UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

An evaluation of South African Business Schools' brand management strategies and its effect on students; (A case study of the UKZN GSB's MBA programme)

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Graduate School of Business, University of KwaZulu-Natal. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Signature: ____________________ Submission date: 30 June 2016

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ABSTRACT

Background

The KwaZulu-Natal Graduate School of Business and Leadership is the prominent business school within the KwaZulu-Natal region. One of the primary reasons for its dominance is the competitive advantage derived from its human capital. It stands to reason that if the school wishes to remain the market leader within the KZN region and South Africa, it needs to ensure that it establishes effective brand management strategies to market its MBA programme in order to remain the University of Choice to South African student population.

Methods

The research design is of a quantitative and descriptive nature. A non-probability sampling technique was used which is described as a technique in which units of a sample are selected on the basis of personal judgment or convenience. A detailed questionnaire was developed for this study. The basis of the questionnaire was the factors and variables that were highlighted in the literature review. The study targeted a total population of 203 and a sample size of 170 2nd year MBA students only.

Results

The results of this study indicate that student perceptions or choices are influenced largely by three strategies; namely: Inspirational leadership, Seasonal Apprentice Mentorships, and Equitable Rewards.

Conclusions

Brand awareness and brand communication were the most highlighted as in need of prompt intervention in order to position the school's brand management strategies on the right track.

Recommendations

In an attempt to gain market share and to elimate the negative perceptions, it is recommended that the UKZN GSB make changes in its curricula so that students can integrate their learning and be able to apply multiple disciplines in the job.

LIST OF KEY WORDS

- **Management strategy**- involves setting objectives, analysing the competitive environment, analysing the internal organization, evaluating strategies, and making sure that the strategies are rolled out across the organization.
- **Strategic position**-The overall intended objectives and approach to a situation.
- **Marketing strategy-** An organization's strategy that combines all of its marketing goals into one comprehensive plan.
- **Competitive differentiation-** is a strategic positioning tactic an organization can undertake to set its products, services and brands apart from those of its competitors.
- **Strategy competency**- is the combination of pooled knowledge and technical capacities that allow a business to be competitive in the marketplace.
- **Balanced scorecard**- is a strategic planning and management system that is used extensively in business and industry, government, and non-profit organizations worldwide to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organization, improve internal and external communications, and monitor organization.

- **Communication strategy-** is the selection of appropriate communication objectives and the identification of the specific brand awareness and brand attitude strategy.
- **Integrated framework**- is a set of standards that supports the interoperability between applications.
- **Organizational effectiveness**- defined as the efficiency with which an association is able to meet its objectives.
- **Brand building**- is an integral aspect of personal and business development.
- **Accreditation**- is the act of granting credit or recognition, especially to an educational institution that maintains suitable standards.
- **Collaborative learning**- is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of students working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product.
- **Strategic framework**- is a comprehensive picture of the organization's strategy.
- **Information processing**- is the change (processing) of information in any manner detectable by an observer.
- **Pre-testing**- carry out a preliminary test or trial of.
- **Cognition**- the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions progressively face the demand to be accountable to their stakeholders. Many business academics and administrators have intensely criticized business school education's relevance to business and the community in general (Kagan, 2015). Business schools have not defined and measured outcomes and there is no value added to some of their programs. It is extremely important for schools to develop and measure their academic processes. This paper describes and applies a specific method within a framework of continuous improvement that has significant potential to achieve such a task within a business school; the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) approaches (Davies, 2014: 29).

This chapter will present an introduction to the study. It will further present the problem statement and background to the study. Thereafter, the focus of the study will be explained. The research objectives, research questions, and research proposition will then be highlighted. The chapter will then conclude by discussing the limitations of the study.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND BACKGROUND

The University of KwaZulu-Natal Graduate School of Business and Leadership (UKZN GSB & L) is a prominent business school within the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) region. The school holds approximately sixty five percent market share in the region (Charles, 2015). One of the primary reasons for its dominance is the competitive advantage derived from its human capital. It stands to reason that if the school wishes to remain the market leader within the KZN region and South Africa as a whole, then it needs to ensure that it establishes effective brand management strategies to market its Masters in Business Administration (MBA) programme in order for it to remain the University of Choice to South African student population. The study intends to establish the brand management strategies that South African business schools use and the effect on student perceptions as compared to the strategies used by the UKZN GSB to market its MBA programme. The UKZN GSB is perceived by many students as an incompetent school when it comes to its brand management strategies as compared to other South African business schools such as the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) and University of Cape Town (UCT) which run various workshops and other strategic interventions sessions to target and provide academically to services such as deserving disabled people with the opportunity for a fair and equal educational and work experience. This is due to its constant failure to appropriately reach out to students in terms of its brand. The problem is that there is no proper alignment between students and management with regards to demands. The challenge is therefore the collaboration between the school's senior management and human resources team by firstly determining whether the school can identify the factors that would motivate such perceptions and behaviours in students, and thereafter understand how the findings can be effectively implemented and incorporated into the school's strategic plan. The failure to do so may result in ineffective strategies being formulated and unsustainable strategic plans been implemented. As a result, the school could see its competitive advantage in the KZN region and surrounding areas being diminished further.

Corporate identity has been regarded as fulfilling key roles in the marketing strategies. Consequently, brand equity is important in attracting and retaining consumers (Abratt, 2015). Due to its prestigious status, the awarding institution of the MBA program is of paramount importance. The choice of the business school to pursue an MBA qualification is the biggest assignment a prospective student undertakes. Business schools have adopted marketing and brand management as one of the key strategies in order to remain competitive and relevant on the market place (Pfeffer, 2014).

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The fundamental question that this study aimed to answer was: "What are the brand management strategies that South African Business schools use to market their MBA programmes and its effect on students?" In answering the above question, the following were the main objectives of the research:

1) **Objective one**: To evaluate the effectiveness of UKZN GSB brand identity strategies for the MBA programme.

2) **Objective two**: To assess the UKZN GSB brand awareness level of its MBA programme amongst the UKZN student population.
3) **Objective three**: To evaluate the UKZN GSB brand communication strategy and its effect within SA's student population.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that needed to be answered were:-

1) What is the effectiveness of UKZN GSB brand identity strategies for the MBA programme?
2) What is the UKZN GSB's brand awareness level of its MBA programme amongst the UKZN student population?
3) What is the UKZN GSB's brand communication strategy and its effect within SA's student population?

1.5 RESEARCH PROPOSITION

A hypothesis is an informed statement that suggests possible relationships between variables measured in research; while a proposition is an argument based on those findings. Hypotheses are educated guesses about possible relationships between at least two variables one plans to measure in research. Propositions form the basis for scientific research (Bennis, 2014). The validity of a research study is, to a large extent evaluated on the criteria of its propositions. For internal validity, study propositions provide information regarding precision of definitions, measurements, associations, confounding factors among others; that are considered in research. While for external validity, propositions form the premise for the deduction of inferences (Ghose, 2014). The following are three proposed propositions for this study:

1) **Research proposition one:** The factors that influence students on management strategies for the MBA programme at the UKZN GSB will be different for men and women.

Charles (2015) states that it is evident from the previous literature review that studies have established contradictory results regarding the effect of gender on levels of education. The motive for this could be explained by the different contexts within which each of the studies was conducted. Another possible explanation could be the fact that the factors which have the most influence on post-graduate education for men and women are different.

2) **Research proposition two**: The factors that influence students on management strategies for the MBA programme at the UKZN GSB will be different for different age groups.

The findings of past studies have also been divided on the effect of age on post graduate studies. Some research has shown age has no effect in predicting levels of students enrolled (Keller, 2015). While others have shown that a positive correlation exists (Arpan, 2015).

3) **Research proposition three**: The factors that influence students on management strategies for the MBA programme at the UKZN GSB will be different for different ethnic/ racial groups.

The academic force (students) in South Africa is racially diverse and therefore one could expect different ethnic groups to be satisfied by different factors. Past studies have shown that ethnicity does affect student choice of schools or universities, and it is therefore important to understand the impact of this demographic factor within the perceptual context (Charles, 2015).

1.6 FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The focus of this research was to evaluate which brand management strategies will be effective to students that UKZN GSB management can utilise in order for the school to rate amongst top Business Schools in South Africa and to remain the University of Choice within UKZN student population, thereby; assisting senior management in the development of an effective strategic plan, and identifying the factors that would motivate students to eliminate the negative perceptions about the brand. These included the three brand management strategies which indicated that the MBA students are mostly influenced by; Inspirational Leadership, Seasonal Apprenticed Mentorships, and Equitable rewards in terms of choice. Thereafter, the research focussed on providing workable recommendations to management on how these strategies can be effectively used to attract students from all around South Africa and the neighbouring countries.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study achieved the necessary required response rate to conclude. However, other bases of limitations of the study were:

- The sample that was taken was restricted to only second year MBA students of the UKZN GSB and therefore the findings can only be used as a guide for other students within the South African context.
- Convenience sampling was utilised for the survey and hence no inferences can be made to the population.
- The sample was restricted to one city in South Africa.
- The time frame for the project was limited to 2015 and therefore changes to survey results is anticipated as new generation of students enter business schools and as older generations leave.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED IN THE STUDY

A descriptive research methodology was used for this study. A survey was administered to a selected sample from a specific population identified by the researcher. The term ‘survey’ is commonly applied to a research methodology designed to collect data from a specific population, or a sample from that population, and typically utilizes a questionnaire or an interview as the survey instrument (Strauss, 2015). Strauss (2015) indicates that mailed surveys are extremely efficient at providing information in a relatively brief time period at low cost to the researcher. For these reasons, the researcher chose a descriptive research methodology and designed a questionnaire survey instrument to assess the perceptions of selected MBA students regarding the quality, condition, perceptions, and improvement of the UKZN MBA programme and its facilities throughout South Africa.

The research design is of a quantitative nature. In this study, the researcher tried to establish the brand management strategies that have an effect on business school students, specifically UKZN GSB students. Zikmund (2016) states that quantitative and descriptive studies are conducted when there is some previous understanding of the research problem. Descriptive studies seek to determine answers to who, what, where, how, and when questions (Roberts, 2016). A non-probability sampling technique was used in this study. Zikmund (2016) describes a non-probability sampling technique as a sampling technique in which units of a sample are selected on the basis of personal judgement or convenience. For the purpose of this study, convenience sampling was used to obtain those units or people most conveniently available.

1.9 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS IN THE STUDY

The research was carried out in different stages and culminated in the dissertation as outlined in the **Figure below:**

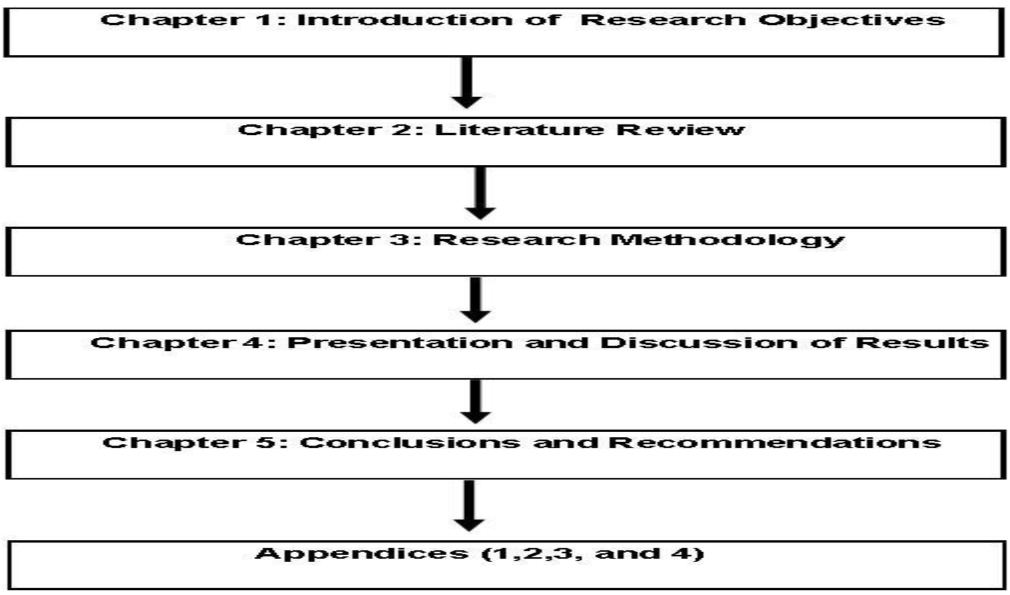


Figure 1.9.1 MBA dissertation outline

Chapter one contains an introduction to the study. It further presents the problem statement and background to the study. Thereafter, the focus of the study is explained. The research objectives, research questions, and research proposition are then highlighted. The chapter then concludes by discussing the limitations of the study. Chapter two provides a discussion on the formulation of strategies. An overview of the strategy of Business Schools is also provided. The history of UKZN is highlighted in respect to the business strategy formulated for the UKZN GSB. The chapter further details how the school can use strategic brand management strategies as an effective tool in maintaining competitive advantage by comparing the business schools and principles followed for success in South Africa and within a global context. Chapter three provides an overview of the methodology that was implemented in conducting the survey. The chapter firstly provides an overview of the research design and data collection strategy adopted. Thereafter, information is provided on the study scenery whereby the location and participants of the study are defined. The sample size and population is then discussed where after, a discussion on the survey instrument is presented. Chapter four presents the data collected and the results of the statistical analysis. An ambiguity that was identified during the survey pre-test is first highlighted and then the demographic profile of the sample is presented. The research findings are discussed in detail and are linked back to the research problem, the literature review and the study objectives that were highlighted in previous chapters. Chapter five provides area for future research and limitations of the study and close with a summary.

1.10 SUMMARY

The challenge faced by the UKZN GSB is not a unique one amongst other Business Institutions in South Africa. A number of circumstances have contributed to the situation. These include the introduction of the two and a half years curriculum to obtain an MBA qualification while other schools run in for exactly 24 months to complete, the constant changing of lecturers and management team as the school fails to find and maintain suitable qualified staff which ultimately results in the misalignment between students and management; hence drawing the negative perceptions from students about the school. As such, the school needs to pursue all options to try to maintain any form of competitive advantage which it may have.

Being a dominant player in the KZN region and surroundings due to its competitive advantage achieved by its human capital, the school has the ability to use brand management strategies and progression planning as a strategic tool to maintain its competitive advantage within the rest of South Africa. In order to do this, the school would need to ensure that it can identify the critical motivating strategies which would influence existing students positively. This chapter presented the introduction and background to the study. The purpose of the research and significance of the study was clearly discussed. The chapter also presented the objectives of the study which is necessary to answer the research questions in this regard. The literature review is comprehensively dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature reviewed in this section describes and examines the supporting theories that are related to the research problem. In order to understand how the UKZN GSB can use brand management strategies and strategic planning as a tool to maintain its competitive advantage within South African student population, the prominent strategic areas need to be investigated. This chapter will provide a comprehensive literature review on the research topic.

The chapter will begin by providing a discussion on the formulation of strategies. An overview of the strategy of Business Schools will also be provided. Thereafter, the history of UKZN and what an MBA is will be highlighted in respect to the business strategy formulated for the UKZN GSB. The chapter will then detail how the school can use strategic brand management strategies as an effective tool in maintaining competitive advantage by comparing the business schools and principles followed for success in South Africa and within the global context. The research further discusses the gaps, strategy and transformation models, rankings, measures of the balanced score card and relevant theories accustomed to how UKZN GSB can utilise these theories into the establishment of strategic plans, and as such, will be necessary to detail the various successful contemporary theories from lucrative authors that have emerged over the past decades. Lastly, the strategic factors which are relevant to the context of this research study are distinguished so that these particular factors could be in the research questionnaire development.

A prominent brand management strategy integrates an understanding of consumers with the actions of the organization to build long-term opportunities for growth and profitability (Balmer, 2014). This paper seeks to present a strategizing framework using a systems perspective that can be used to develop strategy metrics for performance measurement and processes for adaptation and learning to modify strategies over time. Concepts such as the strategic systems map, the balanced scorecard, organisational learning and change management processes are interpreted and discussed in the context of business schools.

2.2 THE HISTORY OF UKZN

The University of KwaZulu-Natal was formed on 1 January 2004 as a result of the merger between the University of Durban-Westville and the University of Natal. The new university brings together the rich histories of both-the-former-Universities. The UKZN website states that the former University of Durban-Westville (UDW) was established in the 1960s as the University College for Indians on Salisbury Island in Durban Bay. Student numbers throughout the 1960s were low as a result of the Congress Alliances' policy of shunning apartheid structures. This policy gave way in the 1980s to a strategy of "education under protest" which sought to transform apartheid institutions into sites of struggle. Student numbers grew rapidly and in 1971, the College was granted University status (UKZN, 2016).

The following year, the newly-named UDW moved into its modern campus in Westville and was a site of major anti-apartheid struggle. UDW became an autonomous institution in 1984, opening up to students of all races (UKZN, 2015).

Founded in 1910 as the Natal University College (NUC) in Pietermaritzburg, the University of Natal was granted independent University status in 1949 owing to its rapid growth in numbers, its wide range of courses and its achievements in and opportunities for research. By that time, the NUC was already a multi-campus institution, having been extended to Durban after World War 1. The distinctive Howard College building was opened in 1931, following a donation by Mr T B Davis, whose son Howard Davis was killed during the Battle of Somme in World War I. In 1946, the government approved a Faculty of Agriculture in Pietermaritzburg and, in 1947, a Medical School for African, Indian and Coloured students in Durban (UKZN 2015). The two KZN universities were among the first batch of South African institutions to merge in 2004 in accordance with the government's higher educational restructuring plans that will eventually see the number of higher educational institutions in South Africa reduced from 36 to 21. Confirmed by a Cabinet decision in December 2002, the mergers are the culmination of a wide-ranging consultative process on the restructuring of the Higher Education Sector that began in the early 1990s (Cravens, 2014).

2.3 WHAT IS AN MBA?

The MBA (Master of Business Administration) is an internationally recognised and geographically portable post-graduate, post-experience academic course in a number of subjects that together can be said to constitute the science of management (Proctor, 2015). It is intended for those who work in business and management who seek career advancement, business ownership, or technical skills and business knowledge. The challenges imposed by the 21st century place a high premium on upgrading skills and qualifications in order to meet the demands set by companies, customers and the environment that managers operate in (Cant, 2014).

i) Management-areas-in-MBA-programme

Functional areas of management comprise-: Human Resource Management, Operations Management, Marketing Management, Information Management, Financial Management, Strategic Management and Organisational Behaviour (Ivy, 2015). At the end of an MBA programme, the graduate emerges with an upper level knowledge of functional managerial and business issues as well as new conceptual skills ready to meet the demands that are set by the competitive business environment. However, in addition to developing strong technical skills, today's managers must be able to influence people, interact with a broad spectrum of colleagues, customers and suppliers; and negotiate with individuals from all walks of life. They must know how their company relates to competitors in both the micro and macro business environments (Blankson, 2014).

ii) Prior-experience-essential

The MBA programme, which was first launched in the United States (US) in the 1950's as a two-year post-graduate course and exported to Europe in the 1960's, was initially rejected as irrelevant to the world of business and the schools were-viewed-as-second-rate. According to (Du Plessis, 2015), the MBA qualification matured largely within the framework of their non-vocational universities; the first year was devoted to the core disciplines of the science of management and the second year offered more specialisation through a choice of electives. Specialist MBAs were introduced with modular topics such as international business, finance, the public sector and even football.

While the US model enrolled students after taking a first degree, business schools in Europe placed much greater emphasis on practical work experience prior to entering the MBA programme. By comparison, the learning curve of entrants with prior business knowledge and work experience played a significant role in re-writing the criteria for universal-MBA-enrolment (Van Riel, 2016). Over a period of almost 30 years from the beginning of the 1960's to the end of the 1980's, the MBA was transformed from being the Cinderella of professional qualifications to a coveted tool to be utilised in building existing competencies to find plausible solutions to concurrent business issues. By the late 1970's, the battle for respectability had been won and the number of universities sprouting business school and MBA courses increased dramatically. Today, increased globalisation and changing lifestyles has meant that thousands of universities worldwide present the MBA qualification, offering more flexible ways of learning, including: distance learning, modular, in company-and-part-time-study-(Du-Plessis,2015).

iii)-New-developments

Driven by competitive factors, new developments over the past 20 years have successfully changed the primary two-year MBA programme to offer entrants shorter programmes (the one-year programme being the norm in some countries); running different programme structures such as modular, consortium, international and joint, as well as programmes accommodating diverse groups of people from different business sectors or different age groups; and internationalisation of curriculum content. While most established programmes around the world have adopted the MBA title, there are programmes that are similar to what other schools would call an MBA, which also lead to degrees with other titles. Such titles include MBL (Master of Business Leadership), which is a post-graduate degree in the management sciences, and MBS (Master of Business Studies).

The MBA program was formulated and established in 1974 (Proctor, 2015). The school's facilities are modernised and provide students with some of the latest teaching technologies. The MBA has been developed to provide skills and knowledge for aspiring managers. As most MBA programmes, a healthy mix of academics and practitioners staff the UKZN MBA programme whereby; the academics focus on the transfer of knowledge whilst the practitioners focus on the transfer of skills (UKZN, 2015). The programme is designed to simulate the working environment. As such, students have to work independently and in groups in order to meet deadlines. The teachers facilitate the learning sessions by supplementing certain formal lectures with critical in-depth discussions; presentations; and an analysis of case studies. Where necessary, lectures are accompanied with technologically based sessions and Internet based research programs (Proctor, 2015). These programs are delivered uniquely using adult learning principles including a mixture of:

- Leading-edge based research, frameworks and tools
- Networking and interaction
- Application and Grounding

The UKZN GSB offers programs in Doctorial, Masters, and Post graduate studies (UKZN, 2016).

