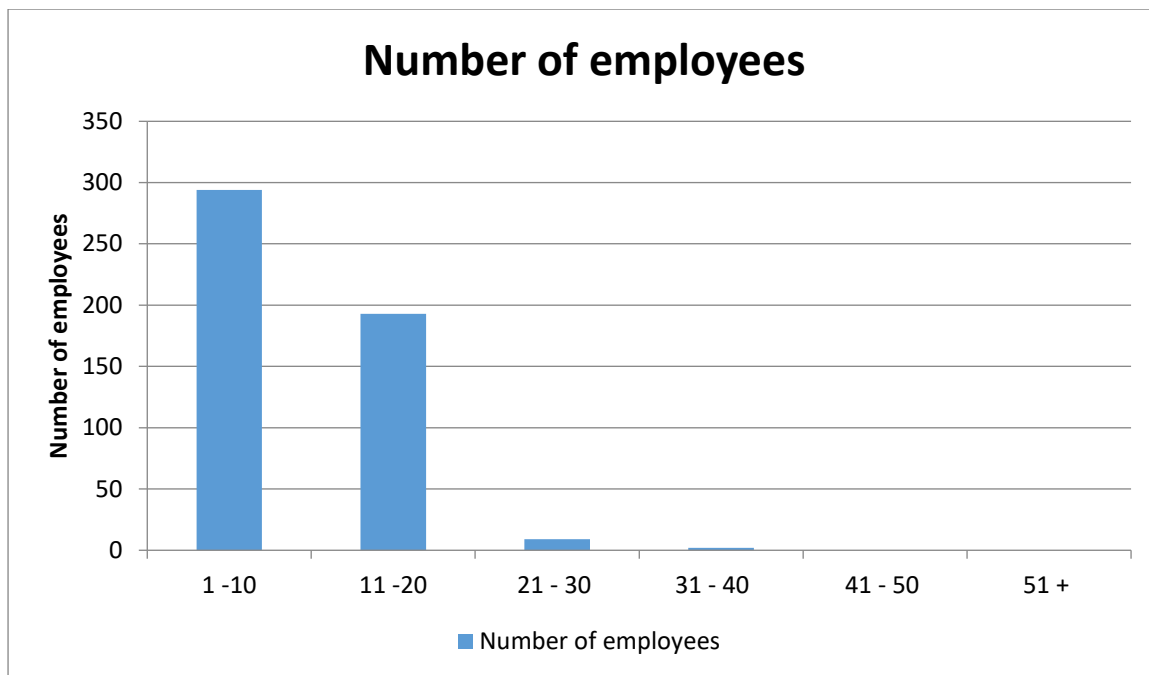


Figure 6.9 Number of employees

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The findings show that 66.9% (n334) of the respondents had 1-10 employees, while 32.3% (n161) had between 11 and 20 employees. The least number of employees was between 21 and 30, 0.8% (n4). There were no SME operators with more than thirty employees. These findings concur with the Zimbabwean Ministry of SMEs (2016) definition, which states that a small business entrepreneur that is registered, has less than fifty employees, while a medium business entity employs up to one hundred people.

The demographic data of the respondents can be summarised as follows:

The majority of the sample were males (75.2%); the biggest group (49.5%) of respondents were aged from 30 to 39; most of the sample were black Africans (80.6%); all the respondents were literate, with the majority having attained a certificate in tertiary education (57.7%); the majority of the sample were in the manufacturing sector (51.1%) and operating in urban areas (68.9%); and the majority of the respondents were the owners of the SMEs (66.7%).

6.5.10 Analysis and tests of qualifications equipping SME implementers

The respondents were asked if their qualifications equipped them with adequate knowledge and skills for their organisation and the results are shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Qualifications and the implementers' knowledge and skills

	Categories	N (%)
Qualification equipped you with adequate knowledge and skills for your organisation	Yes	434(87)
	No	65(13)

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The responses from Table 6.3 were used to perform a binomial test. The binomial test was used to determine if a significant proportion answered yes or no. The test uses the binomial distribution to decide if the outcome of an experiment in which we count the number of times one of two alternatives has occurred (Hervé, 2007). For large values of N, a normal approximation can be used for the binomial distribution.

Table 6.4 Binomial test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
A5 Would you say that your qualification equipped you with the adequate knowledge and skills for your organisation?	Group 1	Yes	434	.87	.50	.000 ^a
	Group 2	No	65	13		
	Total		499	1.00		

a. Based on Z Approximation. (Source : Researcher's own work)

A significant 87% indicated that their qualification equipped them with adequate knowledge and skills for their organisation, $p < .0005$.

Note In SPSS a p value given as .000 is very small and reported as $p < .0005$; a p value of e.g. .017 is reported as $p = .017$

The value of p is derived initially by first computing a Z score (Singh, 2013). From the sample, a significant 87% of operators indicated that their qualification equipped them with adequate

knowledge and skills for their organisation ($p < .0005$). These results show that 87% of the respondents indicated that their academic qualifications have helped them to be much better entrepreneurs. Consequently, there is much value in educational acquisition for SMEs, as it is being used as an important tool in implementers' daily business.

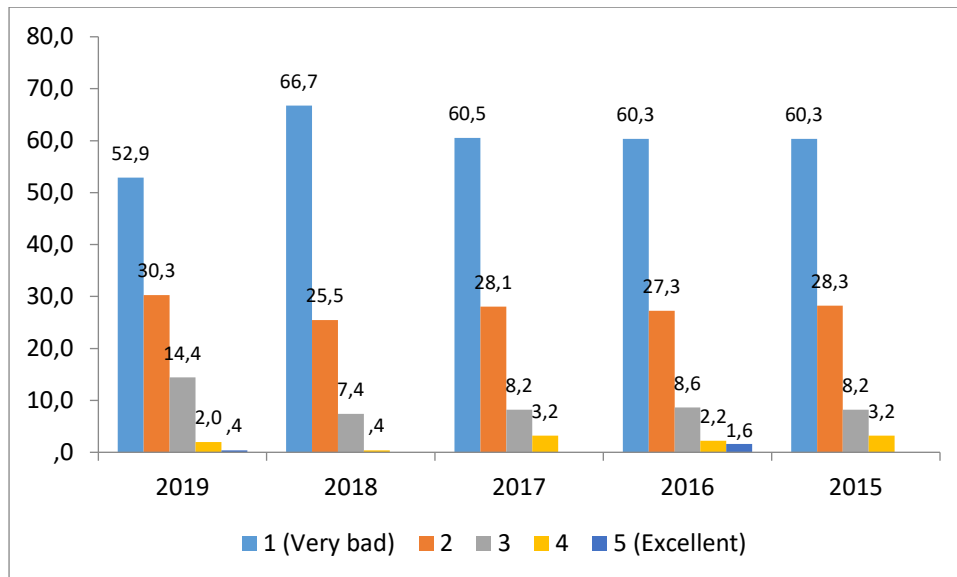


Figure 6.10: Performance of the business: 2015 – 2019

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Summarised in Table 6.11, is further analysis of the results showing means and standard deviations of annual performance from 2015 to 2019. The standard deviation represents a numerical value below or above the mean. It is a measure of dispersion when we describe a sample and the deviation from the mean of each data point is calculated. It is a descriptive statistic that estimates the scatter of values around the sample mean; hence, the standard deviation describes the sample (Andrade, 2020).

The standard deviation of the performance from 2015 to 2019 is less than 1 (one), which shows that the results are very accurate. The bigger the standard variation, the more unreliable the data is. The result shows that the findings of the study can be generalised to the population under study.

Table 6.5: Analysis of SME performance

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance 2019	499	1.67	.825
Performance 2018	499	1.41	.645
Performance 2017	499	1.54	.779
Performance 2016	499	1.58	.862
Performance 2015	499	1.54	.779

(Source : Researcher's own work)

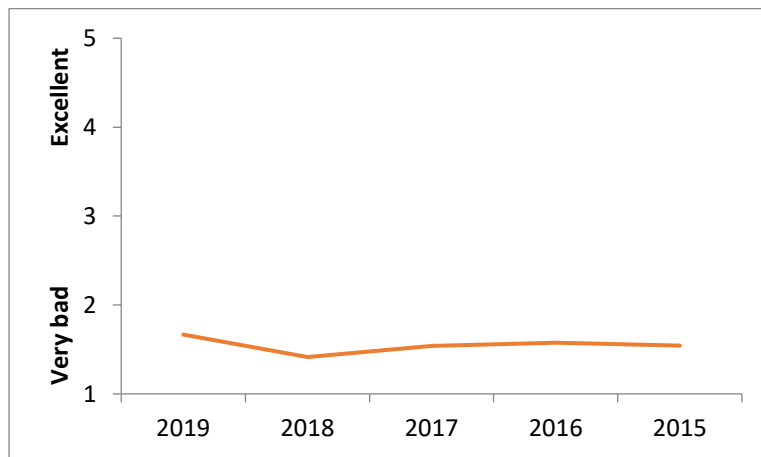


Figure 6.11 Consolidated results

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Figure 6.11 shows that there is generally low performance of SMEs, as most of the respondents selected *Very bad* as the option for the performance of their business during the period under review. This concurs with the study done by Majoni et al. (2016: 382), who confirmed that, "SME failure is high in Zimbabwe because of poor training and monitoring of the sector by Government." The secondary information correlates with the primary data representing the SME implementers.

6.6 Presentation and discussion of research oriented results

This section documents the results of the findings from the interviews and the questionnaires. The gathered information from the interviews is grouped using the main theme and various

small themes that were generated from the collected data. These themes generated from the interviews have been utilised to develop questionnaires, which tested the generalisability of the findings hence the sequential mixed approach was employed in this study.

The findings from both the qualitative and quantitative responses were recorded and analysed for efficacious data management purposes. The findings were then grouped in three sections according to the secondary objectives such as: - Responses on policy awareness and the effects of government policies on SME performance, responses the support received from the government and responses on what should be incorporated in the strategic framework for SMEs. The section, therefore has been segmented into three sections which is sync and in line with the stated objectives.

6.6.1 Objective 1: Effects of government policy on SME performance

Objective one is stated as follows: To assess if the government policies positively influenced the performance of SMEs.

6.6.1.1 Understanding of the two policies

The qualitative data was collected from ten respondents who were purposefully selected from a group of experts in SME policy formulation, implementation and the cognate monitoring and evaluation of SME programmes. The participating respondents could be described as the employees of government departments, non-governmental organisations and leaders of SME organisations. They were knowledgeable of government processes of policy formulation, information dissemination and the general implementation processes. Table 6.6 shows the results from the ten participating respondents' uncontrived interview process in the evaluation of their understanding of the indigenisation and empowerment policy:

Table 6.6: Understanding of the indigenisation and empowerment policy

n = 10

Understanding of indigenisation and empowerment policy		
Aspects that emerged to express understanding of indigenous empowerment policy	Key informants who mentioned the same (e.g. K01, K07, K8, etc.)	Total number of key informants
It promotes equal opportunities for all citizens	K02, K03, K04, K07, K05	5
A policy which unlocks wealth creation by the indigenous population in the country	K08, K02, K04, K09, K10,	5
Training of the Zimbabwean citizens on business ethics	K09, K08, K03, K05,	4
A policy which facilitates funding for investment in the country	K09, K02, K04	3
It promotes the local Zimbabweans to be responsible citizens	K01, K02	2

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The respondents indicated that they were aware of the indigenisation policy and showed a great understanding of the tenets of the policy. The female respondent K01, who works for the government elaborated on the indigenisation policy when she stated:

“It is the policy that was put in place by the government to help the Zimbabweans to improve national development. It helped them to do their business and it was good for change in the structure of who creates wealth and employment in the country. Remember big companies had closed down. The indigenisation policy is a policy that promotes the local Zimbabweans to be in charge of the country.”

Another male respondent K07, who is in the manufacturing sector, expressed his knowledge of the indigenisation policy as follows:

“The indigenisation and empowerment policy promotes equality among the people of Zimbabwe in terms of opportunities and development of the country. This policy deal with the equal access to the wealth of the country. Zimbabwe is rich in natural resources like farming, mining, wild life and vegetation which must benefit every Zimbabwean.”

The respondents were asked to describe their own understanding of the Industrial policy and the results are in Table 6.7

Table 6.7 Understanding of the industrial policy

Understanding of industrial policy		
Aspects that emerged to express understanding of industrial policy	Key informants who mentioned the same (e.g. K01, K07, K8, etc.)	Total number of key informants
It is a policy that is designed to improve the economy of the country through sustainable support to SMEs and value chain management.	K01, K02, K03, K05, K07, K09	6
It is a policy that was intended to improve the country's technology.	K01, K02, K03, K04, K07	5
It enables the intervention of the government on capacity building of business operators in the country.	K08, K04, K07, K08	4
It promotes local industries and entrepreneurship.	K01, K03, K05, K06	4
It has a mechanism to ensure that cohesion exists between the producers and the retailers.	K08, K09, K10	3

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The respondents showed a high level of understanding of the industrial policy. The female respondent KO6, who is in a construction company, had this to say about the industrial policy:

“The industrial policy has to do with improvement of the local business. It promotes

the local industries which include the farmers, manufacturers, retailers and all the sectors involved with the economic development of the nation. It is important to note that the policy focuses on the total development and improvement of the local industries through all the support services like infrastructure, technology and research and development.”

A male respondent K010, who is in the agricultural sector, also indicated a high level of understanding of the industrial policy. In his explanation, he had this to say:

“The industrialisation policy focused on building of the economy through SMEs. The government stressed that the SMEs can be harnessed into a productive sector for the development of the country’s economy. The industrial policy provides all the support that the government would provide to the SMEs in order to make the sector the backbone of the economy of Zimbabwe.”

It can be concluded that the respondents who were interviewed showed a great understanding of the two policies and have high knowledge levels of the policies, as indicated by the responses that were provided. These results were used to solicit the information from the lower levels and the starting point was to address the following question: Was the policy information disseminated to the SME operators and other stakeholders?

6.6.1.2 Awareness of the two policies among the implementers

Awareness of the two policies became the first part of section B of the questionnaire that solicited information that addressed the participants’ awareness of government policies and their effects on SME performance. The questionnaire for the first part had ten (10) questions and the respondents were asked to indicate how much they know about the IEP and the industrial policy that promote SMEs in Zimbabwe by selecting a response from four options: *Not at all, Very little, To some extent and To a great extent*. The results are presented using the table (Table 6.8) and the graph (Figure 6.12). The responses were consolidated, as shown in the Table 6.8

Table 6.8: Awareness of the two policies among the implementers

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)			
	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent
Have you heard about the indigenisation and industrial policies?	406 (81.4)	65 (13.0)	17(3.4)	11 (2.2)
B2 Do you have copies of the two policies at your organisation?	329 (65.9)	139(27.9)	23(4.6)	8 (1.6)
Did any government officer visit you to talk about the two policies?	397(79.6)	71(14.2)	24(4.8)	7(1.4)
B4 Do you have local offices for the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)?	384(77.0)	81(16.2)	25(5.0)	8(1.6)
B5 Does the government distribute information (gazette, brochures, fliers) about the two policies?	395(79.2)	73(14.6)	20(4.0)	11(2.2)
B6 Did the government make any consultations and later inform you about its vision in coming up with the two policies?	405(81.2)	71(14.2)	17(3.4)	6(1.2)
B7 Does the government hold regular workshops to discuss the two policies?	399(80.0)	77(15.4)	11(2.2)	3(.6)
B8 In your operations, are you guided by the two policies?	398(79.8)	72(14.4)	21(4.2)	7(1.4)
B9 Did your organisation benefit from the two policies?	391(78.4)	78(15.6)	21(4.2)	4(.8)
B10 Is the government doing enough work on the ground to keep you informed about the two policies?	386(77.4)	82(16.4)	19(3.8)	6(1.2)

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Graphical representation of the results indicating awareness of the Indigenisation and Empowerment Policy and the Industrial Policy.

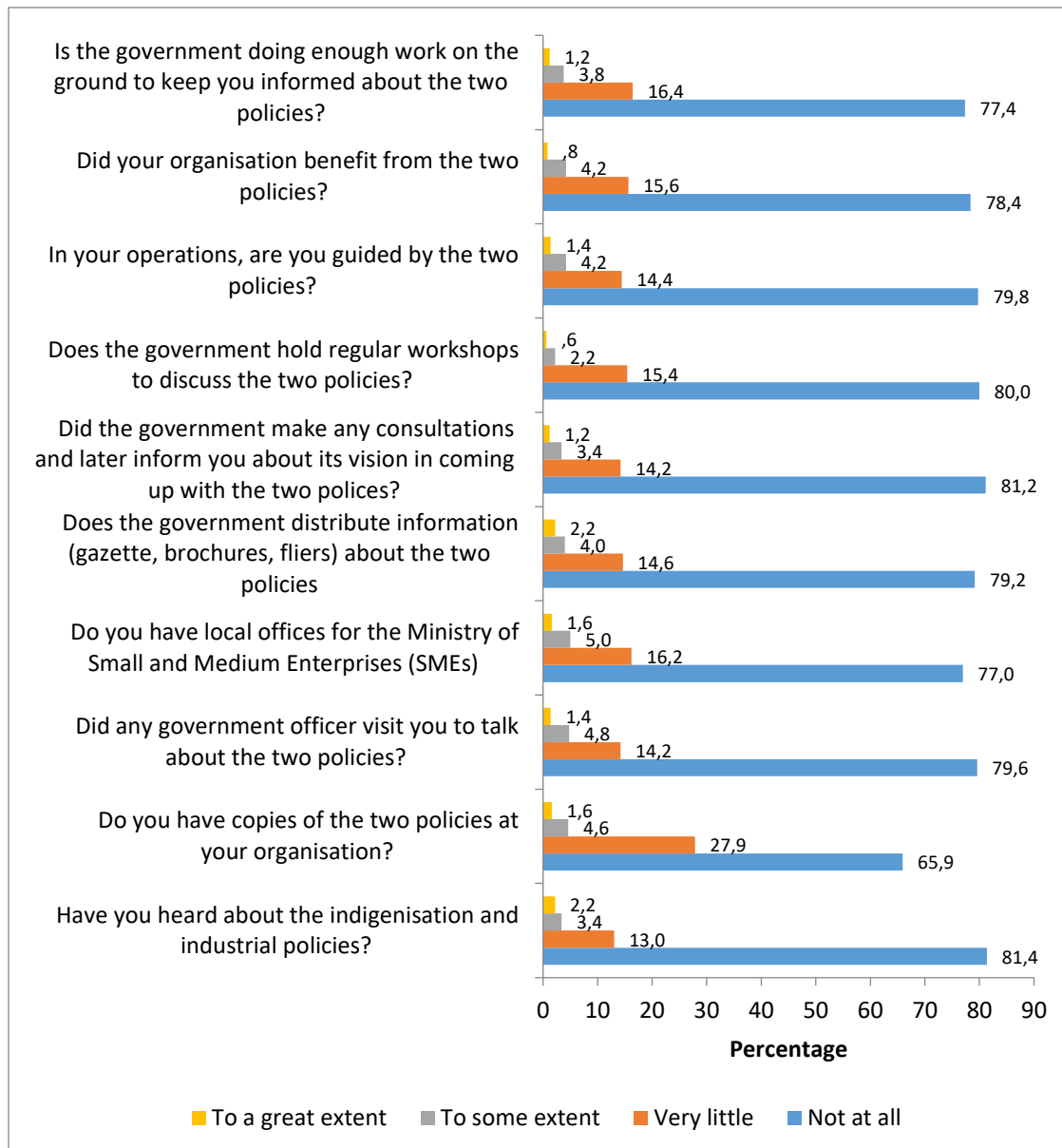


Figure 6.12: Awareness of the two polices among the implementers

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Considering the 10 items, the awareness of the policies is quantified by items 1 to 7, and 10. Items 8 and 9 measure the operational effect of the SMEs within the policy framework. Therefore, a composite measure for awareness of the policies (AWARE) was obtained by adding together responses to the 8 items listed above. These responses were considered as a cumulative score of awareness – the total awareness in all areas. This summated measure

ranges from 8 (min = not at all for all 8 items) to 32 (to a great extent for all 8 items). This composite measure provided the data that addressed the respondents' awareness of the policies. Analysis of AWARENESS was done using the Cronbach's alpha.

Table 6.9: Statistics on awareness of the policies

N	Valid	499
	Missing	0
Mean		10.2745
Median		10.0000
Std. Deviation		1.66911
Minimum		7.00
Maximum		17.00
Percentiles	25	9.0000
	50	10.0000
	75	11.0000

(Source : Researcher's own work)**Table 6.10 Analysis of awareness**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7.00	3	.6	.6	.6
	8.00	58	11.6	11.6	12.2
	9.00	120	24.0	24.0	36.3
	10.00	124	24.8	24.8	61.1
	11.00	93	18.6	18.6	79.8
	12.00	52	10.4	10.4	90.2
	13.00	25	5.0	5.0	95.2
	14.00	14	2.8	2.8	98.0
	15.00	7	1.4	1.4	99.4
	16.00	2	.4	.4	99.8
	17.00	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	499	100.0	100.0	

The reason that three people scored only 7 (when the minimum is 8) is because they did not answer one of the questions that are related to the awareness of the policy. This affected the results accordingly.

Analysis (chi-square goodness-of-fit test) shows that a significant number scored from 8 to 12 ($p < .0005$).

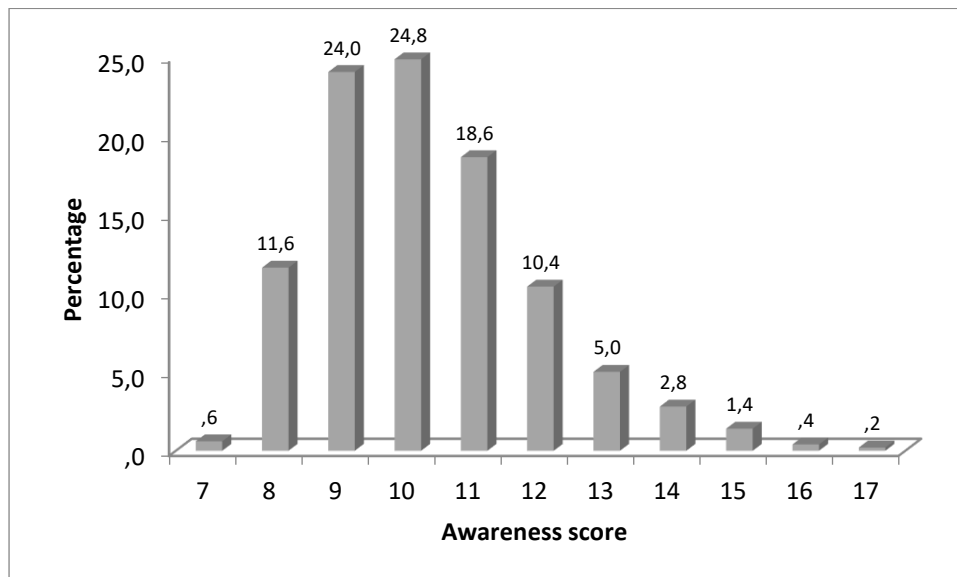


Figure 6.13: Analysis (chi-square goodness-of-fit test) of awareness
(Source : Researcher's own work)

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was done to test the correlation between AWARE and the five measures for performance and it showed that a significant number scored from 8 to 12 ($p < .0005$). The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was appropriate to analyse the data.

Table 6.11: Analysis of the relationship between policy awareness and performance of SMEs

Correlations

	Performance 2019	Performance 2018	Performance 2017	Performance 2016	Performance 2015
Spearman's AWARE Correlation	-.016	.032	.026	-.019	.026
rho					
Coefficient					
Sig. (2-tailed)	.718	.482	.558	.666	.560
N	499	499	499	499	499

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

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The analysis of the relationship between policy awareness and performance of SMEs indicate that there is no correlation between awareness of the policies and performance from 2015 to 2019.

Causal analysis

A regression analysis between the variables (AWARE & PERF) was taken into account by the researcher with:

IV = AWARE and

DV = PERF 2019

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

The performance stemming from 2019 was selected due to its existential nature and its results are more applicable to the current SME performance compared to the 2015 results.

Table 6.12: Analysis of awareness as a predictor of performance in 2019

	df	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
AWARE	10	.664	.759	.013
Error	488			

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Dependent Variable: Performance2019

a. R Squared = .013 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)

AWARE accounts for 1.3% ($R^2 = .013$) of the variance in Performance2019, $F(10, 488) = .664$, $p = .759$. AWARE is not a significant predictor of Performance 2019.

6.6.1.3 Effects of government policies on SME performance

The interviewees were asked to explain the effects of government policies on SME performance. The results are shown in Table 6.13.

