

Behavioural organisational factors affecting strategic management practices in urban councils in Zimbabwe.

Edward Chinongwa¹, Professor Faitira Manuere²

¹Department of Human Resources, Midlands State University, Gweru, Zimbabwe

²Chairperson, Entrepreneurship and Business Management, Chinhoyi University of Technology, Zimbabwe

¹Email: edwardchii@gmail.com or chinongwae@staff.msu.ac.zw

²Email: manuerefaitira@gmail.com

Abstract

The study sought to explore behavioural organisational factors affecting strategic management practice in urban councils in Zimbabwe. A quantitative research approach was adopted in the study with a population of 3031. A cluster sampling technique was adopted where a sample size of 341 professional employees were selected, using the Krejcie Morgan sample size determination table. A questionnaire was adopted in the collection of data after a pilot study and internal consistency was used to test for reliability, where Cronbach's Alpha co-efficient of above 0.7 confirmed the reliability of the research instrument. SPSS version 23 was used in the analysis of data. Descriptive statistical techniques which involve mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentages were used in the data analysis. Organisational culture, organisational structure and technology innovativeness capability were used as variables for assessment. From the findings, it emerged that organisational culture, organisational structure and technology innovativeness capability have a significant influence in the practice of strategic management in urban councils in Zimbabwe.

Key words: behavioural factors, organisational culture, organisational structure, strategic management, technology innovativeness capability

JEL Classification Code: D20,D22,D23,M15, O3.

Introduction

Modern business organisations are operating in a highly turbulent and unpredictable environment, characterised by advances in technological and digital capabilities, evolutionary changes in demographic, social, and economic relationships, the advent of globalisation and the threat of pandemics such as AIDS and Covid-19. As such, Zimbabwean organisations are not spared by the scourge. Of particular concern are the service delivery challenges being experienced by many local authorities, which include urban councils. Most roads in these urban councils are in bad state, street lights are not working, sewage is spilling all over, especially in high density

areas, safe drinking water supplies are erratic, are battling serious house provision backlogs and health service centres do not have sufficient medical equipment and medication. As a result, many people living in towns and cities in the country, are under threat of contracting various forms of diseases with scarce remedy.

In confirmation of the aforementioned allegations, the first report of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Local Government, Rural and Urban development on service delivery by the local authorities in 2016 pointed poor service delivery by the majority of urban councils visited. Similarly, the report of the Auditor-General (2016) on local

authorities presented to the Parliament of Zimbabwe, for the financial year ended 31 December 2018, paints a grim picture of inadequate service provision in the country's cities, towns and smaller urban settings. Additionally, the other report from the Office of the Auditor General of Zimbabwe for the financial year ended December, 31, 2019 on local authorities, presented to Parliament in 2021, indicated that the majority of local authorities are operating without key policy documents such as strategic plans. This is against the provisions of the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act (Chapter 29:12) which stipulates the need for all local authorities in Zimbabwe, to have a strategic planning framework.

Normally, organisations operating under such volatile environments are expected to adopt a raft of measures, such as practising strategic management in order to survive and grow. Of late, in business administration circles, strategic management has been touted as one of the effective management tools in strengthening organisational performance through effective decision making and systematic strategic formulation and implementation (Zaei, Yarahmadzahi and Abtin, 2013). It is defined as a set of managerial decisions and actions that result in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of actions that are necessary for sustaining the success of an organisation's long-term performance (Bauman, 2018, in Eresia-Eke and Soriakumar 2021). The concept has been used effectively in the turning around of troubled organisations and to ensure their continuous superior performance over competitors (Hitt et al, 2012). It is considered more effective because it involves identifying the organisation's current mission, objectives and strategies, analysing the environment, identifying the opportunities and threats,

analysing the organisation's resources, identifying the strengths and weaknesses, formulating and implementing strategies and evaluating the results (Robbins and Coulter, 1996 in Gure and Karugu, 2018). Strategic management practice is in its process adoption, which involves strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation and control elements.

According to Sager and Sørensen (2011) in Retnandari (2022), the success (or failure) of strategy implementation in public sector is determined by political factors which are significantly salient in the public sector. With reference to this assertion, the current study seeks to explore other behavioural factors, embedded within public sector organisations, which affect their practice of strategic management. Therefore, it is against this background that this study seeks to explore behavioural factors affecting strategic management with particular focus on urban councils in Zimbabwe.

Literature review

The study adopted both the theoretical and empirical literature reviews in exploring behavioural organisational factors affecting strategic management practice in urban councils in Zimbabwe. These are discussed below.

Theoretical review

Mckinsey 7s Theory

The study utilised the McKensey 7s model in explaining the influence of behavioural organisational factors on strategic management practices in urban councils in Zimbabwe. The model was developed by the McKinsey and Company consulting entity in 1980 (Manktelow and Carlson, 2014 in Murugi and Ongoto 2018). It demonstrates that successful change execution should be adjusted to the seven components in an organisational setting,

which are skills, shared values, staff, systems, structure, strategy and style (Murugi and Ontogo, 2018). The main argument of the model is that the success of a business depends on interrelated seven factors and that the process of strategic management is not only made up of creating strategies but also considering the other factors expressed in it (Gokdeniz, et al. 2017). On the other hand, Pascale and Athos (1991) cited in Huttasin et al (2018) found out that the

model can also be used to examine an organisation's internal factors which can be a platform to achieve competitive position because it facilitates the improvement of organisation within the context of change. Therefore, as Odeh (2021) observed, the model is an effective tool aimed at depicting how effectiveness can be achieved within an organisation through the interaction of these seven different organisational elements as shown on figure 1, below.