2.4 STRATEGIC BRAND MANAGEMENT

A strong brand has been the primary strategic asset for firms, and therefore building a strong brand is becoming a central component of a firm's marketing strategy. However brand building is always a challenging endeavour, especially in the social media era, as it requires managers to have deep insights on consumer psychology, market competitive dynamics, opportunities and threats associated with social media, and their own organisational capabilities (Fournier, 2015).

i) Building a winning brand marketing strategy

The brand marketing strategy determines whether products and services are successful in the marketplace (Sheth, 2015). Today's quickly changing and increasingly global environment requires new skills and tools to respond to new consumer demands and habits. Traditional brand strategies are no longer sufficient in reaching customers and convincing them to buy products. The modern tools must be used not only to reach consumers, but to maintain relationships over a long period of time. In this context, management of brand marketing strategy becomes a key business process for organizations (Naude, 2015).

In order to be successful, the brand marketing strategy has to be based on a strategic planning process associated with the overall business strategy. It needs to take into consideration the profile of the company, its business objectives as well as the unique selling point (Krippendorf, 2014). Competitive differentiation is what allows companies and products to stand out in today's busy consumer environment. The brand marketing strategy should also be based on corporate vision, mission and values. This contributes to building an internal community of brand ambassadors. It is predominantly fundamental that brand marketing strategy is clearly linked with corporate communication objectives. Corporate communication provides a strategic framework helping to structure marketing efforts, with internal alignment becoming one of the key success factors (Gay, 2015).

A brand marketing strategy must additionally take into consideration the newest trends and technological advances - often not just locally, but globally. These include new communications and social media trends, as well as, changes in consumer preferences and practices (Davies, 2014). A brand that fails to stay up-to-date and relevant is unlikely to last long. The brand marketing strategy must be frequently re-assessed and evaluated. There is no "silver bullet" assuring success in every marketing campaign (Dibb, 2015). Each and every individual’s marketing campaign and associated brand marketing strategy has to take into consideration the context as well as current business objectives. It has to be clearly linked to the true corporate essence and be able to tell its own story. Only in such a way is it possible to build sustainable, efficient and effective brand marketing strategy (Chun, 2014).

ii) Building brand marketing strategy competencies

Building a brand marketing strategy clearly requires a number of skills and competencies. Many business management schools offer courses on marketing, branding and creating a marketing strategic plan. Some offer more specialized training, such as in B2B sales and marketing (Ferrandi, 2015). The top international business schools provide the highest quality business management courses with the necessary global perspective. In order to continually develop the best marketing strategies, brand and marketing managers need to frequently update their skill set and knowledge in order to keep pace with new developments. On-going executive education is one way to do so, as is attending conferences and other business forums. By staying at the forefront, brand marketing managers can anticipate and leverage new trends - ensuring the best results from their brand marketing strategy (Carmines, 2014).

2.5 BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

MBA education evolves with the changing needs of a competitive economic environment, and over the past decade, international management and the need to understand management within a global context has grown significantly in importance (Roberts, 2015). Top business schools have grasped the necessity of creating international MBA classroom environments that reflect the ever increasing international working environment. A number of leading business schools have designed their curricula to focus on international management, while other schools have launched specialized MBA programs in this area.

i) The strategy map as a vision for business schools

The strategy map (Figure 2.5.1) shown below is a framework, both for thinking about policy and strategy and a vehicle for carrying out a dialogue about strategic options in any business school context. Kaplan and Norton’s (2015: 46) statement about strategy frameworks is important:

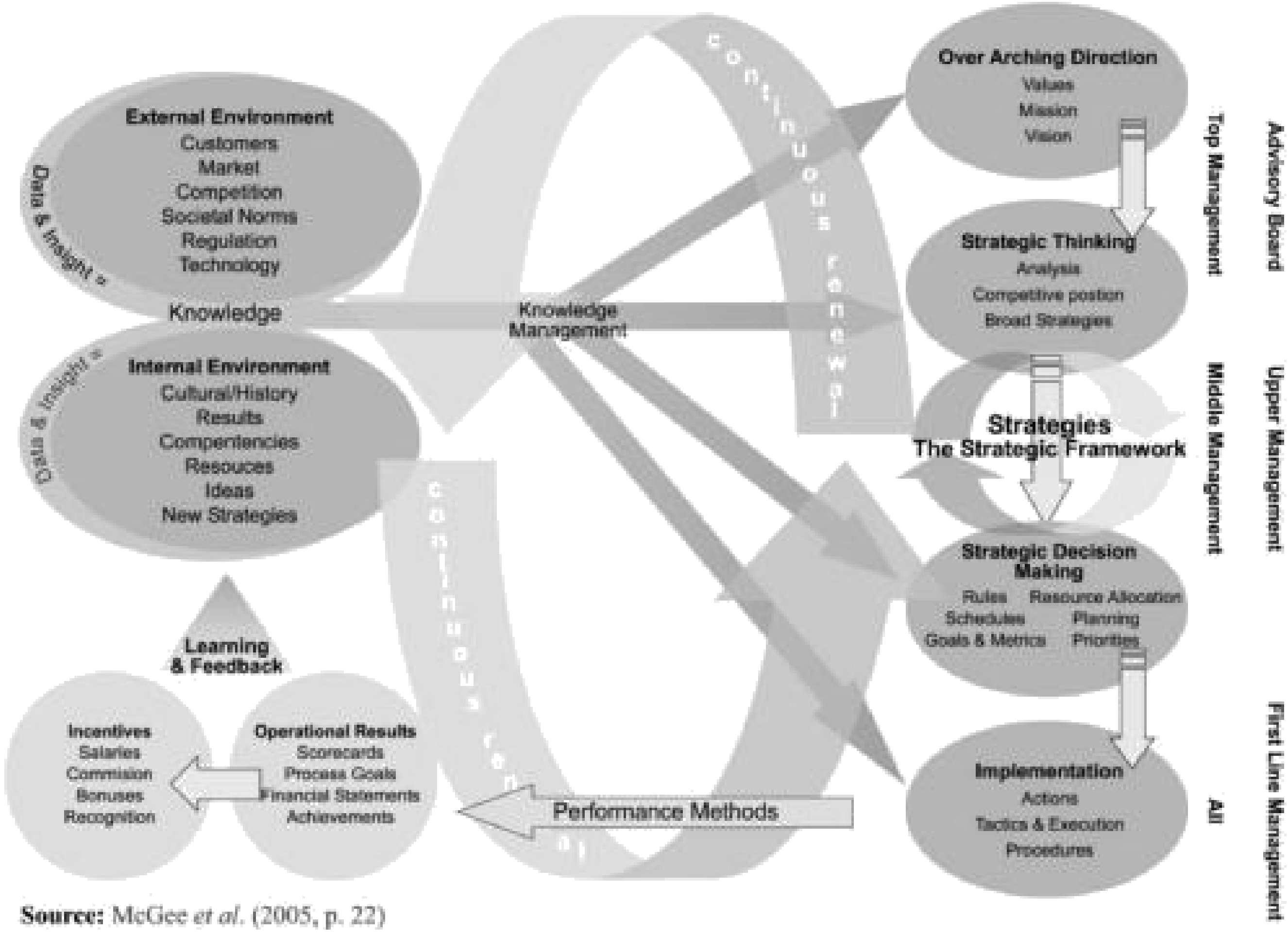
“Strategy frameworks, images or maps help people to do their own mapping, thereby kick-starting an oscillating thinking/acting or strategizing process, which instils a momentum that brings other choices and possibilities to the fore. It may not get people down the mountain in a straight line but it gets things moving and, when things move, other things come into view".

This map is a system model and a thinking framework which ranges from the setting of a business school's overarching direction (as in Stanford University's vision in the 1940s being the Harvard of the West), the design of its strategies – whether planned or emergent – and programmes to the processes of learning, feedback and strategic renewal (Hultman, 2015). It animates and orients the problem of strategy and invites debate and dialogue among strategists taking part in the strategic process. Each stage in the diagram encompasses a set of issues and, typically, invites a specific question from overarching direction (where does the want business school want to be?) to measures of performance (how should the business school's performance be checked relative to the set of school goals?). Performance metrics are extremely important as they highlight the salient issues of progress towards goals and provide signals and insights about how specific tasks and strategies can be improved. In turn, such processes of continuous improvement indicate how change can be designed most effectively in the organisational context (Kaplan, 2015). Given the importance of organisational performance in the strategic systems perspective, the next section focuses on potential measures of business school performance (Lincoln, 2014).

ii) Measures of business school performance

In the literature on organisational performance (see, for example, Kiriakidou and Millward, 2015; Leuthesser and Kohli, 2014), typically, three broad categories of performance are identified (Figure 2.5.2), namely:

- financial performance;
- operational performance; and
- Organisational effectiveness.



Source: McGee *et al.* (2005, p. 22)

Figure 2.5.1 Strategy map

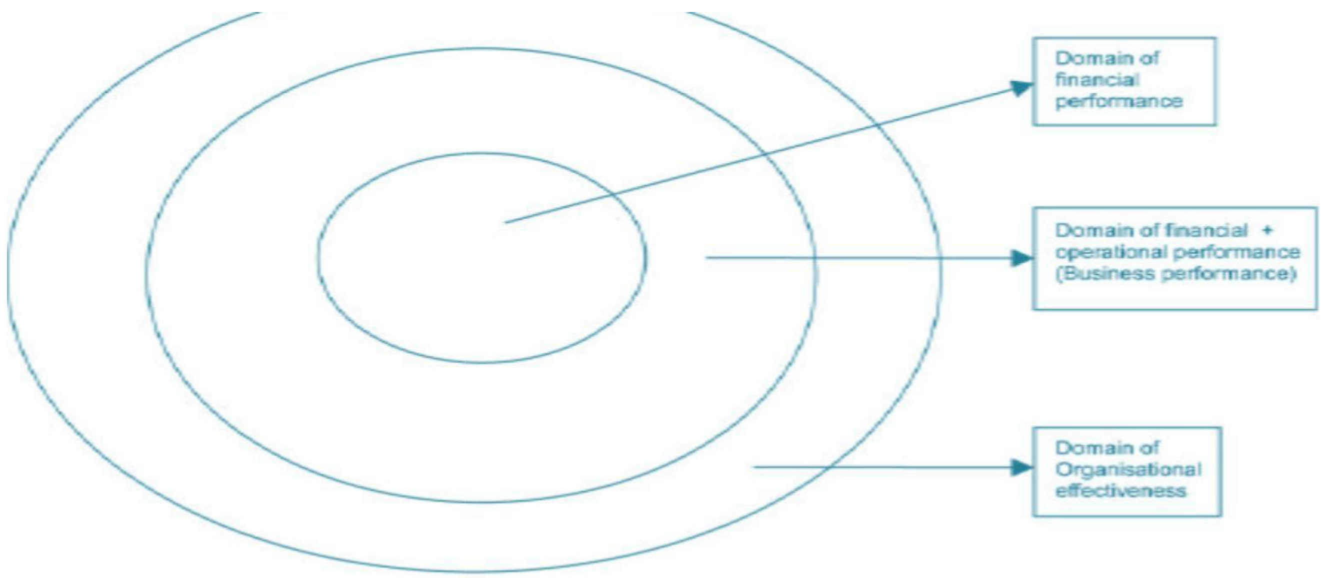


Figure 2.5.2: Performance categories

Source: Kohli (2014: 15)

Organisational effectiveness encompasses both economic and operational performance indicators and includes performance factors that relate to the strategic goals of the organisation as a whole. Examples of each of the performance categories in the business school context follow below:

- financial measures – profitability, financial surplus, level of endowment funding;
- operational measures – faculty quality, student quality, research quality, teaching quality, programme efficiency, measures of market positioning; and
- Organisational effectiveness – league table rankings, reputation, student satisfaction, employer satisfaction, accreditation.

Clearly, a high level of financial performance creates funds for a business school dean to invest in strategic investments such as new faculty, software development and research activity (Austin, 2014). Also, the severe reduction of government funding in higher education worldwide has made the generation of these financial surpluses an important management issue, not only for business school deans but also for university vice-chancellors and presidents, who see business schools as “cash cows”. Increasingly, business schools have also recognised the need (Suhr, 2015) to generate strategic funds through external fundraising in order to build endowments for research, teaching and faculty support activities. Currently, US business schools have been much more successful in this domain and the increased money made available has allowed certain elite US business schools who have built endowment “mountains” (for instance, Harvard and Wharton) to further increase their academic quality, branding and competitive positioning in the marketplace (Lincoln, 2016).

Business schools constantly examine the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations. Faculty recruitment and retention in an environment where there is a supply shortage of suitably qualified doctoral faculty is an important issue for many schools (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, 2003; (McMillan, 2015). The quality of faculty is also a critical element for attracting high-quality students who can, in turn, stretch the faculty in their teaching and research activities. High-quality faculty working with efficiently managed and well-positioned programmes create a virtuous circle and an environment in which research and teaching become of equivalent high quality. It should be noted that there is clear evidence in the marketplace that research and teaching performance is being monitored and reviewed by government agencies (Inman, 2014). In the United Kingdom (UK), for example, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) measures the teaching quality of business schools, while the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is a peer-review based process which assesses the research quality of business schools and higher education as a whole (for example, it reported research quality on a five-point scale in 1996 and 2001, and did so on a four-point scale in 2008). Such government-produced ratings are widely examined by potential students and evidence of excellence is trumpeted widely on business school websites (Joppe, 2016).

These organisational ratings are used in assessing a school's effectiveness and its resultant brand image and reputation. League table rankings of business schools routinely provided by publications such as *Business Week, The Economist, Financial Times and Wall Street Journal* are another important measure of customer satisfaction. Verification of school quality for external constituencies (for example, employers and students) is further provided by accreditation agencies such as the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB International) in the USA, the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) in Europe and the Association of MBAs (AMBA) in the UK. Therefore, these institutionalising processes provided by government and consumer ratings further reinforce the organisational reputations of national business school champions as effective and relevant to industry leaders and other stakeholders (Berthon, 2015).

The key management question with the strategy map therefore is how to translate the strategic framework into a financial, operational and organisational measurement scheme which links strategy to organisational goals. The balanced scorecard framework discussed in the next section offers an appropriate model for piloting the strategy of the organisation across a range of indicators of organisational performance, and adjusting the flight-path of the organisation in order to improve future performance (Mavondo, 2014).

2.6 BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

The Financial Times (FT) Business School Rankings survey placed the spotlight on African business executive and (MBA) qualifications, revealing how the continent is faring internationally. Now in its 15th year, the FT survey rates the top 70-100 providers globally for their MBA and customised and open executive education programmes by collating data from the course providers, programme participants and corporate clients (Patton, 2015). The UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) was the only African university on the Global MBA Ranking 2013 list, scooping position 74. Last year it was ranked 54 after being 60 in 2013, and it holds position 63 on the three-year average (Lincoln, 2016).

The (GSB) at the (UCT) is home to only full-time African MBA ranked (59th) in the top 100 by the prestigious Financial Times and with EQUIS accreditation from the European Foundation for Management Development (Europe); AMBA accreditation from the Association of MBAs (UK) and AACSB (USA) accreditation from The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, the GSB is one of just 59 schools globally, to have the coveted triple-crown accreditation (Van Gelder, 2015). With its roots in Africa, the GSB's goal is to be a leading and an internationally ranked emerging market business school (UKZN, 2016). The School is committed to building a new model of a business school; one that is grounded in values and based on the paradigm of the emerging market. The GSB understands that emerging economy business is confronted by a high degree of uncertainty, complexity, and often excessive situations of inequality, which requires innovative solutions (Friga, 2015). Through its research and teaching, the school therefore aims to raise the profile of emerging market business schools as centres of excellence and thought leadership, and provide students, both local and from all over the world with the knowledge and skills to take on the challenges of managing and leading successfully in complexity. All learning is offered either full time or on a modular basis (Winter, 2014).

Positioned in Sandton Johannesburg, it partners with leading companies and is fortunate to attract the type of individuals who want to make a significant impact (Greenacre, 2015). The 'Open Executive Education Programme' ranked GIBS in position 43 up from 47, University of Stellenbosch Business School 56 (62), the Wits

Business School 62 (55), and the American University in Cairo (AUC) School of Business 70.

The Graduate School of Business Administration, otherwise known as Wits Business School (WBS) was established in 1968. The prime mission of the School is to establish and maintain excellence in scholarship in business management through the promotion of research and teaching, in the various disciplines that fall under business management (Ivy, 2015). The School is entirely postgraduate in nature, but offers an extensive range of certificate and executive programmes to experienced executives. Interestingly, South African business schools perform better in international rankings than their universities, which suggests that they have been able to raise the funding and high-level human resources essential to being globally rated in this highly competitive field (Joppe, 2016).

2.7 THE MOST CRITICAL GAP

Pfeffer and Fong (2014: 64) argued that “with the exception of perhaps a few top schools, MBA programs provide little of use in the real business world and are especially lacking in on-the-job experience leading and managing others. Without a larger clinical or practice component, it is not clear that business schools ever will impart much lasting knowledge that affects graduates’ performance. A big gap separates what graduates offer from what most employers need. Many MBA graduates arrive at new jobs unprepared for the often multicultural, multi-unit, and politically charged decision making they will be required to handle; in our own firm, we find this force us to engage in training we believe the business schools should have provided”.

Of course, professional-service firms do not expect MBA graduates to be fully formed consultants on day one. That is why new MBA hires at some corporate companies enter an immersion process that lasts several months and includes multiple courses and job assignments during which new hires are apprenticed to seasoned mentors. After this initial immersion period, consultants are expected to participate in training throughout their careers. The curriculum is tailored to their strengths and competencies. It would be preferred if the highly motivated, able people who arrive with MBA qualifications had stronger skills in writing, public speaking, building and running teams, supervising and delegating, and sharing leadership in ways that motivate and inspire subordinates. Although it is true that social skills are challenging to teach, curricula can be designed to promote them. Further, the corporate industry would prefer more students to arrive with a better grasp of the scientific method and how to apply it; from hypothesis generation through research and analysis that underlies profession (Kaplan, 2014).

i) Cause and Effect

There are a number of causes for the shortcomings seen in the quality of MBA education. One cause may be that business schools mistakenly defer to students when they design their curricula, reacting to the demands of students who prefer the fun of strategy (Abratt, 2015). That could explain why MBA programmes do not pay enough attention to the nuts and bolts of problem solving and other competencies that employers demand. In particular, students are not taught to pose the question "why" and to keep asking why until they cannot ask it anymore; a significant element of effective problem solving. It is not surprising that schools are so student-centric; students are extremely influential in determining business school reputations. Students will always be a business schools' number one customer (Couper, 2014). The survey rankings and schools' reputations are driven by students, and schools depend heavily on their alumni for money. The consequence is that companies do not feel they can get the well-rounded top talent they are looking for from business schools. Over the last decade, most consulting firms have shifted a portion of their hiring away from an MBA qualification. In part, this is because the total cost of hiring and training an MBA graduate is very high. "For most companies which underwrite a portion of promising candidates' education, the cost to acquire MBA talent is roughly ten times that of acquiring talent in the open market" (Inman, 2014: 47).

Another cause of the problems with MBA education is the increasing similarity of business school programs (Schouten, 2014). At one time, if an employer wanted great general managers, it drew from UCT. If it wanted great quantitative analysts, it drew from GIBS. If it wanted great technologists, it drew from Stellenbosch. But now the graduates from all these programs resemble one another. This, too, stems from the rankings. As schools try to tailor their programs to move higher on the Business Week list, programs become more generic and less impressive in any unique area (Crocker, 2015).

Convergence helps the schools compete, apples to apples in the rankings, but it does not give graduates advantages when they are competing for jobs. Consulting firms for example are not looking for one-size-fits-all MBAs. Students going into consulting, and those going to the finance department of an automotive company all need different skills. By training all students identically, MBA programs do not sufficiently prepare students who have already chosen a specific career path (Ghose, 2014).

ii) Collaborative Change

During the 1990s, many business schools did make dramatic changes in their curricula and approaches to teaching in response to fairly widespread corporate dissatisfaction with MBA graduates (Lebart, 2014). It is theorized that business schools did not change enough to address critical curriculum weaknesses in areas such as communications, relationship management, leadership, and problem solving. Moreover, even where course offerings in non-traditional areas were added, it did not lead to necessary changes in the all-important core course work, or the ways in which students are taught (Suhr, 2015). Indeed, many schools still stress individual competition and academic achievement, even if they talk about giving students more opportunity to work collaboratively on projects that give them practical experience. And most graduate programs still focus on traditional lecture and case discussion over more complex experiential learning. This may be true, in part, because instructors and professors themselves are more comfortable using traditional teaching methods (Crainer, 2015).

There is still confidence that progress can be made especially if it is along with working towards the six curriculum reforms that will be suggested, business schools are open to partnerships with companies and vice versa. Partnerships can sensitize schools to the skills critically required in the market today (Berthon, 2015). Johns Hopkins University partners with Booz Allen to offer two advanced-degree programs: the MBA and the Master of Science in Information and Telecommunications Systems. Both programs are conducted at Booz Allen offices and stress shared leadership and teamwork, and the MBA program requires a course in organizational development. Throughout these programs, students learn through team assignments which try to promote collegiality over effectiveness. The curriculum has progressed more unfailingly to provide the skills needed. This is an excellent example of a university that recognizes that corporations are also its customers (Zikmund, 2016).

By working with employers, business schools can intensify their efforts to meet employer needs. This change in approach will not pay off for the business schools in the short term because it will not immediately attract more students, but it will pay big dividends for the schools in the long term as companies continue to hire freshly minded MBAs rather than searching for talent elsewhere in the broader job market. The alternative is for business schools to degenerate into the sorting service that John Reed talked about back in 2014 “No school wants to be known more for the efficiency of its admissions personnel than the effectiveness of its education program. That doesn’t serve the school, the students, or the employers and it certainly does not have to happen” (Bendixen, 2015: 36).

2.8-ACCREDITATION-AND-RANKINGS

The University of Stellenbosch Business School became Africa's first to secure the triple crown of international accreditations, namely: by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, which represents the highest achievement for an educational institution awarding business degrees; by the European Foundation for Management Development, which awards the European Quality Improvement System accreditation; and via accreditation from the Association of MBAs (Hair, 2015).