Table 6.13: Effects of government policies on SME performance (interviewees)

Objective 1: Government policy aspects that have positively influenced the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe		
Aspects mentioned that positively influenced performance of SMEs	Key informants who mentioned the same (e.g. K01, K07, K8, etc.)	Total number of key informants
Dissemination of vital information through public and private media	K01, K02, K03, K04, K05, K06, K07, K08, K09, K10	10
Provision of affordable loans	K01, K05, K08, K09	4
Provision of inputs	K10, K04, K08	3
Establishment, design and implementation of SME trainings	K10, K07	2
Provision of productive land	K01	1

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The respondents indicated that the government used public and private media such as the national newspapers, radio and television as a means of disseminating information to the SME stakeholders. This was emphasised by a male respondent K02, who works in the transport sector:

“The government mostly used public media. The state newspapers, the radio and the televisions were used to disseminate the necessary information for the entrepreneurs. I still remember reading about the policies in the newspaper where the minister of SMEs was talking about the SMEs and how the government is encouraging people to be involved in this sector. The public media provides the information to the SME operators.”

The respondents stated that the government did not provide much support to SMEs in terms of loans, farming inputs and training. In the instances where the government made an effort to assist SME operators, there were no formal procedures for the selection of beneficiaries and very few people benefitted from these programmes. The male respondent K05 from the manufacturing sector stated the following about the provision of government support to SME operators:

“The SMEs were empowered by the government through funding. Some SME operators received money from the government for their operations even though a very small number received the money but at least they got something. Some operators were assisted to find market for their products and they got help because they were registered by the government.”

Despite the mention of government assistance by some respondents, respondent K03 who is in the mining sector sounded bitter when he emphasised that the government did not do much to assist the mining sector:

“As I have said it already. The government is not helping much. People are in need of money to buy the chemicals for blasting, compressors and so many more other mining equipment but that money is not coming at all.”

The interviewees indicated that the government's support to SME implementers was very insignificant and did not make any impact on the performance of SMEs. The respondents were asked to indicate how much the government policies had influenced the performance of their organisations. The results are presented in tables and graphs. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used to analyse the data. Table 6.14 provides the results of the responses on the effect of government policies on the performance of SMEs in figures and the data is presented in graphs. A graphical representation of the results indicating the effects of government policies on the performance of SMEs is shown in Figure 6.14.

Table 6.14: Effects of government policies on SME performance (questionnaire respondents)

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)				χ^2	df	p-value
	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent			
B12 Government creates stimulating environment for high performance	399(80)	61(12.2)	35(7.0)		499.830 ^a	2	<.0005
B13 Government provides expertise to help in your operations	412(82.6)	55(11.0)	24(4.8)	4(.8)	905.897 ^b	3	<.0005
B14 Do you have access to government resources?	367(73.5)	81(16.2)	43(8.6)	3(.8)	664.769 ^c	3	<.0005
B15 Government distributes information (gazette, brochures, fliers) about the two policies	414(83.0)	54(10.8)	29(5.8)	2(.4)	905.064 ^d	3	<.0005
B16 Government provides duty exemptions on your input	423(84.8)	47(9.4)	25(5.4)	2(0.4)	965.913 ^e	3	<.0005
B17 Government provides access to fuel and electricity	394(79.0)	63(12.6)	39(7.8)	1(.2)	796.577 ^e	3	<.0005

B18 Government provides good feeder roads	366(73.3)	85(17.0)	44(8.8)	1(.2)	658.177 ^f	3	<.0005
B19 Government promotes women and youth involvement	395(79.2)	69(13.8)	29(5.8)	5(1.0)	800.410 ^g	3	<.0005
B20 Government promotes research and development	382(76.6)	71(14.2)	38(7.6)	8(1.6)	723.228 ^d	3	<.0005
B21 Government helps to develop sectoral marketing strategies	410(82.2)	53(10.6)	29(5.8)	6(1.2)	881.807 ^g	3	<.0005
B22 Government organises national conferences	419(84.0)	46(9.2)	27(5.4)	5(1.0)	939.064 ^e	3	<.0005
B23 Government provides networking programmes (intersectoral meetings)	357(71.5)	81(16.2)	46(9.2)	12(2.4)	602.952 ^f	3	<.0005

(Source : Researcher's own work)

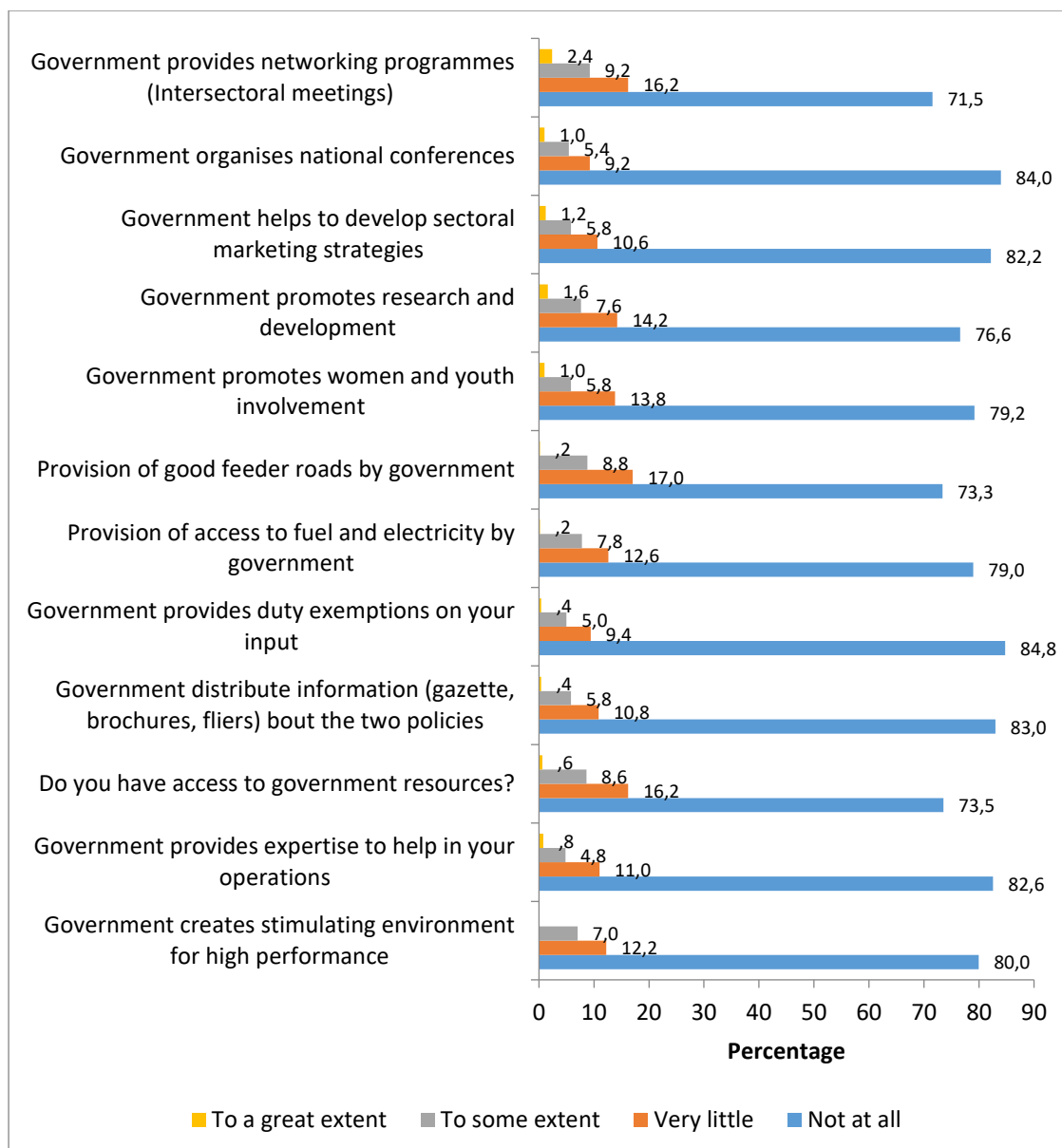


Figure 6.14: Effects of government policies on SME performance (questionnaire respondents)

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The results indicate that the response *Not at all* was selected significantly more than the other responses for all the items. The response *To a great extent* was least selected by the respondents. Analysis on the individual items was done – test = chi-square goodness-of-fit test.

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of the reliability of the composite variable. It is usually accepted that a value $>.7$ indicates reliability. However, this statistic is sensitive to the number of items

included in the composite variable and so when there are only two items, a lower value for alpha is acceptable. A summary of the sub-constructs is presented in Table 6.15.

Table 6.15: Summary of the sub-constructs on SME performance

Construct	Label	Items included	Cronbach's alpha
Networking	NET	Government organises national conferences	.671
		Government provides networking programmes	
Inputs	INP	Government provides duty exemptions on your input	.634
		Government provides access to fuel and electricity	
Supporting environment	SUPENV	Government creates stimulating environment for high performance	.595
		Government provides expertise to help in your operations	
Operations	OPS	Government promotes research and development	.514
		Government helps to develop sectoral marketing strategies	

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Regression analysis was applied to test the causal effect of these constructs on Performance of SMEs in 2019.

Table 6.16: Regression analysis testing the causal effect of sub-constructs of 2019 SME performance

Model	Unstandardised coefficients	Significant predictor
POL_NET	.020	.749
POL_SUPENV	.027	.721
POL_OPS	-.039	.575

(Source : Researcher's own work)

None of these IVs is a significant predictor of SME Performance in 2019 as indicated by the value of R^2 : $R^2 = .032$; $F(3, 495) = .168$, $p = .918$.

A significant number of the SME operators who responded to the questionnaires indicated that the government assistance did not help them to improve their performance. The interviewees who stated that very small government support was provided to SME implementers supported these sentiments.

6.6.2 Objective 2: Government resources and SME performance

The second objective was stated as follows: To assess the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources to SMEs in Zimbabwe. The respondents were interviewed about their knowledge concerning this provision. Three main themes emerged from them in relation to the government support to SMEs: information dissemination process, distribution of funds and human resource support.

6.6.2.1 Information dissemination process

Eight (8) respondents stated that the government communicated with SME stakeholders through public media. The tree analysis in Figure 6.15 indicates the common methods that the government used to disseminate information.

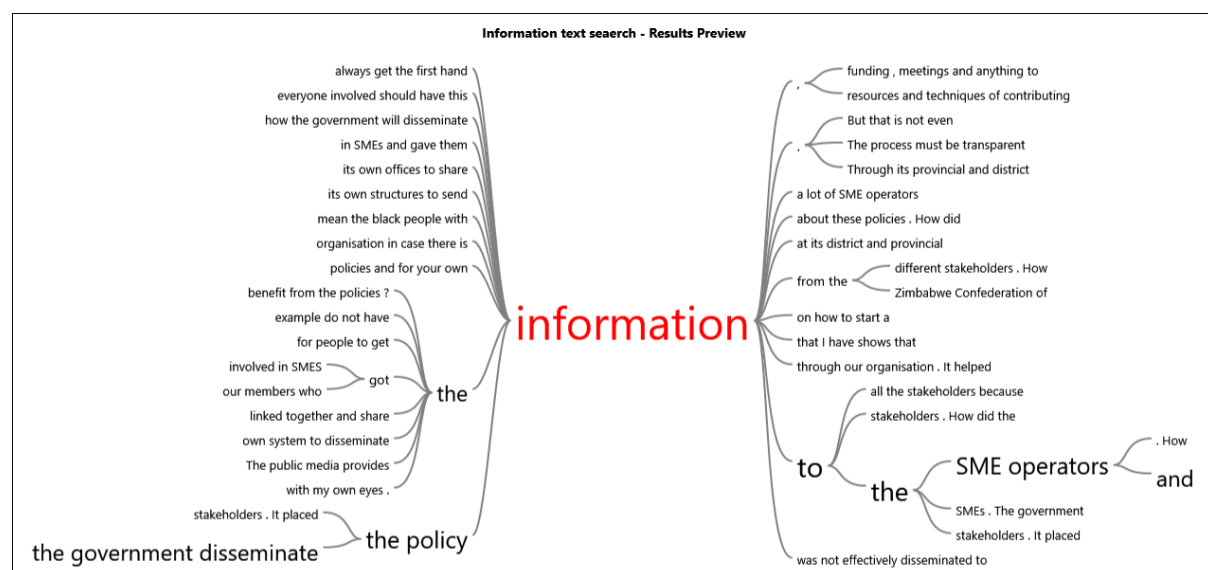


Figure 6.15: Information dissemination process

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The male interviewee K04, who is in the agriculture sector, confirmed that the government used public gatherings and the internet to disseminate information to stakeholders. The respondent stated as follows:

“I only noticed that people were informed about the policies at public gatherings and on the internet for those who were able to have access to it. But I am sure people in the rural areas for example do not have the information about these policies.”

The respondent made a strong emphasis that stakeholders who had no access to the internet would not be able to access the information.

6.6.2.2 Government funding of SMEs

The respondents indicated that the government provided some financial assistance to the SMEs, but could not confirm the impact it made to SME sector and could not give details of the selection process of the beneficiaries. The tree diagram in Figure 6.16 shows the responses of the respondents.

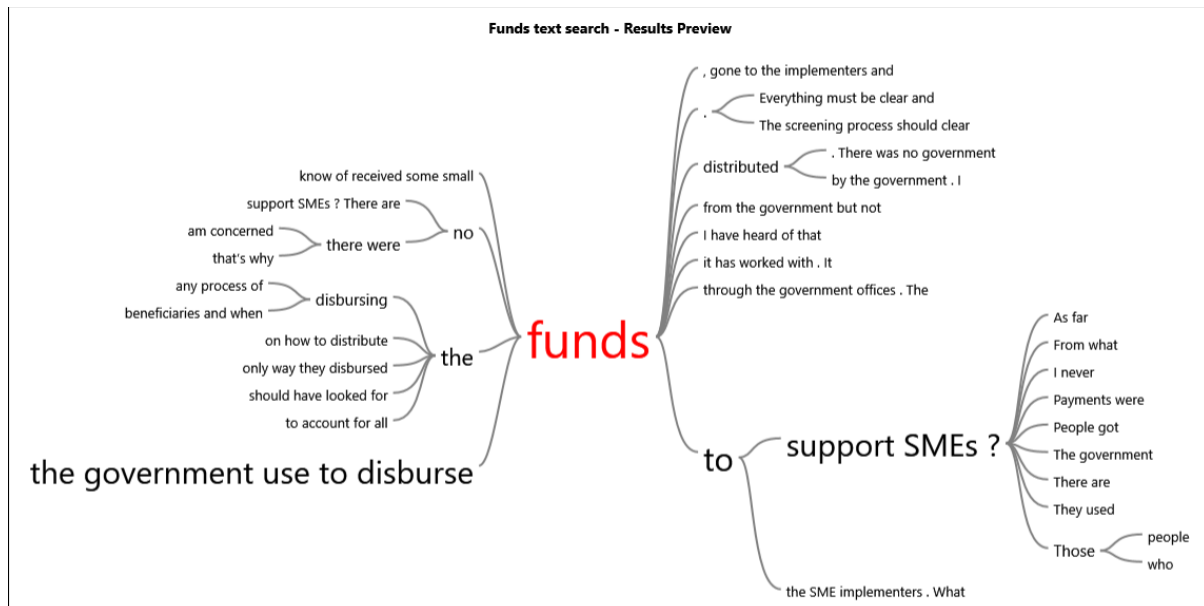


Figure 6.16: Government funding of SMEs

(Source : Researcher's own work)

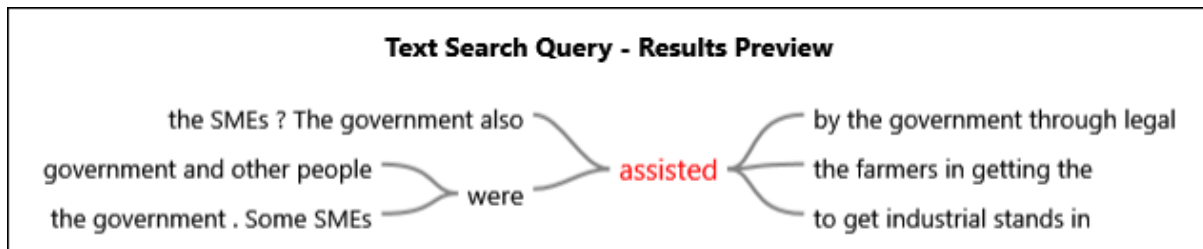


Figure 6.17: Analysis of SME assistance by the government

(Source : Researcher's own work)

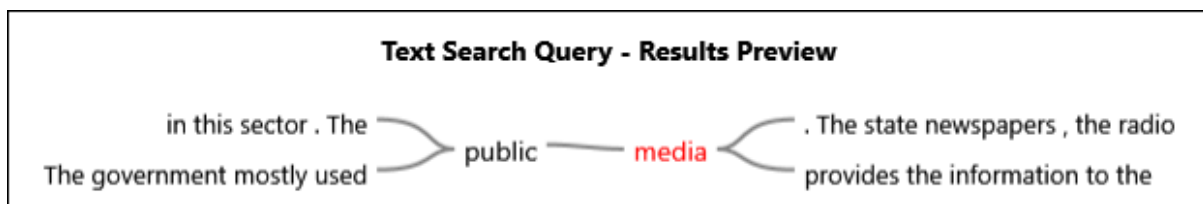


Figure 6.18: Analysis of information dissemination

(Source : Researcher's own work)

6.6.2.3. Human resource support

Most of the respondents concurred that the government did not do enough to support SME implementers. It did not have enough human resources to disseminate information to the stakeholders, to train SME implementers, to work in local areas and to monitor and evaluate the implementation process. Moreover, the government did not follow up any inputs it distributed to find out whether it was put to good use. The tree diagram in Figure 6.19 shows the respondents' views on human resources support.

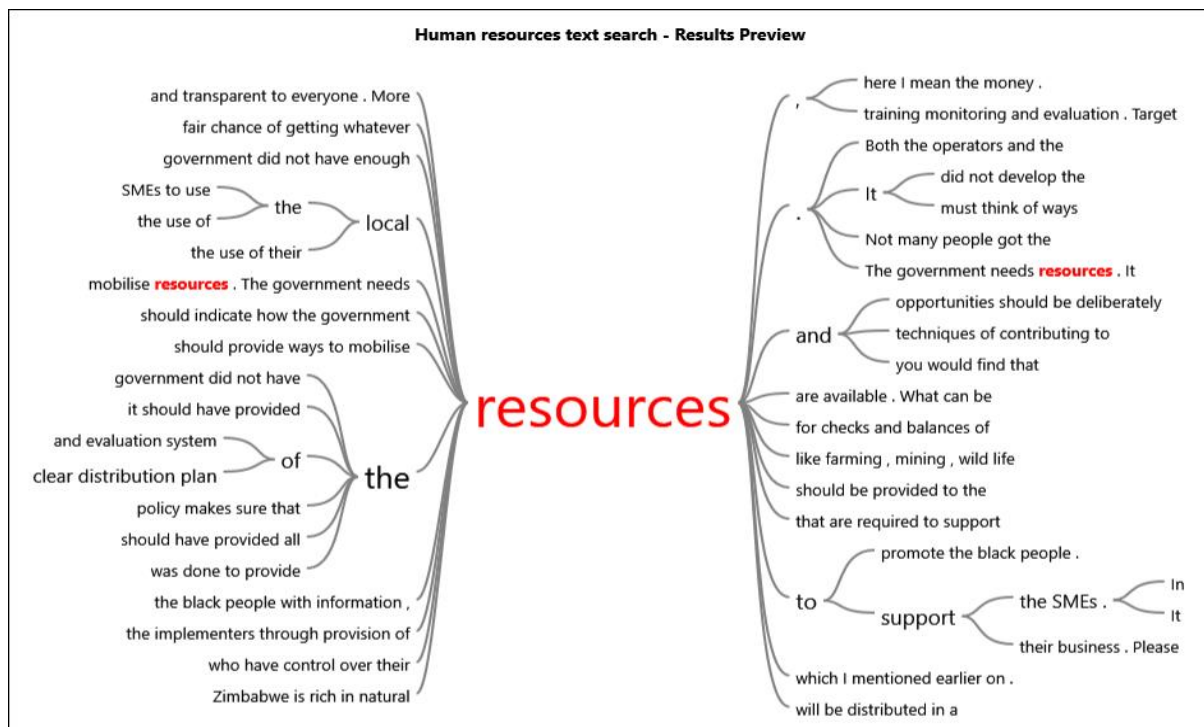


Figure 6.19: Analysis of the government's support through resources

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The themes that were used to develop the questionnaire were drawn from the key words that came out of the interviews. Figure 6.20 shows the main words that were frequently used by the respondents.



Figure 6.20: Key words used to develop the questionnaire

(Source : Researcher's own work)

6.6.2.4 Government's capacity building programmes

The questionnaire was designed corresponding with the second objective that assessed the extent to which the government framework provided adequate resources to SMEs in Zimbabwe. The questions were based on the themes developed from the interviews. The themes that were used in this section were training, financial support and the general support from the government.

6.6.2.5 Skills training

The respondents were asked to indicate their views on training support that they received from the government, using the responses *Not at all*, *Very little*, *To some extent* and *To a great extent*. The results are shown in Table 6.17.

Table 6.17: Government support in SME skills training

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)				χ^2	df	p-value
	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent			
C25 Government provided you with its training schedule	369(73.9)	76(15.2)	37(7.4)	15(3.0)	658.179 ^a	3	<.0005
C26 Government has trained you in your job	416(83.4)	36(7.2)	41(8.2)	6(1.2)	912.375 ^b	3	<.0005
C27 Government holds training for both short and long courses	427(85.6)	29(5.8)	28(5.6)	14(2.8)	981.116 ^c	3	<.0005
C28 Government training is affordable to everyone	430(86.2)	41(8.2)	23(4.6)	4(.8)	1005.020 ^c	3	<.0005
C29 Government provides free training materials	476(95.4)	12(2.4)	11(2.2)		864.774 ^d	3	<.0005

C30 Government provides refresher courses for people it has trained	420(84.2)	51(10.2)	23(4.6)	1(.2)	955.756 ^e	3	<.0005
C31 Government has appointed local training officers	383(76.8)	74(14.8)	37(7.4)	3(.6)	738.759 ^a	3	<.0005
C32 Local training officers have monitoring schedules	407(81.6)	43(8.6)	39(7.8)	6(1.2)	871.101 ^e	3	<.0005
C33 Government has a training website	439(88.0)	32(6.4)	23(4.6)	4(.8)	1062.562 ^c	3	<.0005
C34 Government has free online courses	437(87.6)	33(6.6)	27(5.4)	2(.4)	1046.419 ^b	3	<.0005

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Graphical representation of the results indicating how much the government supported the SMEs in skills training is shown in Figure 6.21.

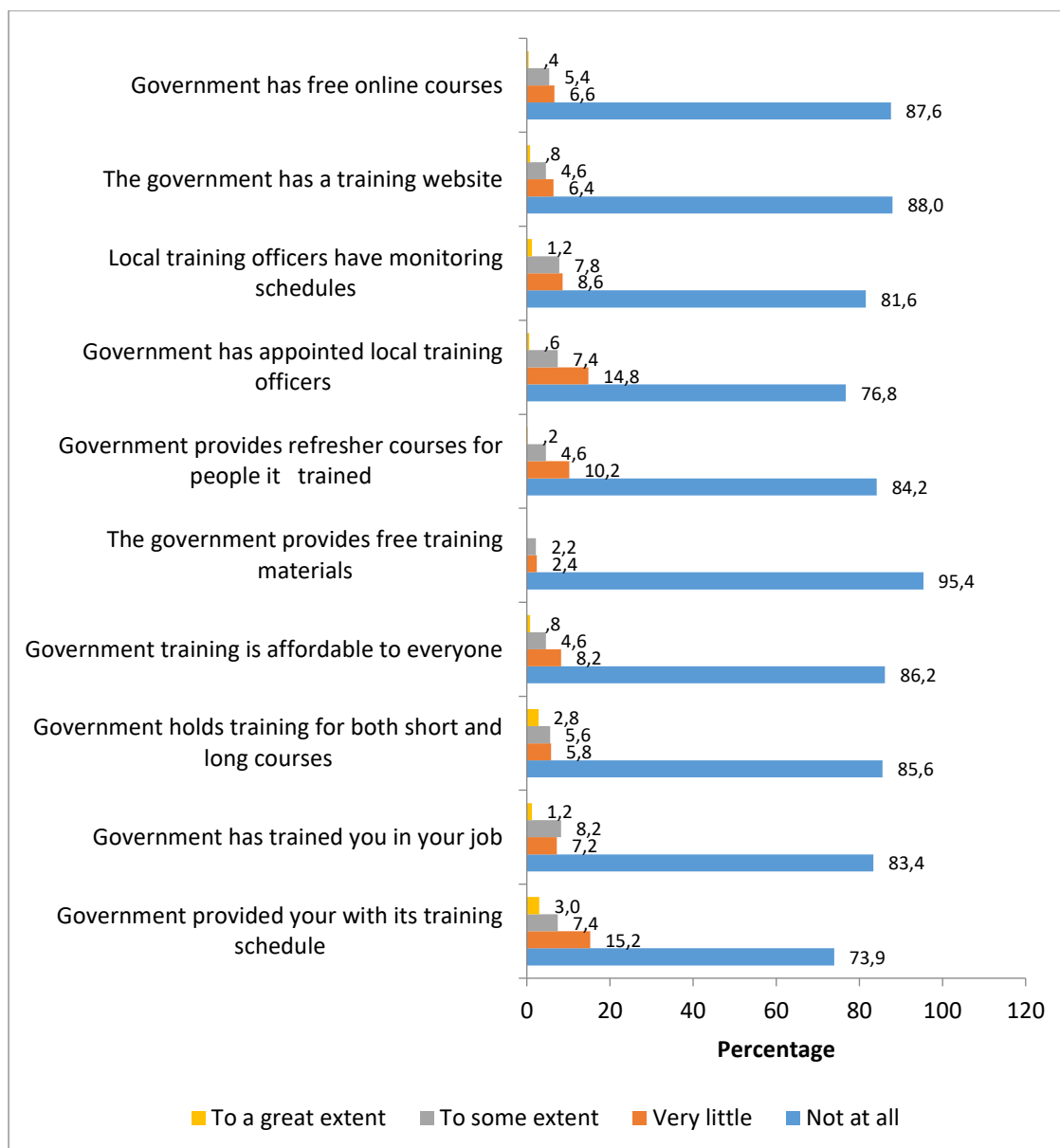


Figure 6.21: Government support in SME skills training

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Analysis (chi-square goodness-of-fit test) shows that for each of these items/areas of training, a significant number responded *Not at all* ($p < .0005$). From the data responses it can be concluded that there was not much training support from the government given to SME operators.

Some groupings from the data were done and the composite variables of government support in skills training are summarised in Table 6.18.

Table 6.18: Factor analysis of composite variables of government support in skills training

Construct	Label	Items included	Cronbach's alpha
Training officers	OFF	Government has appointed local training officers	.786
		Local training officers have monitoring schedules	
Training provision	PROV	Government provided you with its training schedule	.598
		Government has trained you in your job	
Material and courses	MAT	Government provides free training materials	.478
		Government provides refresher courses for people it has trained	

(Source : Researcher's own work)

In order to address the objectives, each of these constructs were tested to assess the adequacy of the resources

This scale goes from 1(*Not at all*) to 4 (*To a great extent*). The binomial test was applied to test if a significant proportion rated the support given by government as *Never* (group 1) or *More than never* (group 2). In each case significant proportions selected *Never*

Table 6.19: Binomial test – To test if a significant proportion rated the support given by government as *Never* (group 1) or *More than never* (group 2)

Item	Frequency (%)		n	p-value
	Never	> Never		
Training offered (TRAIN_OFF)	377 (76)	122 (24)	499	<.0005*
Training provision (TRAIN_PROV)	359(72)	140(28)	499	<.0005*
Material and courses (MAT)	419(84)	80(16)	499	<.0005*

* Indicates significance at the 95% level

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The results indicate that the government did not provide much training to the SME operators.

6.6.2.6 Financial assistance

The respondents were asked to indicate if they received any financial assistance and training in managing finances by the government. The results are presented in tables 6.20 to 6.22 and graphs on figure 6.22

Table 6.20: Financial assistance and training in managing finances

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)				χ^2	df
	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent		
C36 Government has informed us of all its funding programmes	459(92.0)	20(4.0)	11(2.2)	7(1.4)	1203.209 ^a	3
C37 Government has funded some of our programmes	425(85.2)	43(8.6)	23(4.6)	8(1.6)	968.471 ^b	3
C38 Government has small loan programmes	425(85.2)	37(7.4)	32(6.4)	5(1.0)	968.279 ^b	3
C39 Government has facilitated us to get loans from the banks	459(92)	16(3.2)	18(3.6)	4(.8)	1203.419 ^a	3
C40 Government disburses funds in a fair and transparent manner	460(92.2)	21(4.2)	11(2.2)	4(.8)	1215.113 ^c	3
C41 There is less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing the funds	452(90.6)	29(5.8)	14(2.8)	3(.6)	1151.398 ^d	3
C42 There are no corrupt practices in the process of fund disbursement	458(91.8)	27(5.4)	12(2.4)	2(.4)	1189.505 ^b	3

C43 Government has a training programme for all the accountants	456(91.4)	20(4.0)	17(3.4)	4(.8)	1182.203 ^a	3
C44 Government has trained our accounting officers	425(85.2)	39(7.8)	32(6.4)	6.4	973.277 ^d	3
C45 Government officers follow up on the accounting officers it has trained	410(82.2)	54(10.8)	32(6.4)	3(.6)	880.150 ^b	3

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Graphical representation of the results indicating the extent to which the government supported SMEs financially and provided training in the management of finances.

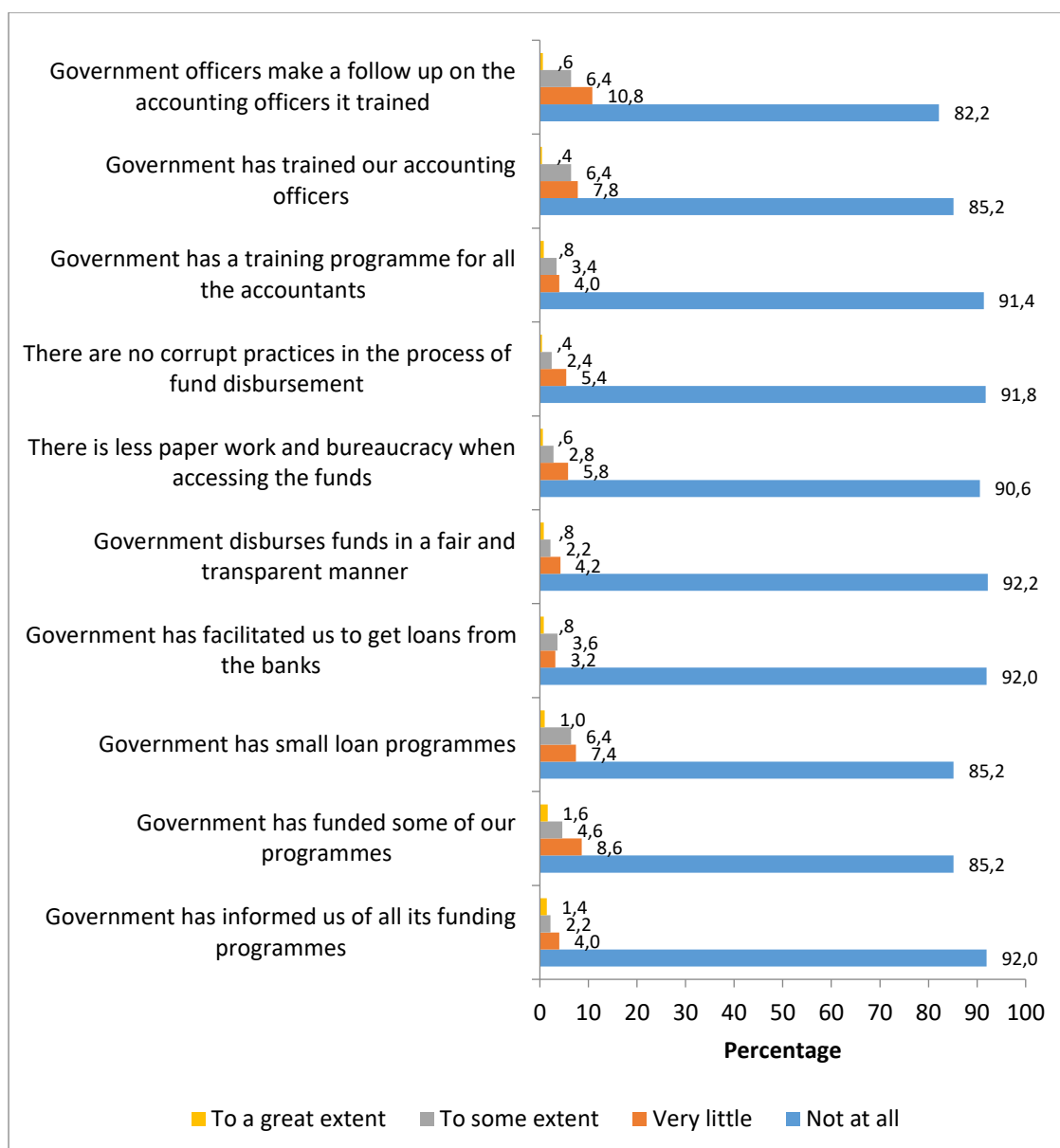


Figure 6.22: Financial assistance and training in managing finances

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The conclusions that can be drawn from the presented data are that a significant number of respondents selected *Not at all* as their option and very few stated that the government supported them financially and provided training in the management of finances. Some groupings of the composite variables of financial support and training in financial management were done, as shown in Table 6.21.

Table 6.21: Factor analysis of composite variables of financial support and training in financial management

Construct	Label	Items included	Cronbach's alpha
Funding	FUND	Government has informed us of all its funding programmes	.586
		Government has funded some of our programmes	
Loans	LOAN	Government has small loan programmes	.663
		Government has facilitated for us to get loans from banks	
Training	TRAIN	Government has a training programme for all the accountants	.524
		Government has trained our accounting officers	

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Cronbach's alpha values of $>.5$ are acceptable as a measure of the reliability of the composite variable because there are only two items being considered. A binomial test was then done, as shown in Table 6.22, used to test if a significant proportion rated the financial support and training in financial management as *Never* (group 1) or *More than never* (group 2). A significant proportions selected *Never*, which implies that the government did not provide much in terms of financial assistance and training on the management of finances.

Table 6.22: Binomial test of the financial support and training in financial management

Item	Frequency (%)		n	p-value
	Never	> Never		
Funding provided (FIN_FUND)	424 (85)	122 (24)	499	$<.0005^*$
Loan provided (FIN_LOAN)	419(84)	80(16)	499	$<.0005^*$
Financial training (FIN_TRAIN)	412 (83)	87 (17)	499	$<.0005^*$

(Source : Researcher's own work)

6.6.2.7. General government support

Table 6.23 shows the responses on the general support that was received by the SME implementers from the government; Figure 6.23 illustrates the general support that was provided by the government.

Table 6.23: The general government support to SMEs

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)				X ²
	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent	
C46 Government has subsidised our tax rates	435(87.2)	37(7.4)	18(3.6)	7(1.4)	1039.958 ^a
C47 Small businesses are prioritised when industrial stands are allocated	419(84.0)	41(8.2)	33(6.6)	5(1.0)	934.578 ^b
C48 Government has provided us with more hours of electricity supply	416(83.4)	39(7.8)	29(5.8)	14(2.8)	912.554 ^b
C49 Government has made special arrangements for us to access fuel	412(82.6)	38(7.4)	30(6.0)	15(3.0)	900.640 ^c
C50 Government supports our products to be sold locally	421(74.4)	29(5.8)	28(5.6)	19(3.8)	945.471 ^a
C51 Government does not import locally produced products	404(81.0)	61(12.2)	17(3.4)	14(2.8)	854.177 ^d
C52 Government has sourced foreign markets for our products	400(80.2)	47(9.4)	42(8.4)	8(1.6)	823.217 ^a
C53 We have easy access to foreign currency to buy the inputs	395(79.2)	56(11.2)	33(6.6)	12(2.4)	797.500 ^d

C54 Government has training programmes for support service staff (administrators and drivers)	397(79.6)	53(10.6)	36(7.2)	11(2.2)	805.495 ^a
C55 Government has monitoring and evaluation programmes at local level	360(72.1)	63(12.6)	48(9.6)	28(5.6)	596.447 ^e

(Source : Researcher's own work)

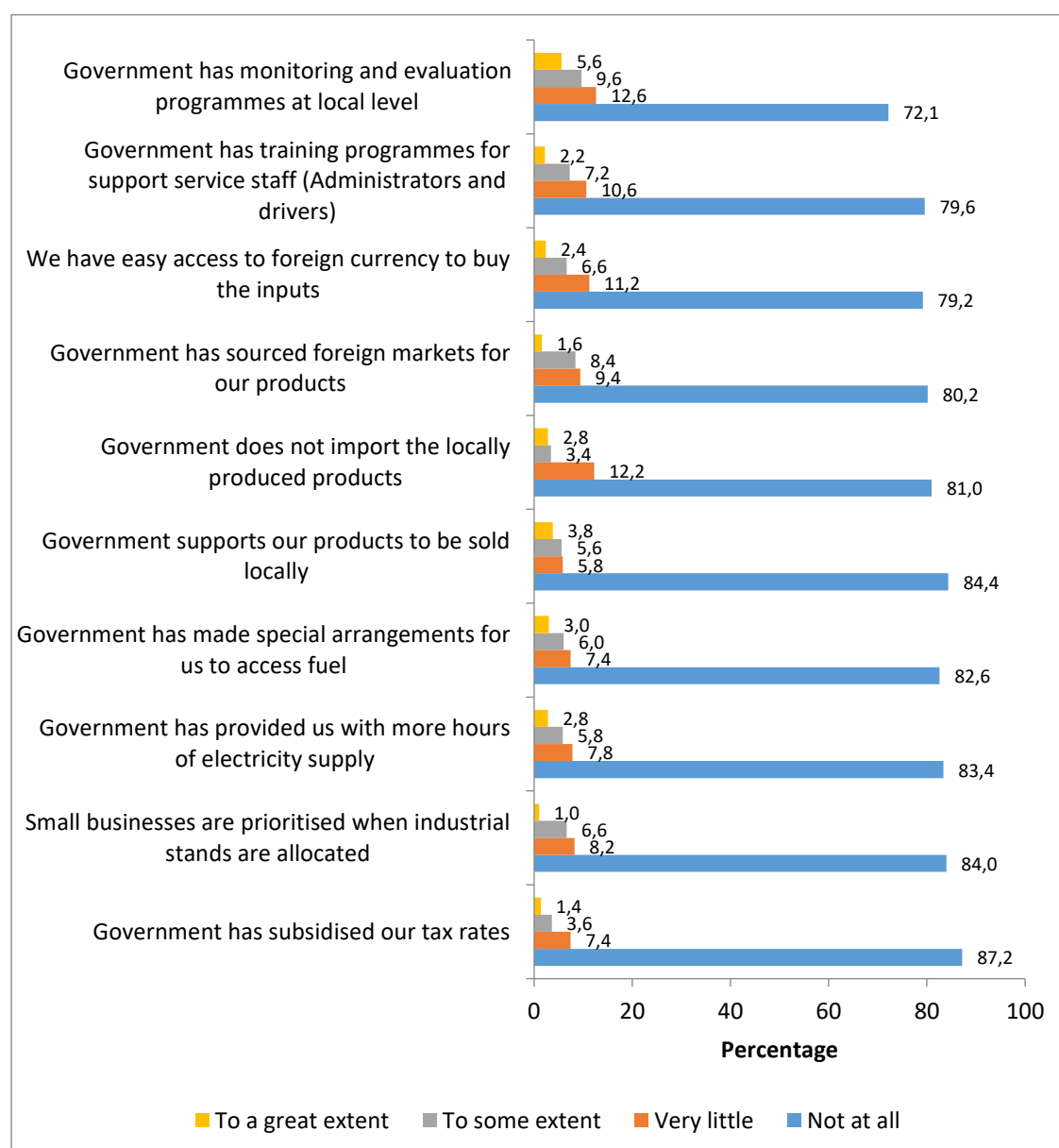


Figure 6.23: General government support to SMEs

(Source : Researcher's own work)

As shown in Table 6.24, some groupings were made of the composite variables of the general support that was provided by the government. These groupings of the items were done in order to carry out the binomial analysis of the results.

Table 6.24: Groupings of the composite variables of government general support

Construct	Label	Items included	Cronbach's alpha
Training	GEN_TRAIN	Government has monitoring and evaluation programmes at local level	.533
		Government has training programmes for support service staff (administrators and drivers)	
Products	GEN_PROD	Government has sourced foreign markets for our products	.481
		Government does not import locally produced products	
Prioritising	GEN_PRIORITY	Government has provided us with more hours of electricity supply	.354
		Small businesses are prioritised when industrial stands are allocated	

(Source : Researcher's own work)

Table 6.25 shows the results of the binomial test that was used to test if a significant proportion rated the general government support as *Never* (group 1) or *More than never* (group 2). Significant proportions indicate that the government never provides the services selected in Table 6.25. The results indicate that the government did not provide much general support to the SME operators. Cronbach's alpha values of $>.4$ are acceptable as a measure of the reliability of the composite variable because there are only two items being considered.

Table 6.25: The binomial test of general government support

Item	Frequency (%)		n	p-value
	Never	> Never		
Training (GEN_TRAIN)	337 (68)	162 (32)	499	<.0005*
Products (GEN_PROD)	360(72)	139 (28)	499	<.0005*
Prioritising (GEN_PRIORITY)	370 (74)	129 (26)	499	<.0005*

(Source : Researcher's own work)

6.6.3 Objective 3: The new strategic framework

Objective three is stated as follows: To identify what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance.

6.6.3.1 Contents of the new strategic framework

The respondents were able to state what they want included in the new strategic framework that seeks to address the plight of the SME sector in Zimbabwe. The responses indicate that the interviewees had a lot of knowledge of what needed correcting. The female respondent K01c, a senior government employee, emphasised that the government could have done better to empower its citizens. She had this to say:

“The government could have done much better in the empowerment policy framework. The idea of supporting the SMEs was very good but I think the government did not do it right. The government should have provided more money/investment start-up capital for the historically disadvantaged Zimbabweans who had viable business ideas. The money, financial start-up capital or loans should have been given a transparent way. The selection of beneficiaries should have been better. The government should have involved banks and other competent and objective stakeholders to give the money/loans. The government did not make follow ups to the projects and most SMEs did not do well as a result.”

The respondents further explained that the best approach that the government could have used was to consult the stakeholders in all its processes, which it did not do. The respondents lamented that the government operated from their offices and did not carry out any needs assessment in order to find out what had to be addressed. This issue was emphasised by the male respondent K04 in the agriculture sector, who had this to say:

“I believe that it had to begin with the people on the ground. The government should have engaged the local leaders, work with them and do everything to make sure that they understand the government programmes... The local leaders would have become the community based facilitators for the government on the SME sector. The local leaders even know the people working in different sectors within their community. The government should have developed a clear government plan of action with timelines. It should have been able to find out if it has achieved its objectives, that is, monitoring and evaluation, which is lacking in the current system. In addition, the government should have developed the technology of the country and match the standards of other countries like our neighbour South Africa that has free Wi-Fi in public places like the parks. It did not do anything on the areas that I have mentioned.”

Nine (9) of the respondents out of ten stated that more training of SME operators is required and the government should design specific capacity building programmes that would benefit SME implementers. The views of the respondents of what must be implemented in the strategic framework, focusing on training, are shown in the tree diagram on Figure 6.24.

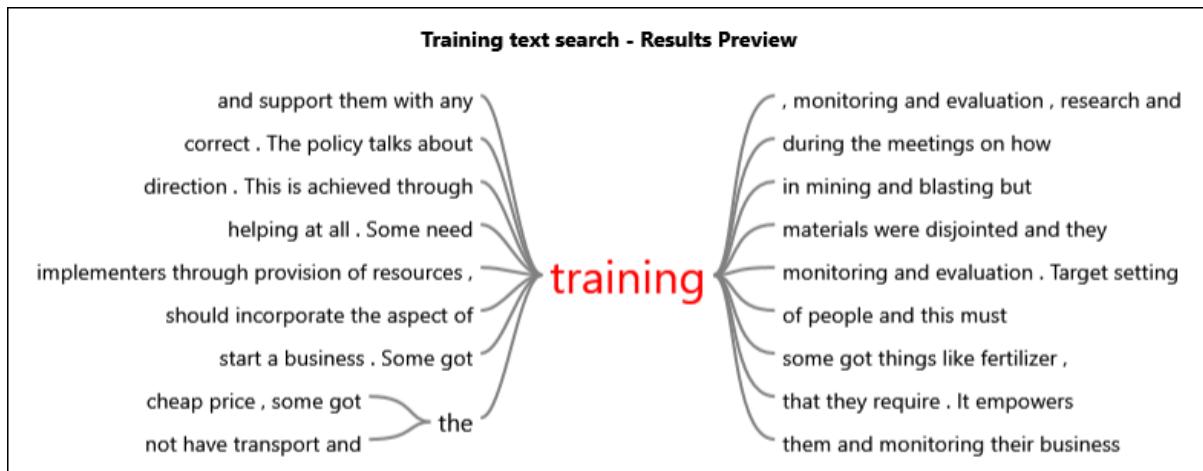


Figure 6.24: Analysis of training programmes to be included in the new strategic framework
(Source : Researcher's own work)

Indicated in Figure 6.25 are the key words that came from the respondents and that were used to develop the themes in the questionnaire.



Figure 6.25: Key words used to develop the questionnaire (on trainings)
(Source : Researcher's own work)

In accordance with the third objective focused on what needs to be included in the new strategic framework, the themes that emerged from the interviewees were training, stakeholder participation, transparency, information, communication and technological programmes and information sharing programmes. These themes were used to develop the questionnaire, which was answered by 499 respondents. They answered questions that solicited ideas of what should be incorporated in the new strategic framework. The responses of the 499 SME implementers are shown in Table 6.26. The results indicate that there is a

significant agreement for each item that should be included in the new strategic framework. The results are represented graphically in Figure 6.26. The respondents concurred that a new strategic framework needs to incorporate all the key themes that were raised by the interviewees.