The international business school accreditations and international diversity in the classroom are some of the key deciding factors motivating Africa's future business leaders to study abroad. It is believed that studying abroad and being exposed to international diversity better prepares students to compete in the global economy (Charles, 2015). The ability to perceive, analyse and engage in a problem or case from an international, multi-dimensional view enables one to compete on a global level in more superior terms. International diversity improves the vitality of the education environment and the learning experience (Schouten, 2014).

The current world environment of complexity, excitement and challenge; the speed and scale of various driving forces changing the business and social landscape are astonishing (Nicholls, 2014). Consequently GIBS based in Pretoria, Johannesburg believes it has a role to play in ensuring that business leaders – whether corporate or entrepreneurial; have the chance to improve their skills and business acumen. An operational MBA programme is aimed to be a life-changing experience to students by affording them the opportunity to advance knowledge, think critically, challenge assumptions, be exposed to new experiences, and form diverse relationships (McMillan, 2015). A qualification from an internationally accredited institution is exceedingly valued by employers as the accreditations were quality guarantees (Crainer, 2015). In the past decade, the institutions had seen a steady increase in the number of students from other African countries enrol into the MBA programme. High volumes of interest from African countries have been particularly evident with the MDevF programme consisting of more than sixty percent of students from African countries (Berthon, 2015). Over the past three years, the business schools such as GIBS have intensified their marketing efforts in Africa with regular information sessions, alumni association activities and representations in key territories. In a nutshell, accreditations serve as a quality control mechanism and isolate areas within the business school that needs improvement. Specifically, accreditations are tools to improve the education and research delivered by an institution (Blackmur, 2015).

2.9 EDUNIVERSAL

Headquartered in Paris, Eduniversal is a global ranking and rating agency specializing in higher education. The company has established strong expertise in evaluating academic institutions and programs in France since 1994, and internationally since 2007. Eduniversal produces two annual global rankings:

1) The Top 1000 Business Schools in 154 countries

2) The Top 4000 Masters and MBA programs in 30 fields of study in 154 countries

These rankings are designed to provide information to prospective graduate students that will help them in their search for future studies in the following zones: Africa, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Eurasia & Middle East, Far East Asia, Latin America, North America, Oceania, Western Europe.

Its mission is:

- To provide tools and expertise to allow individuals regardless of nationality, income level or background to be able to navigate the best global educational opportunities; and to make the precise personal choices from choosing an academic institution to selecting a career.

- To provide an in-depth view on world-wide academic expertise to all participants of higher education, with the goal of actively supporting international exchanges between institutions, reassuring agility to professors and students; and assisting HR professionals to identify specialized talent.

The best business schools in South-Africa according to Eduniversal

5 Palmes Of Excellence - UNIVERSAL business school with strong global influence	Rank by Palmes league	Dean's recommendation rate 2015
University of Cape Town - UCT Graduate School of Business	**1**	**367‰**
University of Stellenbosch Business School	**2**	**344‰**
4 Palmes Of Excellence - TOP business school with significant international influence	Rank by Palmes league	Dean's recommendation rate 2015
University Of Pretoria - Gordon Institute Of Business Science	**1**	**208‰**
University of the Witwatersrand - Wits Business School	**2**	**149‰**
3 Palmes Of Excellence - EXCELLENT business school with reinforcing international influence	Rank by Palmes league	Dean's recommendation rate 2015
Rhodes University - Rhodes Business School	**1**	**117‰**
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) Business School	**2**	**110‰**
UNISA - University of South Africa - Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL)	**3**	**91‰**
NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY - POTCHEFSTOOM CAMPUS - POTCHEFSTROOM BUSINESS SCHOOL	**4**	**58‰**

3 Palmes Of Excellence - EXCELLENT business school with reinforcing international influence	Rank by Palmes league	Dean's recommendation rate 2015
University of the Free State - Universiteit van die Vrystaat - UFS Business School	5	45‰
University of Limpopo - Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership	6	26‰
University of Kwazulu-Natal - Graduate School of Business and Leadership	6	26‰
2 Palmes Of Excellence - GOOD business school with strong regional influence	**Rank by Palmes league**	**Dean's recommendation rate 2015**
Henley Business School South Africa	1	84‰
Regent Business School	2	49‰
Management College Of Southern Africa - Mancosa - Durban	3	45‰
Milpark Business School	4	13‰
1 Palme Of Excellence - BUSINESS school with considerable local influence	**Rank by Palmes league**	**Dean's recommendation rate 2015**
North-West University - Mafikeng Campus - Faculty Of Commerce & Administration	1	36‰
Tshwane University of Technology - TUT Business School	2	16‰
Damelin School Of Business And Management - Randburg	2	16‰
Regenesys Business School (RBS)	4	13‰

Figure 2.9.1: Business School Rankings

Source: Yucelt (2014: 46)

2.10 THE BALANCED SCORECARD FRAMEWORK

i) Background

The concept of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) was first introduced by Robert S. Kaplan and David P Norton in 1996. The basic premise of the BSC is that financial outcomes alone cannot capture value generating activities. In other words, financial measures are lagging indicators and as such, are not effective in ascertaining the drivers or activities that affect fiscal results. Therefore, Norton (2014) suggested that organizations, while using financial measures, should develop a comprehensive set of additional measures to use as leading indicators or predictors of financial performance. He suggested that measures should be developed that address four perspectives:

1). The financial perspective. Measures in this perspective should answer the question, "How should we appear to our shareholders?"

2). The customer perspective. These measures should answer the question, "How should we appear to our customers?"

3). Internal business processes perspective. Measures in this perspective should answer the question, "What processes must we excel at?"

4). Learning and growth perspective. These measures should answer the question, "How can we sustain our ability to change and improve?"

In essence, the BSC is a customer-based planning and process improvement system aimed at directing and driving the change process. It does this by translating strategy into an integrated set of financial and non-financial measures that both communicate the organizational strategy to the members; and provides an actionable response on fulfilment of objectives (Alessandri, 2015). A critical factor for an effective BSC is the alignment of all the measures in the four perspectives with the organization’s vision and strategic objectives. The BSC allows managers to track short-term financial results while simultaneously monitoring their progress in building the capabilities and acquiring the intangible assets that generate growth for future financial performance (Chang, 2014). Thus, the BSC enables managers to monitor and adjust the implementation of their strategies and to make fundamental changes in them overtime (Routledge, 2015). Figure 2.10.1 shows the logic of the approach. What the basic concept of a balanced scorecard provides is a disciplined framework through which to impose a series of questions that should be addressed by the business school:

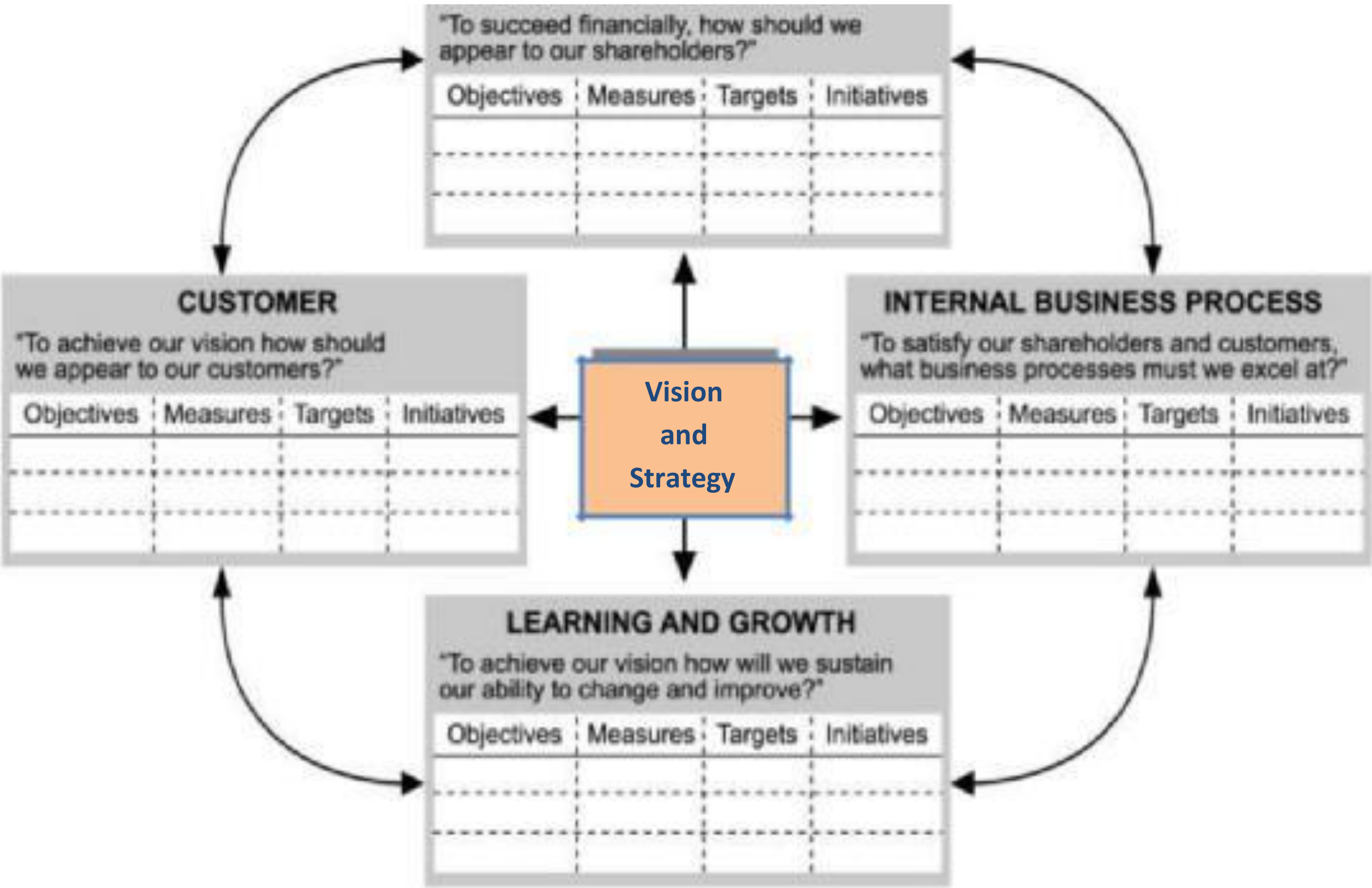


Figure 2.10.1: The BSC Approach

Source: Hogan (2014; 22)

- How does the institution look to stakeholders, particularly university presidents or vice-chancellors? (the financial lens): metrics in this area include accounting-based measures of profitability and surplus generation.
- How do students see the institution? (the customer lens): metrics in this area include market-share, brand image and student, alumni and employer satisfaction.
- What must the institution excel at? (the internal lens): the issues in this area involve the internal business processes necessary to develop a successful strategy. Metrics would include supply-chain processes, research quality, teaching quality, and others.

- How can the institution continue to improve and create value? (the innovation and learning lens): metrics in this area address the school's ability to innovate and develop new capabilities through research, new product growth and development and improved funding opportunities.

BSC applications focus on for profit organizations. However, a few studies of the BSC look specifically within Business schools for applications. Drtina et al, (2015) suggested integrating measures with clearly defined strategies as a first step with various guidelines. Karathanos and Patricia (2014) successfully applied the BSC to a specific master's degree program in business, entrepreneurship, and technology. Papenhausen, and Einstein (2015) proposed that a BSC be used in educational institutions for reinforcement of the importance of managing rather than just monitoring performance.

Clont (2014) reported that the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California implemented the BSC approach to assess its academic program and planning process. Checklists of measures however, beg the question of what the best set of measures or key performance indicators (KPIs) are for any specific business school. Fundamentally, it is argued that significant KPIs must link to the overall strategy and vision to monitor the key elements of that strategy. It must also take into account any changes in the broader economic and technological environment the school faces (Aaker, 2014). In essence, the KPIs chosen should be regarded as a future-oriented set of metrics that will allow the school to benchmark and monitor the economic and competitive outcomes; and examine the stability of the school's strategy (the long-term perspective) and operations (the short-term perspective). The strength of the BSC approach is its inclusivity of the range of strategy concepts and the way of linking them together in a single map (Figure 2.10.2).

There is strength also in the way in which measurable KPIs are used to ground the map in reality and to make it an operational tool for managers (Neelankavil, 2015), but this is also its weakness. Not all elements of competitive strategy are easy to measure although many schools have strategic planning processes that make a heroic attempt to do this (Roberts, 2015).

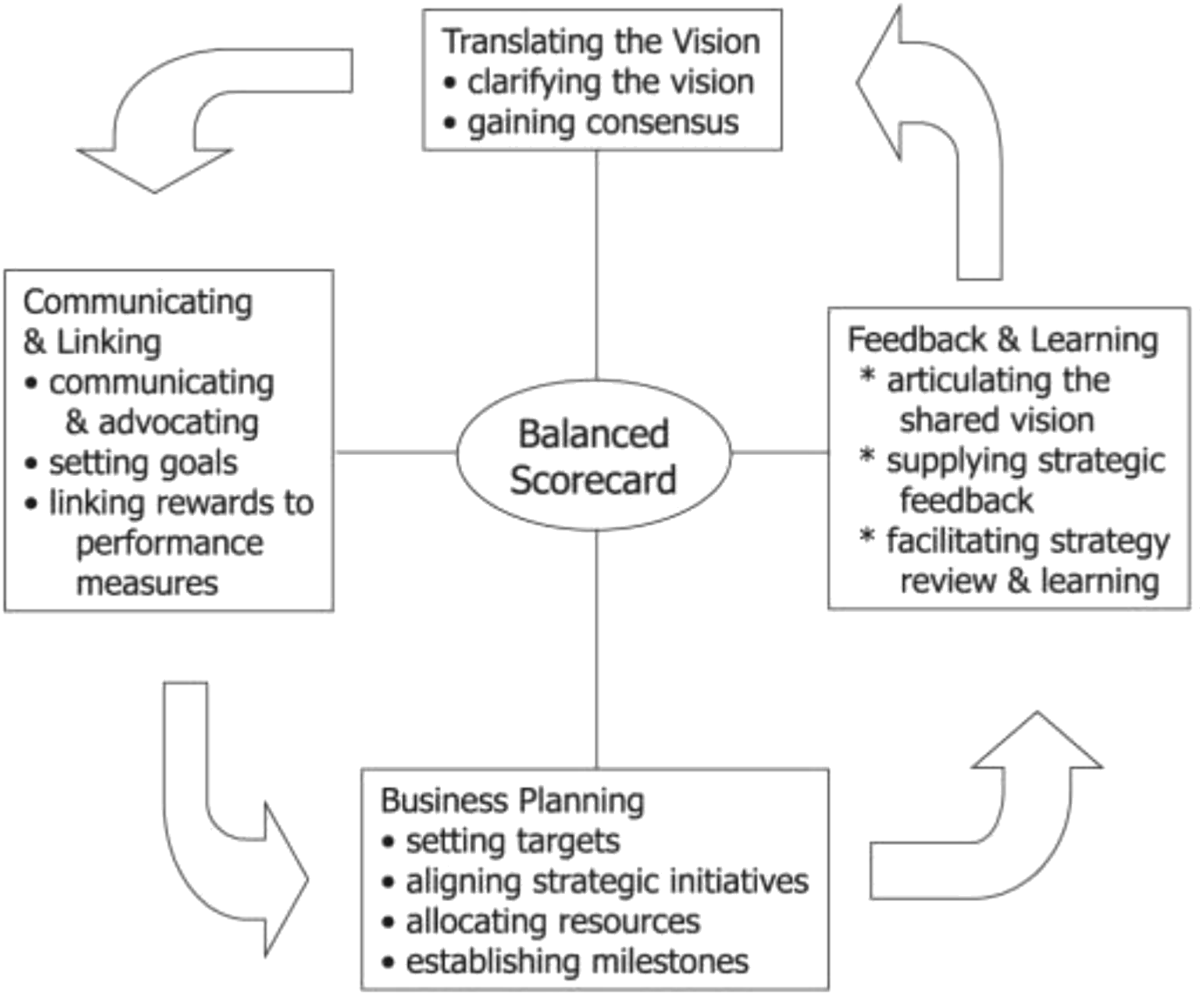


Figure 2.10.2: The BSC Strength Approach

Source: Karathanos (2015: 92)

More difficult is the area of management process, which provides an essential grounding for strategy analysis decisions. Without good or appropriate processes, good decisions cannot be made – decisions do not make themselves. The BSC is relatively silent on matters of process (Karathanos, 2015), and should really be seen as a designed set of KPIs that provides early warning indicators rather than as a diagnostic system that indicates the nature of problems and the sources of them (America, 2015). This is a controversial area that will benefit from progress on two fronts:

(1) better conception and measurement of KPIs; and

(2) better linkage of strategy process elements to strategic decisions.

Chang and Chow (2014) reported that responses in a survey of sixty nine accounting department heads were generally supportive of the BSC’sapplicability and benefits to accounting programs. Karathanos (2015) also indicated that the University of California, Sans seniorDiego’management launched a BSC planning and performance monitoring system for thirty institutional functions using three primary data sources: 1)sinternalUCSD’financial reports; 2) National Association of College and University Business Officers benchmarks; and 3) faculty, staff and student customer-satisfaction surveys. This exercise was conducted under the framework of the universvi**s**ion,ity’mission, and values. Reported benefits and outcomes to date have included reorganization of the workload in the vice chancellor’s area, revisi job descriptions with performance standards, introduction of continual training for user departments, on-going customer assessments and increased responsiveness to communication needs through the use of technology. Winer and Michels (2015) describe how a faculty committee at the Rossier School of Education of USC adapted a BSC model originally developed for business firms to satisfy the central administration’needtoknow how they measure up to other schools of education.

ii)-The balanced scorecard and strategic alignment

As Kaplan and Norton (2014: 75) noted, “the earlier version of the BSC as a balanced multi-perspective performance measurement system has changed to take account of strategizing processes and the alignment of strategy with organisational structures and environments. It has evolved to a new strategic management system, linking long-term strategic objectives with short-term actions, following the usage and experience gained from applying the original scorecard concept in a wide range of 100 or so organisations. Each of those organisations found that the balanced scorecard approach supplied a structure and a framework for such critical management processes as goal-setting, business planning, capital allocations, strategic initiatives and feedback and learning that facilitated strategic thinking and stimulated the analysis of alternative policy options for the organisation”.

The new strategic management system involves a set of four management processes which interact to enable the management of the strategic balance between short-term productivity objectives and long-term growth perspectives (Chang, 2014). The first of these processes is that involved in the translation of the vision and strategy statements using the model shown in Figure 2.10.2, so that they form a clear and well-understood set of objectives and measures that are agreed and endorsed by all senior managers. This vision/strategy facilitates the framing of the strategy map and identification of the long-term drivers, whether marketing, organisation or financial, that will determine the long-term success of the school. Ultimately, a well-structured vision and strategy statement builds organisational commitment (Stone, 2015).

The second of these processes; communicating and linking requires deans to discuss and communicate their strategy as the corporate vision throughout the school and link that strategy to departmental and individual objectives (Abratt, 2015). Thus, the scorecard provides a vehicle for debate and undertakes a strategic role in ensuring that the organisational strategy is understood by all organisational levels and, more importantly, that both departmental and individual objectives are linked and closely aligned to the strategy (Mark, 2014). The third of these processes; business planning provides a basis for the integration of programme and financial plans. Since the BSC links strategy to KPIs, senior managers can use the scorecard measures and associated goals to allocate resources and set priorities to achieve long-term strategic objectives at the business unit level. In other words, business unit (that is programme-level) scorecards are designed to link with the corporate (school-level) scorecards. The fourth of these processes – feedback and learning – allows the school to use feedback from the balanced scorecard and benchmarking processes to provide an insight into, and evaluation of, existing strategic positioning. Thus, strategies can be changed, or re-oriented, to take account of the real-time learning and feedback achieved by the school and the faculty. Thus, corporate and business unit scorecards can be reviewed and updated. As Kaplan and Norton (2015: 97) point out, “the balanced scorecard in this context can be viewed as a systems dynamics model that provides a comprehensive, quantified model of a school’s value proposition and enables the corporate strategy and vision to be continually refined and reviewed.” This point is examined further in the next section.

iii) Measures

The strategic directions can be developed and measured within the generic structure of the BSC. The following is the adaptation of a sample BSC developed by Bailey et al, (2014) for a university and its strategic business units.