Table 6.26: Contents of the new strategic framework

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)					Mean (SD)	t	df	p-value	
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree					
Explain government goals and mission on SMEs to stakeholders	1 (.2)	2 (.4)	7 (1.4)	13 (2.6)	472 (94.6)	495	4.93 (.382)	112.016	494	<.0005*
Government to promote dialogue with SME implementers	2 (.4)		3 (.6)	12 (2.4)	479 (96.0)	496	4.95 (.332)	130.555	495	<.0005*
Improve interaction of SME operators to exchange ideas	4 (.8)	1 (.2)	6 (1.2)	12 (2.4)	474 (95.0)	497	4.91 (.461)	92.591	496	<.0005*
Engage the local	1 (1.2)	1 (1.2)	12 (2.4)	14 (2.8)	469 (94.0)	497	4.91 (.409)	104.108	496	<.0005*

leadership at all levels										
More consultative meetings to be held	5 (1.0)	3(.6)	7(1.4)	12(2.4)	471(86.4)	498	4.89 (.532)	79.188	497	<.0005*
Promote gender diversity in SME operations	6 (1.2)		13 (2.6)	15 (3.0)	464 (93.0)	498	4.87 (.558)	74.821	497	<.0005*
Organise cluster groups of SMEs	4 (.8)		3 (.6)	35 (7.0)	452 (90.6)	494	4.88 (.460)	91.015	493	<.0005*
Promote marketing and selling of products in clusters	3 (.6)		4 (.8)	12 (2.4)	477 (95.6)	496	4.94 (.328)	131.767	495	<.0005*
Facilitate access to fuel, electricity, water and other resources in clusters	1 (.2)	5 (1.0)	8 (1.6)	17 (3.4)	467 (93.6)	498	4.90 (.459)	92.221	497	<.0005*
Being accountable and transparent at all levels	6(1.2)	6(1.2)	8(1.6)	12(2.4)	468(93.8)	498	4.88 (.557)	75.120	497	<.0005*

Zero tolerance to corruption, fraud and tribalism at all levels						499	4.87 (.558)	75.015	498	<.0005*
Less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing government inputs	5(.8)	4(.8)	8(1.6)	15(3.0)	467(93.6)	499	4.89 (.434)	97.210	498	<.0005*
Low interest rates on government loans	3 (.6)	3 (.6)	13 (2.6)	21 (4.2)	462 (92.6)	499	4.85 (.558)	73.874	498	<.0005*
More training in skills development	2 (.4)	7 (1.4)	12 (2.4)	24 (4.8)	454 (91.0)	499	4.87 (.474)	87.881	498	<.0005*
Select the indigenous people for higher training		6 (1.2)	9 (1.8)	31 (2.6)	453 (90.8)	499	4.88 (.464)	90.673	498	<.0005*
Open offices for Ministry of SMEs at all administrative levels	2 (.4)		16 (3.2)	18 (3.6)	463 (92.8)	499	4.90 (.409)	103.932	498	<.0005*

On job training to be intensified		4 (.8)	8 (1.6)	20 (4.0)	467 (93.0)	499	4.87 (.499)	83.521	498	<.0005*
Provide conferences for the different sectors		7 (1.4)	12 (2.4)	22 (4.4)	458 (91.8)	499	4.79 (.704)	56.774	498	<.0005*
Develop sector websites for SMEs		12 (2.4)	11 (2.2)	28 (5.6)	443 (88.8)	494	4.83 (.579)	70.143	493	<.0005*
Sectors to market their products on line	4 (.8)	5 (1.0)	6 (1.2)	27 (5.4)	454 (91.0)	496	4.86 (.551)	75.175	495	<.0005*
The Ministry website must be easily accessible		11 (2.2)		15 (3.2)	469 (94.0)	495	4.90 (.470)	89.994	494	<.0005*
More technology development programmes and trainings		12 (2.4)	7 (1.4)	27 (5.4)	449 (90.0)	495	4.84 (.553)	74.218	494	<.0005*
Provide more research and development programmes		8 (1.8)		47 (9.4)	440 (88.2)	496	4.85	84.798	495	<.0005*
Develop national	1 (.2)	1 (5.0)	61.2	35 (7.0)	451 (90.4)	498	4.87 (.473)	88.083	497	<.0005*

monitoring and evaluation programme										
Disseminate the monitoring and evaluation programmes to all levels			4 (.8)	4 (.8)	490 (98.2)	497	4.93 (.399)	108.143	496	<.0005*
Provide access to internet for SME operators and its stakeholders	4 (.8)			17 (3.4)	476 (95.4)	498	4.98 (.199)	221.414	497	<.0005*
A national strategic plan to be developed and disseminated to the stakeholders		1 (.2)	2 (.4)	9 (1.8)	483 (96.8)	495	4.97 (.227)	192.751	494	<.0005*
Provide schedule for annual training programmes	2 (.4)		3 (.6)	5 (1.0)	486 (97.4)	496	4.96 (.312)	139.903	495	<.0005*

Organise national exchange sector programmes	6 (1.2)	1 (.2)	9 (1.8)	13 (2.6)	407 (93.6)	496	4.88 (.545)	76.900	495	<.0005*
Have regional exchange programmes	1 (.2)		7 (1.4)	16 (3.2)	472 (94.6)	496	4.93 (.341)	126.024	495	<.0005*
Participate in national, regional and world SME exhibitions		2 (.8)		14 (2.8)	478 (95.8)	499	4.95 (.282)	154.266	498	<.0005*
Provide links with global village on SME issues			4 (.8)	14 (2.8)	478 (96.4)	496	4.96 (.242)	179.868	495	<.0005*

(Source : Researcher's own work)

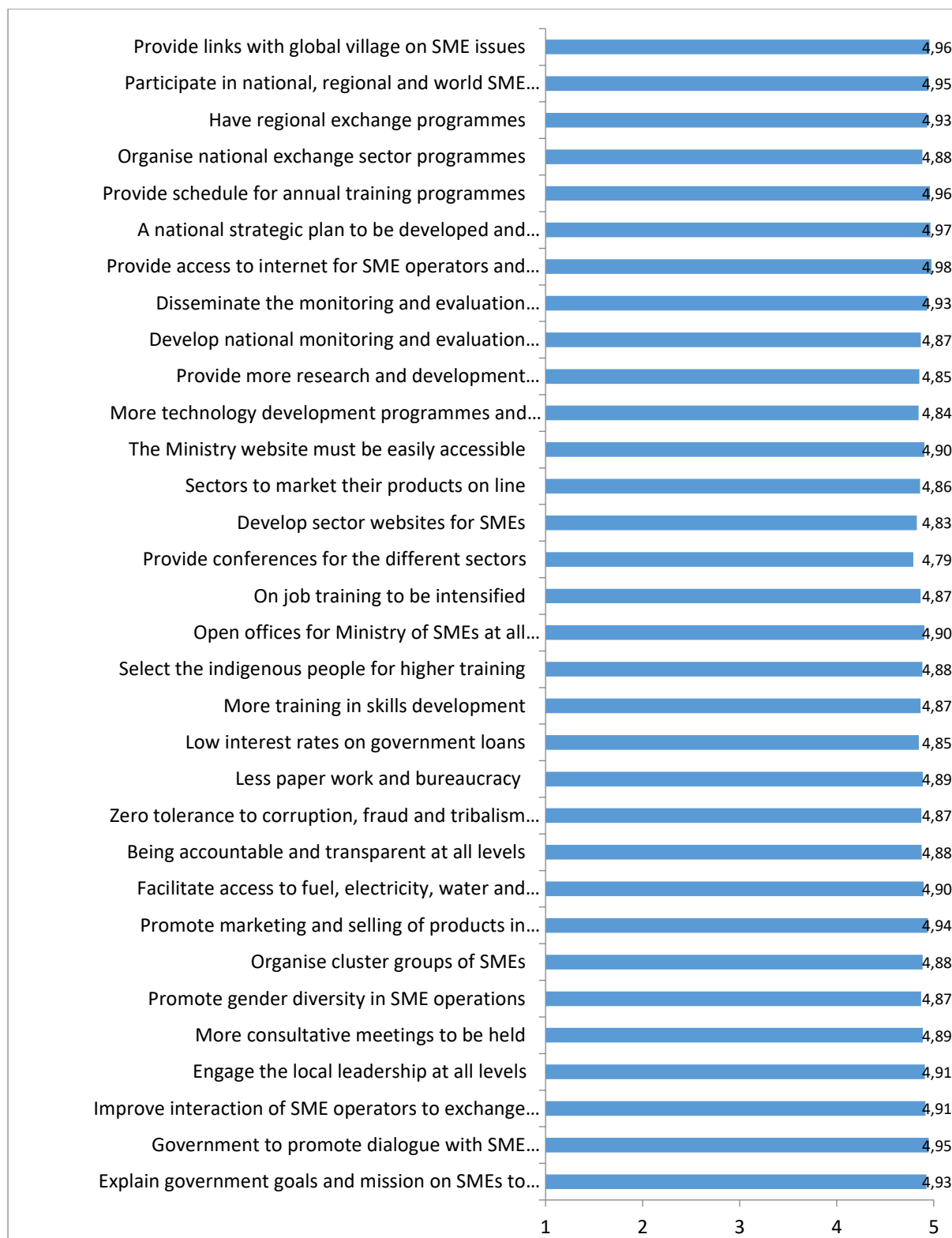


Figure 6.26: Contents of the new strategic framework

(Source : Researcher's own work)

As shown in Table 6.27, a one-sample t-test was used to test for significant agreement or disagreement. This tests the average agreement score against the central score of '3'. If the

result is significant and the mean and average score is >3 , it is interpreted as significant agreement; if significant and mean score is <3 , it is interpreted as significant disagreement. These results show that there is a significant agreement to each item that should be included in the framework because the mean (average) score is >3 . It shows a great agreement on the contents of the new strategic framework that there is high positive correlation of the responses; this creates a desire for the researcher to explore further why the results are skewed towards change, which is explored further in the next chapter.

Table 6.27: One-Sample t-test on the contents of the new strategic framework

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
D57 Explain government goals and mission on SMEs to stakeholders	495	4.93	.382	.017
D58 Government to promote dialogue with SME implementers	496	4.95	.332	.015
D59 Improve interaction of SME operators to exchange ideas	497	4.91	.461	.021
D60 Engage the local leadership at all levels	497	4.91	.409	.018
D61 More consultative meetings to be held	498	4.89	.532	.024
D62 Promote gender diversity in SME operations	498	4.87	.558	.025
D63 Organise cluster groups of SMEs	494	4.88	.460	.021
D64 Promote marketing and selling of products in clusters	496	4.94	.328	.015
D65 Facilitate access to fuel, electricity, water and other resources in clusters	498	4.90	.459	.021
D66 Be accountable and transparent at all levels	498	4.88	.557	.025
D67 Zero tolerance to corruption, fraud and tribalism at all levels	499	4.87	.558	.025
D68 Less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing government inputs	499	4.89	.434	.019
D69 Low interest rates on government loans	499	4.85	.558	.025
D70 More training in skills development	499	4.87	.474	.021
D71 Selection of the indigenous people for higher training	499	4.88	.464	.021
D72 Open offices for Ministry of SMEs at all administrative levels	499	4.90	.409	.018

D73 On-the-job training to be intensified	499	4.87	.499	.022
D74 Provide conferences for the different sectors	499	4.79	.704	.032
D75 Develop sector websites for SMEs	494	4.83	.579	.026
D76 Sectors to market their products online	496	4.86	.551	.025
D77 The Ministry website must be easily accessible	495	4.90	.470	.021
D78 More technology development programmes and trainings	495	4.84	.553	.025
D79 Provide more research and development programmes	496	4.85	.486	.022
D80 Develop national monitoring and evaluation programmes	498	4.87	.473	.021
D81 Disseminate the monitoring and evaluation programmes to all levels	497	4.93	.399	.018
D82 Provide access to internet for SME operators and its stakeholders	498	4.98	.199	.009
D83 A national strategic plan to be developed and disseminated to the stakeholders	495	4.97	.227	.010
D84 Provide schedules for annual training programmes	496	4.96	.312	.014
D85 Organise national exchange sector programmes	496	4.88	.545	.024
D86 Have regional exchange programmes	496	4.93	.341	.015
D87 Participate in national, regional and world SME exhibitions	499	4.95	.282	.013
D88 Provide links with global village on SME issues	496	4.96	.242	.011

(Source : Researcher's own work)

6.7 Conclusion

The data collected has indicated that the interviewees had high knowledge levels of the Zimbabwe empowerment policies, while the questionnaire respondents showed low levels of policy awareness and policy. However, both the interviewees and the questionnaire respondents concurred that the government was not able to provide sufficient resources to meet the needs of SME operators. The respondents indicated that the financial resources were very little and the selection of the beneficiaries was randomly done, which leads to suspicions of corruption. Information about the SME programmes was disseminated through public media and most of the implementers were not able to access the information. The new strategic framework should address the shortcomings of the current system being used by the government and come up with a homegrown stakeholder driven strategic framework that addresses the current situation of SMEs in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER SEVEN: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

7. Introduction

7.1 Objective One: Policy understanding and influence to SMES

7.1.1 Understanding of the two policies

7.1.2 Awareness of the two policies among the implementers

7.1.3 Effects of government policies on SME performance

7.2 Objective Two: Government resources and SME performance

7.2.1 Skills training

7.2.2 Financial assistance

7.2.3 General government support

7.3 Objective Three: The development of the new SME Strategic Framework

7.4 SME performance over 5 years

7.5 Summary of findings

7.6 Conclusion

7. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the results and analysis of the data collected through the qualitative and quantitative methods, following the sequential mixed approach. This chapter presents the interpretation and discussion of the presented and analysed results from the previous chapter. It explains the results and provides an image of the state of the operational environment of the Zimbabwean SMES. The interpretation and discussion of the results will marry the primary and secondary data sources of the study. The discussion of is done in three sections, following the secondary research objectives that are stated as follows: to assess if the government policies positively influenced the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe; to assess the extent to which the government framework provided adequate resources to SMEs in Zimbabwe; to identify what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance.

7.1 Objective One: Policy understanding and its Influence on SMEs

This objective was addressed by part B of the questionnaire (Appendix 3). The respondents were provided with statements to select their levels of agreement. These statements in this section of the questionnaire were related to government policies and their effects on the performance of SMEs. According to Ifekwem (2019), the development of a sound government policy for SME performance is an indispensable component of the strategy of most economies and holds significance for the growth, development and performance of SMEs. Those SMEs not supported by the government have restricted access to improving their growth and performance. The advancement of SMEs in the developed nations has been achieved by the policies that have supported their performance.

The findings of the interviews have revealed that the government's support to the SME implementers was insignificant and did not make any impact on the performance of SMEs. These views were shared by the questionnaire respondents, who indicated that the government assistance did not help them to improve their performance. This evidence was revealed by the information provided by the participants' understanding of the policies, the awareness of the two polices among the implementers and the overall effects of government policies on SME performance.

7.1.1 Understanding of the two policies

Some notable features of the responses given by the interviewees were that they demonstrated a clear understanding of both the indigenisation and empowerment policy and the industrial policy. Each of the interviewees mentioned a correct attribute of the two policies, as stated in the two policy documents, which means that they were familiar with them. Table 6.5, which shows the interviewees responses to the understanding of the indigenisation and empowerment policy, indicates that 50% of the interviewees stated that the policy promotes equal opportunities for all citizens, another 50% said that the policy unlocks wealth creation by the indigenous population in the country, 40 % said the policy trains the Zimbabwean citizens on business ethics and another 40% mentioned that the policy facilitates the funding for investment in the country. The policy issues that were raised by the interviewees correspond to the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act (IEEA) Chapter 14:33, Act 14/2007, which has all the facts that have been mentioned by the respondents. Table 6.6 shows the responses of the interviewees on the understanding of the industrial policy. Sixty percent of the interviewees stated that It is a policy that is designed to improve the economy of the country through sustainable support to SMEs and value chain management; 40% said It enables the intervention of the government on capacity building of business operators in the country. The results show that the government managed to inform its high profile stakeholders about the SME policies and its intentions were clearly communicated to all the experts in the SME sector, which include employees of government departments, SME sector leaders, non-governmental organisation coordinators and various captains of the SME sector.

The process of informing the elite group of SME stakeholders was a noble idea for the government, because this development was key to the successful implementation of the policy. In a normal government set-up, this group of people are the custodians of the policy and their mandate would be to cascade the policy down to the lower structures, up to implementer level. The experts would carry out various activities that include the policy awareness campaigns, training of local officers, dissemination of all the information, addressing any queries from the implementers and monitoring and evaluation of the progress being made by the implementers. This process is supported by Sobel et al. (2007), who state that public policies determine the entrepreneurial development of a country or region by

introducing specific policies that need to be cascaded to all the institutional structures by the trained officers thereby creating a conducive entrepreneurship environment. In this regard, the government made a good start in the implementation process of the policy. This process leads the discussion of the second level, which is the SME implementers and their awareness of the two policies.

7.1.2 Awareness of the two policies among the implementers

Pearson's and Spearman's correlation measures that were used to measure the linear association between awareness of the policy and performance of SMEs (Table 6.6) indicated that from 2015 to 2019 there was no correlation between awareness of the policies and performance. The casual analysis was also applied (Table 6.8). A regression analysis was applied with: AWARE accounts for 1.3% ($R^2 = .013$) of the variance in Performance 2019, $F(10, 488) = .664$, $p = .759$. The results imply that AWARE was not a significant predictor of Performance 2019; and that the SME implementers were not aware of the SME policies.

Moreover, the results indicated that while the interviewees acknowledge the effort that was made by the government to inform them about the Indigenisation and empowerment policy and the industrial policy, the government did not do much to do the same to the SME implementers. This brings into the fold the triangulation concept which was stated by Uwe (2014) that triangulation comprises many possibilities for the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, and the different functions of methodological integration in the research process are even better. Most of the implementers who responded to the questionnaire were not aware of the existence and the operational framework of the policies. The information from Table 6.13 indicated that the percentage that had not heard about the policies (81.4%) was very high, 65.9% did not have copies of the policy and 79.2% stated that the government did not distribute any information on the SME policies. Thus, the government failed to provide the policy information to its stakeholders. The action of the government in relation to the dissemination of the policy information was not aligned with the basic principles of policy formulation, as stated by Aluko (2004), who asserts that policy is a guide to action, a means to an end, and not an end in itself; it an instrument of management that has to be well communicated to its intended beneficiaries. A policy outlines the intended actions to all the stakeholders and it is carried out as a procedure and according to its

contents; hence; its dissemination and sharing with all the stakeholders is mandatory (Majoni et al., 2016).

The government of Zimbabwe left everything to chance and ignored simple basic principles of policy formulation and implementation; therefore, SME performance in Zimbabwe is very low and the general economic conditions continue to deteriorate. This situation was affirmed by the government in the report from the Government of Zimbabwe (2009), which asserted that from 2006 all economic sectors posted low productivity, manufacturing went down by 7%, agriculture was the most affected, dropping by 73,3% and mining went down by 53,3% in 2008. These facts were alluded to by Kachembere (2011), who asserted that in 2008 industry across the whole country was operating at far below the normal production levels and reached below 5%. The SME policy issues that were not communicated to the implementers had a negative ripple effect across the whole economy of the country; hence, the need to come up with a more robust and homegrown strategic framework that corrects the mistakes made by the government. The failure to reach out to the lower levels of the SME implementers with the policy had a negative impact on the performance of SMEs and the government should take this as a learning opportunity and adopt the new strategic framework that is poised to put right what has been incorrectly executed.

7.1.3 Effects of government policies on SME performance

The Zimbabwean government came up with some sound policies that focused on the performance of SMEs, but the main challenge was in their implementation and the support given to them; hence, their impact was highly insignificant. The primary data indicated that the government did not do much to support its policies. The male respondent K03 from the mining sector (6.4.4) stated, "As I have said it already. The government is not helping much. People are in need of money to buy the chemicals for blasting, compressors and so many more other mining equipment but that money is not coming at all". The participants who completed the questionnaire also indicated that the government policies had not helped them improve their performance. The results from Table 6.13 indicate that the response *Not at all* was selected significantly more than the other responses for all the items; for example, 80% of the respondents selected *Not at all* on item B12 which states 'Government creates stimulating environment for high performance'; no response (0%) was received on the option

To a great extent. This is a clear indication that a significant number of the SME operators who responded to this section of the questionnaire stated that the government assistance had not helped them to improve their performance. . The results from the interviews (qualitative data) were supported by the results from the questionnaires (quantitative data) and this triangulation of data combines data drawn from different sources and at different times, in different places or from different people Farquhar et al. 2020) strengthens the validity of the results.

The poor performance of Zimbabwean SMEs is fundamentally an issue of the government and its commitment to policies that support economic growth. The secondary data from the reviewed literature indicated that for the SMEs to have a high performance the government must be supportive and provide an environment conducive for production. According to Havav (2017), institutional theory is based on the assumption that an institutional environment influences the performance of organisations. The theory states that an institution's environment is a strong force that can influence the development of structures in a firm more than any other force. The term "institution" broadly refers to the formal rules set, the agreements and behaviour of organisations in following laws (Jepperson, 1991). According to this theory, the government of Zimbabwe failed to provide a positive and supportive environment that promotes the performance of the SMEs. The negative action of the government is thus a cause of concern, as it failed to develop the SME sector into a vibrant economic hub that competes with other SMEs in the region.

The literature that has been reviewed provides excellent examples of governments that have supported the SME sector and where high performing SMEs were developed. he Chinese government, which supported SMEs and the focus of their policies in the mid-2000s was to improve the operating environment of SMEs. In addition, the Chinese SMEs Promotion Law which came into effect in 2003 was a milestone in policies and laws specific to SMEs (Rajesh, 2009). Moreover, the Chinese government supported SMEs actively, improved the quality of service for them, and created an environment where enterprises could compete fairly and effectively. This was the political drive that the Zimbabwean government lacked.

Japan provides another example where the supportive SME implementation environment yielded positive results. Honjo and Harada (2006) emphasise the SME Creative Business Promotion Law in Japan that was introduced in order to support pioneering SMEs in new areas of business through entries; research and development and commercialisation of research has seen a high growth in their performance. Pergelova and Angulo-Ruiz (2014) argue that the manufacturing extension programmes in Japan offer a range of services to Japanese SME manufacturers, including technology guidance, technical assistance and training, networking, testing, analysis and instrumentation. The high performance of SMEs follows the established supportive environment that is provided by the government, and these are the lessons that Zimbabwe can tap into and improve its economy through the SME sector.

7.2 Objective Two: Government resources and SME performance

The second objective was addressed by part C of the questionnaire. The responses from the participants provided the information that addressed the objective. The questionnaire was divided into three sections focusing on skills training, financial support and the general support.

7.2.1 Skills training

The analysis of the data (chi-square goodness-of-fit test) shows that, for each of the items of training, a significant number responded *Not at all* ($p < .0005$) in each case. From the data it can be concluded that there is not much training support from the government given to the SME operators. The binomial test was applied to test if a significant proportion rated the support given by government as *never* (group 1) or *more than never* (group 2). In each case a significant proportion selected *never*. The results indicate that the government did not provide much training to the SME operators. The empirical data show that the government lacked capacity building programmes to support the performance of SMEs, yet it is one of the primary requirements for the successful implementation of SME programmes. . The consensus of the two different sources of data over the common theme of skills training confirms the concept of triangulation validates the results.

The Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy (2012 -2016) has a clause which states that the provision of capacity building for skills training of employees and setting up of common facilities will be implemented. However, the government was not able to fulfil its mandate to train any SME stakeholders. The power of capacity building of SMEs was realised by the Kenyan government who prioritised training of its entrepreneurs. That country's government (2007) identified the provision for training, the creation of an enabling environment, improvement of the necessary infrastructure, provision of extension services, establishment of rural business centres for information dissemination and research as the main drivers for the development of its SMEs.

Indonesia is another example where the government-initiated knowledge and technology transfer training programmes provided expertise transfer, as well as physical equipment (machinery and tools) to SMEs. This government also set up training centres for use by SMEs (Handoko et al., 2019). The Malawian government developed the entrepreneurial mindset of its population through the revamping and restructuring of public organisations entrusted with national entrepreneurship development such as the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurial Training Authority (TEVETA) and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Institute (SMEDI) (Ndala and Pelsler, 2019). These nations are fully aware of the fact that training of the SME implementers improves their performance and pays dividends at the end. However, Zimbabwe has not done much to train its stakeholders and it has resulted in a drastic situation for SMEs, lamented by Mbendi (2003), who stated that although SMEs in Zimbabwe contribute less than 5% to GDP, in neighbouring countries like South Africa, SMES are the backbone of the economy contributing an average of 56% towards employment and 36% towards GDP (Olawale and Garwe, 2010). The comparison between the two nations shows a vast difference between them and government commitment to its policies is the main cause of the differences.

7.2.2 Financial assistance

The respondents were asked to indicate if they had received any financial assistance and training in managing finances by the government. The conclusions drawn from the data analysis are that a significant number of respondents selected *Not at all* as their option and very few stated that the government supported them financially and with training in the

management of finances. The statistics from Table 6.23 indicate that 92% of the respondents stated that government had never informed them of its funding programmes, 92% stated that the government had never facilitated any loans for them from banks and of those who had received money, 91.8% stated that there were corrupt practices in the process of fund disbursement. Additionally, the total of 91.4% of the respondents stated that the government has no training programme for accountants. Therefore, the empirical evidence shows that the government has not done much to support SMEs financially, despite it being the deciding factor in improving their performance and that government financial support to SMEs has proved to be a major support of their performance in many nations. . The triangulation of data improves the authenticity of the results. Further consideration of the respondents who received the money 91.8%, stated that there are some corrupt practices in the process of fund disbursement.

The Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act (IEEA) Chapter14:33, Act 14/2007, provides the blueprint of the indigenisation process of Zimbabwean native citizens and one of its major aims in relation to the indigenous people is to provide financial assistance for business start-ups, rehabilitation and expansion to increase, enhance and facilitate their involvement and participation in the national economy. However, the majority of the 499 participant questionnaire respondents (85,2%) stated that the government has no loan facility programme for the SME (from Table 6.23). This is an indication of a clear failure status on the part of the government to financially support its programmes.

Examples can be drawn from many nations that have used the financial factor to support the successful performance of SMEs. In Malaysia for example, the commercial banks are the main source of finance for SMEs, with about 70.4% working capital being financed by them. In contrast, Islamic banks provided running capital of about 11.3% (Bhuiyan et al 2016). Studies done in the USA on the influence of government financial support on new firms confirms that government loans, guarantees and government equity to firms provided a pathway towards high performance of SMEs and the results reveal that these financial guarantees and equity have a direct impact on new firms' performance (Fernando et al., 2014). Brazil provides an interesting case study because the Brazilian SME support service (SEBRAE) is an extensive system providing business assistance to SMEs (Aces, 2008). The SEBRAE provided US\$ 1.1

billion in financial support for SMEs in 2007, a sector employing the majority of the labour force in Brazil (Cravo et al., 2014). The innovation funds, equity financing and venture capital are most commonly used to promote the technological development of SMEs, the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) being at the forefront of venture capital promotion. The Indian government has robust financial programmes for supporting SMEs, as stated by Agarwal (2019), and several indigenous structures to finance Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) were set up in India to reach out to every SME in need of financial support:

- Chit Fund
- National Industrial Development Bank of India (NIDBI)
- Micro-Financing
- Small Industry Development Bank of India (SIDBI)
- Grameen Banks
- Cooperative Banks (similar to Fund Banks in the US and Europe)
- Invest India Start-Up Initiative
- Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) loan scheme

With this kind of a set up in a country for all the SMEs that require financial support able to access it, a country is bound to produce high performing SMEs. As stated by Aliogo and Eneh (2017), in India, SMEs constitute 97% (10.5 million) of the industrial units, employ 45% (25 million) of the labour force, and contribute 45% of overall export and 7% of GD. The Indian SME performance is as a result of resounding financial support that is provided by the government; yet its Zimbabwean counterpart has no record of a properly executed programme to finance the SMEs.