Table 2.10.1: Generic Structure of a BSC
Source: Bailey et al. (2014: 92)

1. **Stakeholder/Student Perceptive**	
Goals	Measures
1) Students Attract high-quality ethnically diverse students Development high-quality students Retain high-quality students	Average SAT, GMAT, GRE High school QPA, Market share of student enrolment, Geographic draw area % minority enrolment Students portfolios GPA over time, average grades awarded Integration of technology into curriculum Financial aid offered Retention rate Student satisfaction surveys Tuition compared with comparable schools
Graduate high-quality students and improve placement	Number of degree awarded Number of students recruited Starting salaries Number of visits by recruiters
2) Employee-Satisfaction with graduates	Employer survey rating graduates effectiveness Perception surveys Support of programs and initiatives
3) Faculty satisfaction and quality	Participation in decision-making Encouragement for research, attendance of conferences Office space and computer availability % full time, % doctoral qualified Level of faculty publications / conference - attendance / presentations Student perception of faculty quality Student / teacher ration % of budget devoted to faculty development
4) Alumni satisfaction	Increased assistance with placement Level of alumni giving Number of alumni attending special events
5) Community Public-Enhance relationships with community, improve public image	Employer surveys Outreach programs to community Community perception of faculty and staff Internships / co-op programs Advisory committees New articles featuring school and / or faculty
2. Internal Institution Perspective	
GOALS	MEASURES
Teaching and learning excellence	Evaluation by external reviewers and employers Peer review Students satisfaction with teaching quality Grade point standards Quality and technological level of computer labs and libraries

	Presentation capabilities Degree of deployment of technology in learning experience
Curriculum / program excellence	Degree to which curriculum is up-to-date with educational, business, and commercial trends Reviews by advisory boards Periodic review of each program Faculty credentials, development plans, appraisals Contacts with business and industry
Quality and currency of faculty	Utilization rate of multimedia in classrooms Degree cycle time Teaching load policy management % of students completing program in 4 years
Efficiency and effectiveness of service	Analysis of use of space Student satisfaction Placement services and opportunities Availability of internships / co-ops Allocation and use of equipment and supplies

3. Innovation and Learning Perspective	
GOALS	MEASURES
Teaching and learning innovation and faculty Development	Number of innovations incorporated into classroom Level of equipment Quality of instruction / advising / mentoring Number of on-going instructional development programs Number of new initiatives / courses / programs Formally approved curriculum changes Seminars presented Expenditures for teaching enhancement Number and quality of faculty publications / presentations Attendance at conferences Honours and awards received by faculty Innovation versus competitors Adequacy of classrooms, equipment, computers, library resources
Quality of facilities	% of budget for improved facilities Time required to service, replace, allocate Reports of implementation of decentralization efforts for sites
Specific strategic decision implementation decentralization of campuses	Evaluation of strategic planning results

The continuous improvement starts with a mission statement. A school develops and publishes a mission statement or its correspondent that provides direction for making decisions (Johnson, 2015). The mission statement derives from a process that includes the viewpoint of various stakeholders. An example of a mission statement is as follows: The mission of the Byrd School of Business is to educate students to become successful, principled leaders with a global perspective. A matrix approach to the mission and faculty responsibilities would include:

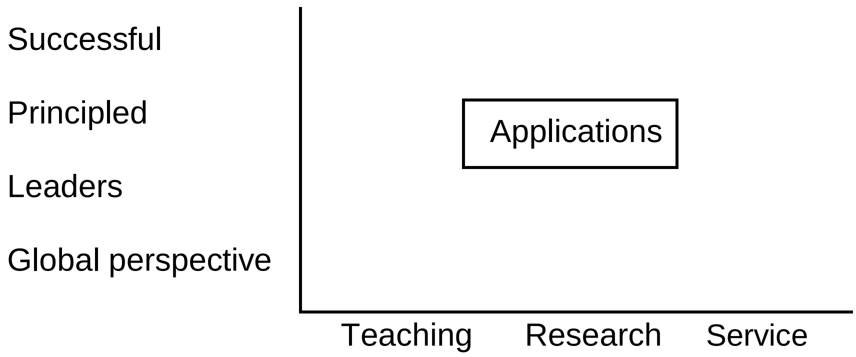


Figure 2.10.3: A Matrix BSC Approach
Source: Singh (2015: 17)

This subset would form the foundation for development and expansion within the perspectives of stakeholders/customer, internal business, and innovation/ learning as well as provide assurance of learning (Lohr, 2014). The AACSB shift to process-based standards is evident in several of the 2003 standards that require each school to utilize processes that generate the capability to enhance an important service or product for its external consumers for management education (Singh, 2015). Further, the new standards are intended to improve internal service or products supporting management education: develop faculty, improve instruction, and enhance intellectual activity. Process-based standards define and document the capability of transforming inputs into desired outcomes. Because processes define a unifying structure to create these capabilities, an important metric used to evaluate a school's performance against a given standard should be documentation of the processes that create the capability required in each standard (Balmer, 2015).

Recognition standards that are process-based support continuous quality improvement in management education while those that are input-driven or outcomes-focused most often do not. Therefore, the measures or metrics must be identified as to process based. For example, under the stakeholder/customer perspective, the measure of the level of faculty publications, conferences attendance, and presentations, is evidence of how faculties are developing their research agenda and the development of quality journal articles over time (Hogan, 2014). Another example would be the development or use of a case in the undergraduate level within certain core courses to assess student learning thus assessing common concepts or achievements across the curriculum. The ideas developed could be generalized into a basic model of a transformation process involving inputs, processes, outputs, and a feedback loop (Neelankavil, 2015).

The inputs are transformed into outputs as a result of a defined set of related steps or operations called a process. Generally, the inputs represent resources from both the internal and external environments, including the products or outputs from other sub-systems of the school or university including students, physical environment and organizational infrastructure (Yucelt, 2014). The outputs created by the system include the service or value addition generated by the process. The outputs can be assessed using outcome-related metrics. The purpose of the feedback loop is to facilitate continuous improvement through the entire transformation process. The basic model is shown in Figure 2.10.4 below:

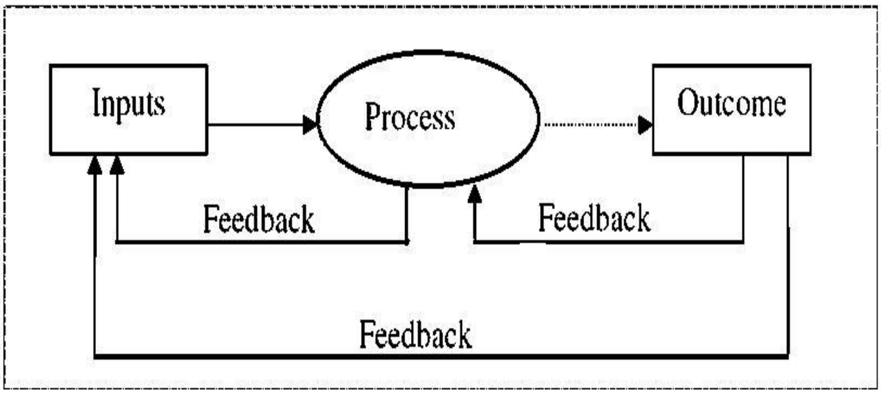


Figure 2.10.4: Transformation Process Model
Source: Friga (2015: 219)

iv) An Integrated Framework Approach

The integrated framework approach would start with the overall strategy based on the mission statement. The mission statement would be integrated with resources such as faculty; including their perspectives of teaching, research, and service. A comprehensive strategy would include measures or metrics with the four perspectives outlined (Friga, 2015). The content within the perspectives would be viewed on a continuum of improvement over time. The framework can be further developed by considering other standards for measurement and application within the BSC and consideration of actual data provided by a university. The framework would provide a systematic perspective for long-term planning and decision making. A generic architecture to describe the framework is shown in Figure 2.10.5. The measures or metrics could be further developed into a BSC strategy map as illustrated by Kaplan and Norton (2014). Each measure would be considered in a chain of cause-and-effect logic that connects the desired outcomes from the strategy with the drivers.

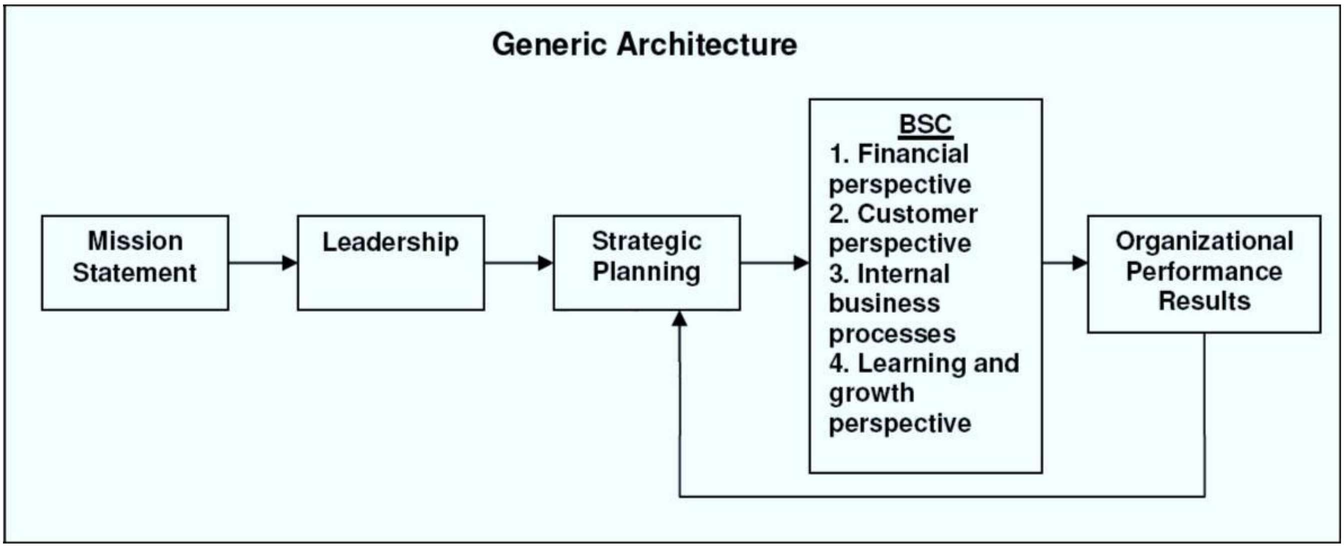


Figure 2.10.5: Generic Architecture of a BSC

Source: Kaplan and Norton (2014: 117)

Continuous improvement within an environment including relationships and trials will lead to the planned or expected outcomes. The measures demonstrated in this paper may then be tied to multiple goals (Kaplan et al, 2014). The important concept is that each measure is aligned with the organization's strategy based on the mission statement. It is important to recognise that the strategic management approach presented here is not placed forward as a "one size fits all" strategic approach for all business schools, irrespective of the context and environments in which it operates. As a post-script while specific examples of the use of such a strategic management model are difficult to obtain, it should be emphasised that this approach provides the pillar for the strategizing processes of business schools around the globe (Roberts, 2015).

2.11 THE UKZN GSB's MANAGEMENT STRATEGY MODEL

i) Brand identity strategy

The role of branding has become a major subject. Most companies establish that they are required to know the value of the financial status of its corporate brand and products; strategically manage its brands; provide to consumer implementation that is relevant, powerful and different to build a bond that is loyal (Seveg, 2015). The external interpretation of a brand which includes its name, trademark logo, visual image and communication is regarded as a brand identity. Since the identity is encompassed by the relevant brand owner, it shows how the owner would *favour* the customer to perceive its brand, organization, products and services (Balmer, 2015).

The mission of the UKZN Graduate School of Business & Leadership is to provide business professionals with a strong and well-informed foundation in international business to further their careers. The School provides a program of rigorous academic coursework, support for intellectual contribution, and in-depth exposure to current multicultural business practices. Candidates come to master and apply the principles of management in the field of international business. The focus is on quality and institutional leadership in management education. In a rapidly evolving and highly competitive world, cross-cultural knowledge and international perspective are essential attributes for modern managers and today's business leaders (UKZN, 2015).

The UKZN GSB is one of the country's most innovative executive education communities. From MBA to doctoral degrees, GSB faculty, students, and alumni come together from the four corners of the globe to facilitate knowledge sharing, learning, and networking in ways that produce professional value and life-enhancing results. Based in Durban and PMB, with seminar programs hosted in leading emerging markets, the School's business experience and reputation for academic excellence empower individuals and enhance their ability to succeed in today’s multinational environment. The UKZN GSB is dedicated to redefining executive education by providing students with comprehensive and demanding executive education programs led by leading international professors and practitioners. Students are engaged in interactive learning that is characterized by small and intimate classes, flexibility, and choice (UKZN, 2016).

The school’s student body provides an invaluable lifetime resource of personal and professional relationships, contacts and knowledge across geographical boundaries and business sectors. Good strategic management is essential for long-term business success. Strategic management of a company or business unit involves defining a business strategy with clear objectives, creating clear plans as to how these objectives will be achieved, aligning business activities to support the objectives, and allocating the resources needed to achieve the objectives (Weber, 2015). Beyond improving business results, good strategic management also contributes to a company's social license to operate - an increasingly essential business aspect in today's ever-more informed multi-stakeholder environment. Consumers are now conscious and more concerned not only in a company's products, but also in the way it conducts its business from an ethical and environmental point of view. These elements should be included at the heart of strategic management to help ensure the long-term survival of the business (Paul, 2014).

ii)-Skills for effective strategic management

Strategic management requires numerous business and leadership skills. To start with, strategic management entails highly developed analytical skills (Thompson, 2015). Business front-runners involved in strategy development need a varied, interconnected view of their company - including the business environment in which it operates, global trends, the competitive landscape, customer needs and stakeholder expectations (Trout, 2014). Strategic management can only be successful if it originates with a clear and honest understanding of the internal and external factors that will determine the company's current and future success. Strategic management requires strategy skills to go from business analysis to business strategy, which is identifying opportunities from the business analysis, choosing which ones to monitor, and then developing a strategy that defines how the company will influence the chosen opportunities (Balmer, 2015). Finally, strategic management requires strong leadership skills for implementing the business strategy. Business leaders need to involve stakeholders both internally and externally, be aware of trials to strategy implementation, and have the individual leadership skills to overcome these (Zikmund, 2016).

The UKZN GSB's MBA content is a balance of academic knowledge and industry experience, hence the strategy for using a mixture of academics and industry practitioners to enrich students with the necessary tools and skills required to succeed in the business world. Students are drawn mostly from KZN, South Africa, and the greater Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. Students graduating from the program are equipped with skills to conquer the world. These are facilitated in the form of part-time and block-release options. The UKZN GSB's motto is to "educate managers and business leaders who make a difference in the world through educational programmes, ideas produced and disseminated by academic experts, and through industry partners'; and its mission is to educate managers and leaders to create value for society". The program is innovative, intellectually stimulating, and geared to produce a graduate who is socially engaged (Louw, 2014). Its vision is to be a prominent graduate school of business and leadership education in Africa with the following aims;

- Achieve success in learning and teaching
- Be involved in innovative and research that is socially relevant8
- Nurture national collaborations and partnerships
- Promote the GSB&L to be a choice of school for learners
- Be involved in community empowerment through entrepreneurship education

The UKZN GSB uses the above identity in order to be easily identified by its target market. The strategy is effective as the school is able to attract students from all over Africa and the world. Brand positioning is a marketing strategy that permits a brand to occupy a critical position in the mind of the consumer relative to competing brands (Siguaw, 2015). While the school has been rated number five in the Professional Management Review's rankings of SA business schools, in recent years it has been facing increasing competition from other high-profile institutions that have started offering executive courses and other events in KZN. The head of school believes that competition is worthy and that the GSB&L was gearing up and positioning itself for pre-eminence. The new school has seen the merger of three units including the old GSB together with the Centre of Entrepreneurship and the Centre of Leadership Studies (UKZN, 2015).

The GSB strives to produce leaders that will articulate the energy of *Ubuntu* in both business life and private life. The school is accredited by Council for Higher Education and is ranked amongst the top one thousand best business schools in the world, having achieved 3 Palmes in the ed Universal International rankings of business schools (UKZN, 2015). In combination of the two aims, the school is seemingly aligning itself with the sincerity phase in its bid to project its true nature of Africa. Looking at its status in relation to the dimension on the figure, it is somehow struggling to achieve this objective (UKZN, 2015). As the oldest business school in South Africa, and the first business school to be found on the external continental USA, the University of Pretoria's Graduate School of Management also appears to be struggling to create a brand identity for itself. Perhaps, this school hopes to put up a brand equity dimension such as excitement or sincerity but the messages however seem not strong and clear (Singh, 2015).

2.12 MARKET POSITIONING OF RSA BUSINESS SCHOOLS

Businesses utilise perceptual or positioning maps to help develop a market positioning strategy for their products or services. As the maps are based on the perception of the buyer, they are sometimes called perceptual maps (Hogan, 2014). Positioning maps show where existing products and services are positioned in the market so that the firm can decide where they would like to place their products. Organizations have two choices; they can either position their product in such a way that it fills a gap in the market or if they desire to compete against their competitors, they can position it where existing products have placed their product (Drummond, 2016).

i) Interpreting Positioning Maps

Positioning maps help companies penetrate the fog that shrouds the competitive landscape (Starkey, 2014). They can pinpoint the benefits that customers' value, locate unoccupied or less competitive spaces, identify opportunities created by changes in the relationship between the primary benefit and prices, and allow companies to anticipate rivals' strategies. When interpreted within the context of industry and customer knowledge, they help explain why some enterprises' products and brands perform better than others do (Hoffman, 2014).

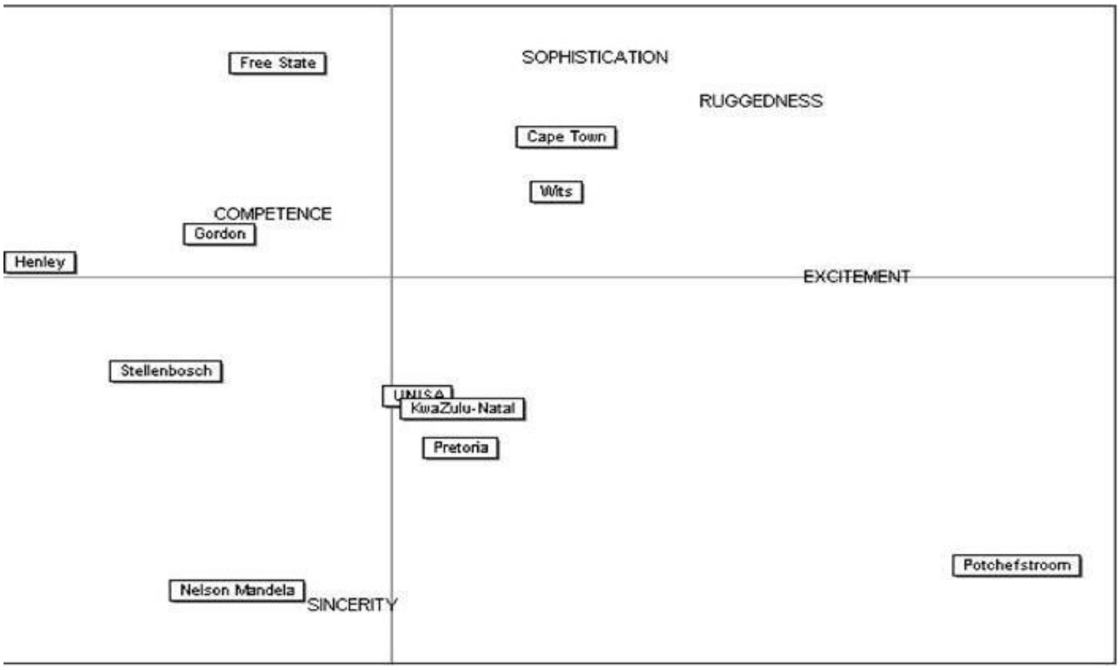


Figure 2.12.1: Correspondence Analysis Map of the 11 South African Business Schools in relation to the Five Brand-Personality Dimensions Source: Hoffman (2014: 29)

The above perceptual map generated by means of accurate correspondence analysis indicates that the business schools' websites of the GIBS and Nelson Mandela respectively convey the dimensions of competence and sincerity. They distinctly stand out amongst their competitors as being clearly and closely associated with matching selected personality dimensions. On the correspondence analysis map, it can be identified by the immediate proximity to the two dimensions (Aaker, 2014). Wits and UCT are two schools that are close to the dimension of ruggedness, even though UCT is noted to be communicating clearly on the dimension than Wits. As evident from the above positions UNISA, UKZN, Pretoria and Stellenbosch are promoting their brand personalities very weakly. UKZN is, however, seen to be moving close to sincerity while Pretoria and UNISA are leaning towards excitement in a weak format. Potchefstroom is failing to align itself to any of the dimensions and appears to not communicating its brand personality. Henley and Free State are communicating competence brand personality dimension in relative terms due to the fact that the latter message is stronger than the previous. A repeat glance at the content of the schools' websites accurately supports the analysis of correspondence plot by showing how a business school such as GIBS appear to innovatively focus on one aspect of the curriculum consistent with the dimensions primarily identified in the analysis, evaluating its MBA program as a highly classified world class business degree (Blackmur, 2015).

ii) **Brand awareness**

Brand awareness refers to the ability of customers to recognize and recall the brand on different changing conditions linking it to the brand name. It comprises brand recall and brand recognition (Leuthesser, 2014). It is there to assist the consumers to know which products or service category a certain brand belongs, and under which brand name the products and services are sold. It ensures that consumers understand that their needs are fulfilled by the brand through its product offerings (Kagan, 2015). Brand awareness is of significant importance as consumers will barely alter your brand if they are not efficiently made aware of it (Ghose, 2014).

The UKZN GSB is the best business school in KZN; according to the KZN Top Ten Business Brands (UKZN, 2015) which is a competition opened to every business with headquarters in KZN. An attribute of a good brand is in its ability to positively impact on people's lives through its services and products. The GSB forms one of very few organisations in KZN that have the ability and the capacity to touch and improve people's lives and has done so continuously over the years. As such, it comes as no surprise that the GSB has won a well-deserved KZN Top Ten Brands award. The school has worked extremely hard to create and develop brand awareness among its government and business stakeholders within the Province (Starkey, 2014). The GSB's branding has become more noticeable as Deputy Vice-Chancellor and former Head of the College of Law and Management Studies,
Professor John Mubangizi had allocated strategic funding to grow the GSB's visibility. Students are well aware of the MBA program that UKZN GSB offers but it needs to use platforms like television and radio to create aggressive awareness. When questioned about whether or not they are aware of the GSB and its programs

offered, some of the UKZN population are aware of the MBA program offered by the UKZN while other students from around campus have never heard of it (UKZN, 2016).

iii) Brand communication strategy

Successful modern marketing campaigns are dependent on a wide holistic approach. The art of persuasion is marketing; communications is therefore the art of valuable information (Jo, 2015). Working towards perfecting one's approach to both these is crucial to achieving targeted audience. The GSB & L creates a favourable academic environment that enriches, empowers and nurtures its students to address possible business challenges and opportunities. It strives to achieve this through group and individual work, discussing raw business case studies, educational seminars, and lectures, relevant breakfast talks by business practitioners, and debates on current issues (UKZN, 2015). To reach business goals, a business must start with a necessary strategy. In the context of communication and marketing, this includes assessing your overall vision, tactics and objectives that will be deployed when necessary (Louw, 2015). There are numerous mass tactics that assist the UKZN GSB build source leads and brand awareness, such as advertising, Search marketing Engine and Optimization, development and web design. The lead cultivation or relationship brand communications strategies help connect with the audience, such as social media, events, and newsletters (Byrne, 2015).