7.2.3 General government support

In the everyday running of their businesses, the implementers were expecting support from the Zimbabwe government in order to keep them running. The respondents were asked the extent to which the government had provided them with support services. Table 6.22 shows that most of them (87.2%) stated that the government was not subsidising the tax rates being paid by SME operators, 83.4% stated that in times of power cuts the government was not providing them with more hours of electricity supply and 80.2% indicated that the government did not source any markets for the products of SME implementers. The results

indicate that the government has no plans to support the SMEs with resources, despite the fact that it came up with policies that were meant to promote the SME sector.

Some nations that have crafted policies to support SMEs, in many different ways supported these policies to ensure that they yielded positive results. Rajesh et al. (2015) states that some of the recent initiatives taken by the Chinese government to promote SMEs was lowering the tax rate from 33% to 18% for those enterprises with an annual profit of less than RMB 30,000 (approximately USD 3,600), and to 27% for those with an annual profit of between RMB 30,000 and RMB 100,000 (approximately USD 12,000), obviously an incentive to promote the performance of the SMEs.

The results from Table 6.22 showed that 72.1% of the respondents indicated that the Zimbabwe government has no monitoring and evaluation programmes at local level. This implies that the government cannot measure the development of SMEs and they are left out to perform as they desire. . The triangulation of data improves the authenticity of the results. Further consideration of the respondents who received the money 91.8%, stated that there are some corrupt practices in the process of fund disbursement. This is not in line with scientific management of businesses, which place a high value on monitoring and evaluation programmes. The OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD (2019) emphasises that more effective and proper monitoring and evaluation leads to well-informed evidence-based policy making, helping to improve the performance of SMEs. More recently, EU policy makers (OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD, 2019) have developed SME monitoring tools (section 4.3.1) to monitor their key programmes.

The empirical data has shown that the SMEs lack resources ranging from financial, human to physical in order for them to achieve high performance. According to the RBV theory, resources are the key components and it emphasises their value in any organisation that seeks to achieve high performance. Barney (2018) states that this theory argues that firms possess resources, a critical input which enables them to achieve competitive advantage, and a further subset, which leads to superior long-term performance. These resources are converted into final products or services by using a wide range of other firm assets such as technology, management information systems, incentive systems, and trust between management and labour (Amit and Schoemaker, 2018). The actions of the Zimbabwean

government towards SMEs, according to the empirical data, have not considered the value of resources; hence, their performance is always low. Their low performance, revealed by scholars as discussed in the literature review section, was also reflected by the data collected. The primary data results of this study concur with the secondary data that the current strategic framework for SMEs in Zimbabwe lacks the government's commitment; this was elaborated by Majoni et al. (2016), who lamented:

Zimbabwe's policies are less supportive resulting in higher failure rate of SMEs. SMEs lack the access to business finance, skills and technology shortage, inadequacy or improper infrastructure, lack of managerial skills and SME failure is high in Zimbabwe because of poor training and monitoring of the sector by Government. The registration process for one to be considered an official SME in Zimbabwe is hectic and the requirements are difficult to meet.

The results from both the primary and secondary data indicate that there is a need to revamp the SME strategic framework and redress all the shortcomings of the current system that have been revealed. Both participants from the interviews and questionnaires were keen to contribute towards the development of a new SME strategic framework, as they considered this development as their hope for ushering in a new era in the SME sector. Their views are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

7.3 Objective Three: The Development of the new SME strategic framework

The participants showed a keen interest in the development of a new SME strategic framework that seeks to address the plight of the SME sector in Zimbabwe. The interviewees showed much enthusiasm and the interviewer could observe that the participants were ready for the new framework. The responses indicated that the interviewees had a great deal of knowledge and they suggested what needed to be corrected in the current framework and also brought in new ideas. One of the participants summed up what needs to be done when he stated:

"I believe that it had to begin with the people on the ground. The government should have engaged the local leaders, work with them and do everything to make sure that

they understand the government programmes... The local leaders would have become the community based facilitators for the government on the SME sector. The local leaders even know the people working in different sectors within their community. The government should have developed a clear government plan of action with timelines. It should have been able to find out if it has achieved its objectives, that is, monitoring and evaluation which is lacking in the current system. In addition, the government should have developed the technology of the country and match the standards of other countries like our neighbour South Africa that has free Wi-Fi in public places like the parks. It did not do anything on the areas that I have mentioned.”
<Files\\KeyInformants\\K04 Male Agriculture>

The views of the participants were that the new SME strategic framework should begin with consultations with the stakeholders, which includes the involvement of the local leadership, developing a plan of action and disseminating the information to all the stakeholders; the information should in fact reach out to all the people. The participants encouraged the government to mobilise more resources and distribute them in a clear, transparent manner and any corrupt practices should be avoided. The interviewees mentioned that the government should improve the technology system, employ a monitoring and evaluation system and introduce a capacity development department. These sentiments were summarised by participants K06, who stated that, “the government should have actioned all the provisions of the policy including provision of adequate resources, training monitoring and evaluation. Target setting and encouraging scientific management of businesses is vital.” The respondents of the questionnaire also concurred with the interviewees on the need to develop a new strategic framework and its contents. The analysis of both the qualitative data and quantitative data focusing on a common research objective shows the importance of triangulation as stated by Patton, 1999 as cited by Carter et al. 2014) that triangulation uses multiple methods or data sources in to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena.

The respondents answered questions that solicited ideas of what should be incorporated in the new strategic framework. Over 90% (Table 6.25) indicated that the new strategic

framework should be developed, cascaded, implemented, monitored and evaluated in a professional manner. On the framework's development, 94.6% of the respondents stated that the government should explain the goals and mission on SMEs to stakeholders, 96.0% indicated that the government should promote dialogue with SME implementers and 94.0% stated that the government should engage the local leadership at all levels. On cascading the policy and any relevant information (Table 6.25), the respondents aired their views as follows: 96.0% indicated that the government should promote dialogue with SME implementers and 95.0% stated that the government should improve interaction with SME operators to exchange ideas. On implementation, the respondents are anticipating more training programmes (more than 90%) and the government was tasked by the respondents to produce monitoring and evaluation programmes. The views of the participants will form the core of the new strategic framework that will be developed by the researcher. Both the participants who took part in the interviews and those who completed the questionnaire provided useful information which guided the crafting of a proposed new strategic framework that is homegrown, stakeholder oriented and that calls for the government's commitment as an assurance of its successful implementation. This triangulation process of the data of having several data sources, varied by time and place improves the degree of confidence (Farquhar et al 2020). The results from the data collected, analysed and interpreted indicate that the engagement of the SME stakeholders at all stages of policy development and execution is a key requirement for the successful implementation of any policy. This view was followed by the Nigerian government in its strategic framework, as stated by Osinbajo (2015), that the government of Nigeria resolved to engage more with SMEs and entrepreneurial activities towards ensuring viable economic development and wealth creation by supporting the sector (Osinbajo, 2015); this development produced great results, as SMEs provide gainful employment for about 90% of the Nigerian population (Onuorah and Jakpa, 2016). The engagement and integrated approach of all the ideas obtained from the consultative meetings will provide the basic information that will be used in the crafting of a proposed new strategic framework, presented in the next chapter.

7.4 The SME performance trend over five years

The participants from the SME operators in item A 11 of the questionnaire indicated that the performance of their organisation over a period of five years. The participants looked at the

general trend of the organisation over the years and they could easily account for how the organisation was performing based on the comparison basis from year to year. The changes that took place in the organisation helped the participants to make an informed judgement of their organisation over the years. Even the general employee was able to trace the position of business in terms of sales, number of employees, retrenchments and worker benefits over the five-year period. The economic deterioration of the economy in the five-year period was also another parameter that was used to compare the validity of the results.

The Zim Asset (2013) ascertains that Zimbabwe experienced a deteriorating economic and social environment since 2000 and this resulted in a deep economic and social crisis. The SME performance results from the participants and government reports show a common trend of poor results as the year progressed and the triangulation of the primary and secondary data validates the results. The downward economic trend of Zimbabwe affected most of the operations in the country and this was confirmed by the views of the SME operators who concurred that the performance of the business deteriorated over the five years.

7.5 Summary of findings

The findings from the study showed that the government managed to inform its high profile stakeholders about the SME policies and its intentions were clearly communicated to all the experts in the SME sector. However, the government failed to provide the policy information to the implementers. The poor performance of Zimbabwean SMEs is basically an issue of the government and its commitment to the policies that support the economic growth. The empirical data show that the government lacked capacity building programmes to support the performance of SMEs and the government did not do much to support the SMEs financially yet this area is the most deciding factor in improving the performance of the SMEs. The participants showed a keen interest in the development of a new SME strategic framework that seeks to address the plight of the SME sector in Zimbabwe. The triangulation of the findings from the data collected from both mixed methods, indicate that the engagement of the SME stakeholders at all stages of the policy development and execution is a key requirement for the successful implementation of any policy.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research findings and three basic fundamental issues about SME performance that were raised by the participants and triangulation was used in the analysis of results. The first issue is that the government managed to inform its officers about the SME policies and its intentions were clearly communicated to all the experts in the SME sector but this information did not reach to the SME implementers. The second issue is that the government has no plans to support the SMEs with resources. This was observed through the poor performance of Zimbabwean SMEs which is basically an issue of the government which failed to be committed and support the SME sector. The third issue is that the empirical data show that the government lacked capacity building programmes to support the performance of SMEs the government did not doing much to support the SMEs financially. The last issue which motivated the participants was the crafting of the new strategic framework. The participants showed a keen interest in the development of a new SME strategic framework that seeks to address the plight of the SME sector in Zimbabwe. The next chapter will discuss the synthesis of the new strategic framework which has the potential to bring on board a new economic era in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER EIGHT: PROPOSED NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

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8.8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the analysis and discussion of the results in three sections based on the objectives: the government policies and its influence on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe; the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources to SMEs; and what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance. This chapter presents a recommended strategic framework, which can be implemented by SMEs in Zimbabwe. The framework is a tool that is designed to enhance the performance of SMEs and is synthesised from the findings of the primary data, which were guided by the research objectives. The process begins with a consultative procedure that involves all the stakeholders in the development of a government policy that seeks to establish an adequate resource base as a key driver that promotes SME performance in Zimbabwe.

The literature on SMEs in Zimbabwe has revealed that in addition to not receiving government support, they also lack the necessary skills such as human resources, and marketing, financial management and general management skills to achieve high performance. It is emphasised by Zindiye et al. (2012), that insufficient management skills have a negative effect on the growth of the SME sector in Zimbabwe. The prime purpose of this chapter is to craft a more practical, feasible and client based SME strategic framework for Zimbabwe that can change the operating conditions of its SMEs. Zimbabwe is rich in natural resources, enjoys a consistent savanna climate and its residents have a high literacy rate, all of which can be tapped and channelled towards high SME performance through a well-crafted SME strategic plan. The evidence based SME strategic framework is developed from factors resulting from the results of the primary data, literature reviews and the theoretical framework.

8.2 Pillars of the new SME strategic framework

The proposed new strategic framework is based on the three main pillars of government, SME operators and the general stakeholders, who are the community serviced by SMEs and the main features of the SME strategic framework.

8.2.1 The government of Zimbabwe

The government of Zimbabwe is the main player in the operations of the SME strategic framework that aims to transform the current business operational system into a more economically viable productive entity. The government provides the policy structure and the resources that are required for the improved performance of SMEs. Its role was stressed by Nurul (2016), who pointed out that government policy provides the blueprint that emphasises the government plan and initiative of their course of action and effective government policy would facilitate the success of SMEs. Further, the government provides the institutional environment which influences the performance of organisations such as SMEs, as stated in institutional theory (Havav, 2017). The government's role in the strategic framework is two pronged: It is the policy maker and a major resource provider that exerts a strong influence on the innovation capacity of SMEs (The Asian Development Bank, 2016). The government of Zimbabwe has to adopt this vision for SMEs and provide the support through its policy development process and by availing the resources to the SME sector.

8.2.2 The SME operator

The SME operator is the second important pillar whose performance is directly influenced by government support. Operators are the main beneficiaries of the government's policies that support the entrepreneurship programmes. They need to be empowered by the government through various activities which target the development of the SMEs. Zimbabwe can follow the example of Japan, which had programmes that were provided by 262 Kohsetsushi centres (public industrial technology research institutes), which offer a range of services to Japanese SME manufacturers, including technology guidance, technical assistance and training, networking, testing, analysis and instrumentation, and access to open laboratories and test beds (Pergelova and Angulo-Ruiz, 2014). The SME success is hinged on the government's support and a client based SME strategic framework that is backed by sufficient financial resources will pioneer this development in Zimbabwe.

8.2.3 The general stakeholders

The third pillar with a stake in the SME strategic framework is the general stakeholders, which consist of the community at large, employees of the SME sector and the suppliers of goods and services to the SME sector which are all covered by social entrepreneurship theory. This

theory, underpinned by social objectives to improve wealth and well-being for the community, rather than just the individual (Cant, 2007), plays an important role in the strategic framework. This group of people are either directly or indirectly involved with daily SME business operations. People who are employed in the SME sector will have more job security if the sector improves its performance. The suppliers of inputs to SME operators will have a more sustainable business and the consumers of goods and services from the SME sector will be assured of high quality products that are being continuously improved through innovation, research and development. Khangarot (2019) emphasises that social entrepreneurship involves a variety of stakeholders that are in the local community, which include government agents, non-governmental organisations, local leaders, traditional and cultural leaders, citizens and communities who must collaborate to solve social problems. The general stakeholders, as social entrepreneurship theory states, cannot be overlooked in the crafting of the new national SME strategic framework.

The three pillars described are the main players in the SME strategic framework and their operations are interlinked and interrelated. Therefore, coordination of their activities is of great significance in the execution of the framework. They form a tripod structure (Figure 8.1) which must be a well-coordinated system poised for the successful implementation of the SME strategic plan. All the features have to be fully accountable to the resources entrusted to them, because they are a critical feature of the performance of the SMEs. The lack of resources and inconsistent resource supply by the government has been stated by the respondents as one of the main causes of their poor performance. Resource supply and management are the fundamental principles that have unlocked the success stories of SME performance worldwide, anchored by RBV theory.

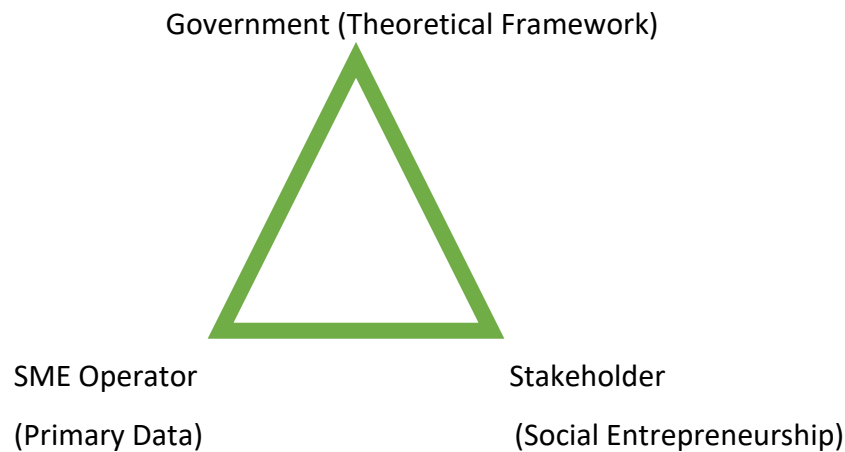


Figure 8.1: Pillars of the new strategic framework

(Source : Researcher's own work)

8.3 Financial resource adequacy as the foundation of the framework

The availability of financial resources is a major requirement towards the implementation of a viable strategic framework that addresses the plight of SMEs. The RBV theory provides the lens that can be used to address the financial needs of SMEs. It focuses on the abundance of financial, human, and social capital that might determine entrepreneurs' willingness to address both the social objectives and the economic objectives (Sieger et al., 2011). An RBV perspective by entrepreneurs considers resources as a tool to determine their performance (Shepherd and Wiklund, 2005). A cluster of scholars share the same sentiments that financial, human, and social capital exert significant influences on the performance of entrepreneurial activity, making the management of such resources critical (De Clercq et al., 2013; Estrin et al., 2016; Hörisch et al., 2017; Kachlami et al., 2017). The policy makers in Zimbabwe have to develop financial reserves that will be able to support the needy SMEs in Zimbabwe.

Economies that house very successful SME sectors have made huge financial investments in them. Their access to finance is a key aspect towards the performance of small businesses. As the financial support of SMEs is the driving force behind their high performance, this was incorporated by the South African B-BEE programme, whose primary objectives is to improve SME access to finance (DTI, 2007). In Malaysia, the commercial banks are the main source of finance for the SMEs with about 70.4% of working capital being financed by them and the Islamic banks provide running capital of about 11.3% (Bhuiyan et al., 2016). Kraemer-Eis et al. (2019) pointed out that the European Investment Fund (EIF) plays an important role in

alleviating problems experienced by SMEs in accessing finance and through a wide range of financial intermediaries, such as banks, leasing companies, guarantee funds, mutual guarantee institutions, promotional banks and other financial intermediaries, finance is easily accessible by the implementers. The government of Zimbabwe has a lot to learn from these countries and to develop a comprehensive funding mechanism for SMEs that will be easily accessible, sustainable and meet their minimum requirements.

The primary data indicated that the current policy framework lacks the financial resources. Most of the respondents (90%) interviewed (Table 6.23) indicated that the country failed to provide the financial support to the cause of SMEs. The respondents from the questionnaires (93%) concurred with the interviewees that the government failed to provide financial resources. This failure by the government was the main cause of the high SME failure rate. A strong financial resource is a major requirement towards establishing a commendable SME strategic framework. The government has to re-strategise and mobilise financial resources that are adequate for SMEs to operate. Financial resource adequacy therefore has to be pursued with much effort and determination by the government of Zimbabwe.

8.4 The strategic road map

A strategic road map would provide the pathway that needs to be followed by the government to usher in the development of the SME strategic framework. This road map would set the tone of the SME strategic framework, as its indicators and benchmarks would point towards the progress and achievements that can be recorded by SMEs. It would identify the primary issues that the government has to genuinely address as a first priority before it brings out an SME strategic framework, which would be a secondary document for the people. The strategic roadmap is the compass that guides all the other processes to be implemented in the context of the SME strategic framework. The next section looks at the priority areas in the crafting of the strategic framework.

8.4.1 Priority One: Development of a Zimbabwean grown SME policy

The current SME policy needs to be revised, updated and improved to meet the needs of the implementers. The government has the power to craft policies that support the performance of SMEs. Its SME policy has to be clearly outlined to articulate its vision, mission, aim,

objectives and the implementation process, emphasising a government plan and effective policy to facilitate the performance of SMEs (Sahrom et al., 2016).

For the SME strategic framework to be successfully implemented, the government policy makers have to rethink and craft a new policy through a rigorous consultative process of all the stakeholders involved in the SME sector. The government has to go to the communities, carry out a needs assessment, by holding meetings in each region with SME implementers, employees and other stakeholders such as community leaders and suppliers and incorporate their findings in the new policy framework. This process will produce a Zimbabwean homegrown SME policy, which would be owned by both the government and the SME stakeholders. This first point was emphasised by the majority of the respondents (94%), that the government does not consult the stakeholders (Table 6.13). The engagement of the stakeholders will not surprise them when the government rolls out the programme to the stakeholders. The consultation programmes help in building the trust between the government and stakeholders. This process has achieved positive results in Asian countries which maintain a leading role in the performance of SMEs, which contribute between 70% to 90% to employment and an estimated 40% contribution to their respective GDPs (SBC, 2015). This is achieved through developing homegrown policies, of which the Critical Business Development Services (BDS) and special government patronage or deliberate market support (practised in many Asian countries) have made SMEs the centre of economic development in these countries (Adebiyi, 2014). These policies are linked to the needs of the community and the government's interaction with the community provides the required resources to the SMEs. The new strategic plan encourages the government to begin with the consultation programmes.

The relationship between the government and SME stakeholders during the policy framework formulation is a critical factor towards the ownership of the policy. The stakeholders will develop strong confidence in their government through the incorporation of their views in the policy framework; this will create strong synergies between them. This approach has been successfully adopted in Brazil through the Local Production System (LPS) perspective. The LPS approach provides a policy framework which seeks to foster sustainable and coordinated development at national, regional and local levels through a participatory approach involving

economic, political and social agents localised in the same area, performing related economic activities and presenting consistent articulation, interaction, co-operation, and learning processes (Arroio, 2014). The government of Zimbabwe can implement a similar procedure, since it has a well-developed administrative structure that cascades from the national, provincial, district, ward and village level that it can fully utilise.

The government cannot afford to divorce the stakeholders from the policy development processes, as the initiative marks the beginning of the establishment of a strong bond that also attracts investment to the SME sector. The government will need to continuously give feedback to its stakeholders, until they produce the final blueprint of the Zimbabwe SME policy framework for its people. This dispensation of the policy development process would then not bring any surprises or shocks to SME stakeholders, as their involvement in the crafting of the policy will have been defined from the infant stages of its formulation. They will have been involved in all the stages all the way up to the final SME policy document.

8.4.2 Priority Two: Government's commitment to provide resources to SMEs

Financial support by the government has been identified as one of the major resources that empowers the SMEs. Microfinancing providers in the USA now include stand-alone micro-lenders, community development banks, federal and state governmental agencies, credit unions and mutual fund associations, Certified Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and conventional banks that work directly with financial institutions in providing micro-funds to their clients (Islamic Finance in the United States, 2018). This was massive support of the SMEs by the USA government resulting in high performing SMEs being produced.

The Asian countries have invested huge financial support in the SME sector and have reaped big dividends, as reflected by the contributions of SMEs to their respective economies. The South Korean government, for example, invested one trillion Korean won (approximately US\$750 million) in the Industrial Bank of Korea to expand its investment foundation and increase the amount of SME lending up to 12 trillion Korean won (approximately US\$9 billion) (Liang et al., 2017). The huge support provided by the Korean government to SMEs explains the high performance of their SME sector. The government of Zimbabwe needs to duplicate

this type of commitment to support its own SME policy which will reap great dividends. A robust resource mobilisation programme needs to be set up to maintain a continuous supply of resources.

Additionally, the government should strive to improve the infrastructure systems servicing the SMEs implementers. For instance, the majority of the respondents (96%) indicated that the feeder roads that they use (Table 6.13) in their daily operations are in a bad state. These sentiments are echoed by Majoni et al. (2016: 383), that “infrastructure being used by many SMEs in Zimbabwe is either dilapidated or is inadequate to accommodate the assigned SMEs”. Moreover, SME implementers indicated in their responses that they experience continuous shortages of water, power and the working environment is in a deplorable state. This situation was further elaborated on by Majoni et al. (2016), who state that the inefficiently provided infrastructures by the state such as electricity and water has negatively affected the function of SMEs. The commitment of the government towards supporting the SME programmes is critical in enhancing the performance of SMEs. Therefore, government needs to make commitments towards improving these infrastructure systems.

8.4.3 Priority Three: Government resource mobilisation programmes

The government of Zimbabwe’s commitment to support the policy it has developed is the key to the transformation of the new policy framework, from the paper to the implementation process. The government, as the architect of the policies, has a mandate to commit its support to them through resources so that they make an impact in the communities that are being served. The government has to embark on resource mobilisation processes in order to support the SME policy implementation. It can learn from the Nigerian government that developed a comprehensive programme for financing the SME sector. Omorogbe (2011) has elaborated that some of the support institutions and opportunities created by the Nigerian government to enable SMEs access funding include the following:

- Mandatory Credit Guideline in respect of SMEs (1970)
- Small Scale Industries Credit Guarantee Scheme (1971)
- Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (1973)
- Nigeria Agriculture and Co-operative Bank (1973)

- Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry (1973)
- Rural Banking Scheme (1977)
- The World Bank Assisted SME I (1985) and The World Bank Assisted SME II (1990)
- Second-Tier Security Market (1985)
- Peoples Bank (1989)
- National Economic Reconstruction Fund (1992)
- Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Loan Scheme (1992)
- Family Economic Advancement Programme (1997)
- African Development Bank – Export Stimulation Loan Scheme (ADB-ESL) (1988)
- Bank of Industry (BOI) – (merger of NIDB, NBCI and NERFUND) (2001)
- Nigerian Agricultural Co-operative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB) – merger of NACB, Peoples Bank and Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) (2002)
- Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) (2004)
- Microfinance banks
- Small and Medium Enterprises Credit Guarantee Scheme for SMEs (2010)

Due to these programmes were designed to provide support to SMEs in Nigeria, today that country is considered among the top performers in the SME sector in Africa. This has been achieved through the government's commitment to its SME policies and its financial support proved to be the source of the the SME sector success in Nigeria.