Each tactic requires a detailed plan, creative production development and execution; therefore the more effort put into the process the better (Pfeffer, 2015). These allow all South Africans to be aware of the MBA program offered by the UKZN GSB. The school does perhaps require more form of billboard advertising to communicate its brand all over the country. When internationals and local travellers land at domestic airports, brands need to be accessible and clearly visible in order to grow and compete against other local business schools which utilize similar strategies. Business schools need to have a corporate-centric approach when designing strategic communication courses to cater the needs of industry. The schools need to reflect on connecting with their target market; in order to develop a relevant marketing plan. Collaboration among multiple academic departments allows interested universities to navigate through the approval process (Zikmund, 2016).

2.13 SUMMARY

The UKZN GSB has the ability to utilise its brand management strategies and strategic planning as a tool to maintaining its competitive advantage within UKZN student population. It recognises that from a business level, its most valuable assets are its academic force or human capital. It is recognised further that there is a tremendous scarcity of skilled and competent MBA graduates entering the job market due to the lack of proper training from schools; as a result of weak curriculums and not so robust lecture sessions. This is of more significance in the Westville area.

The current environment demands increasing accountability from business schools especially those schools seeking AACSB accreditation (Peladeau, 2014). The proposed framework centred on the BSC approach offers an alternative for developing and implementing a strategic performance management system in a business school. The implementation of a strategy based on the mission statement requires communication and active participation by not only the business school's faculty but the faculty and administrators across the campus. This would lead to consistent messages and sets of priorities throughout each academic school or division (Hedin, 2015). Through continuous improvement, each faculty member will gain a thorough understanding and appreciation for the strategy, implementation of planning, and results achieved. A successful BSC can provide feedback to the administration and faculty that can lead to a long-term process that will foster individual and collective growth resulting in improved organizational performance (Bennis, 2014).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The skill of selecting the precise methodology when conducting a study is not at all times easily achieved. A researcher has to take into reflection the different variables and consider the pros and cons of the various alternatives. Further, the perspective of the study can present certain trials and difficulties which need to be overcome for the methodology to be reliable.

This chapter will provide an overview of the methodology that was implemented in conducting the survey. Firstly, the chapter will provide an overview of the research design and data collection strategy adopted. Thereafter, information will be provided on the study scenery whereby the location and participants of the study will be defined. The sample size and population will then be discussed where after, a discussion on the survey instrument will be presented. The researcher will then provide facts on the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. The chapter will subsequently conclude by addressing the concerns of the questionnaire administration and data analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the research:

2) **Objective one**: To evaluate the effectiveness of UKZN GSB brand identity strategies for the MBA programme.
3) **Objective two**: To assess the UKZN GSB brand awareness level of its MBA programme amongst the UKZN student population.
4) **Objective three**: To evaluate the UKZN GSB brand communication strategy and its effect within SA’s student population.

3.3 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research is generally made using scientific methods, which can include:

- The generation of models, theories and hypotheses
- The development of instruments and methods for measurement

- Experimental control and manipulation of variables
- Collection of empirical data
- Modelling and analysis of data

Quantitative research is often contrasted with qualitative research which is the examination, analysis and interpretation of observations for the purpose of determining underlying meanings and patterns of relationships, including classifications of entities in a manner that does not involve mathematical models (Hofmeyer, 2014). Approaches to quantitative psychology were first demonstrated on quantitative approaches in the physical sciences by Gustav Fechner in his work on psychophysics, which built on the work of Ernst Heinrich Weber.

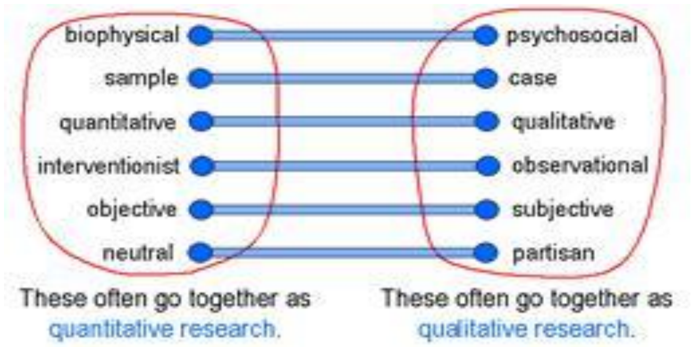


Figure 3.3.1: Quantitative vs. Qualitative research

Source: Roberts (2016: 12)

Although a distinction is commonly drawn between qualitative and quantitative aspects of scientific investigation, it has been argued that the two go hand in hand (Roberts, 2016). For example, based on analysis of the history of science, Johnson (2015: 22) concludes that “large amounts of qualitative work have usually been prerequisite to fruitful quantification in the physical sciences”. Qualitative research is often used to gain a general sense of phenomena and to form theories that can be tested using further quantitative research (Kiriakidou, 2015). For instance, in the social sciences qualitative research methods are often used to gain better understanding of such things as intentionality (from the speech response of the researchee) and meaning (why did this person/group say something and what did it mean to them?).

Lohr (2014)'- s views regarding the role of measurement in quantitative research are somewhat divergent. Measurement is often regarded as being only a means by which observations are expressed numerically in order to investigate causal relations or associations. However, it has been argued that measurement often plays a more important role in quantitative research. For example, Johnson (2015) argues that within quantitative research, the results that are shown can prove to be strange. This is because accepting a theory based on results of quantitative data could prove to be a natural phenomenon. He argues that such abnormalities are interesting when done during the process of obtaining data as seen below:

"When measurement departs from theory, it is likely to yield mere numbers, and their very neutrality makes them particularly sterile as a source of remedial suggestions. But numbers register the departure from theory with an authority and finesse that no qualitative technique can duplicate, and that departure is often enough to start a search" (Johnson, 2015: 180).

3.4 CHOICE OF METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research methodology was used for this study. A survey was administered to a selected sample from a specific population identified by the researcher. The term 'survey' is commonly applied to a research methodology designed to collect data from a specific population, or a sample from that population, and typically utilizes a questionnaire or an interview as the survey instrument (Strauss, 2015).

Surveys are used to obtain data from individuals about themselves, their preferences, or about other institutions. Sample surveys are an important tool for collecting and analysing information from selected individuals. They are widely accepted as a key tool for conducting and applying basic social science research methodology (Couper et al, 2014). South African society is familiar with the use of surveys to assess issues or project trends: marketing researchers use surveys to study consumer preference and patterns (Thompson, 2015).

According to Thompson (2015), there are distinct advantages in using a questionnaire vs. an interview methodology: questionnaires are less expensive and easier to administer than personal interviews; they lend themselves to group administration; and, they allow confidentiality to be assured. Strauss (2015) indicates that mailed surveys are extremely efficient at providing information in a relatively brief time period at low cost to the researcher. For these reasons, the researcher chose a descriptive research methodology and designed a questionnaire survey instrument to assess the perceptions of selected MBA students regarding the quality, condition, perceptions, and improvement of the UKZN MBA programme and its facilities throughout South Africa.

The research design is of a quantitative and descriptive nature. Zikmund (2016) explains that the major purpose of descriptive research is to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon. In this study, the researcher tried to establish the brand management strategies that have an effect on business school students, specifically UKZN GSB students. Zikmund (2016) also states that descriptive studies are conducted when there is some previous understanding of the research problem. Descriptive studies seek to determine answers to who, what, where, how, and when questions (Roberts, 2016). The aim of this study was to answer the following questions:

- What are the brand management strategies that had the most effect or influence on student decision or perceptions to selecting a business school?
- How do the factors that influence these students differ for different demographics (age, gender, and ethnicity)?

Therefore a quantitative, descriptive research design was perfectly suitable for this study.

3.5 DIMENSIONS IN RESEARCH

Research quality is currently an area attracting a lot of interest. Previous studies have looked at research quality mainly from two perspectives: as a measure of research productivity and performance (for example, citation analysis) and as a guide for research quality development (for example, reviewers' comments analysis).

The dimensions of research are as follows:

- **Nature of the topic**. A research project begins with identification of a specific topic, problem or question. The nature of the topics forms a dimension that extends from purely physical at one end through biological, behavioral, psychological to social topics at the other end.
- **Scope of enquiry**: single case vs. sample of a population.
- **Mode of enquiry**: observational vs. interventionist.
- **Methods**: quantitative vs. qualitative.
- **Ideological stance**: objective vs. subjective.
- **Political stance**: neutral vs. partisan.

These six dimensions define a kind of multidimensional space in which a given research project or part of a project is represented by a single point. Some regions of this research space are popular, some are unusual but potentially rewarding, and some are inhospitable (Jack, 2016).

3.6 THE USE OF RESEARCH

i) <u>Basic Research</u>

Basic research advances fundamental knowledge about the social world. It attempts to address the fundamental questions surrounding a discipline. Occasionally, researchers make significant findings that have great impact on the direction, or development, of existing schools of thought. Basic research is often criticized as wasteful and useless despite the fact that it is the source of most new scientific ideas and ways of thinking about the world (Arpan, 2015).

ii) <u>Applied Research</u>

In contrast to basic research, applied researchers argue that funding should only be spent on scientific projects that aim to solve a specific policy, social or environmental issue. Applied researchers are numerous in type and number.

iii) <u>Type of Applied Research</u>

- Action Research

Is applied research that treats knowledge as a form of power and attempts to abolish the line between research and social action? In other words, the goals of the researcher are often motivated based upon an unequal distribution of social, political, and financial power. For example, research focuses on power with a goal of empowerment; research seeks to raise consciousness or increase awareness; and research is tied directly to political action (Bickerstaff, 2015).

3.7 RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to Binder and Roberts (2015: 5), “a paradigm is a broad view or perspective of something”. Additionally, Carmines and Zeller (2014: 460) definition of paradigm reveals how research could be affected and guided by a certain paradigm by stating that, “paradigms are patterns of beliefs and practices that regulate inquiry within a discipline by providing lenses, frames and processes through which investigation is accomplished”. Therefore, to clarify the researcher’s structure of inquiry and methodological choices, an exploration of the paradigm adopted for this study will be discussed prior to any discussion about the specific methodologies utilized in the study. This study utilised a non-triangular approach to explore the management strategies used by most successful Business Schools in South Africa as compared to the UKZN GSB. The use of quantitative methodology was necessary to encompass the different aspects of these strategies and their success. A research paradigm is a set of beliefs and methods that a community of researchers uses to engage with the world (Sheth, 2015). Their four paradigms, with brief descriptions adapted from their manuscript, are as follows;

- **Positivist**: The researcher discovers knowledge by observation and experiment. The aim is to explain, predict or control events.
- **Poststructuralist**: The researcher views people as subjects of discourses (interrelated systems of unstable social meanings), which serve mainly the interests of a dominant group. Social change is the goal, but there is no clear path to it.
- **Interpretive**: Part of the truth of a situation can be found in the self-understandings of participants, which the researcher interprets. Truth is discovered more by thought than by observation.

- **Radical**: The focus is the experiences and views of people from marginal and disempowered social groups. The researcher's role is to raise understanding of oppression and to facilitate collective action against it.

According to Carmines and Zeller (2014), the paradigms most commonly utilised in Business schools research are positivist, post positivist, interpretive, and critical social theory. The quantitative methodology shares its philosophical foundation with the positivist paradigm. The positivist paradigm arose from the philosophy identified as logical positivism and is based on rigid rules of logic and measurement, truth, absolute principles and prediction (Kirk and Miller, 2014). The positivist philosophy argues that there is one objective reality. Therefore, as a consequence, valid research is demonstrated only by the degree of proof that can be corresponded to the phenomena that study results stand for (Strauss and Corbin, 2015). Researchers seem to use the words quantitative and qualitative to refer to paradigms, but Greasley (2014) believes these words should be used to describe methods available to researchers of any persuasion.

Table 3.7.1: Summary of the Research Paradigms

Characteristic	**Positivist View**	**Interpretive View**
Purpose	The researcher will predict and explain changes in management strategies of Business school colleges	The researcher will interview students and recognise the value and depth of the individual content
Beliefs	One truth exists Must be objective	Many truths and realities Different people have different perceptions, needs and experiences
Research Methods	Quantitative	Qualitative
What study data is based upon	Measurable outcomes from questionnaire data	Descriptive, explanatory and contextual words of interview data
Study Sample	Clear and precise inclusion and exclusion data	Representatives who are able to provide expertise from different points of view.

Due to the nature of the research study, there was a single paradigm that could satisfactorily deal with the required methodological aspect. Therefore, the researcher found it necessary to use the quantitative/positivist paradigm. The use of the paradigm provided the researcher with the ability to statistically analyse the scientific data whilst also recognizing the complex psychosocial and emotional factors that influence student choice issues. The discussion that follows will further elaborate and describe in detail the paradigm and methodological approach that was implemented in this study.

3.8 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

In order to support the research propositions stated in Chapter 1, the unit of analysis for this study was a current second year MBA student studying at the UKZN GSB, Westville Campus.

The total population for this study based on the above criteria was 203 students. However, this total population refers to the total number of students throughout the country for the UKZN GSB within which the study was conducted.

3.9 SAMPLING METHOD AND SIZE

Sampling refers to the statistical process of selecting and studying the characteristics of a relatively small number of items from a relatively large population of such items to draw statistically valid inferences about the characteristics about the entire population (Weber, 2015).

There are two broad methods of sampling used by researchers. These are non-random or judgmental sampling; and random or probability sampling. In judgemental sampling the researcher selects items to be drawn from the population based on his or her judgement about how well these items represent the whole population. The sample is thus based on someone’s knowledge about the population and the characteristics of individual items within it (Leuthesser, 2014). The chance of an item being included in the sample is influenced by the characteristic of the item as judged by an expert selecting the item. A judgement sampling system is simple and less expensive to use. Also when there is very little known about the population under study a pilot study based on judgement sample is carried out to permit design of a more rigorous sampling system for a detailed study (Neuman, 2015).

Gay (2015) reports that random sampling is the best single way to obtain a representative sample. No technique, not even random sampling guarantees a representative sample, but the probability is higher for this procedure than for any other. Gay (2015) also agrees that stratified random sampling is an appropriate methodology in order to make proportionate, and therefore meaningful, comparisons between sub-groups in the population. Suhr (2015) states that the sampling theory supports stratified random sampling as an efficient choice because the means of the stratified samples are likely to be closer to the mean of the population overall. Finally, Johnson (2015) indicates that a stratified random sample will typically reflect the characteristics of the population as a whole.

In random sampling, individual judgement plays no part in selection of sample. Each item in the sample stands an equal chance of being included in the sample. In case of random sampling, the researcher is required to use specific statistical processes to ensure this equal probability of every item in the population. A random sampling system enables more reliable results of statistical analysis with measurable margins of errors and degree of confidence (Krishnamurthy, 2015). To improve the cost effectiveness of data collection and analysis, several variations of the random sampling are used by researchers. Some of the most common types of random sampling methods are (1) simple random sampling, (2) systematic sampling, (3) stratified sampling, and (4) cluster sampling.

- Simple random sampling ensures that each possible sample has an equal probability of being selected, and each item in the entire population has an equal chance of being included in the sample.
- In systematic sampling the items are selected from the population at a uniform interval defined in terms of time, order or space. For example, an observation may be made every half an hour, or from a long queue of people every fourth person may be selected, or in a bunch of documents every tenth document may be selected.
- In stratified sample the entire population is divided in relatively homogeneous group. For example, all the students of a school may be divided in groups of boy and girls. Once this is done random sample from each of such groups is drawn independently. This approach is suitable when there are identifiable

sub-groups exist within the population that differ significantly in respect of characteristic under study (Fowler, 2014).

- In cluster sampling the population is divided into groups or clusters. For example, a city may be divided in a cluster of small localities, and a sample of these localities may be drawn using random sampling methods. All the households within each of the locality may be studied for the research. A research based on a well-designed cluster sampling can often give better result than a research based on simple random sample with same time and cost of research (Bennis, 2014).

A non-probability sampling technique was used in this study. Zikmund (2016) describes a non-probability sampling technique as a sampling technique in which units of a sample are selected on the basis of personal judgement or convenience. For the purpose of this study, convenience sampling was used to obtain those units or people most conveniently available. The benefits of using this sampling procedure were that a larger number of completed questionnaires were obtained quickly and economically. Fowler (2014) also suggests using the convenience sampling method because the people who are willing to complete the survey are also available when you need them.

The sampling procedure that was used also had some disadvantages. The variability and bias of estimates cannot be measured or controlled and projecting data beyond the sample is inappropriate (Roberts, 2016). However, the sampling technique was still adopted because of ease of access, increased sample size, and a higher response rate. In terms of the sample size and survey distribution, the questionnaire was personally hand delivered by the researcher to 200 students of the total population. The 200 students to which the survey was hand delivered were chosen based on geographic location, ease of access into the institution, availability of participants on the day the survey was delivered and willingness to participate. Surveys were also distributed and returned by email to certain students. A cross-sectional survey design was used for data gathering which is described by Fowler (2014) as a snapshot of a group of people. The study will use a Quantitative research approach to collect and analyse data. The study will target a total population of 2^{nd} year MBA students only. UKZN GSB has Part time MBA students, as well as Block-release MBA students. The breakdown of the population and sample size is reported in Table 3.8.1 as follows:

Table 3.9.1 Target population and a sample of students

Population type	Population	Sample
Block 2nd year MBA students	105	85
Part-time 2nd year MBA students	98	85
Total	203	170

3.10 QUESTIONNAIRES

i) Surveys

Surveys are a very popular form of data collection, especially when gathering information from large groups, where standardization is important. Surveys can be constructed in many ways, but they always consist of two components: questions and responses (Roberts, 2016). While sometimes evaluators choose to keep responses “open ended,” that is, allow respondents to answer in a free flowing narrative form; most often the “close-ended” approach in which respondents are asked to select from a range of predetermined answers is adopted. Open-ended responses may be difficult to code and require more time and resources to handle than close-ended choices (Leeuw, 2015). Responses may take the form of a rating on some scale (for example, rate a given statement from 1 to 4 on a scale from “agree” to “disagree”), may give categories from which to choose (for example, select from potential categories of partner institutions with which a program could be involved), or may require estimates of numbers or percentages of time in which participants might engage in an activity (for example, the percentage of time spent on teacher-led instruction or cooperative learning).

Although surveys are popularly referred to as paper-and-pencil instruments, this too is changing. Evaluators are increasingly exploring the utility of survey methods that take advantage of the emerging technologies. Thus, surveys may be administered via computer-assisted calling, as e-mail attachments, and as web-based online data collection systems (Krippendorf, 2014). Even the traditional approach of mailing surveys for self-guided response has been supplemented by using facsimile for delivery and return. Selecting the best method for collecting surveys requires weighing a number of factors. These included among others, the complexity of questions, resources available, and the project schedule. For example, web-based surveys are attractive for a number of reasons. First, because the data collected can be put directly into a database, the time and steps between data collection and analysis can be shortened. Second, it is possible to build in checks that keep out-of-range responses from being entered. However, at this time, unless the survey is fairly simple (no skip patterns, limited use of matrices), the technology needed to develop such surveys can require a significant resource investment. As new tools are developed for commercial use, this problem should reduce (O'Brien, 2015).

Surveys are typically selected when information is to be collected from a large number of people or when answers are needed to a clearly defined set of questions. Surveys are good tools for obtaining information on a wide range of topics when in-depth probing of responses is not necessary, and they are useful for both formative and summative purposes (Hair, 2015). Frequently, the same survey is used at spaced intervals of time to measure progress along some dimension or change in behaviour. Exhibit 3.9.1 shows the advantages and disadvantages of surveys.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Good for gathering descriptive data	1. Self-report may lead to biased reporting
2. Can cover a wide range of topics	2. Data may provide a general picture but lack depth
3. Are relatively inexpensive to use	3. May not provide adequate information on context
4. Can be analysed using a variety of existing software	

Exhibit 3.10.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of surveys.

3.11 DATA INSTRUMENT

A detailed questionnaire was developed for this study. The basis of the questionnaire was the factors and variables that were highlighted in the literature review. The survey addressed two purposes. The first purpose was to examine the perceptions of selected MBA students regarding the quality of the program offered in other Business schools as compared to UKZN GSB, and the second purpose was to examine how the management strategies utilised by these schools have an impact on student choice. The survey instrument was divided into three sections. The survey items in this study were developed as a result of an analysis of previous studies, discussions with professionals in the field, and a review of the literature. The questionnaire items are located in Appendix 1.

No previously tested questionnaire was available for this research study. Therefore, the researcher was required to develop and validate the pre and post-test questionnaires before their use. The questionnaires were to be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation activities. The research instruments were constructed after a thorough review of the available published literature, and reflection upon the researcher's knowledge and academic experience.

The questionnaire comprised of two parts, A & B (Refer to appendix 1):

The first part (Part- A) positioned the research to the respondents and included instructions for completing the questionnaire. It also included a statement that participation is voluntary and that participants can withdraw at any time without penalty. All data has been kept confidential and the identity of each participant was not required or captured. Demographic Information measured the respondent's perception about these issues according to the variables specified; that is, gender, ethnicity, age, education level and present job position. The demographic data that was collected was coded using the method recommended by Greasley (2014). The coding of data was necessary for the statistical analysis that was conducted. The codes were also recorded on the questionnaire for record purposes.

The second part (Part-B) comprised a series of questions that are generally used to measure student satisfaction. Each statement was measured using a Likert scale (Agree to strongly disagree) and a Dichotomous scale (Yes / No) type of questions.

Reliability and validity are important aspects of questionnaire design. According to Singh (2015), a perfectly reliable questionnaire elicits consistent responses. Although it is difficult to develop, it is reasonable to design a questionnaire that approaches a consistent level of response.

Charles (2015) indicates that a high reliability of response is obtainable by providing all respondents with the exact same set of questions. Validity is inherently more difficult to establish within a single statistical measure. If a questionnaire is perfectly valid, it must measure in such a way that inferences drawn from the questionnaire are entirely accurate (Theaker, 2014).