A similar approach can be adopted by the Zimbabwean government. However, the resource mobilisation process by the government has to be extensive in order to provide financial resources for SMEs. Through its structures and through sustainable fund raising programmes, the government can come up with different ways of securing the resources. In recent years it has implemented a successful AIDS levy programmes and it can introduce an similar SME levy programme which supports their growth and development. An SME levy would be

administered by the Ministry of SMEs. The national budget of the country needs to allocate resources specifically for the SME sector to ensure a continuous flow of the funds. In addition to the suggested resource mobilisation activities, the stronger involvement of the Reserve Bank and the Ministry of Finance, Old Mutual and foreign financiers should be invited and be part of the resource mobilisation team. A multi sectoral approach to the resource mobilisation process would have many financial streams bringing money to the national SME fund and thus the funding of the sector would be achieved.

8..4.4. Priority Four: Establishing the government SME support structures

The government has to establish a parastatal within its structures to administer the SME levy. This would follow the idea of the Asian Development Bank (2016), which states that government policy and the government itself exert a strong influence on the innovation capacity of SMEs and have a critical role to play in every sphere of innovation via different policies and schemes, including access to finance and technology, capacity building and human resources, market linkages, availability of research facilities, and access to key information, among others. The new Zimbabwe National SME sector (ZNSS) that would be administered by the Ministry of SMEs would establish the following five departments that support the function of SMEs: Finance and Resource Mobilisation , Information Technology, Capacity Building, Research and Development and Monitoring and Evaluation. Each of these departments would carry out a special mandate to support the SME sector. Figure 8.1 illustrates the proposed departments of the ZNSS.

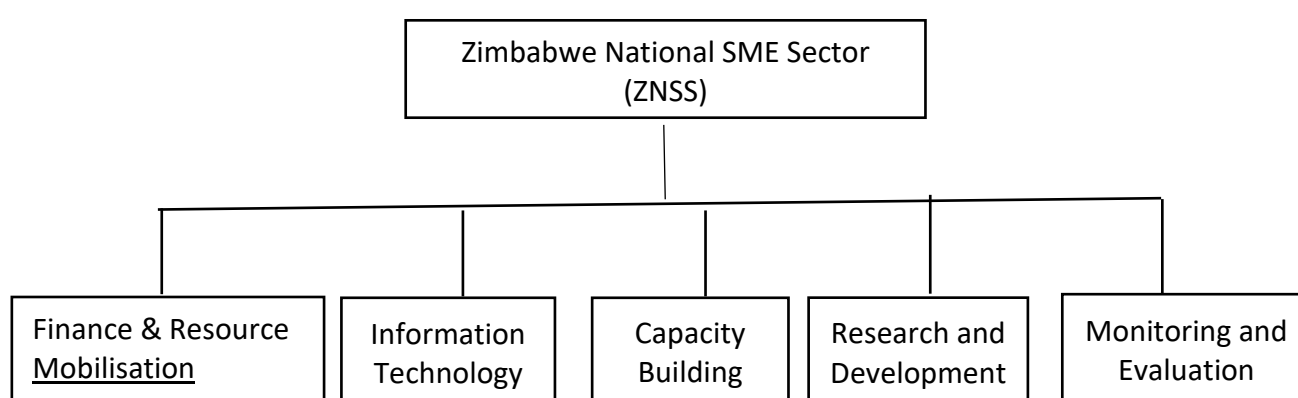


Figure 8.2: Proposed departments of the new Zimbabwe national SME sector

(Source : Researcher's own work)

The ZNSS would be led by the chief executive officer who reports to the Minister of SMEs and the SME board of governors. The board of governors would be appointed by the government to monitor the proceedings of the national SME sector. The function of each of the proposed departments is briefly described in the next section: the national SME strategic framework implementing guidelines.

8.5 The functions of the Zimbabwe national SME sector (ZNSS) departments

The national SME strategic framework implementing guidelines discuss the functions of each department of the ZNSS. Each of the five departments has a special function that will assist SMEs to improve on their performance. Each will be headed by a professional manager, who will continuously report on the progress of the respective department to the chief executive officer. The national office will house the five departments, which will be duplicated at all levels, cascading down to the last level in the districts. The district managers will have hands-on information of what is happening among the SME implementers and relay the information to the provincial office, which, in turn, reports to the national office; the departmental head will report to the chief executive officer, who sits on the board of directors and in government meetings, to furnish them with the progress being made by the SME sector. This reporting structure will ensure that accurate reports are provided and each department is accountable for any activities being carried out in support of SMEs. This process employs the evidence-based system of implementing the SMEprogrammes.

8.5.1 The Finance and Resource Mobilisation department

As stated earlier, financial resources are the major input required for the high performance of SMEs. The management of the SME levy would have to be done in a professional and transparent manner by the finance department. The results of the data collected (Table 6.23) indicate that SME implementers (78%) showed a great dissatisfaction with the manner in which the current system is administering SME funds. In the same section of financial support the questionnaire the respondents pointed out that there are high incidences of corruption (79%), favouritism (87%) and manipulation in the disbursement of funds (89%). These results will be used as checks and balances in the execution of programmes involving money. The department will be expected to execute its duties professionally and both internal and external regular audits will have to be carried out. The Finance and Resource Mobilisation

department will house a number of sections which include the revenue collection, disbursement, audits and the like. These will operate professionally, guided by the basic accounting systems. All the sections will report to the finance and resource mobilisation manager, a highly qualified practitioner with the technical knowledge of administering financial business. This department holds the key for the success of the implementation of the SME strategic framework, as revealed by both the primary and secondary data concerning financial resources.

8.5.2 The Information Technological Communication department

In recent years technological innovation has taken the grand stage across the global village and internet technology and ICT has brought the whole world together. Digital technologies and their applications are systematically altering established practices and making new ones emerge in different realms of society. The field of social sciences in general and management in particular, together with several examples that span a variety of fields, are the main beneficiaries of the technological innovations (Fini et al., 2017). Digitalisation affects individual and team behaviours, organisation strategies, practices and processes, industry dynamics and competition among entrepreneurs (Droll et al., 2017). The recent advent of remote sensing, mobile technologies, novel transaction systems and high-performance computing offers opportunities to understand trends, behaviours, and actions in a manner that was not previously possible (West et al., 2006). The related literature indicates that the establishment of an effective ITC department is a vital development in any economic sector.

The Zimbabwe SME sector will need to develop a well-established, robust ITC department to keep pace with the advancements in technology. There is increasing evidence of entrepreneurs' growing use of WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and other social network sites, which have the capacity to link local entrepreneurs with each other and with the global village. Therefore, this department will need to be equipped with state of the art ICT equipment and highly qualified professional ITC officers to provide a system that will reach out to every SME stakeholder at an affordable price. An ITC department is capable of changing the current negative perceptions of the SME implementers, as the changes it will bring should have a direct effect in their work, life and future. The department will be the centre of information dissemination and, through it, all stakeholders should be able to access

SME information and improve the current situation. [whereby 79.2% of the respondents from table 6.13 selected *Not at all* on the question that solicited information on the overnment's distribution of information (gazette, brochures, fliers) about the two policies'. This lack of information dissemination, and therefore, lack of knowledge, will become a thing of the past because a department reaching out to all stakeholders with information will have been established.

8.5.3 The Capacity Building department

Institutional theory is used as a lens to understand how the environment influences the capacity of an organisation to learn effectively in order to achieve sustainability performance (Crews, 2010). Normative isomorphism in industries is associated with professionalisation, which is imagined as the impact of formal learning, especially in colleges and in the standard working groups where affiliations are the daily practices (Mushtaq, 2020). Today, learning has moved to the top of the business priority list in terms of sharpening skills, enlarging the leadership pipeline, and stimulating employee incentives (Xing et al., 2018). Every organisation has to reassess its learning environment and to implement a fresh vision to create a conducive learning experience that touches everyone involved in the learning system (Olivier and Page, 2017). The literature from cited scholars provides the primary foundation on which the capacity building department will be based.

The Indonesian government, for example, initiated knowledge and technology transfer programmes and has provided training programmes, expertise transfer and training centres, as well as physical equipment (machinery and tools) for use by SMEs (Handoko et al., 2019). The Malawian government has embarked on programmes to develop the entrepreneurial mindset of the population through the revamping and restructuring of public organisations entrusted with national entrepreneurship development such as the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurial Training Authority (TEVETA), Small and Medium Enterprise Development Institute (SMEDI) and Malawi Rural Development and Enterprise Fund (MARDEF) (Ndala and Pelsner, 2019). The Zimbabwe SME capacity development department will have to borrow ideas from Indonesia and Malawi to strengthen capacity building.

Capacity development should target stakeholders at all levels. This should include advocating and sensitising stakeholders including SME implementing partners, policy makers and decision makers at all levels. The gender mainstreaming programmes in all SME programmes and activities should be prioritised, as indicated in the biographic data that a paltry 25% of women are involved with SMEs. A production of a tool kit for gender mainstreaming with gender-sensitive results indicators and provision of appropriate training and orientation on gender and SME activities will need to be implemented.

This department will need to work closely with experts from finance, ITC, research and development and monitoring and evaluation. Its aim will be to coordinate the training programmes and their rollout for entrepreneurs, that will also benefit SME operators. A well-coordinated programme will see most entrepreneurs gaining knowledge in areas not previously addressed by the current system, which include business management, financial management, marketing and ICT. The department will need to be an associate member of the entrepreneurship department of the institutions of higher learning in the country, which include universities, and technical, vocational and entrepreneurial training colleges.

Capacity building of the SME business operators will enable the implementers to be accountable to the government, their communities, stakeholders and partners that are either directly or indirectly involved with SMEs. Capacity building will also focus on leadership building, team building, development of accountability systems and participatory decision making arrangements (especially for SME owners and their employees), human resources management and financial management in order to strengthen the credibility of SMEs in their endeavour to improve the performance of their businesses.

8.5.4 The Research and Development department

Research and development has evolved to be an integral part of any system that aims to keep pace with the dynamic changes in the environment. Cohen and Levinthal (1990) state that entrepreneurs that invest in research and development increase their capacity to adapt knowledge developed in other organisations and are able to appropriate some of the profits gained to external investments in new knowledge. Universities provide the opportunities for

research and development in linking entrepreneurship and innovation. Some countries have invested in it and it has paid some dividends.

An example is the Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA) is an independent trust, which started operations in 1995 as a non-governmental policy research institution with a mission is to inform policy and build capacity through research and consultancy services (Khanie, 2018). The BIDPA is partly funded by the Government of Botswana, as it supports the government to be more objective in its policy creation, implementation and evaluation. In Brazil, SME performance continues to grow due to continued support and research and development programmes that have been prioritised by the government. In 2005, these businesses accounted for approximately 52.5% of the Brazilian labour market (Beck et al., 2005).

The Zimbabwe SME sector has to develop a research and development department that keeps in touch with the dynamic world. The department will need to be linked with the higher institutes of learning and funding for research activities across the SME sectors has to be made available. Such a department will help the SME sector to grow, following the endogenous growth theory, which states that research and development investments and knowledge spill-overs are capable of generating high degrees of innovation, increased productivity and higher growth (Romer, 1990). A research and development programme will usher in new horizons in the performance of SMEs, which are non-existent in the current strategic framework.

8.5.5 The Monitoring and Evaluation department

An effective SME strategic framework requires monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of programmes that would provide guidance to the improvement of the performance of SMEs. This department would develop SME monitoring tools based on the activities being done by SMEs. An SME monitoring and evaluation system has been implemented in the EU, as reported by the....OECD/ETF/EU/EBRD (2019); EU policy makers have come up with SME monitoring and evaluation tools which contain the following key programmes that will be monitored: regulatory conditions for SMEs, expanding regional co-operation of SME development, making women's entrepreneurship participation one of its priority areas and

supporting SMEs to scale up in order to enhance their productivity. A department of M&E will therefore provide the benchmarks for the development of the SME sector. A stakeholder consultative meeting will be held to develop SME performance M&E tools, which will be printed and distributed to all the SME structures from the national office down to the district offices.

A national eM&E framework needs to be developed and a set of core indicators have to be identified, described and communicated to all the stakeholders. In addition, a comprehensive M&E plan for SME activities needs to be developed. The overall goal of the national M&E system would be to provide a comprehensive tracking system to collect, enter, analyse and share information on SME performance that will enhance decision making at all levels in the implementation of interventions under the national SME strategic framework. A national M&E work plan that clearly states agreed indicators and M&E activities during the year will be developed in collaboration with all partners and disseminated to all sectors. The plan will state the responsibility of different stakeholders participating in SME activities. Planning and review meetings with stakeholders are crucial and so is the scale-up of harmonised M&E tools to all levels. Strengthened M&E systems, coupled with facilitative supervision, will ensure accountability in service delivery as well as improved performance of SMEs.

8.6 The SME strategic framework rollout programme

After the government has put together the homegrown SME policy, developed the strategic road map, established the support structures and developed the implementing guidelines, the final action is to bring the SME strategic framework to the people through the rollout programme. This programme consists of coordinated sequential steps to be followed to ensure that the people will embrace it, own it and support it through a mutual relationship because they were involved in all the stages of establishing it. The next sections provide the sequential activities which need to be carried out in the rollout programme. The programmes include SME stakeholder engagement, policy awareness campaigns and information and education materials.

8.6.1 SME stakeholder engagement

It is critical for the various stakeholders to buy into the idea of a harmonised SME strategic framework; hence, the need for intensive consultation. This should include holding meetings to discuss the concept, design and strategic direction for the common SME strategic framework platform, to establish an all-inclusive stakeholder team to review and document a detailed information system requirement for the SME sector, to solicit technical assistance, to procure corporate utility tools and software and to train staff in the ITC department for SME information management (SIM) to manage the software.

Stakeholder consultation with participants representing all the stakeholders involved in SME activities is vital for the success of the operationalisation of the strategic framework. As indicated in the data collection results, SME activities are spread all over the country, with the urban settlements having the greatest number of SMEs (Figure 6.7). The first point of entry is to hold meetings with the community leaders and enlighten them on the intentions of the government and highlight the benefits that will come with the programme, especially employment creation, government support through the financial resources and the general development of the community through SME activities. After meeting the local leaders, then would follow the business leaders in the community, the SME implementers and all the people who have an interest in the SME sector. In all the meetings the government will have to bring its agenda to the people and thus enlighten the stakeholders of the government's intentions to improve the SMEs in their community. These meetings will address the shortcomings of the government, which were revealed by 81.4% of the respondents (Table 6.13) who indicated that they had never heard about the indigenisation and industrial policies. Stakeholder engagement is the entry point for the government and once the community accepts the programme they will own it and support it and success will be guaranteed.

8.6.2 Policy awareness campaign programme

The government will need to use the community leaders to reach out to all the people and disseminate the SME strategic framework. The respondents in the survey showed that their operations were not following any policy framework. Responding to the question, 'In your operations, are you guided by the two policies?' (Table 6.13), only 1.4% were following the

SME policies, 4.2% to some extent and 14.4% very little, while the majority of 79.8 % were following their natural instincts. This shows that there were very few awareness campaigns held by the government. To address this shortcoming, the local people will need to take a leading role in identifying the current SME operators, the potential SME implementers. The government, through their local officers, will then inform all the people with interests in SMEs how they can benefit from its programmes.

Through the local leadership, the government would identify local volunteers, who it will train to lead in the awareness campaigns. These volunteers will be able to articulate the SME policy, both in English and the vernacular language, to ensure that the SME strategic framework reaches out to all the people. The volunteers will be given a token of appreciation in the form of allowances, motor cycles for travelling and registering all the potential SME stakeholders, which will lead to the development of the national SME database. After the awareness campaign programme, the government should embark on the information, education and communication (IEC) material dissemination programme.

8.6.3 Information, education and communication (IEC) dissemination

The IEC material dissemination would share in detail the policy information and the SME strategic framework with all people who have interests in SMEs. The respondents in the survey on the question, 'Do you have copies of the two policies at your organisation?' (Table 6.13), showed that 1.6% had copies, 65,9% did not and 32,5% were not sure of the policies. The results show a very low rate of information dissemination by the government. A massive production of IEC materials has to be done. This material would be developed by the ITC department in collaboration with the other departments. A standard information package developed by the ICT department will then be distributed to all community levels to increase awareness and access to information on the policies and how to access government support. The government, with the support of local leadership, will have to maximise the community based volunteers to disseminate the information. It can be assured that the people with interests in the SME programme will read the information packs because Zimbabwe has a high literacy rate.

Both print and electronic media will be used, as they have proved to be effective and efficient channels of communicating information. In fact, all the channels of communication will be used to bring the national SME strategic framework to the people. Weekly radio and television programmes targeted at the entire population should be aired and broadcasted, whilst print material in the form of pamphlets, posters, news bulletins and billboards can be used during the SME awareness campaigns and any community gatherings. A vibrant strategic information system is therefore required for the Zimbabwe SME strategic framework to guide policy, support programme planning and implementation, measure SME performance, and identify gaps and emerging needs so as to develop solutions to address these and continuously assess and refine actions to ensure accountability and an effective national participation of all potential entrepreneurs.

8.6.4 Rollout of the SME work plans

The annual SME work plan should be properly costed and shared with the stakeholders who will then provide reports according to an agreed schedule. This strategy would ensure timely disbursement of financial resources according to the work plan. Annual operational plans can be developed on the basis of the Zimbabwe SME strategic framework, providing a structure indicating the activities to be undertaken and the allocation of responsibilities. These action plans would comprise a narrative and matrices containing the following information:

- **OUTPUTS:** the expected deliverables relevant to the performance of SMEs
- **ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS:** the steps and procedures to be taken in each SME intervention with an indication of where/what they lead to
- **RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION:** the sector and agency responsibilities where a number of players find their niche in the improved performance of SMEs
- **TIME-FRAME:** how long the anticipated intervention programme would take to be executed over the 12-month planning period
- **INDICATORS:** the evidence of implementation or achievement either in terms of process or outcomes or both

The process of M&E of SME performance will be greatly facilitated by an annual work or operational plan.

8.6.5 Management, coordination and M&E of the national SME strategic framework

In line with the national SME strategic framework, the ZNSS will have to establish the necessary coordination structures and systems for an effective response by the community to become entrepreneurs. To facilitate effective coordination, the ZNSS will need to decentralise structures at provincial, district and ward levels. The Zimbabwe SME sector would be responsible for coordinating the government's mandate to improve the performance of SMES, with particular focus on national SME policy development, partnerships, resource mobilisation, monitoring, evaluation and administration of the SME levy.

The number of coordinating entities that will be involved in the national response to the improvement of SME operations in Zimbabwe will include: the Zimbabwe Business Coalition on SMEs, which coordinates the private sector on SME activities; the Zimbabwe Association of Cross Border Traders, which coordinates SMEs involved in trade with the neighbouring countries; and the Zimbabwe Indigenous Business Community and the Indigenous Business Women of Zimbabwe, which coordinates women in business. These registered business entities house most of the SME operators and will be effectively used as the working partners of the government.

8.7 The implementable Zimbabwe national SME strategic framework

The strategic framework that has been detailed above is summarised into a working document in Table 8.1. It can be used by the implementers to turn the policy on paper into action. The action oriented strategic framework provides the objectives, strategy and the activities to be used. It also clarifies the core output indicators, which show the expected results. The responsible authority shows who executes the task, and ends up with the office where the reports are submitted.

Table 8.1 The new strategic framework: Working document

Activity	Objective	Strategy	Core Output Indicators	Responsible Authority	Reports to
Realigned SME policy	To develop a new SME policy through consultative meetings	(i) Hold consultative meetings with all the stakeholders in the SME sector (ii) Government consolidates the views raised by the stakeholders (iii) Government develops a new SME policy	- Meetings held - Stakeholder views compiled - New policy developed	Government legislators	The president of the country
Resource mobilisation strategies	To mobilise resources that will meet the needs of SMEs	(i) Government to introduce the SME levy (ii) Banking sector to lead in sourcing for funds (iii) National budget to support SMEs (iii) Leading mobile phone operators to be charged SME tax	- SME levy introduced - Banking sector source for funds - Budget line for SMEs included -Mobile phone operators charged SME tax	Ministry of SMEs in liaison with ZNSS	Parliament portfolio on SMEs which reports to the president
Financial resources	To provide financial resources to	(i) Develop a database of needy SMEs	Database developed	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in	Ministry of SMEs

	all the SMEs that are in need	(ii) Develop the selection plan for SMEs (iii) Develop the disbursement plan (iv) Develop the audit system (v) Develop (M&E) tools	• Selection plan developed and checked • Audit team in place • M&E tools developed	partnership with government officers	
Capacity building	To train SME implementers in various areas of need	(i) Administer a needs assessment programme (ii) List the training priority areas (iii) Draw up an annual, quarterly and monthly training programme (iv) Disseminate the programme to all the stakeholders (v) Implement the training programmes (vi) M&E of the training programmes	• Needs assessment done • Training priority areas identified • Training programme developed (annual, quarterly and monthly) • Training programmes received by the stakeholders • Trainings done • M&E programme developed and implemented	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in partnership with government officers	Ministry of SMEs

Information, technology and communication (ITC)	To establish an ITC department to keep pace with the advancement in technology	• Establish a wide internet activity coverage • Develop SME sector website • Promote the SME group activities on social media • Develop IEC materials • M&E of the ICT activities	• A wide internet coverage established • SME website developed • SME groups established on social media • IEC materials developed (fliers, pamphlets, T-shirts, caps, hats and billboards) • M&E programme developed and implemented	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in partnership with government officers	Ministry of SMEs
The Research and development (R&D)	To establish an SME R&D programme	• Establish an R&D department within the ZNSS • Establish an R&D department at every institution of higher learning	• R&D department established within the ZNSS • R&D department at every	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in partnership with government officers	Ministry of SMEs

		• Provide funding for the R&D activities • Promote innovation in SMEs	institution of higher learning involved with entrepreneurial programmes • Innovation programmes being implemented by SMEs		
Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)	To develop a national SME M&E strategic tool for all programmes	• Develop a national five-year SME strategic M&E tool • Develop an annual, quarterly, monthly M&E tool • Implement the SME M&E tool	• Five-year SME M&E plan produced • Annual, quarterly, monthly M&E tools produced • Reports of M&E programmes done are produced	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in partnership with government officers	Ministry of SMEs

Five phases of the National SME strategic framework rollout programme

Phase 1 SME stakeholder engagement	To engage all the stakeholders into dialogue	• Discuss the rollout plan and record the views of stakeholders	• Views of stakeholders are captured and recorded	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in partnership with	Ministry of SMEs
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	about the strategic plan	• Inform the stakeholders about the government plans with the SME sector • Evaluate the level of mastering the new policy and its objectives	• Feedback to the stakeholders about the government plans • Continuous evaluation of the community's understanding of the SME policy	government officers	
Phase 2 Policy awareness campaign programme	To disseminate government information on the SME policy	• Hold meetings with local leaders to inform them about the SME policy • Hold meetings with government officers who are involved with SMEs • Hold meetings and workshops with the leaders of SME organisations • Formation of SME task forces at	• Meetings with local leaders held • Meetings with government officers held • Meetings with SME leaders held • Reports and minutes of meetings produced and distributed to all the participants	Ministry of SMEs in partnership with ZNSS	Parliament portfolio on SMEs which reports to the president

		provincial, district and ward levels Task forces and local leaders identify SME volunteers to work with the government and ZNSS	- Task forces formed and committees put in place - Volunteers identified and informed of their roles		
Phase 3 Information education and communication (IEC) dissemination	To disseminate the policy information to all the SME stakeholders	- Government officers disseminate the SME policy information to the stakeholders in the government, NGOs and diplomatic cooperation - Government officers and SME task force disseminate the SME policy information to the SME implementers - The SME volunteers disseminate SME policy information to the local people - M&E of the information	- IEC materials (fliers, pamphlets, T-shirts, caps, hats and billboards) are disseminated to all the stakeholders - Volunteers distribute the IEC materials to the local people - IEC materials received by most of the stakeholders	Ministry of SMEs in partnership with ZNSS	Parliament portfolio on SMEs which reports to the president

		dissemination process	• M&E reports are produced at all levels		
Phase 4 Rollout of the SME work plans	To roll out the SME strategic plans followed by the implementation process	• Annual operational plans developed following Zimbabwe SME strategic framework • Implementation following the plans is carried out • All the SME activities (resource mobilisation and disbursement, capacity building, M&E, R&D, ICT and general stakeholder support) instituted in this phase • Feedback provided through M&E programmes	• Operational plans produced and distributed • The implementation of the programme activities • SME levy implemented • Mobile operators support SMEs • Funds are disbursed • Training is conducted • R&D is done • M&E is implemented • ICT department supports the whole system	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in partnership with government officers	Ministry of SMEs

Phase 5 Management coordination and M&E of the ZNSS	To strengthen the ZNSS established structures and systems for an effective response by the SME community	- Decentralisation of structures at provincial, district and ward levels - ZNSS implements its national mandate to coordinate the national response to the improvement of SME operations in Zimbabwe - Establishing a strong stakeholder bond with business partners: Zimbabwe Business Coalition on SMEs, Zimbabwe Association of Cross Border Traders, Zimbabwe Indigenous Business Community and the Indigenous Business Women of Zimbabwe - Programme review meetings are regularly held to discuss the	- SME structures operating at all levels - ZNSS establishes coordinating committees at all levels - Team building programmes with stakeholders implemented - Stakeholder committees established - Programme review meetings held - Reports and minutes produced - The next activities are identified, planning is done and	Zimbabwe National SME Sector in partnership with government officers	Ministry of SMEs
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		implementation process • Review meetings and M&E reports will inform the ZNSS of the next activities to be done • The capacity development of M&E officers is continuously done	implementation follows • M&E officers trained		
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(Source : Researcher's own work)

8.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the evidence-based national SME strategic framework for Zimbabwe. It discussed the stakeholders, government support, structures and the implementation guidelines. It further explained the procedure that the government will need to follow when rolling out the SME strategic framework to the people. The chapter elaborated the importance of resource mobilisation, management, coordination and implementation of the M&E as the main activities that hold the success of the national SME strategic framework to redirect the economy of the country. The developed SME strategic framework was guided by the literature on SMEs, the theoretical framework and the results of the survey conducted by the researcher. The next chapter provides the key conclusions from this study in relation to the research questions, the contributions of the researcher of this study, the proposed recommendations and the implementation thereof, researcher reflections and scope for future research arising from the limitations identified in this study.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Summary

9. 3 General conclusions

9. 3. 1 Conclusions from the secondary research

9. 3. 2 Conclusions from the primary research

9.3.2.1 Objective One: government policies

9.3.2.2 Objective Two Government support on SMEs

9.3.2.3 Objective Three Components of the strategic framework for SMEs

9.3.2.4 Objective Four Recommended SME policy changes

9. 4 Recommendations

9. 4. 1. Recommendations on the new strategic framework

9.4.1.1 Recommendation on the development of policies that positively influence the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe

9.4.1.2 Recommendation on the development of a strategic framework that is resource oriented for the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe

9.4.1.3 Recommendation on what should be incorporated into the strategic framework that improves the performance of SMEs

9.4.1.4 Recommendation on the future research areas

9.5 Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

The article on SME policies and challenges: A comparative analysis of Zimbabwe and South Korea (Majoni, Mutunhu, and Chaderopa, 2016) motivated further research of three main factors concerning SMEs. The first one is government policy and support of SMEs, the second is the resource adequacy for SMEs and its affects on their daily operations and the third is the performance of the SMEs under restrictive operational conditions. The study developed an SME strategic framework to improve their working environment and that can be implemented in order to exploit the full potential of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The investigation was informed by the following objectives:

Objective 1: To assess if government policies positively influence the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe

Objective 2: To assess the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources to the SMEs in Zimbabwe

Objective 3: To identify what should be incorporated into a policy framework towards improving SME operator performance in Zimbabwe

Objective 4: To recommend policy changes towards resource adequacy for SMEs in Zimbabwe

This chapter draws conclusions arising from the research analysis and interpretations and gives a synthesis of the study. Guided by the objectives, It provides both general remarks and detailed recommendations that can be employed for the improvement of SMEs in Zimbabwe and which can be adopted by other developing nations.