The survey questionnaire was pre-tested to verify any ambiguity within the instrument. This was done by administering the survey to a subset within the main sample. A subset of ten participants was chosen based on their physical location relative to that of the researcher's location. Participants of the pre-test are located within the same organisation as that of the researcher. During the pre-test, the duration that respondents took to complete the questionnaire was recorded in order to ensure that the questionnaire was not too time consuming. The results of the pre-test of the questionnaire were reviewed to ensure that there was no ambiguity in the questions. Participants of the pre-test were also interviewed to verify any ambiguity within the questions and confirm ease of completion.

3.12 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

i) Value of the Data

Quantitative and qualitative techniques provide a trade-off between breadth and depth, and between generalizability and targeting to specific (sometimes very limited) populations (Louw, 2014). For example, a quantitative data collection methodology such as a sample survey of high school students who participated in a special science enrichment program can yield representative and broadly generalizable information about the proportion of participants who plan to major in science when they get to college and how this proportion differs by gender. But at best, the survey can elicit only a few, often superficial reasons for this gender difference. On the other hand, separate focus groups (a qualitative technique related to a group interview) conducted with small groups of men and women students will provide many more clues about gender differences in the choice of science majors, and the extent to which the special science program changed or reinforced attitudes. The focus group technique is, however, limited in the extent to which findings apply beyond the specific individuals included in the groups. There are many different types of data collection methods that can be used in any evaluation (Patton, 2015).

Each has its advantages and disadvantages and must be chosen in light of the particular questions, timeframe, and resources that characterize the evaluation task. While some evaluators have strong preferences for quantitative or qualitative techniques, today the prevailing wisdom is that no one's approach is always best, and a carefully selected mixture is likely to provide the most useful information (Mashhadi, 2014). Data collected through quantitative methods are often believed to yield more objective and accurate information because they were collected using standardized methods, can be replicated, and, unlike qualitative data, can be analysed using sophisticated statistical techniques (Aaker, 2014). In line with these arguments, traditional wisdom has held that qualitative methods are most suitable for formative evaluations, whereas summative evaluations require hard (quantitative) measures to judge the ultimate value of the project (Greenacre, 2015). This distinction is too simplistic. Both approaches may or may not satisfy the canons of scientific rigor. Quantitative researchers are becoming increasingly aware that some of their data may not be accurate and valid because the survey respondents may not understand the meaning of questions to which they respond, and because people's recall of events is often faulty. On the other hand, qualitative researchers have developed better techniques for classifying and analysing large bodies of descriptive data (Hultman, 2015). It is also increasingly recognized that all data collection—quantitative and qualitative—operates within a cultural context and is affected, to some extent, by the perceptions and beliefs of investigators and data collectors (Johnson, 2015).

Data was gathered by using a self-administered questionnaire which was personally distributed by the researcher through the drop-off method and the email survey method. The reason for using the drop-off method was that most of the respondents within the study population and geography of the study are based at the UKZN GSB, and hence obtaining a large number of completed questionnaires would be fairly easy and quick. However, the drop-off method of data gathering did not provide the anticipated number of completed questionnaires and so the email survey method was then utilised. Participants were not directly chosen when the email survey method was chosen. The surveys were emailed by the researcher to the UKZN GSB and the school was requested to forward the survey to all students within the defined population. All incomplete surveys were discarded from the analysis. Frequency tables and descriptive statistics were constructed to display results with respect to each of the three research questions. The questionnaire that was utilised for this study consisted of several questions which were used to discover the key factors that are most important to students in influencing their business school of choice. It identifies unmet needs based on interviews with students, and proposes curricula innovations that address these needs.

3.13 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

A questionnaire is a set of questions designed to gather information from a respondent. It is the interface between the respondent and the researcher, and therefore plays a central role in the data collection process. A questionnaire may be interviewer-administered or respondent-completed, using different methods of data collection. The questionnaire design is as important as the questions contained in it; sound questionnaire design principles go a long way in reducing confusion and bias. Dillman and Christian (2015) listed the following fundamental principles for good questionnaire design:

- Wording of questionnaires
- Categorization, scaling and coding of variables after receipt of responses.
- General appearance of the questionnaire.

Questionnaires play a central role in the data collection process and influence the image of a statistical agency. They have a major impact on respondent behaviour, interviewer performance, collection cost and respondent relations and therefore on data quality (America, 2015). A well-designed questionnaire should collect data that correspond to the survey's Statement of Objectives while taking into account the statistical requirements of data users, administrative and data processing requirements as well as the nature and characteristics of the respondent population. Good questionnaires impose low response burden and remain both respondent and interviewer-friendly (Fournier, 2015). The question design and wording must encourage respondents to complete the questionnaire as accurately as possible. To this end, the questionnaire must focus on the topic of the survey, be as brief as possible, flow smoothly from one question to the next and facilitate respondents' recall (Lebart, 2014). Moreover, well-designed questionnaires should facilitate the coding and capture of data. It should minimize the amount of edit and imputation that is required, and lead to an overall reduction in the cost and time associated with data collection and processing (Hogan, 2014).

3.14 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Data analysis is the process of developing answers to questions through the examination and interpretation of data (Converse, 2015). The purpose of the data analysis and interpretation phase is to transform the data collected into credible evidence about the development of the intervention and its performance (Yucelt, 2014). The basic steps in the analytic process consist of identifying issues, determining the availability of suitable data, deciding on which methods are appropriate for answering the questions of interest, applying the methods and evaluating, summarizing and communicating the results (Lincoln, 2016).

Analytical results underscore the usefulness of data sources by shedding light on relevant issues. Data analysis also plays a key role in data quality assessment by pointing to data quality problems in a given survey. Analysis can thus influence future improvements to the survey process (Kagan, 2015). Data analysis is essential for understanding results from surveys, administrative sources and pilot studies; for providing information on data gaps; for designing and redesigning surveys; for planning new statistical activities; and for formulating quality objectives (Roberts, 2016). The main results will draw on the description of independent and dependent variables of the study. Since the sample size was less than 175 respondents, the researcher will mainly use raw frequencies to describe the biographic section of the sample. The N- value cannot exceed the total number of respondents. Frequency distribution tables help the researcher to be able to see the spread of the sample or to describe the sample. In other words, the researcher becomes familiar with the demographic variables through the use of frequency distribution tables.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 11.0 was used by the researcher to analyse data. Univariate analysis was also used in the description of the sample in terms of demographic characteristics as well as instrument scores. The data analysis consisted of examining the surveys for accuracy and completeness; coding, keying data into a database and performing an analysis of descriptive responses according to frequency distributions and descriptive statistics.

3.15 MEASUREMENT

Measurement refers to the assessment, estimation, observation, evaluation, appraisal or judgment of an event (Converse, 2015). Measurement in research; also considered a dependent variable is the process of assigning numerals to objects to represent quantities of characteristics according to certain rules. Those involved in conducting a study must choose the most appropriate measurement scale (Inman, 2014).

A study should contain one or more scales of measurement that meet the logical requirements of measurement. The least powerful measurement scale is the nominal scale which consists of descriptive variables in no particular order. By contrast, ordinal scales have all of the requirements of nominal scales but also have the property of order (Okazaki, 2015). Nominal and ordinal scales are usually subject to the less powerful statistical tests such as the chi -square or the Mann-Whitney U tests. Interval and ratio scales are much more influential than nominal and ordinal scales because the variables provide more information about the phenomenon of interest. Parametric tests such as the t-test or ANOVA can be used for interval and ratio scales (Ghose, 2014). A researcher administers a questionnaire survey to respondents but receives numbers as a response to the research questions. The numbers are analysed using quantitative and statistical techniques; and interpreted against literature to arrive at research findings. Measurement is the assigning of numbers to objects being measured. Numbers allow the researcher to perform statistical analysis of the data, to test hypotheses and to effectively communicate results. A Likert scale was used to assign a number to give indication on how respondents express their opinions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the objectives of the study. The Likert scale used a 5 point scale to examine the respondent’s feelings, beliefs and attitudes towards research questions.

3.16 RELIABILITY

Research requires dependable measurement. Measurements are reliable to the extent that they are repeatable and that any random influence which tends to make measurements different from occasion to occasion or circumstance to circumstance is a source of measurement error (Balmer, 2015). Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. Errors of measurement that affect reliability are random errors and errors of measurement that affect validity are systematic or constant errors. Test-retest, equivalent forms and split-half reliability are all determined through correlation (Neuman, 2015).

Kirk and Miller (2014) identify three types of reliability referred to in quantitative research, which relate to: (1) the degree to which a measurement, given repeatedly, remains the same (2) the stability of a measurement over time; and (3) the similarity of measurements within a given time period. A high degree of stability indicates a high degree of reliability, which means the results are repeatable. Joppe (2016) detects a problem with the test-retest method which can make the instrument, to a certain degree, unreliable. She explains that test-retest method may sensitize the respondent to the subject matter, and hence influence the responses given. We cannot be sure that there was no change in extraneous influences such as an attitude change that has occurred. This could lead to a difference in the responses provided. Similarly, Crocker and Algina (2015) noted that when a respondent answer a set of test items, the score obtained represents only a limited sample of behaviour. As a result, the scores may change due to some characteristic of the respondent, which may lead to errors of measurement. These kinds of errors will reduce the accuracy and consistency of the instrument and the test scores. Hence, it is the researchers' responsibility to assure high consistency and accuracy of the tests and scores. Thus, Crocker and Algina (2015:106) say, "Test developers have a responsibility of demonstrating the reliability of scores from their tests".

Although the researcher may be able to prove the research instrument repeatability and internal consistency, and, therefore reliability, the instrument itself may not be valid. In quantitative research, the measurement procedure consists of variables; whether a single variable or a number of variables that may make up a construct. When we think about the reliability of these variables, we want to know how stable or constant they are. This assumption, that the variable you are measuring is stable or constant, is central to the concept of reliability (Sheth, 2015). In principal, a measurement procedure that is stable or constant should produce the same or nearly the same results if the same individuals and conditions are used. According to Wiese (2014), reliability is the consistency of the measuring instrument. A reliable test is one that yields the same measure or comparable result every time. One importance about reliability is that it is not measured but estimated either by doing retest or internal consistency. Test/retest is done by administering a measurement instrument at two different occasions measuring the similar concept, assuming that there was no change in the base conditions. So what do we mean when we say that a measurement procedure is constant or stable? The table below shows the scores of the three strategies obtained using the Cronbach Alpha.

Table: 3.16.1: Cumulative % and Cronbach Alpha scores for each of the three strategies.

	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Cumulative %	24.73	31.44	37.07
Cronbach Alpha	0.873	0.846	0.846

Reliability of this research was determined using Cronbach's alpha, due to the following reasons:

- Research questions in a questionnaire are grouped in a set of five questions per objective (making it easier to measure reliability as questions measure the same theme).
- The questions had a Likert-scale as recommended by Greasley (2014).
- Most reliable measure of internal consistency for social sciences or business research (Charles, 2015).

3.17 VALIDITY

The traditional criteria for validity finds its roots in a positivist tradition and to an extent, positivism has been defined by a systematic theory of validity. Within the positivist terminology, validity resided amongst and was the result and culmination of other empirical conceptions such as universal laws, evidence, objectivity, truth, actuality, deduction, reason, fact and mathematical data (Winter, 2014). Joppe (2016) provides the following explanation of what validity is in quantitative research.

Validity determines whether the research actually measures that which it was intended to measure or how straightforward the research results are. In other words, does the research instrument allow you to hit "the bull’s eye" of your research object? Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others. Pfefferr and Fong (2014) describe the validity in quantitative research as “construct validity”. The construct is the initial concept, notion, question or hypothesis that determines which data is to be gathered and how it is to be gathered. They also assert that quantitative researchers actively cause or affect the interplay between construct and data in order to validate their investigation, usually by the application of a test or other process. In this sense, the involvement of the researchers in the research process would greatly reduce the validity of a test.

In so far as the definitions of reliability and validity in quantitative research reveal two strands: Firstly, with regards to reliability, whether the result is replicable. Secondly, with regards to validity, whether the means of measurement are accurate and whether they are actually measuring what they are intended to measure. However, the concepts of reliability and validity are viewed differently by qualitative researchers who strongly consider these concepts defined in quantitative terms as inadequate (Bennis, 2014). In other words, these terms as defined in quantitative rapports may not apply to the qualitative research paradigm. The question of explicability in the results does not concern it (Jacki, 2016), but precision (Winter, 2014), credibility, and transferability (Hoepfl, 2015) provide the lenses of evaluating the findings of a qualitative research. In this context, the two research approaches or perspectives are essentially different paradigms (Thompson, 2015). There are several methods to measure the validity of the data. These include content validation, criterion validity and construct validity; hence validation for this survey was done by construct validity to which a research instrument measured the intended construct; the UKZN GSB.

3.18 PILOT TESTING

i) Testing and evaluation

To test the feasibility, equipment and methods, researchers often use a pilot study, a small-scale rehearsal of the larger research design. Generally, the pilot study technique specifically refers to a smaller scale version of the experiment, although equipment tests are an increasingly important part of this sub-group of experiments (Aaker, 2014).

Pilot experiments are frequently carried out before large-scale quantitative research, in an attempt to avoid time and money being wasted on an inadequately designed project. A pilot study is usually carried out on members of the relevant population, but not on those who will form part of the final sample. This is because it may influence the later behaviour of research subjects if they have already been involved in the research.

A pilot experiment is often used to test the design of the full-scale experiment which then can be adjusted. Pilot studies, therefore, may not be appropriate for case studies. It is a potentially valuable insight and should anything be missing in the pilot study it can be added to the full-scale (and more expensive) experiment to improve the chances of a clear outcome (Starkey, 2014). Choose among a wide range of methods to test and evaluate the questionnaire. This could include qualitative tests such as focus groups or cognitive tests, pre-tests or pilot tests. The suitability and intensity of their use depend on various factors and circumstances. These include the type and size of the survey, the survey's content, utilization of previous survey questions or standard questions, whether it is an on-going collection or not, the method of data collection, the project schedule, the budget, and the availability of resources. Multiple reviews may be necessary and this will impact the cost and project schedule (Abratt, 2015). The pilot testing for this study was conducted by administering questionnaires to 60 MBA students of the targeted population. The respondents of the pilot questionnaire were second year part time and block release students conducted as follows:

Table 3.18.1 Pilot Participation Statistics

Number of individuals invited to Participate in the Survey	60
Number of Participants that viewed the questionnaire	52
Number of Participants that started the questionnaire	48
Number of Participants that completed that questionnaire	45
Participation Rate	75%
Drop outs (after beginning)	3
Validation Errors	1
Average time to complete questionnaire	10 minutes

3.19 RESEARCH METHOD LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings from your research. They are the constraints on generalizability, applications to practice, and/or utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which you initially chose to design the study and/or the method used to establish internal and external validity.

Whether you are relying on pre-existing data or you are conducting a qualitative research study and gathering the data yourself, self-reported data is limited by the fact that it rarely can be independently verified. In other words, you have to take what people say, whether in interviews, focus groups, or on questionnaires, at face value. However, self-reported data can contain several potential sources of bias that you should be alert to and note as limitations (Segev, 2015). These biases become apparent if they are incongruent with data from other sources. These are: (1) selective memory [remembering or not remembering experiences or events that occurred at some point in the past]; (2) telescoping [recalling events that occurred at one time as if they occurred at another time]; (3) attribution [the act of attributing positive events and outcomes to one's own agency but attributing negative events and outcomes to external forces]; and, (4) exaggeration [the act of representing outcomes or embellishing events as more significant than is actually suggested from other data (O'Brien, 2015). The research methodology guided the entire research process and ensured consistency and validity of the research. The methodology design also made sure that the research process was conducted systematically so that the research objectives would be met.

3.20 ETHICS APPROVAL

One of the most important aspects of research is to protect participants from harm (Singh, 2015). The type of ethical issues encountered in qualitative and quantitative research may differ slightly. Therefore, a variety of ethical and legal issues must be considered before commencing research which includes human subjects (Stephani, 2014). For this study, the researcher used such guidelines as a primary source for highlighting issues. The specific ethical issues relevant to protecting research participants throughout this research project included; the UKZN ethics committee, voluntary participation, informed consent, beneficence of participants, confidentiality, and privacy. Some of these topics will be discussed below.

i) The UKZN ethics committee

The questionnaire was assessed and the ethical clearance for this study was granted by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee on the 26^{th} November 2015 (Protocol Reference Number: HSS/1600/015M) attached as Appendix 1. Part of the requirements of the research questionnaire was that it had to contain no issues of ethical infringements. The respondents were also informed that the participation was voluntary and confidential. The questionnaire was also approved by the UKZN Professor D Jagayi, acting registrar from the office of the registrar (Appendix 3).

ii) Voluntary participation and consent

In order for participants to make a true choice of whether to participate in any study, individuals require accurate information (Crainer, 2015). In other words, individuals must be informed about the range of matters relating to the research study they are considering to be involved with. Only after hearing information related to all research facts can an individual volunteer to participate and give full consent (Stephani, 2014). Contained within the consent form was the name and contact number of the researcher's supervisor. Such a contact was provided in case any participant felt the need to contact a third party for clarification or report any concerns they had regarding any aspect of the researcher's conduct or progress of the research study. To provide potential participants with truthful information about the study, two information sheets were developed; one that addressed control group participant issues and one that addressed treatment group participants. The information sheets were devised to provide participants with written documentation that would help guide their decision to participate. No coercion or persuasion was used to recruit participants. Each participant was informed that their involvement or decision not to be involved with the research study in no way would affect their academic interests or treatment in campus.

iii) Risks

According to Pfeffer and Fong (2014), risk is considered to be something that may pose as a potential harm to participants. Such harm may include injury, emotional distress, loss of self-esteem, or embarrassment. It is essential to ensure that the risk research participants take when agreeing to partake in a research study never exceeds the potential of humanitarian benefits of the knowledge to be gained (Neuman, 2015). In this study there was one type of data collected that included personal details about the research participants; participant responses from pre and post-test questionnaires. Although some demographic data was collected from all participants, none of the participants could be identified from such information. The data reviewed and collected was directly controlled by the participant. Therefore data collected in this manner was seen as having a insignificant risk (Friga, 2015). Overall, the researcher felt confident that all of the risks posed to any research participant was addressed and posed a minimal threat throughout all stages of this project.

iv) Benefits

The researcher explained to all interested individuals that there would be no incentives or monetary benefit if they voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. All participants were supplied with pens to complete the questionnaires. In addition, each control and treatment group participant that completed and returned both questionnaires received a thank you note accompanied by a lollipop. This gesture was the researcher's way of expressing gratitude for participating. The idea of giving participants a thank you note and a lollipop was not disclosed to participants before data was collected in case such actions would have been perceived as a form of bribery.

v) Security of data

All of the written data will be kept for a period of five years, and then destroyed in accordance with the UKZN requirements. The only persons who had access to the research data were the researcher and her research supervisor who had signed a confidentiality agreement.

3.21 SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the research methodology of this study, explain the sample selection, describe the procedure used in designing the data collection instrument and data collection process, and provide an explanation of the statistical procedures used for data analysis. This chapter covered fundamentals of research methodology that were adopted in conducting the survey. The researcher opted to use a quantitative data collection strategy for the study to establish student perceptions about the UKZN GSB's strategic brand position, since the results of the quantitative research can be applied to the general targeted population. There were several distinct advantages that led to the adoption of the quantitative data collection strategy. The population incorporated only MBA second year students, both part-time and block-release. The basic and applied research has been adequately explained.

The chapter further discussed the research paradigms which guided the study methodology. A summary of the characteristics associated with the two research paradigms used in this study are described in Table 3.6.1. Following the discussion about the research paradigms, a detailed description of the research design and methodology was shown to support the researcher's choice of sampling, data collection and analysis. To minimise confusion, the methodology was organised and described under four phases. Lastly, ethical issues such as voluntary participation, consent, risk, privacy and confidentiality, and security of data were addressed in detail.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Data presentation and analysis is a critical factor of research. It converts raw data into meaningful information that can relate directly to research objectives and recommendations. If this step is done correctly, the outcome vital results can add tremendously to various areas of study and schools of thought (Abratt, 2015).

This chapter will present the data collected and the results of the statistical analysis. An ambiguity that was identified during the survey pre-test is first highlighted and then the demographic profile of the sample is presented. The research findings are discussed in detail and are linked back to the research problem, the literature review and the study objectives that were highlighted in previous chapters. The results of the factor analysis are then presented. Using the results of the factor analysis, the three research propositions were tested and their results are then presented.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY PRE-TEST

As the drive of data collection, the questionnaire is one of the critical components in achieving high quality in a survey (Berthon, 2015). The paramount of sampling schemes and estimation strategies will not yield accurate data if the answers provided by the respondent are not eloquent. During the last decade or so, there has been an increased emphasis on building superiority into the questionnaire design process through pretesting. This has been approached from an operational perspective in government agencies (Clont, 2014) but it has been informed by theoretical work in the areas of cognitive and social psychology (Stone, 2015). The three methods used to pre-test questionnaires are namely; respondent debriefing, cognitive interviewing and behaviour coding of respondent or interviewer interaction. There are several other valuable pretesting methods such as expert panels, questionnaire appraisal coding systems, and interviewer debriefings among others.