9.2 Summary

The primary aim in this study was to develop a new strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement to improve the performance of SMEs. The research explored the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources to SMEs in Zimbabwe and what should be incorporated into a new policy framework towards to improve SME performance. The study recommends policy changes that can be implemented towards resource adequacy for SMEs in Zimbabwe.

The opening chapter introduced policy as a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions to control and achieve rational outcomes. It identified policies that Zimbabwe deliberately enacted to promote SMEs, focused on these entities as the only hope of economic survival and explored the establishment of SMEs in every economic sector of the country. The first chapter went on to elaborate on the advancement of SMEs in the developed nations, achieved by policies supporting their growth and development. In addition, some key concepts were defined. Particular attention was paid to the concept of a strategic framework, which is deemed to be relevant in terms of its significant contribution towards the prime goal of this study: to craft and synthesise an SME strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement to rehabilitate its economic condition. The secondary objectives led to developing the study's research questions.

Chapter two focused on a Zimbabwe SME policy framework as a tool for empowerment. It presented the indigenisation policy as such a tool and the Zimbabwe Industrial Development Policy as a tool for economic transformation. The chapter is divided into the following six sections. The first section discussed the indigenisation policy, which has been adopted worldwide as a process of correcting political, economic and social imbalances caused by colonial settlers. Indigenisation acknowledges that the oppression through colonial domination and subordination prevailed for some time and should be eradicated through positive transformation (McNeil and Shauneen, 2014).

The second section discussed the UN SDGs. These consist of a set of goals and targets to be achieved by 2030 and SDG goal 8 is significant to the empowerment of all nations through economic growth and employment states: "To promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all." (Kaltenborn et al., 2020).

The third section discussed the Africa Agenda 2063 which was unveiled by the African Union in 2013 and enshrines the Africa We Want Strategic Framework for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development. At the heart of the agenda are the economic development paths, population movements, policy narratives and technology innovations (African Union Commission, 2015). This agenda reflects Africans' willingness to take ownership of and direct

their future towards aspirations of poverty elimination, sustainability, and green and inclusive growth (Turner, Cilliers, and Ughes, 2014).

The fourth section discussed entrepreneurship as a critical part of economic growth and economic development (Nnyanzi et al., 2019). There is growing evidence that entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth and innovation, as well as increasing the development of many nations through the production of more commodities and services, leading to the creation of new job opportunities (Bourne, 2011; Debus et al., 2017; Sabella et al., 2014; Yang and Li, 2011).

The fifth section discussed the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), which is a comprehensive tool that measures the microeconomic and macroeconomic foundations of national competitiveness. It has been used by the World Economic Forum's annual Global Competitiveness Report that benchmarks the many factors underpinning national competitiveness with the goal of providing insight and stimulation in the discussion among all stakeholders on the best strategies and policies to help countries to overcome the obstacles to improving competitiveness (Sala and Artadi, 2004). It has been revealed by the literature that the performance of Zimbabwe on the GCI is among the worst performing nations. In 2008 Zimbabwe was ranked among the least competitive economies, second to last at 133rd out of 134 countries (The Global Competitiveness Report 2008). In 2011, Zimbabwe was ranked fourth to last, at 136th overall, covering 139 economies from all of the world's regions. (The Global Competitiveness Report 2011). The poor performance of Zimbabwe is basically an issue of the government and its commitment to policies that support economic growth; this study has developed a strategic framework to address these issues.

The final section discussed the Evolvement of SME Policy Framework in Zimbabwe, which explains the pre-independent Zimbabwe policies of the colonial government that disempowered the indigenous people from becoming entrepreneurs. In the post-independent Zimbabwe, SME policy has evolved through a number of phases, from the time the country attained its independence in 1980 to the present. The crafting of the indigenous policies to redress the dominance of the multinational companies is the latest phase. It produced some positive results, which include an increase in the number of SMEs established

and the involvement of black people in entrepreneurship programmes. However, the policy framework failed to establish SMEs as the backbone of the Zimbabwean economy.

This last section also discussed the nexus between SME policy framework and entrepreneurial mindset and covered the business plan, business model, value chain strategies and the horizontal and vertical integration of SMEs. The entrepreneurial mindset increases their ability to sense opportunities and mobilise their resources, and the knowledge required to exploit them, and determines how entrepreneurs will perceive, interpret, and consequently respond to situations (Gillin and Hazelton, 2020). The entrepreneurial mindset includes the business plan, business model inter-firm linkages. Thus, SMEs can forge horizontal links between themselves (network relationships between firms at the same level of the supply chain,) and vertical linkages with larger manufacturing and service industries (between firms at different levels of the supply chain), typically with suppliers or customers (Hussain and Planning, 2000).

Chapter three covers the theoretical framework, paying particular attention to four theoretical aspects of entrepreneurship. The first aspect focuses on entrepreneurship development theory, which is understood today as foundational. Schumpeter's theory of entrepreneurship is centred around the idea that the concept of the entrepreneurship constitutes a key to development in the economic, social political and across all the spheres of life (Swedberg, 2007). The second aspect considers the knowledge spillover theory, which states that knowledge spillovers are a public good; they are easily available through things like conference participation, technology conference memberships, patent filings, and publications in which the flow of tacit knowledge requires closer interaction between an entrepreneur and an external collaborator (Audretsch and Feldman 1996; Audretsch and Caiazza, 2016).

The third aspect pays attention to institutional theory, which is used to understand how the environment influences the capacity of an organisation to learn effectively in order to achieve sustainability performance (Crews, 2010). The fourth aspect is a critical discussion on RBV theory, which states that the competitive advantage of a firm is found in its ability to apply its internal resources. According to Penrose (1959), there is a close relationship between the

firm's various resources which it works with and the development of the skills, experience and technical knowhow of its management and entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurship development theory, the RBV theory and the institutional theory were adopted for the study and blended to provide the theoretical framework used in the study.

Chapter four provided the extended literature review aligned to the objectives. Each of the four objectives was discussed in relation to the selected nations from the EU, the Asian Tigers (India, Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea) and the developing nations, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and some African states. The first section looked at SME performance and their economic contributions in the different countries. Globally, SME performance is regarded as an important force driving economic growth and employment creation in both developing and developed countries (Ariyo, 2008; Kpleai, 2009, Birch, 2011; Storey, 2014). Edom et al. (2015) emphasise that their performance occupies a place of pride in virtually every country or state because of the significant roles they play in the growth and development of various economies. They are a force to be reckoned with in all nations and, as a result their performance, need to be closely monitored and supported by the government of the day.

The second section of the chapter discussed the influence of government policy on SME performance. The development of a sound government policy for SME growth is an indispensable component of the strategy of most economies and, in turn, holds significance for the growth, development and performance of SMEs (Ifekwem, 2019). Those which lack government support policies have restricted access to improving their growth and performance. Government policy is reflected in strategic plans and policy memos and it is translated and carried out through rules and regulations, manuals, requests for proposals, contractual agreements and enforcement actions (Ifekwem, 2019). The advancement of SMEs in the developed nations has been achieved by the policies that have supported their performance. It is in this vein that any government policy has a great bearing on their performance.

The third chapter section discussed the impact of the government's resources on the performance of SMEs. Government institutions can clearly influence their performance and

as the architect of the policies, it has a mandate to commit its support through its resources so that its policies make an impact in the communities they serve. Financial support by the government has been identified as one of the major resources that supports the performance of SMEs. Therefore, access to finance is a key aspect towards the performance of small businesses.

The last section in the chapter discussed the attributes of an effective SME strategic framework. An effective framework is designed to assist in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes that aim to improve the performance of SMEs. There are a number of strategic frameworks that have been designed by several governments, stakeholders and international organisations and these have been successfully implemented to improve the performance of SMEs and other organisations. Examples have been drawn from the EU, Asian countries, the BRICS and several African states.

Chapter five provides a discussion of the details of the research process. The research methodology is important in this study because it determined the manner in which the data were collected and analysed. A mixed approach was used and both the positivist and interpretivist positions were adopted, employing a blend of the qualitative and quantitative methods. The data were first collected using interviews, then analysed to develop themes that were used to generate the questionnaire; these were then used to solicit information from SME implementers.

Chapter six is one of the most important sections of this study, because it explains how the data were presented and analysed. It documents the results of the findings from the interviews and the questionnaire. The gathered information from the interviews is grouped using the main theme and various smaller themes that were generated from the collected data. The findings from the questionnaire were recorded and the response rate of the respondents was noted. The findings were grouped into three sections according to the objectives of the study: Responses on the effects of government policies on SME performance, responses on the support obtained from the government and responses on what should be incorporated into the strategic framework for SMEs.

Chapter seven presented the analysis and discussion, which was done in three sections: the government policies and its influence on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe; the extent to which the government framework provides adequate resources for SMEs and what should be incorporated into the policy framework towards improving SME operator performance.

Chapter eight presented the proposed strategic framework which can be used for the development of SMEs in Zimbabwe. It is a tool that enhances their performance, focusing on a government policy framework that embrace the resources as a critical requirement for the performance of SMEs.

9. 3 Conclusion

In this study the researcher aimed to design a strategic framework that can be implemented by the Zimbabwean SMEs in order to transform the current business operational system of SMEs into a more economically viable productive entity which can be used as a project in the region and beyond. The following conclusions are drawn from the literature review and the objectives of the study. Objective four is addressed in chapter eight which discuss in detail the proposed SME strategic framework.

9. 3. 1 Conclusions from the Secondary Research

The literature review covered three sections on the performance of SMEs which are the policy framework as a tool for empowerment, theory related to entrepreneur performance and the literature based on the three objectives of the study. The following conclusions were drawn from the areas mentioned above.

From chapter two the researcher concluded that the SME policy is a powerful tool that can be used for the empowerment of the indigenous people. The indigenisation policy has been adopted worldwide as a process of correcting the political, economic and social imbalances that have been caused by the settlers who disadvantaged the indigenous citizens. Literature revealed that the indigenisation policies were successfully adopted and implemented by the United States of America, Russia, Columbia, Indonesia, India, Mexico and Bolivia. In Africa, it has been implemented in Zambia, Nigeria, Malawi, Kenya and South Africa where the they

adopted the B-EEE programme to redress the imbalances that were brought up by the apartheid government.

The United Nations established 17 Sustainable Development Goals and goal number 8 promotes the empowerment of local people through employment creation and sustainable economic growth for all the people. The Africa Agenda 2063 reflects made a commitment for Africans to take ownership of their future and work towards poverty elimination, sustainability, and empowerment of every African. Empowerment is top on the agenda both at United Nations and Africa Union levels as indicated by the leadership from the two institutions. Literature has revealed that entrepreneurship is a critical component of economic growth and development of any nation. Entrepreneurship contributes to economic performance of nation hence the empowerment of the indigenous people to be involved in the entrepreneurship activities creates employment, promotes knowledge sharing and the economic growth of the country. An increase in the number of entrepreneurs generates a growth and improves the performance and the overall quality of entrepreneurial ability to improve the economic growth.

The researcher concluded that the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), is a comprehensive tool that measures the microeconomic and macroeconomic foundations of national competitiveness and has revealed that the performance of Zimbabwe on the GCI is among the worst performing nations. Literature showed that the policy framework failed to establish SMEs as the backbone of the Zimbabwean economy as they failed to improve the economy of the country as the economic situation of Zimbabwe has drastically deteriorated since the establishment of the indigenous policies. This was alluded by Block (2013) who states that empowerment policy has negatively affected the ability of Zimbabwean economy to attract foreign direct investment.

From chapter three the researcher drew the following conclusions from the three theoretical perspectives, the entrepreneurship, institutional and resource mobilisation theories: The theory of entrepreneurship is centred around the idea that the concept of the entrepreneurship constitutes a key of development in the economic, social political, art and across all the spheres of life. Entrepreneurship is an economic process that has been largely

considered as a driver of economic growth in advanced states, in transition and emerging economies as well as the developing nations like Africa.

Institutional theory is used to understand how the environment of the different business infrastructure influences the capacity of an organisation to learn effectively in order to improve its performance. The institutional theory stresses that an institutional environment influences the performance of organisations and it is concerned with how groups and organisations manage to survive and operate legally by conforming to the rules. The Institutional Theory is critical in the learning environment as highlighted by Geels (2004) that learning involves the reproduction or transformation of cognitive, normative and regulative skills through imitation or the exchange of experiences within the environment.

The resource based view (RBV) has grown into one of the most influential theoretical perspectives with a central premise that firms compete on the basis of their resources and capabilities. The main thrust of this theory is that the competitive advantage of a firm is found in its ability to apply its internal resources. A resource-based perspective focus on the abundance of financial, human, and social capital might determine entrepreneurs' willingness to address both the social objectives and the economic objectives.

9. 3. 2 Conclusions from the Primary Research

The conclusions from the primary research are drawn from the findings of the interviews and the survey in relation to the study objectives. The relevance of these conclusions for the Zimbabwe's economy is that there is need to design a home grown strategic framework that can be implemented by the Zimbabwean SMEs to turn around the economy of the country. The conclusions from the primary research indicate the Zimbabwe is not making maximum use of its natural resources to improve the performance of SMEs. Zimbabwe is rich in natural resources like minerals, wild life, fertile soils and the Savannah Climate which provides excellent farming conditions supported by a population with the highest literacy rate in Africa, has a great potential to turn the country into an economic hub of Southern Africa.

9.3.2.1 Objective One: Government policies

The researcher has drawn two conclusions on how the government policies influence the performance of SMEs. Firstly, the SME implementers have very little knowledge about the indigenisation and empowerment policy and the industrialisation that are aimed to promote SMEs in Zimbabwe. The government does not have any mechanism in place to distribute information in the form of pamphlets, brochures, fliers or billboards about the policies. The policies were not made available to the users and no print or electronic materials were distributed to the SME implementers. The government does not make any consultations with the SME implementers it only operates from the office and use a desk top approach in the implementation of its policies. The implementers did not benefit much from the two policies and their operations are not guided by the policies. In a nutshell the government of Zimbabwe failed to put into practice what it developed hence the poor performance of SMEs.

Secondly the government policies have very little influence on the performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe. The government does not have any policy commitment towards providing the implementers with the technical assistance which they so much require and has no programmes to promote research and development. The government has no platforms that promote information sharing like forming the sectoral groups and developing networking committees for peer training and peer education. It is not involved any support of SME activities like the marketing of the products, access to fuel and electricity and provide duty exemptions on the inputs.

9.3.2.2 Objective Two Government support on SMEs

From this objective the researcher concludes that the government has no support it is providing to SME sector. Very little support was provided in skills training, financial support and the general business support. The SME implementers revealed that the government hardly supported the SME operators with skills training. The SME implementers did not receive any training schedule from the government and there was no any form of training they were given at their workplaces. The implementers expected the government to help them improve on their performance through capacity building programmes and this was not done. In addition to this lack of support, the government did not appoint local training officers that would assist the implementers. The government does not have a website documenting

its programmes and has no link to with the SME implementers. From the findings of the study the researcher deduces that the functions of the government and SME implementers are disjointed and the implementers are not receiving any trainings from the government which implies that the capacity building programmes are non-existent in the SME sector.

The researcher further concludes that the government is not providing any financial assistance and training in the management of finances ti the SMEs. The SME implementers are not aware of any funding programmes being offered by the government. Most implementers did not receive any funding from the government and the implementers who received some financial support were complaining of very stringent measures, favouritism and some corruption practices that are being done by the government officers. The disbursement of funds is unfair and there are no transparent systems in the handling of SME funds. The SME operators did not receive any training in the financial management system of which they needed capacity development in the handling of their finances. The researcher concludes that the government did not put in place any training programme for the accountants and the accounting officers in the SME sector which heavily disadvantaged the SME implementers in their financial management systems.

The researcher has concluded that in general the government support to the SMEs has been very minimal and most of the implementers are not aware of the existence of any SME government support systems. The government has no arrangements to subsidise the tax rates being paid by the SME operators The small businesses are not prioritised when industrial stands are allocated, during the load shedding and fuel shortages the government does not prioritise the SMEs when supplying power to the valuable industries. The government has no training programmes for the support service staff like administrators, human resources officer and drivers. The government has no monitoring and evaluation programmes in place for the performance of the SMEs. The researcher concluded that the government has no structures to support the SMEs like finance and resource mobilisation, ICT support, M&E, R&D and any other form of business support.

9.3.2.3 Objective Three Components of the Strategic Framework

In this objective, the researcher concludes that the implementers have a lot of knowledge of what should be incorporated in a new strategic framework for SMEs in Zimbabwe. The respondents indicated that the government goals and mission on SMEs should be explained to all the stakeholders through dialogue at all levels including the local leadership. More consultative meetings that promote cluster groups, marketing and mainstreaming of gender into SMEs programmes need to be implemented by the government.

The respondents suggested that the government should be accountable and transparent at all levels, implement zero tolerance to corruption, fraud, tribalism, less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing government resources. The respondents further stated that more training in skills development, select the indigenous people for higher training and on the job training should be intensified. The government should open offices for Ministry of SMEs at all administrative levels. In the new strategic framework for SMEs in Zimbabwe the government should provide schedule for annual training programmes, organise national exchange sector programmes and regional exchange programmes. The respondents stated that they would like to participate in the national, regional and world SME exhibitions so that they can enhance their business and improve their performance. The government should provide links with global village on SME issues. Based on what has been reflected by this objective, the researcher further concludes that the respondents have a lot of valid points on what should be incorporated in a new strategic framework for SMEs in Zimbabwe that are not contained in the current framework.

9.3.2.4 Objective Four Recommended SME Policy Changes

It is recommended that the government should go back to the drawing board and produce a revised policy that is developed through the consultation of all the SME stakeholders. The all-inclusive policy that is resource mobilisation oriented calls upon the government to get into the communities, hold meetings with all the local leadership structures, engage the SME implementers through debates, interviews and focus group discussions of the different SME sectors. This process will allow the government to sell the concept to all the stakeholders, and solicit ideas of the stakeholders who will embrace the new policy and own the programme which they will support all the time.

The primary empirical data has shown that the government lacks the resources to support the SMEs. It has to be extensively involved in the resource mobilisation process in order to provide financial resources that are key to the improved performance of the SME sector. Through its structures, the government can come up with different ways of securing the resources through sustainable fund raising programmes. The government has to introduce a national SME levy that will form the bulk of the SME fund. The national budget will also provide SMEs with financial support. The government will have to set up a resource mobilisation unit which will research, document and implement all the possible funding streams that can bring the financial resource to the SME sector. The administration of the SME financial resources has to be done professionally and in a transparent manner. All the stakeholders from the local implementers up to the national level including the international community should have confidence in the administration of the SME fund and this will attract investors from across the globe.

The researcher recommends that the government should secure ICT resources for the SME sector. It has to develop a robust ITC department to keep in pace with the advancement in technology. There is increasing evidence of entrepreneurs' growing use of WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and other social network sites which have the capacity to link local entrepreneurs with each other, partners and the stakeholders who support their businesses. The human resources have to be equipped with the ideas and knowledge that will help them to improve their performance. The government has to put in place capacity development programmes targeting all the SME stakeholders and all the departments in order to improve the production.

9. 4 Recommendations

The findings of this study revealed that the government crafted policies that promote the SME performance which were not supported with the resources. The implementers indicated very little knowledge of the policies, received very little support from the government and their performance is much lower than their abilities. The implementers believe that with an improved commitment from the government, they can perform much better than their current performance.

In short, the study indicates that the SME sector can contribute much better to the economy of the country through improved performance, employment creation, improved standard of living in the local communities and provision of the goods and services which are in serious shortages in the country, poverty alleviation and improved GDP contribution. To translate this intention into action, something needs to be done urgently. This must include a recommitment of the government to support its policies and equip the implementers with the required resources.

9. 4. 1.Recommendations on the New Policy and Strategic Framework

It is recommended that Zimbabwean government should re-focus and craft a resource oriented policy that will be supported by a strategic framework that implements the new policy. The new policy and the strategic framework will be closely linked and the strategic framework will be supporting the policy. The strategic framework will be the mirror of the new policy developed. The two documents will work together and will be complementing each other.

9.4.1.1 Recommendation on the Development of Policies that Positively Influence the Performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe

For the SMEs to contribute towards improved performance, job creation and poverty alleviation, it is recommended that the government need to align its policies with the needs of the country. This has to be done through a rigorous consultative process of all the stakeholders in the SME sector. The government has to go to the local communities, carry out the needs assessment, hold meetings in each region with SME implementers, employees and other stakeholders like the community leaders, suppliers and incorporate their findings in the new policy framework. This process will produce a Zimbabwean home grown SME policy which would be owned by both the government and the SME stakeholder.

9.4.1.2 Recommendation on the Development of a Strategic Framework that is Resource Oriented for the Performance of SMEs in Zimbabwe

A strong financial resource is a major requirement towards establishing a commendable SME strategic framework. It is recommended that the government develop robust resource

mobilisation programmes that continually supply the resources to the SMEs. The resource mobilisation process has to be extensively done by the government which has to involve all the stakeholders in the financial sector including non-governmental organisations, World Bank, African Development Bank and the local banks.

9.4.1.3 Recommendation on What Should be incorporated into the Strategic Framework that improves the performance of SMEs

It is recommended that a new strategic framework should contain the views of all the stakeholders. It will be an all-inclusive policy that will have been developed through the concerted efforts of all the stakeholders. After the government has put together the home grown SME policy, it will develop the strategic road map, establish the support structures and develop the implementing guidelines which provide the model that will be adopted by the strategic framework rollout programme. The strategic framework will contain the logical processes that have to be followed by the stakeholders and each participant of the programme will be well informed about all the contents and the procedure of implementing the strategic plan.

9.4.1.4 Recommendation on the Future Research Areas

The study has unveiled some new study areas that need further investigation. The area of training is essential to the performance of SMEs, and the study has revealed that it was not provided hence more research should be done in this aspect. SMEs in Zimbabwe lack resources, mostly financially which is a key requirement for the performance of any entrepreneurship and further studies in this sphere would improve the SME sector. The study revealed that the government has no resource mobilisation strategies and programmes, and this calls for more research to be conducted in the field of resource mobilisation. Further studies are recommended in the area of resource mobilisation techniques in support of the SMEs especially in the developing countries. A lot of studies have been done on the effects of resources on the performance of SMEs, but not much research has been done on the process of resource mobilisation. The study has shown that the government has challenges in the engagement of the community it serves. Further research has to be done on information dissemination, community involvement and how the community can own the programmes that are implemented in their local area. If further research is done in the grey areas that have

been mentioned, it will augment the strategic framework and high performance of SMEs is more achievable.

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Appendix 1: Consent form and information letter (Questionnaire)

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 09 September 2020

Dear Respondent

My name is Godfrey T Musabayana am a **Doctor of Philosophy (PHD)**, student at the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. My email address is musabayanagt@gmail.com and my contact number is +27 61 297 0051.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research entitled: **“Re-Thinking Government Policy Framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) performance in Zimbabwe”**. The prime objective of the research is to produce a strategic framework that Zimbabwe can implement to improve the performance of SMEs. The aim and purpose of this research is to develop the ways that can be used by the government and the business people to improve the performance of their individual businesses

The study is expected to enroll 1 487 participants in total, all coming from the four regions of Zimbabwe. 368 participants will be from Bulawayo, 375 from Harare, 364 from Matabeleland and 380 from Mashonaland. The participants from each region will be randomly selected at district and ward levels and will be requested to complete the questionnaire. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be 25 minutes.

The study may involve a few discomforts in that it will request you to provide information that affects your daily business procedures in relation to the assistance you get from the government. The study will not provide you with any direct benefits but it will help the Small and Medium Enterprises in Zimbabwe to improve in performance and the government to support the create the following benefits.

The participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at any point. In the event of refusal or withdrawal of your participation, you will not incur penalty or loss of treatment or any negative consequences. If you decide to withdraw, you are requested to hand in any materials provided by the researcher and quietly move out of the room or the place of data collection.

The participation is voluntary and confidential and if you share your responses with another person or discuss with other people the researcher will terminate your participation and you will be asked to withdraw from participation.

The research data collected in this study will be stored by the supervisor for a period of 5 years under lock and key where both the supervisor and I have access to the data. After 5 years the data on hard files will be shredded while electronic data will be deleted and the electronic discs will be reused.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (_____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at (provide contact details) or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I (Write your Name) have been informed about the study entitled: **“Re-Thinking Government Policy Framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) performance in Zimbabwe”** by Tambudzayi Godfrey Musabayana.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (add these again if appropriate).

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at musabayanagt@gmail.com or +27 61 297 0051

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

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I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Use of my photographs for research purposes	YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

**Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)**

Date

**Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)**

Date

Appendix 2: Consent form and information letter (Interviews)

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

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A total of sixteen participants were interviewed, taking four participants from each of the four regions of Zimbabwe. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be 20 minutes.

The study may involve a few discomforts in that it will request you to provide information that affects your daily business procedures in relation to the assistance you get from the government. The study will not provide you with any direct benefits but it will help the Small and Medium Enterprises in Zimbabwe to improve in performance and the government to support the create the following benefits.

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or discuss with other people the researcher will terminate your participation and you will be asked to withdraw from participation.

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I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (add these again if appropriate).

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Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

**Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)**

Date

**Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)**

Date

Appendix 3: Research instrument 1 – Interview schedule

Interview Guide Questions

1. Please describe in your own words what you understand by the following policies:
 - (i) The Indigenous and empowerment policy
 - (ii) The Industrial policy?
2. What pushed the government to develop these policies?
3. How did the government disseminate the policy information to the SME operators and other stakeholders?
4. How did the SMEs in Zimbabwe benefit from the policies?
5. Elaborate the ways the SMEs benefited from the policies
6. How did the government support the SMEs?
7. Which methods did the government use to disburse funds to support SMEs?
8. What were the challenges that the government faced in supporting SMEs?
9. In your opinion, what could the government had done to improve the SMEs?
10. What can be included in a new strategic framework that aims to improve performance of SMEs?

Appendix 4: Research instrument 2 – questionnaire

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This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC/00001828/2020).

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Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Use of my photographs for research purposes	YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

**Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)**

Date

**Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)**

Date

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please answer the questions below by placing a tick (✓) in the box that is appropriate.

A1. What is your gender?

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| ☐ | 1. Male |
| ☐ | 2. Female |

A2. What is your age group?

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| ☐ | 1. 20-29 years |
| ☐ | 2. 30-39 years |
| ☐ | 3. 40-49 years |
| ☐ | 4. 50-59 years |
| ☐ | 5. 60+ years |

A3. What is your race?

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| ☐ | 1. African |
| ☐ | 2. Indian |
| ☐ | 3. Coloured |
| ☐ | 4. White |
| ☐ | 5. Other: Specify |

A4. What is your highest qualification?

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ | 1. Never went to school |
| ☐ | 2. Primary Education |
| ☐ | 3. Secondary Education |
| ☐ | 4. Vocational Training (Certificate) |
| ☐ | 5. Vocational Training (Diploma) |
| ☐ | 6. University Graduate |

A5. Would you say that your qualification equipped you with the adequate knowledge and skills for your organisation?

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| ☐ | 1. Yes |
| ☐ | 2. No |

A6. Your organisation is in which sector?

- ☐ 1. Agriculture
- ☐ 2. Mining
- ☐ 3. Manufacturing
- ☐ 4. Information Technology
- ☐ 5. Retail and Wholesale
- ☐ 6. Food Outlet

A7. In which area does your organisation operate?

- ☐ 1. Town
- ☐ 2. Growth Point
- ☐ 3. Mining Area
- ☐ 4. Rural Area
- ☐ 5. Newly Resettled Farming Area

A8. What is your designation in your organisation? (Select **ONE** option only)

- ☐ 1. Owner
- ☐ 2. General Employee
- ☐ 3. Manager
- ☐ 4. Senior Manager
- ☐ 5. CEO

A9. How many employees do you have in your organisation?

- ☐ 1. 1 - 10 employees
- ☐ 2. 11- 20 employees
- ☐ 3. 21- 30 employees
- ☐ 4. 31- 40 employees
- ☐ 5. 41- 50 employees
- ☐ 6. 51+ employees

A10. How many years have you been in this organisation?

☐	1. 1 - 5 years
☐	2. 6 - 10 years
☐	3. 11- 15 years
☐	4. 16 - 20 years
☐	5. 21 - 25 years
☐	6. 26 + years

A11. In the last five years rate the performance of your business from 1 to 5 (1 is the worst and 5 is the best) **(Circle your answer on the boxes provided)**

Performance Rating (1 to 5)					
Year	Response				
2019	1	2	3	4	5
2018	1	2	3	4	5
2017	1	2	3	4	5
2016	1	2	3	4	5
2015	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION B. Effects of government policies on SME performance

Part 1: Knowledge of the Indigenisation and Empowerment Policy and the Industrial Policy

Indicate how much you know about the two policies that promote SMEs in Zimbabwe

The following policy factors are linked to the two policies select your response				
Policy Factor	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent
1. Have you heard about the indigenisation and industrial policies?	0	1	2	3
2. Do you have copies of the two policies at your organisation?	0	1	2	3
3. Did any government officer visit you to talk about the two policies?	0	1	2	3
4. Do you have local offices for the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	0	1	2	3
5. Does the government distribute information (gazette, brochures, fliers) about the two policies	0	1	2	3
6. Did the government make any consultations and later inform you about its vision in coming up with the two policies?	0	1	2	3
7. Does the government hold regular workshops to discuss the two policies?	0	1	2	3
8. In your operations, are you guided by the two policies?	0	1	2	3
9. Did your organisation benefit from the two policies?	0	1	2	3
10. Is the government doing enough work on the ground to keep you informed about the two policies?	0	1	2	3
11. Any other policy factors linked to performance.....				

Part 2: Effects of government policies on SME performance

Indicate how much the government policies have influenced the performance of your organisation

The following policy factors are linked to the performance of your organisation select your response					
	Policy Factor	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent
12	Government creates stimulating environment for high performance	0	1	2	3
13	Government provides expertise to help in your operations	0	1	2	3
14	Do you have access to government resources?	0	1	2	3

15	Government distribute information (gazette, brochures, fliers) about the two policies	0	1	2	3
16	Government provides duty exemptions on your input	0	1	2	3
17	Provision of access to fuel and electricity by government	0	1	2	3
18	Provision of good feeder roads by government	0	1	2	3
19	Government promotes women and youth involvement	0	1	2	3
20	Government promotes research and development	0	1	2	3
21	Government helps to develop sectoral marketing strategies	0	1	2	3
22	Government organises national conferences	0	1	2	3
23	Government provides networking programmes (Intersectoral meetings)	0	1	2	3
24	Any other factors which you could link to performance				

SECTION C. Government support on SMEs

Part 1: Skills Training

Rate the extent to which the government supported you in skills training

No	Skills Training Factor	Not at all	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent
25	Government provided you with its training schedule	0	1	2	3
26	Government has trained you in your job	0	1	2	3
27	Government holds training for both short and long courses	0	1	2	3
28	Government training is affordable to everyone	0	1	2	3
29	The government provides free training materials	0	1	2	3
30	Government provides refresher courses for people it trained	0	1	2	3
31	Government has appointed local training officers	0	1	2	3
32	Local training officers have monitoring schedules	0	1	2	3
33	The government has a training website	0	1	2	3
34	Government has free online courses	0	1	2	3
35	Any other skills training factors.....				

Part 2: Financial Assistance and Training in Managing finances

Rate the extent to which the government supported you financially and training in Managing Finances

No	Financial Factor	Never	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent
36	Government has informed us of all its funding programmes	0	1	2	3
37	Government has funded some of our programmes	0	1	2	3
38	Government has small loan programmes	0	1	2	3
39	Government has facilitated us to get loans from the banks	0	1	2	3
40	Government disburses funds in a fair and transparent manner	0	1	2	3
41	There is less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing the funds	0	1	2	3
42	There are no corrupt practices in the process of fund disbursement	0	1	2	3
43	Government has a training programme for all the accountants	0	1	2	3
44	Government has trained our accounting officers	0	1	2	3
45	Government officers make a follow up on the accounting officers it trained	0	1	2	3

Part 3: Government General Support

Rate the extent to which the general government support has assisted your organisation

No	Government General Support Factor	Never	Very little	To some extent	To a great extent
46	Government has subsidised our tax rates	0	1	2	3

47	Small businesses are prioritised when industrial stands are allocated	0	1	2	3
48	Government has provided us with more hours of electricity supply	0	1	2	3
49	Government has made special arrangements for us to access fuel	0	1	2	3
50	Government supports our products to be sold locally	0	1	2	3
51	Government does not import the locally produced products	0	1	2	3
52	Government has sourced foreign markets for our products	0	1	2	3
53	We have easy access to foreign currency to buy the inputs	0	1	2	3
54	Government has training programmes for support service staff (Administrators and drivers)	0	1	2	3
55	Government has monitoring and evaluation programmes at local level	0	1	2	3
56	Any other support.....				

SECTION D. What should be incorporated in the strategic framework for SMEs

Give your opinion of what should be incorporated in a new strategic framework for SMEs in Zimbabwe

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
57	Explain government goals and mission on SMEs to stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5
58	Government to promote dialogue with SME implementers	1	2	3	4	5
59	Improve interaction of SME operators to exchange ideas	1	2	3	4	5
60	Engage the local leadership at all levels	1	2	3	4	5
61	More consultative meetings to be held	1	2	3	4	5
62	Promote gender diversity in SME operations	1	2	3	4	5
63	Organise cluster groups of SMEs	1	2	3	4	5
64	Promote marketing and selling of products in clusters	1	2	3	4	5
65	Facilitate access to fuel, electricity, water and other resources in clusters	1	2	3	4	5
66	Being accountable and transparent at all levels	1	2	3	4	5
67	Zero tolerance to corruption, fraud and tribalism at all levels	1	2	3	4	5
68	Less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing government inputs	1	2	3	4	5

69	Low interest rates on government loans	1	2	3	4	5
70	More training in skills development	1	2	3	4	5
71	Select the indigenous people for higher training	1	2	3	4	5
72	Open offices for Ministry of SMEs at all administrative levels	1	2	3	4	5
73	On job training to be intensified	1	2	3	4	5
74	Provide conferences for the different sectors	1	2	3	4	5
75	Develop sector websites for SMEs	1	2	3	4	5
76	Sectors to market their products on line	1	2	3	4	5
77	The Ministry website must be easily accessible	1	2	3	4	5
78	More technology development programmes and trainings	1	2	3	4	5
79	Provide more research and development programmes	1	2	3	4	5
80	Develop national monitoring and evaluation programme	1	2	3	4	5
81	Disseminate the monitoring and evaluation programmes to all levels	1	2	3	4	5
82	Provide access to internet for SME operators and its stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5
83	A national strategic plan to be developed and disseminated to the stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5
84	Provide schedule for annual training programmes	1	2	3	4	5
85	Organise national exchange sector programmes	1	2	3	4	5
86	Have regional exchange programmes	1	2	3	4	5
87	Participate in national, regional and world SME exhibitions	1	2	3	4	5
88	Provide links with global village on SME issues	1	2	3	4	5
89	Any other.....					

Appendix 5: Turnitin report

Turnitin Originality Report

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Re-Thinking Government Policy Framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises Performance in Zimbabwe By Godfrey Tambudzayi Musabayana

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP Doctor of Philosophy Proposal Title: Re-Thinking Government Policy Framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises Performance in Zimbabwe Student Name: Godfrey T. Musabayana Student No: 218084474 A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP COLLEGE OF LAW AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES Name of Supervisors: Dr Tony Ngwenya Dr Emmanuel Mutambara DECLARATION I, Godfrey Tambudzayi Musabayana (student number 218084474), declare that this research study entitled: Re-Thinking Government Policy Framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises performance in Zimbabwe is a result of my own, original independent effort and work, except where it is specifically indicated. All the secondary sources that have been used or quoted have been duly acknowledged by means of complete references. In addition, I declare that the thesis has not been accepted for submission to any institution for degree purposes. Furthermore, I give consent to the University of KwaZulu-Natal to make my thesis available for inter-library loan for academic purposes and anyone who uses any idea in part or in full from this thesis needs to acknowledge the researcher. Signed Date 20 January 2021 | ABSTRACT Zimbabwe enacted the Indigenisation policies with the hope of revamping the economy through the promotion of black empowerment. This was viewed by the government as a conduit for the promotion of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and placed great emphasis on the performance SMEs. Literature revealed that SMEs are the key drivers of the economy and the sustainable development of every nation, are the life blood of commerce and industry at large and are sources of innovation and business evolution. In this regard the policy environment which is created by the government has a great influence on the performance of industries, however in Zimbabwe SMEs have failed to achieve high production of goods and services. Since the inception of the indigenous policies, the early researchers established that the economy of Zimbabwe has drastically deteriorated and can be best described as a country with a failed economy. Both secondary and primary data have shown that Zimbabwe's policy environment does not support the growth and development of SMEs in order to achieve high performance. The government does not have any strategies in place to support the SMEs. The programmes for capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, research and development programmes and financial assistance to assist SMEs are non-existent despite the blueprint statement from the policies that the government would provide adequate resources to support SMEs. The government through its reports conceded that all its sectors are operating at far below the normal production levels. The stated situation led the researcher to investigate the situation from the policy implementers through interviews and SME operators through questionnaires to explore deeper into the SME performance in Zimbabwe and develop a strategic framework that can be employed to turn around the economy of the country through the improvement of the SME performance as the key economic driver. This brings into the fold the broad aim of this study which is to design a home grown SME strategic framework that the policy makers and the stakeholders can implement in order to write a new chapter of the economy of the country hinged on improved performance of SMEs. Key words: indigenisation, policy, SME performance, strategic framework, entrepreneurship ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS I would like to humbly extend my sincere

Appendix 6: Ethical clearance



01 October 2020

Mr Tambudzayi Godfrey Musabayana (218084474)
Grad School Of Bus & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Musabayana,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00001829/2020

Project title: Re-Thinking Government Policy Framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises performance in Zimbabwe

Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 13 August 2020 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL** on the following condition:

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 01 October 2021.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

Professor Urmilla Bob
(University Dean of Research)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 **Email:** hssrec@ukzn.ac.za **Website:** <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix 7: Permission to do data collection

All communications should be addressed to **The Secretary**

Telephone: 2-708398, 2-735188,
2-790932
www.women.gov.zw



Zimbabwe

Ministry of Women Affairs, Community
Small and Medium Enterprises
Development

P. Bag 7726 Causeway
Harare

Ref/Godfrey Tambudzai Musabayana
Student Number: 218084471

25 September 2019

Godfrey Tambudzai Musabaya

House Number 10006
Riverside
Chinhoyi
Telephone: 0772393440

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO A RESEACH ON PEOPLE INVOLVED
IN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRICES.**

The above subject matter refers.

The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development is pleased to advice that your request to do a research on re-thinking government policy framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMSs) performance in Zimbabwe is approved. The approval is granted on condition that the information you obtain during your research will be used for academic purposes only.

Your research is vital to the Ministry, therefore could you share your final research findings.

We look forward to hear from you.




Air Commodore I. G. Dumba

**Acting Secretary for Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium
Enterprises Development**

Cc: File

Appendix 8: Test Statistics - Knowledge (awareness) of the policies

Test Statistics -Knowledge (awareness) of the policies

	B1 Have you heard about the indigenous population and industrial policies?	B2 Do you have copies of the two policies at your organisation?	B3 Did any government officer visit you to talk about the two policies?	B4 Does the government have any local distribution offices for the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)?	B5 Does the government make any consultation and information (gazette, brochure, flyers) about the two policies?	B6 Did the government make any consultation and later inform you about its vision in coming up with the two policies?	B7 Does the government hold regular workshops to discuss the two policies?	B8 In your operations, are you guided by the two policies?	B9 Did you organise any benefit from the two policies?	B10 Is the government doing enough work on the ground to keep you informed about the two policies?
Chi-Square	859.485 ^a	528.295 ^a	809.818 ^a	744.618 ^b	798.595 ^a	858.844 ^a	859.061 ^c	819.896 ^b	796.866 ^d	773.669 ^e
df	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Appendix 9: Test statistics – Effect of government policies on SME performance

	B12 Government create s stimul ating enviro nment for high perfor mance	B13 Government provide expert ise to help in your operat ions	B14 Do you have access to gover nmen t resou rces?	B15 Government distrib ute infor matio n (gazet te, broch ures, fliers) about the two policie s	B16 Government provide es duty exem ptions on your input	B17 Provis ion of access to fuel and electri city by gover nmen t	B18 Provis ion of good feede r roads by gover nmen t	B19 Government prom otes wome n and youth involv ement	B20 Government promo tes resear ch and develo pment	B21 Government helps to devel op sector al marke ting strate gies	B22 Government organise national confer ences	B23 Government provid es netwo rking progra mmes (Inters ectoral meetin gs)
Chi	499.83	905.8	664.7	905.0	965.9	796.5	658.1	800.4	723.22	881.8	939.0	602.95
-	0 ^a	97 ^b	69 ^c	64 ^d	13 ^e	77 ^e	77 ^f	10 ^g	8 ^d	07 ^g	64 ^e	2 ^f
Squ												
are												
df	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Asy	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
mp.												
Sig.												

Appendix 10: Test statistics – Government support (Skills training)

	C25 Government provide d your with its training scheduling e	C26 Government has trained you in your job	C27 Government holds training for both short and long courses	C28 Government training is affordable to everyone	C29 The government provide s free training materials	C30 Government provide s refresher courses for people it trained	C31 Government has appointed local training officers	C32 Local training officers have monitoring schedules	C33 The government has a training website	C34 Government has free online courses
Chi-Square	658.179 ^a	912.375 ^b	981.116 ^c	1005.020 ^c	864.774 ^d	955.756 ^e	738.759 ^a	871.101 ^e	1062.562 ^c	1046.419 ^b
df	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Appendix 11: Test statistics – Government support (Financial factors)

	C36 Government has informed us of all its funding programmes	C37 Government has funded some of our programmes	C38 Government has small loan programmes	C39 Government has facilitated us to get loans from the banks	C40 Government disburses funds in a fair and transparent manner	C41 There is less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing the funds	C42 There are no corrupt practices in the process of fund disbursement	C43 Government has a training programme for all the accountants	C44 Government has trained our accounting officers	C45 Government officers make a follow up on the accounting officers it trained
Chi-Square	1203.209 ^a	968.471 ^b	968.279 ^b	1203.419 ^a	1215.113 ^c	1151.398 ^d	1189.505 ^b	1182.203 ^a	973.277 ^d	880.150 ^b
df	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Appendix 12: Test statistics – General government support

		C47 Small busin esses are	C48 Govern ment has provide					C53 We have easy acce	C54 Govern ment has training program	
	C46 Gover nment has subsid ised our tax rates	priori tised when indus trial stand s are alloca ted	d us with more hours of electric ity supply	C49 Governme nt has made special arrangem ents for us to access fuel	C50 Govern ment suppor ts our produc ts to be sold locally	does not import the locally produc ed produc ts	has source d foreign market for our produc ts	forei gn curr ency to buy the inpu ts	C55 Govern ment has monitori ng and evaluati on program mes at local level	
Chi- Squa re df	1039.9 58 ^a 3	934.5 78 ^b 3	912.55 4 ^b 3	900.640 ^c 3	945.47 1 ^a 3	854.17 7 ^d 3	823.21 7 ^a 3	797. 500 ^d 3	805.495 ^a 3	596.447 ^e 3
Asy mp. Sig.	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000	.000 .000 .000

Appendix 13: One-Sample – Statistics of the new strategic framework contents

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
D57	Explain government goals and mission on SMEs to stakeholders	495	4.93	.382	.017
D58	Government to promote dialogue with SME implementers	496	4.95	.332	.015
D59	Improve interaction of SME operators to exchange ideas	497	4.91	.461	.021
D60	Engage the local leadership at all levels	497	4.91	.409	.018
D61	More consultative meetings to be held	498	4.89	.532	.024
D62	Promote gender diversity in SME operations	498	4.87	.558	.025
D63	Organise cluster groups of SMEs	494	4.88	.460	.021
D64	Promote marketing and selling of products in clusters	496	4.94	.328	.015

D65 Facilitate access to fuel, electricity, water and other resources in clusters	498	4.90	.459	.021
D66 Being accountable and transparent at all levels	498	4.88	.557	.025
D67 Zero tolerance to corruption, fraud and tribalism at all levels	499	4.87	.558	.025
D68 Less paper work and bureaucracy when accessing government inputs	499	4.89	.434	.019
D69 Low interest rates on government loans	499	4.85	.558	.025
D70 More training in skills development	499	4.87	.474	.021
D71 Select the indigenous people for higher training	499	4.88	.464	.021
D72 Open offices for Ministry of SMEs at all administrative levels	499	4.90	.409	.018
D73 On job training to be intensified	499	4.87	.499	.022
D74 Provide conferences for the different sectors	499	4.79	.704	.032

D75 Develop sector websites for SMEs	494	4.83	.579	.026
D76 Sectors to market their products on line	496	4.86	.551	.025
D77 The Ministry website must be easily accessible	495	4.90	.470	.021
D78 More technology development programmes and trainings	495	4.84	.553	.025
D79 Provide more research and development programmes	496	4.85	.486	.022
D80 Develop national monitoring and evaluation programme	498	4.87	.473	.021
D81 Disseminate the monitoring and evaluation programmes to all levels	497	4.93	.399	.018
D82 Provide access to internet for SME operators and its stakeholders	498	4.98	.199	.009

D83 A national strategic plan to be developed and disseminated to the stakeholders	495	4.97	.227	.010
D84 Provide schedule for annual training programmes	496	4.96	.312	.014
D85 Organise national exchange sector programmes	496	4.88	.545	.024
D86 Have regional exchange programmes	496	4.93	.341	.015
D87 Participate in national, regional and world SME exhibitions	499	4.95	.282	.013
D88 Provide links with global village on SME issues	496	4.96	.242	.011

Appendix 14: Certificate of Editing



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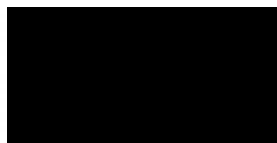
Certificate of Editing

13 September 2021

Name of author: Godfrey T Musabayana

Document title: Re-Thinking Government Policy Framework towards resource adequacy for Small and Medium Enterprises Performance in Zimbabwe

This serves to confirm that the above document was edited substantively by members of the KZN Language Institute's professional English language editing team. The document was returned to the author with tracked changes and comments intended to correct errors and to clarify meaning. It was the author's responsibility to attend to these changes.



Ms J. Kerchhoff

Director of the KwaZulu-Natal Language Institute

KZN Language Institute – Transforming Words