The survey was pre-tested by using ten students to complete the survey. During the pre-test, four of the participants found an ambiguity within the questionnaire. The four participants were unsure of whether they were rating the importance of each statement in terms of student satisfaction with the UKZN GSB or whether they were rating the importance of each statement in terms of influencing their satisfaction in general. The survey was then revised by changing the portion of the instructions within the questionnaire to remove this ambiguity.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF DATA

This paper will first present the findings based on the demographic information and factor analysis which will provide an overview of the results. Thereafter, the bivariate analysis of the relevant findings will be discussed. This will provide a multi-dimensional view of the data and provide the source to the recommendations on the study.

i) Demographic profile of sample

A total of 191 completed surveys were returned by participants. This includes data that was gathered by both drop-off survey method and email survey method. Of the 191 completed surveys, 21 surveys could not be utilised for data analysis due to the incompletion of surveys by the participants. Common inaccuracies that resulted in surveys being unusable were missing age details and unanswered questions. Of the 200 surveys that were dropped-off, 134 completed surveys were returned which translate to a response rate of 67%. The email survey method managed to achieve 36 completed surveys yielding a total of 170 usable responses.

ii) Ethnicity profile of sample

The table and figure below represent the ethnicity of the sample. They were 170 students in the sample of which students of Black African ethnicity made a total of 53% while students of coloured ethnicity made 3%. Indian and White students made up 20% and 24% of the sample respectively.

Table 4.3.1: Ethnicity profile of sample

ETHNICITY				
Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Black	90	52.94	90	52.94
White	41	24.12	131	77.06
Indian	34	20.00	165	97.06
Coloured	5	2.94	170	100.00

There is a bigger response rate from the Black ethnic group of MBA students and the lowest is from the coloured ethnicity. Unlike before when educational expectations were lower from black masses as a result of apartheid, after the introduction of Broad Based Economic Empowerment (BBEE); many blacks now have equal opportunities to education and are predominantly enrolling in these Universities to obtain the education that they were previously deprived of to empower themselves.

iii) Gender profile of sample

Of the 170 students that completed the survey, 123 were male students and 47 were female. The response rate from both groups was adequate to conduct a statistical analysis. The table and figure below depicts the gender profile of the sample.

Table 4.3.2: Gender profile of sample

GENDER				
Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Male	123	72.35	123	72.35
Female	47	27.65	170	100.00

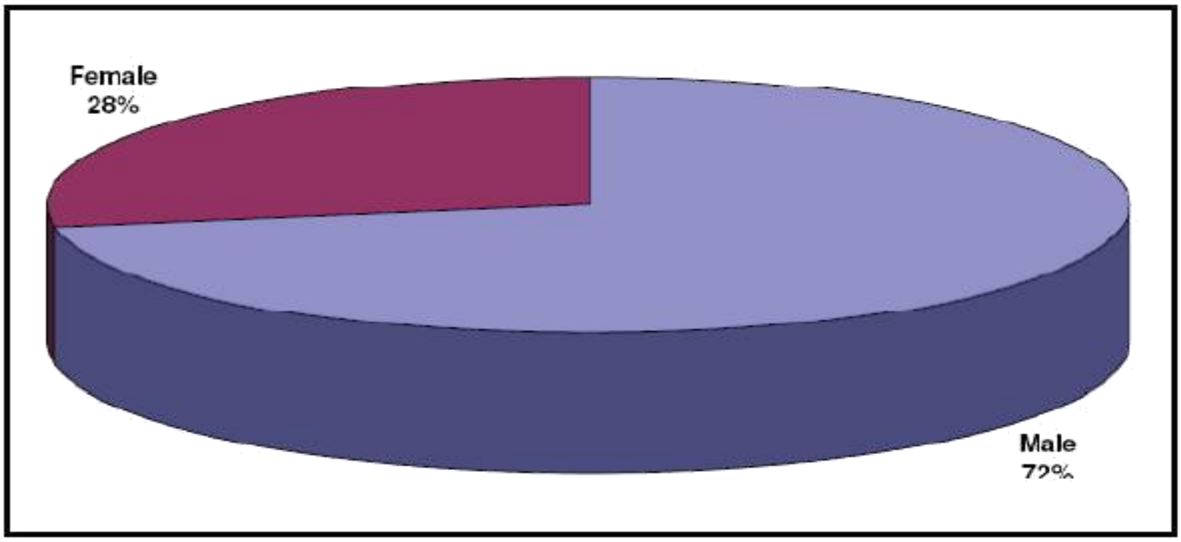


Figure 4.3.2: Gender profile of sample

iv) Age Profile of Sample

The age groups were not originally specified but respondents actual ages were collected during the survey. The age group was developed so that there were a sufficient number of respondents within each group. There were four age groups developed: 26-30 years, 31-39 years, 40-49 years, and greater than 50 years. The number of respondents in each group was 27, 86, 32 and 25 respectively as shown in the table below.

Table 4.3.3: Age profile of sample

AGE				
Age Group	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
26 - 30	27	15.88	27	15.88
31 - 39	86	50.59	113	66.47
40 - 49	32	18.82	145	85.29
50 +	25	14.71	170	100.00

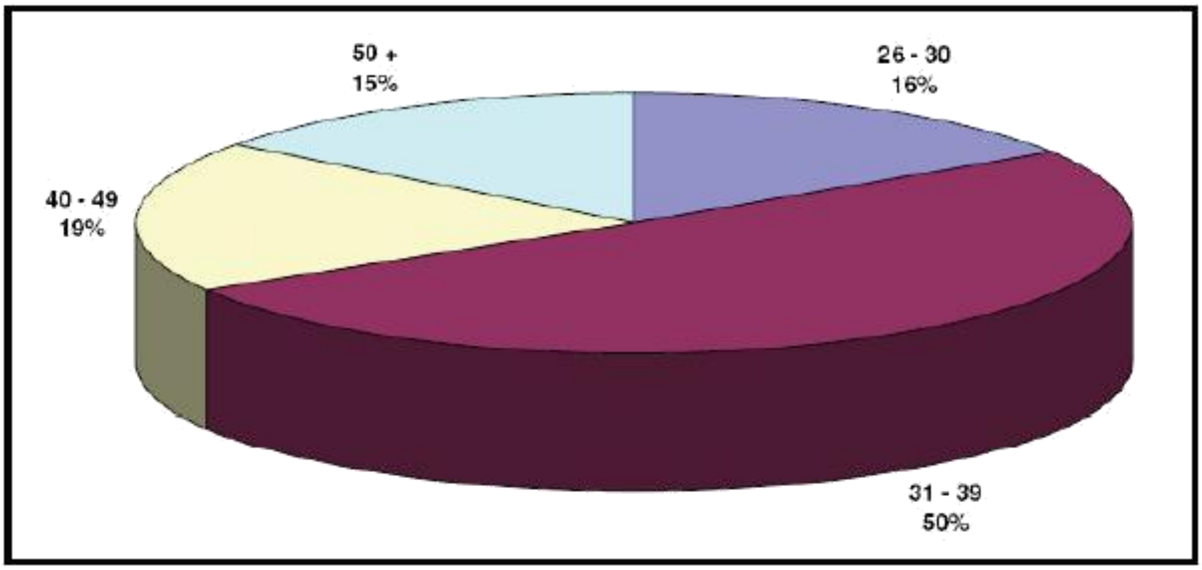


Figure 4.3.3: Age profile of sample

4.4 FACTOR ANALYSIS

A factor analysis was conducted using the responses from the 170 students. The aim of the factor analysis was to take the questions from the survey and reduce them into a smaller number of facts that would represent the objective of the study. In order to verify if the data set was suitable for factor analysis, the strength among the statements was tested using the KAISER-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. Hoepf (2015) suggests that Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant at the 5% level and the KMO value should exceed 0.6 for factor analysis to be considered. The table below presents the results of the KMO measure and Bartlett's test. In this study, the KMO value is 0.822 greater than 0.6 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity value was significant at the 5% level (the Significance value is ‹ 0.05); hence the data set was appropriate for factor analysis.

Table 4.4.1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.822
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2.851.083
	Degrees of Freedom	
	Sig.	0.000

4.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In presenting the findings of the study, a structured layout which follows the research objectives will be adopted. This will permit for a concise discussion on the topic per objective which will ultimately form the basis of the conclusion and the recommendations made.

In order to determine the number of factors to extract, the Eigen values, Scree Plot and percentage variance explained was considered. The Scree Plot which is shown in the figure below shows that there were several factors with Eigen values above one. The Scree Plot also shows an elbow (change in shape) between the third and fourth factors and hence only the factors above the fourth factor were retained.

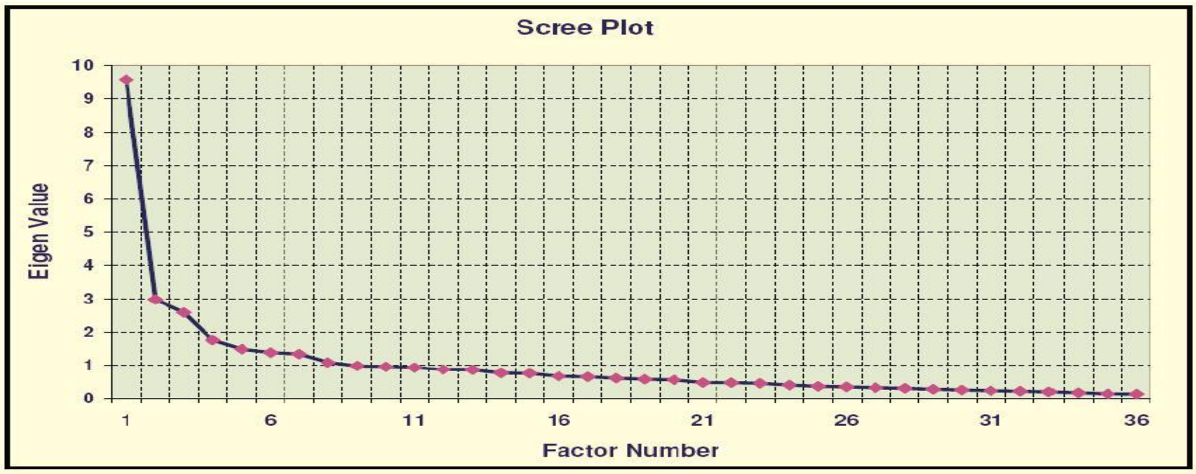


Figure 4.5.1: Scree plot graph. Source: Arpan (2015: 217)

The table below reports the Eigen values, percentage variance explained and Cronbach Alpha for each of the three strategies. The Eigen values for three strategies were 9.563, 2.978 and 2.583 respectively and the variance explained by each of the three strategies was 24.73%, 6.71% and 5.63% respectively. The total variance explained by the three strategies was 37.07%. Although the total variance explained by the three strategies is lower than the desired 50%, the Scree Plot indicated that a three strategic framework would be appropriate. The Cronbach Alpha for each of the three strategies were also high, 0.8726, 0.8464 respectively, and indicates that the statements contained within each factor are closely related and measure the underlying factor respectively.

Table: 4.5.1: Eigen values, % variance and Cronbach Alpha for each of the three strategies.

	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Eigen Value	9.563	2.978	2.583
% Variance explained	24.73	6.71	5.63
Cumulative %	24.73	31.44	37.07
Cronbach Alpha	0.873	0.846	0.846

i) Results for research Proposition one

The aim of research proposition one was to test whether the UKZN GSB brand management strategies for the MBA programme would have a different effect on men and women. The results for gender group comparison are shown in the table below. The results show that Strategy one is equally important to men as it is to women (p value › 0.05) and that Strategy two and Strategy three is more important to women than it is to men (both Strategy one and Strategy two p values are less than 0.005).

Table 4.5.2: Results of gender group comparisons

GENDER (A)					
Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std Dev	P Value
	Males	123	5.9805	0.6079	
S1	Females	47	6.1333	0.3779	0.0966
	Males	123	5.8421	0.7159	
S2	Females	47	6.2163	0.4364	0.0052
	Males	123	5.1075	0.988	
S3	Females	47	5.4161	0.6249	0.0255
GENDER: REPEATED MEASURES ANOVA (B)					
Strategy	Mean	Comparison	Group	N	P Value
S1	5.9805	S1-S2	Males	123	0.0237
S2	5.8421	S2-S3	Males	123	›0.0001
S3	5.1075	S1-S3	Males	123	›0.0001
S1	6.1333	S1-S2	Females	47	0.1385
S2	6.2163	S2-S3	Females	47	›0.0001
S3	5.416	S1-S3	Females	47	›0.0001

The repeated measure ANOVA for the gender group comparison shows that Inspirational leadership (Strategy one) is the most important for men. For women, Strategy one and Strategy two are equally the most important than Strategy three.

ii) Results for research proposition two

The aim of research proposition two was to test whether the UKZN GSB brand management strategies for the MBA programme would have a different effect on student's different age groups. The table below presents the results for the age group comparisons. The ages were clustered into four groups: 26-30, 31-39, 40-49 and greater than 50. From the age group comparison table below, it is seen that there are no differences in the means between each age group, for each strategy respectively. Hence Strategy one is of the same importance for each age group. The same is concluded for Strategy two and Strategy three.

The means of each strategy were then compared within each age group to determine which the most important strategy for each age group was and whether the difference within each age group was significant at the 5% level. The results indicate something noteworthy. For the first two age groups (26-30 and 31-39) strategy one and strategy two are equally the most important and both are more important than strategy three. For the second two age groups (40-49 and 50+) strategy one is the most important, strategy two is the second most important and strategy three the third most important. This indicates that a difference in the importance of strategies exists between the younger two age groups (26-30 and 31-39) and the older two age groups (40-49 and 50+). The results show strategy two is more important to the younger two age groups than it is for the older age groups.

Table 4.5.3: Results of age group comparisons

AGE (A)					
Strategy	**Group**	**N**	**Mean**	**Std Dev**	**P Value**
S1	**26-30**	**27**	**6.0494**	**0.6356**	**0.9743**
	31-39	**86**	**6.0379**	**0.5769**	
	40-49	**32**	**6.0417**	**0.5042**	
	50+	**25**	**5.9173**	**0.4766**	
S2	**26-30**	**27**	**6.2130**	**0.4980**	**0.7438**
	31-39	**86**	**6.0116**	**0.5945**	
	40-49	**32**	**5.8310**	**0.6708**	
	50+	**25**	**5.5770**	**0.9007**	
	26-30	**27**	**5.2839**	**1.0429**	

S3	31-39	86	5.1434	0.8745	0.8085
	40-49	32	5.2569	1.0811	
	50+	25	5.1822	0.6501	
AGE: REPEATED MEASURES ANOVA (B)					
Strategy	Mean	Comparison	Group	N	P Value
S1	6.0494	S1-S2	26-30	27	0.0779
S2	6.2130	S2-S3	26-30	27	‹0.0001
S3	5.2839	S1-S3	26-30	27	‹0.0001
S1	6.0379	S1-S2	31-39	86	0.6625
S2	6.0116	S2-S3	31-39	86	‹0.0001
S3	5.1434	S1-S3	31-39	86	‹0.0001
S1	6.0417	S1-S2	40-49	32	0.0489
S2	5.8310	S2-S3	40-49	32	0.0002
S3	5.2569	S1-S2	40-49	32	‹0.0001
S1	5.9173	S1-S2	50+	25	0.0499
S2	5.5770	S2-S3	50+	25	0.0193
S3	5.1822	S1-S3	50+	25	‹0.0001

iii) Results for Research proposition three

The aim of research proposition three was to test whether the UKZN GSB brand management strategies for the MBA programme would have a different effect on student's different ethnic/ racial groups. The table below illustrates the results for the ethnic group comparisons. The results show that it is only for strategy two that a significant difference between the means exist. The mean on strategy two for the white ethnic group differs significantly at the 5% level from the other three ethnic groups. This shows that strategy two is less important to white students than it is for black, Indian and coloured students.

The table below also shows that for the black ethnic group, Seasonal apprenticed mentorships (strategy two) is the most important strategy to have an influence on students. For the white students, Inspirational leadership (strategy one) is the most important. Strategy one and two is equally the most important to students of Indian ethnicity. The results for the coloured sub-group was not considered for the repeated measures ANOVA due to the small sample size (N=5).

Table 4.5.4: Results of ethnicity group comparisons

ETHNICITY (A)					
Strategy	**Group**	**N**	**Mean**	**Std Dev**	**P Value**
	Black	90	5.9992	0.6383	
S1	White	41	5.9691	0.4216	0.5019
	Indian	34	6.1529	0.4715	
	Coloured	5	6.0000	0.4989	
	Black	90	6.1315	0.5505	
S2	White	41	5.4919	0.7683	0.0006
	Indian	34	6.0267	0.6191	
	Coloured	5	5.7660	0.4691	
	Black	90	5.1037	0.9780	
S3	White	41	5.1653	0.8965	0.1530
	Indian	34	5.4575	0.7648	
	Coloured	5	5.2222	0.3600	
ETHNICITY: REPEATED MEASURES ANOVA (B)					
Strategy	**Mean**	**Comparison**	**Group**	**N**	**P Value**
S1	5.9992	S1-S2	Black	90	0.0086
S2	6.1315	S2-S3	Black	90	‹0.0001
S3	5.1037	S1-S3	Black	90	‹0.0001

S1	5.9691	S1-S2	White	41	0.0002
S2	5.4919	S2-S3	White	41	‹0.0066
S3	5.1653	S1-S3	White	41	‹0.0001
S1	6.1529	S1-S2	Indian	34	0.2007
S2	56.0267	S2-S3	Indian	34	‹0.0001
S3	5.4575	S1-S2	Indian	34	‹0.0001
S1	6.0000	S1-S2	Coloured	5	N/A
S2	5.7660	S2-S3	Coloured	5	N/A
S3	5.2222	S1-S3	Coloured	5	N/A

The issue that needs to be investigated is why do students have these negative perceptions about the school in the first place. What negativity is derived from the school's management team which has resulted in these perceptions to students? There may be several reasons for this. Firstly, most students are infuriated with the school's MBA programme curriculum which runs for a full 30 months to complete whereas other business schools in South Africa run the programme for only 24 months (Yucelt, 2014). Other negativities for such perceptions is the fact that the school cannot retain its lecturers and management; and as a consequence of this, it has resulted in the misalignment between the students and the management team; due to failure of these professionals to maintain a consistent strategic plan to run the school as required. Sometimes lecturers are even being changed closed to exam time and this causes a lot of confusion amongst students because they cannot keep up with the different teaching styles from the lecturers. This is why most students graduate with an MBA qualification from UKZN GSB but are still not ready for the job market as they lack the necessary skills to compete, due to a lack of proper lecture training from lectures who are changed occasionally by the school (Crainer, 2015). Therefore, since these negativities are less likely to come up in leading business schools, it stands to reason that the existing students would be more enticed to apply for tuition to those few leading schools.

The first objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of UKZN GSB brand identity/management strategies for the MBA programme and to then determine which of these strategies was most important. It was found that there were statistical significance and associations. The Friedman test indicated that a statistically significant difference existed between the three strategies with a p value ‹ 0.0001. To determine between which strategies the difference was significant, a Friedman Multiple Comparison Test was conducted, the results of which are reported in the table below. The results show that strategy three differs from strategy one and strategy two at the 5% level. Strategy one is not significantly different form strategy two at the 5% level and hence the conclusion is that Inspirational leadership (Strategy one), and Seasonal apprenticed mentorships (Strategy two) are equally the most important strategies to an effective UKZN GSB brand identity strategy for the MBA programme.

Table 4.5.5: Results of Friedman Test (ANOVA & Comparisons)

FRIEDMAN – ANOVA (A)					
Strategy	**N**	**Mean**	**Std Dev**	**P Value**	**Z Stat**
S1	**170**	**6.0227$_a$**		**‹0.0001***	
S2	**170**	**5.9455$_a$**		**‹0.0001***	
S3	**170**	**5.1928**		**‹0.0001***	
FRIEDMAN COMPARISONS (B)					
S1-S2					**0.79**
S1-S3					**10.93***
S2-S3					**10.14***

Note: Means with different superscripts differ significantly from other means on the 5% level.

Between certain influential factors and whether or not a student studied outside UKZN (other business schools), from an intrinsic stimulus perspective these were: an opportunity to gain experience (P = 0.009) and a promotion (P = 0.031). From an extrinsic stimulus perspective, a salary increase (P = 0.009) resulted in a statistical significant association with the variable whether or not the respondent studied in the school.

The second objective of the study was to assess the UKZN GSB brand awareness level of its MBA programme amongst UKZN student population. The findings indicate that approximately seventy percent of students within UKZN are not aware of the MBA programme offered as it is not visibly marketed to all students (Abratt, 2015). Most of the current MBA students were also not aware that the GSB existed before enrolling into the programme. The majority of them including myself came to know about the school by word of mouth from previous students rather than from promotional adverts or marketing material. Therefore, the school needs to focus its advertising to students and involve itself in top class marketing campaigns such as radio interviews, television advertisements, and billboards in order to raise awareness and remain competitive. This is because if the UKZN student population is not aware of the school, it is difficult to expect the overall South Africa's student population external to the University to be aware of the programme.

While objective three was to evaluate the UKZN GSB brand communication strategy and its effect within SA's student population, it had the same results as the 2^{nd} objective as students shared the very same sentiments about its brand communication strategy. The UKZN GSB as a brand is not well communicated to the public, simply because the school lacks the necessary resources to put itself out there or maybe just simply taking it for granted that they need to excel in their brand marketing strategies in order to be on top. The school does not even engage MBA students to occasional debate conferences with other MBA students from competing business schools to empower the students and to promote UKZN as a brand by being involved in such initiatives. The school has brand management strategies in place but it is not being implemented appropriately to promote the brand (Roberts. 2015). Literature and research have emphasized that several factors can validate to be strategic influences that can be used successfully in a school's strategic plan (Trout, 2014). These include motivating factors such as career growth, job position and promotions. Interestingly, these factors did not demonstrate to have a significant association to all respondents of the survey. In fact, the appealing factors only emerged as having a significant association to students within the programme. The implications of this finding are that the KZN GSB would not likely be in a position to entice students from outside the KZN region using those particular motivating factors. However, it did mean that they could use the factors to influence students from within KZN to remain in and accept the management's strategic plans to improve the school's brand and marketing strategies and thus eliminating existing negative perceptions from the minds of future MBA candidates. However, the challenge that remains is the scarcity of competencies and skills of lecturers within the school. The findings in this study have provided much insight into the options which are available to the UKZN GSB in the use of brand management strategies as strategic tool in maintaining competitive advantage in the KZN region and surrounding provinces.

4.6 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview on the participation statistics on the survey conducted. An overview of the demographic information was presented which provided some background on the respondents that participated in the survey. The results of the survey relating to the factor analysis were presented and summarised. A bivariate analysis was then done on the results using the Chi-squared test of association method. Based on the results, it was found that there was statistical significance and association between the ages, gender, and ethnicity of respondents and their perception or choices. These students are mostly influenced by the three brand management strategies; Inspirational Leadership, Seasonal Apprenticed Mentorships, and Equitable rewards. Even though S1- Inspirational leadership is most commonly important between all ages, ethnicity (except black), and both genders; the analysis shows that between the ages of 26-39, Inspirational leadership and seasonal apprenticed mentorships are mostly important strategies to the respondents which signifies that the age group is mostly influenced by the desire to lead and succeed rather than the formulation and implementation of strategies (Equitable rewards). This ultimately leads to the conclusion that the UKZN GSB needs to focus more inspiration leadership seminars and apprentice mentorship programs within this age group, as an empowerment and influential tool to remaining competent as a business school. The management team must be aligned with student demands through its brand management strategies. The next chapter will provide an overview of the fundamental findings and provide concluding comments and recommendations which will relate to the objectives of the study.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This case study researched the topic on the evaluation of South African Business Schools' brand management strategies and its effect on students; (A case study of the UKZN GSB's MBA programme). The research was conducted from a UKZN GSB perspective. The conclusions and recommendations construed from the research are presented in this chapter. The chapter begins by revisiting the research problem and the fundamental outcome of the study before presenting a set of conclusions and recommendations. The chapter provides area for future research and limitations of the study and close with a summary. The three objectives of the research were to: evaluate the effectiveness of the UKZN GSB brand identity strategies for the MBA programme, to assess the UKZN GSB brand awareness level of its MBA programme amongst the UKZN student population, to evaluate the UKZN GSB brand communication strategy and its effect within South African student population.

5.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM RESOLUTION

It was established that the UKZN GSB is the leading business school within the KZN region. The school holds approximately sixty five percent market share in the region. One of the primary reasons for its dominance is the competitive advantage derived from its academic force or human capital being the lecturers, students, and management. However, the problem is that the school has no proper alignment between management and students, due to constant change of senior management, inability to attract and retain suitable and competent lecturers. This has resulted in students having negative perceptions about the school as a brand of choice and the communication of its brand management strategies as compared to leading business schools in the country. Therefore, should the school wish to remain the market leader in this region and overall South Africa, it has to formulate effective brand management strategies that will assist to put into perspective ways that management can utilise to retain staff and keep them loyal and committed to the vision and goal of the GSB.

5.3 THE FUNDAMENTAL OUTCOME OF THE RESEARCH

While the research set out to establish what brand management strategies the GSB can utilise in order to encourage and motivate students to change the existing negative perceptions they hold about the UKZN GSB, it was found that there was a significant association between the ages, ethnicity and gender in terms of their perceptions and what strategies they considered to be appropriate for the school. This meant that it would be likely that these brand management strategies explored in this study, would entice students from around South Africa to enroll into the UKZN GSB's MBA programme; as most of the age groups of current students consider these to be appropriate to ensuring that the school remains competitive; and to close the negative gaps. This would also imply that these strategies could be used in the strategic plan aimed at enticing students already enrolled into the University to choosing the school as their institution of choice when wanting to pursue their MBA degree instead of leaving to other Business School's considered to be the best.

5.4 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS

A strong brand has been the primary strategic asset for firms, and therefore building a strong brand becomes a central component of a firm's marketing strategy. The results have some interesting implications for the UKZN GSB and its strategy formulation.

Since the only variable that showed that a significant association to the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators was whether the student was based in other provinces in South Africa, the implication is that, based on the factors which were studied in this paper, these motivating factors would unlikely act as positive influence to students, other than those already based in the KZN region. This would mean that when the UKZN GSB endeavours in developing its strategic progression plan in exploitation of the BSC, which is relatively silent on matters of process and specifically relating to key positions; that the division should rather focus on students which are already based within the province itself. More difficult is the area of management process, which provides an essential grounding for strategy analysis decisions. Without good or appropriate processes, good decisions cannot be made – decisions do not make themselves. BSC applications focus on for profit organizations. However, a few studies of the BSC look specifically within Business schools for applications as previously mentioned in this paper. Drtina et al, (2015) suggested integrating measures with clearly defined strategies as a first step with various guidelines which UKZN GSB can utilise in order to attract and retain its academic force. However, the problem arises in regards to the scarcity in the level of competence and skills of existing students in the corporate world, given aspects such as senior staff complement, the likelihoods of proposals by competitors and the temptation of life in the big cities. It is therefore pivotal that the division develop strategies on how to increase the level of competencies and skills of lecturers and management which must be incorporated in the strategic plans in order to translate the strategic framework into a financial, operational and organisational measurement scheme which links strategy to GSB goals. The enhanced training programs will ensure that students acquire the necessary competency levels required, whereas the mandatory mentoring and coaching programs will assist in skills being passed on by the experienced staff (lecturers and management). Competency levels and skills set needs to be clearly predefined from the onset and milestones need to be determined so that student's progress can be closely monitored. If the division manages to incorporate the above criteria into its progression plan, the school would effectively be moving towards a more sustainable model that would ensure that their competitive advantage, which thus far has been derived from its academic force, continues to be sustained. This will go a long way in meeting strategic goals of the GSB.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In a tremendously competitive industry, Business School's need to grasp any source of competitive advantage that it can find. The UKZN GSB recognises this fact and therefore places much emphasis in remaining a leading player in KZN and overall South Africa's student population. One of the key reasons for its high market share in this province and main source of competitive edge lies in the school's ability to source critical human capital. In order to sustain this strategy, the UKZN GSB must continue to strategically use its brand management strategies as a tool to maintaining its existing competitive advantage in KZN and to be able to retain its students, lecturers and management.

The aim of the study was to assist management of the UKZN GSB to understanding what brand management strategies could be used in strategic planning which would result in existing students either remaining in or referring other potential students to enrolling into the MBA programme and eliminating the negative perceptions from them about the school. The study comprised of a survey which would produce responses to determine which were most effective brand management strategies that could be incorporated in the strategic plans. The survey was instrumental in revealing some interesting results. These findings could result in critical determinations in the formulation of the school's strategic plans, in particular for South Africa's student population. Even more so, the study goes far to assist the management of the UKZN GSB to gain understanding on how to strategically allocate and focus time and resources in the particular areas of student requirements and demands. This could ultimately assist the school in the development of a more sustainable strategic model for the future and the existing dominance in the KZN geographic region; which can be maintained by the school's ability to preserve its competitive advantage that cannot be easily imitated by competitors in the industry.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

In order for UKZN GSB management to improve overall institutional effectiveness, a deep understanding of the brand management strategies influencing student choice positively is required. Past studies have shown that student satisfaction has a positive correlation to strategies that ultimately affect academic effectiveness. Management should have a clear understanding of these strategies and the relationships among each of the constructs to brand management.

Business Schools around the globe develop strategic plans. They carefully create a vision of their future and the strategies needed to get there. But many fail to realize their vision and fail to deliver the expected strategic results. Unfortunately, executive teams cannot pinpoint the reasons for this dilemma so they repeat the strategic planning cycle over and over, always hoping that the next strategic planning session will bring better results. And of course it does not deliver the desired results. There are five critical factors that will ensure strategic plans are successfully implemented. Strategic Planning is a process not an event. A key element in the process is the engagement of all levels of students throughout the school (Van Riel, 2016). Student engagement generates additional input and helps build their commitment to the end plan. It is essential to involve students in the planning of strategy and direction for the Business school (Opoku, 2015). Student's input will:

Provide insight into issues, challenges, concerns, and opportunities which may not have been known or fully understood; and ensure their "buy-in" to help execute the strategies.

The senior management team will not execute the strategies – students will. Engage them and your strategy execution success rate will increase dramatically. Students, schools, and businesses — as well as governments and the general public — would be better served if graduate business schools, specifically the UKZN GSB begin to implement change in six areas:

First, business schools should require more courses in communication, leadership, human resources, psychology, and other fields that provide graduates with skills vital to effectively managing people and team-driven organizations. Business schools should require at least two of every 10 core courses to focus on such subjects; currently, these courses are often electives. In the top 10 South African business schools, only half require at least two courses on human or organizational relations and management. At Harvard, of 11 required courses, only one (Leadership) focuses on managing people.

On top of regular classroom lectures, reading, and paper writing, schools should require more collaborative projects that emphasize the development of people skills. Projects can be for an individual or a group, but typically they emphasize applied learning that forces students to question, think deeply, weigh alternatives, and create. Project work also involves more management skills — listening, influencing, judging, and selling.

Business schools often fail to guide students to balance competition with cooperation. Competition in the classroom raises the profile of the brightest students, but during many types of business engagements, competition backfires. Successful people know how to collaborate — to listen to customers and cooperate with peers to come up with creative, defensible solutions. Many schools have adopted team-based projects to mimic on-the-job situations. It is with caution, however, that a few team-based projects will not instil collaborative skills if professors still reward head-to-head competition in the classroom. I particularly like the idea of the UCT's LEAD course, a mandatory one-year experiential leadership course for first-year students. Using role playing and other techniques, LEAD develops expertise in negotiation, organizational development, interpersonal communication, and leadership (Bickerstaff, 2015). In one three-day seminar, students give an elevator speech and then a pitch. Professors videotape presentations to give detailed feedback. In another module, students learn team dynamics after having taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test to learn their psychological type. Second-year students serve as teachers and mentors in the course, which reinforces what is learned in the first year. Since the course runs in tandem with more conventional course work, students have opportunities to practice their new leadership skills while engaging in the regular curriculum.

Secondly, business schools should introduce and emphasize courses that offer the basic skills and tools needed in problem solving. These include data gathering, data analysis, and innovative problem-solving methodologies and tools, such as systems thinking and the Venn diagram. MBA graduates often stop short of getting to a problem's root causes because they define those causes in the same way they were defined in a case study they covered in school.

Thirdly, more and better grounding in theory — theories of economics, measurement, governance, psychology, human behaviour, and leadership — would help students go beyond case studies to analyse problems and craft solutions in situations they have never before encountered. If students learn the nitty-gritty of microeconomics, for example, they may be more prepared, say, to develop a winning pricing strategy. If they master theories of human behaviour, they may be more prepared to suggest solutions to team or unit motivational problems. By delving deeply into theory, the graduates can also distinguish themselves with specialized knowledge that appeals to employers.

Fourthly, schools should make changes in their curricula so that students can integrate their learning and apply multiple disciplines on the job. Instead, students are usually forced to learn about each of the fundamental business disciplines such as finance, strategy, operations, and marketing in a silo-like fashion.

MIT's Sloan School's Leaders for Manufacturing program is an example of a curriculum that integrates subjects ranging from manufacturing processes and operations management to leadership and change management, and that emphasizes on-the-job and classroom training. The Leaders for Manufacturing program runs two tracks of learning at the same time, one covering traditional classroom subjects and the other covering leadership and integrative activities outside the classroom. The non-classroom track includes leadership seminars, 15 plant tours each year, and a thesis. In the second year, each student spends six and a half months as an intern at one of 20 partner companies. In past internships, students have joined a Ford vehicle launch team, deployed a John Deere production system, and implemented lean manufacturing at United Technologies.

Fifthly, schools should encourage students to take full advantage of courses outside the traditional core curriculum. At present, most students do not appear to be diversifying their course load. Perhaps this accounts for the lack of differentiation seen among the graduates at interviews. Schools offer plenty of electives — 88 at Harvard, 143 at the University of Chicago, more than 200 at Wharton and only 3 at UKZN. But MBA students are not taking these classes. Instead, most are sticking to finance, operations, and strategy. Graduates aiming at jobs in management consulting, for example, would do well to explore — even to the Ph.D. level — such subjects as microeconomics, competitive dynamics, and statistics in addition to their broader-based management training.

Graduates too, infrequently have in-depth knowledge of specific industries, the government, or global nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). This creates a tremendous void, given the demand in business for expertise in such topics as global markets, economic alliances, and government privatizations. Corporate companies increasingly thirst for help in these areas.

Sixthly, and perhaps most critically, business schools and most specifically UKZN GSB should commit itself to re-creating differentiation in their curricula. Although it may be too risky for a school today to completely leave the mainstream, MBA programs can still allow students to concentrate on an industry. For example, schools can offer students who want to go into consulting or investment banking a tailored course of study that specifically prepares them for these fields, not just by offering electives, but by creating a discrete set of courses and experiences.

These six recommendations are an essential starting point for reform. Schools should also include a “practicum” approach in which a major portion of a student’s credits are attached to supervised real work in his or her area of concentration. This is different from an internship, which is typically not under direct supervision of the business school. Strategic Planning processes are successful when a bottom up and top down communication approach is taken. It starts off with a communication to all MBA students informing them that a Strategic Planning process will be undertaken. It includes how they will be involved in this process (the proper alignment between management and students). This is the bottom up communication. Students will provide input to the strategic planning process through feedback surveys, focus groups, and meetings among other strategies, regarding their ideas for institutional direction. It is followed by the top down communication. Senior management will share the strategic plan with students. They will communicate to all GSB students how their engagement will help ensure success in the execution of these strategies. The conditions of service directive within the UKZN GSB are currently generic. This needs to be modified to incorporate the finding that student satisfaction of male and female students is influenced by different strategic approaches.

Younger students are influenced by different strategies when compared to older students. Seasonal Apprenticed Mentorships is one of the most important strategies to younger students and management should develop strategies based on this finding. For older and much more experienced students, the strategy could contemplate the idea of providing more challenging assignments, giving them more autonomy in their work as they are in senior positions in organisations.

The UKZN GSB needs to establish a clear and meaningful strategic planning process. It should engage students in all relevant activities to ensure success and effective communication to students is a vital factor. Further, the UKZN GSB should use an innovation process for all new products (MBA programme) development, and service delivery strategies. As well as, create projects to manage the strategies and prioritize all of these projects to ensure they are properly resourced. There is need to re-shape the institutional culture to be more adaptive to the changes that the strategic plan requires.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Whilst this study has contributed to the body of knowledge on brand management strategies within the UKZN GSB, several limitations of the research were highlighted in the previous chapter. Also given the important role played by the UKZN within economies locally, more attention needs to be focused into understanding student satisfaction of MBA students from most leading Business Schools. Institutional Culture refers to the commonly held attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours of its students. The culture of an institution is as unique and diverse as an individual's personality. If the students of an institution believe that change is something to be feared and avoided, then change implementation is often reactive and haphazard. If the students believe that all change should be aggressively implemented "from above", then change is seldom supported. However, if the students of an institution believe that change is worthwhile and everyone's responsibility; then change and growth occur with relative ease. These are the few "excellent" institutions that continue to excel in their industry.

According to Brennan and Garneau (2015: 101), "positioning plays a major role in achieving the desired position in the minds of existing and probable consumers". Brennan (2015) states that positioning is a continual process. Freling and Forbes (2015) also proposes the continual reassessment of the target market, the firm's position and the position of competing offerings to ensure that the marketing program stays on track and also to identify emerging positioning opportunities. A recommendation to the UKZN GSB would be that there be continual assessment of the various stakeholders to see whether the desired position is accorded and to identify new positioning opportunities where the UKZN has internal competency to offer a competitive advantage.

5.8 SUMMARY

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the brand management strategies that South African Business Schools use to market the MBA programme and its effect on student perceptions and to verify the effect of demographics (gender, age, and ethnicity) on these strategies. The results of this study indicate that the student perception or choice is influenced largely by three strategies; namely: Inspirational leadership, Seasonal Apprentice Mentorships, and Equitable Rewards. The results also lent support to the three research propositions and concluded that the strategies influencing the construct of student satisfaction is indeed affected by demographics. The chapter presented the conclusions and recommendations highlighting both the positive and unfavourable findings. The chapter discussed the findings in the form of conclusions and acknowledges what is going sound with regard to current management strategies at the GSB and also make recommendations for areas not thriving.

The objectives of the study are well covered with each objective having its set of conclusions and recommendations. The conclusions serve both as approval for what is going in the right direction and also flags areas of which the school is not doing well, whilst the suggested recommendations, if implemented, are likely to enhance the execution of the overall management strategy. Of the three objectives of the study, brand communication and positioning was the most that was highlighted as in need of prompt and great intervention to position the school's brand identity in the right track and realise the vision of being the Business school of choice to candidates from all over South Africa and beyond. Further exploratory study is needed to get into the bottom of the not so positive feedback.

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Appendix 1- Research Questionnaire

The survey is part of an MBA research project aimed at evaluating the UKZN GSB's MBA program in terms of its brand identity strategies, brand awareness, communication strategies and its effect on students. The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete a set of 15 questions. Please answer the questions in spaces provided by placing a tick next to your preferred answer. The information will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. In the event you neither agree nor disagree with the statements provided, kindly choose neutral as your answer.

PART-A: Biographical information

a) Your age

26-30	1
31-39	2
40-49	3
Over 50	4

b) Your highest education level

Diploma	1
Degree	2
Honours	3
Post grad diploma	4
Post grade degree	5

c) Your gender

Male	1
Female	2

d) Present job level

Manager	1
Senior Manager	2
Top manager	3

Other	4

e) Level of experience

1-5	1
6-10	2
11-15	3
16-20	4
Over 20	5

Part B:

Instructions

- The following statements seek your opinion regarding the MBA program at UKZN.
- Please highlight the extent to which you agree or disagree with the questionnaire statement by putting a mark on the number that represents your view.
- You are allowed to cross only one answer per statement

6.1 The effectiveness of the UKZN GSB's brand identity strategies

a) The school is using the best possible strategies to market the MBA program?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

b) You do see advertisement on any communication channels that market the school and programs offered.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

c) These ads have a positive effect on your perceptions about the school.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

d). The MBA Open Day is an effective event in convincing a prospective student to enroll for the program.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

e). You recall an advert or marketing campaign promotion UKZN MBA program.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

6.2 UKZN GSB's brand awareness of its MBA program

a) The school is well known by students all over South Africa.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

b) The UKZN student population is aware of the MBA program.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

c) As compared to other business schools in South Africa, the UKZN MBA program is relatively easy to enroll into.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

d) You can recall any important seminars hosted by the School as practiced by other prominent business schools in the country.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

e) You can recall any talk-shows or news programs that feature GSB academics as commentators.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

6.3 UKZN GSB's brand communication strategy and its effect on student population

a) Are you aware of the communication strategies used by the school?

Yes	1
No	2

b) Were you influenced by an UKZN GSB's alumni to enroll into the program?

Yes	1
No	2

c) Would you say that you were influenced by the UKZN GSB's communication strategy into enrolling for the program?

Yes	1
No	2

d) Did the MBA program meet your expectations from the way it was advertised to prospective students?

Yes	1
No	2

e) Would you highly recommend the UKZN GSB's MBA program to a friend/ colleague/ relative as someone who's had an experience with the school?

Yes	1
No	2

Appendix 2- Informed consent letter

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

PROJECT TITLE: An evaluation of South African Business Schools' brand management strategies and its effect on students; (A case study of the UKZN GSB's MBA programme).

RESEARCHER

Full Name: Colleen Biyela
School: GSB&L
College: Humanities
Proposed Qualification: MBA
Contact details: 0833281915
Email:colleenbiyela@yahoo.com

SUPERVISOR

Full Name: Dr. Muhammad Hoque
Contact details: (031) 2608690
Email: hoque@ukzn.ac.za
Campus: Westville

HSSREC RESEARCH OFFICE
Full Name: Prem Mohun
HSS Research Office
Govan Bheki Building
Westville Campus
Contact: 0312604557
Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

I am Colleen Biyela**,** Student number 209519924, an MBA student at the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, in the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: An evaluation of South African Business Schools' brand management strategies and its effect on students; (A case study of the UKZN GSB's MBA programme). The fundamental question that this study aimed to answer was: "What are the brand management strategies that South African Business schools use to market their MBA programmes and its effect on students?"

Through your participation, I hope to understand your challenges and perceptions with the UKZN GSB's MBA programme as well as its strategic channels in terms of its brand awareness and communication, as compared to other business schools domestically and internationally. This is an attempt to gain insight on how the school in question can improve itself. I guarantee that your responses will not be identified with you personally. Your participation is voluntary and there is no penalty if you do not participate in the study.

Please sign on the dotted line to show that you have read and understood the contents of this letter.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Participants Signature…………………………………………

Date……………………………………………..

Appendix 3- Ethical Clearance certificate

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

26 November 2015

Mrs Colleen Sindile Biyela (209519924)
Graduate School of Business & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Mrs Biyela,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1600/015M
Project title: An evaluation of South African Business Schools' Brand Management strategies and its effect on students; (A case study of the UKZN GSB's MBA programme)

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 29 October 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

[redacted] ....

pp **Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)**

/ms

Supervisor: Dr Muhammad Hoque
Academic Leader Research: Dr Muhammad Hoque
School Administrator: Ms Zarina Bullyraj

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 **Facsimile:** +27 (0) 31 260 4609 **Email:** ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix 4- Gatekeepers Letter

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

1 October 2015

Mrs Colleen Slindile Biyela (SN 209519924)
School of Management, IT and Governance
College of Law and Management Studies
Westville Campus
UKZN
Email: colleenbiyela@yahoo.com

Dear Mrs Biyela

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) towards your postgraduate studies, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

"An evaluation of South African Business Schools' brand management strategies and its effect on students; (A case study of the UKZN GSB's MBA programme)".

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by handing out questionnaires to students currently registered for the MBA programme from the College of Law and Management Studies on the Westville Campus.

Please ensure that the following appears on your questionnaire/attached to your notice:

- Ethical clearance number;
- Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor;
- Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire;
- gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

You are not authorized to contact staff and students using 'Microsoft Outlook' address book.

Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

[redacted]

REGISTRAR (ACTING)

Office of the Registrar
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 8005/2206 **Facsimile:** +27 (0) 31 260 7824/2204 **Email:** registrar@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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