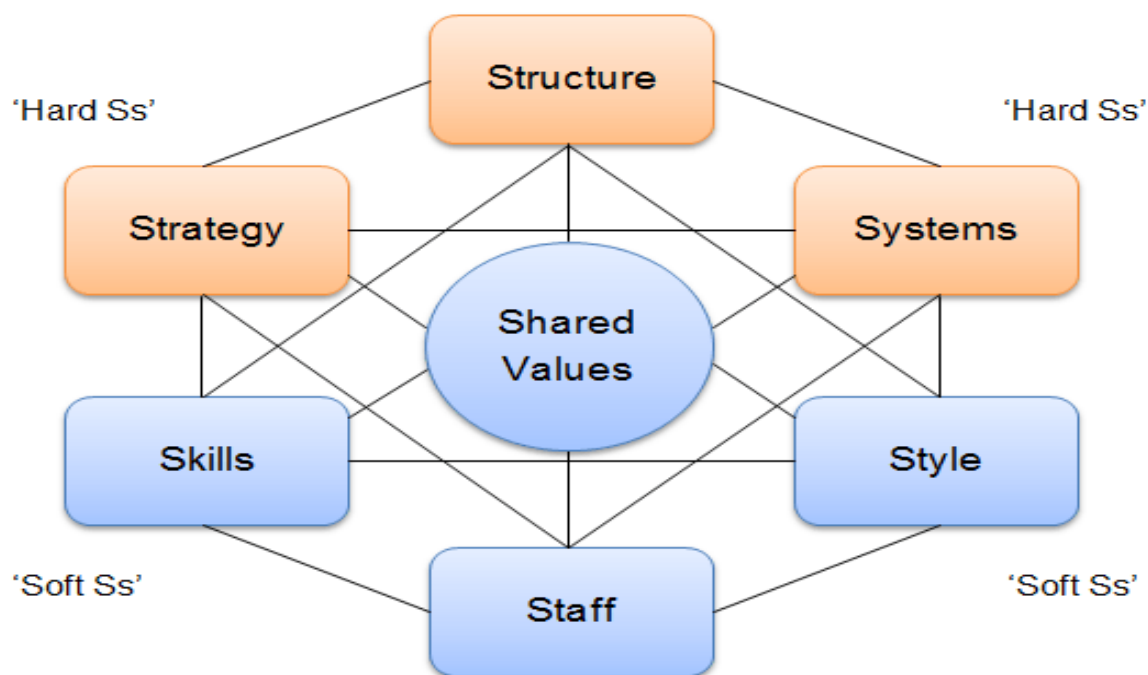


Figure 1: McKinsey 7s Model (Demir and Kocaoglu, 2019)

According to Donselaar (2012), the McKinsey 7S model identifies structure as the division of activities, integration and coordination mechanisms and the nature of the informal organisations. In other words, the element refers to the company's organisation in terms of leadership, command, accountability, and responsibility (Robbins, Judge and Vohra, 2019; Khan, Taher and Islam, 2021, in Odeh, 2021). Precisely, the structure of an organisation is defined as the clustering of

tasks and people into small groups, as in dividing the organisation into smaller sections such as departments, divisions or units (De Wit and Meyer, 2003 in Donselaar, 2012). That is the reason Huggins (2005) in Donselarr (2012) describes it as consisting of five parts namely jobs, the authority to do those jobs, the grouping of jobs in a logical fashion, the manager's span of control and mechanisms of coordination. Therefore, according to Odeh (2021), organisational

structure is one of the most conspicuous features to change as failure to create a cohesive and efficient structure undermines the ability to perform tasks necessary for attaining the stated goals and objectives.

The other element of the Mckensey 7S model is strategy. This element of the model entails a well-formulated business plan that allows the company to create an action plan to realise sustainability supported by the organisation's mission and values (Ali and Anwar, 2021, in Odeh, 2021). It is referred to the actions that a company plans in response to or in anticipation of changes in its external environment, its customers and its competitors (Waterman et al, 1980 in Donselaar, 2012). As such, as Higgins (2005) in Donselaar (2012) emphasises, strategies are formulated to achieve organisational purposes. Therefore, changes in strategic purposes lead to changes in strategy, thus helping in the alignment of the whole organisation under one vision and objective from top management to junior staff members. In that case, the McKinsey 7S model identifies not only the strategy as a separate part, but also focuses on the purpose of the strategy and the way the organisation seeks to enhance its competitive advantage (Donselaar, 2012).

A system, as another element of the model is referred to as the technical infrastructure within the company that facilitates workflow and decision-making. In other words, these are regarded as the procedures and processes that determine how to conduct business within the organisation (Odeh, 2021). Similarly, Waterman et al (1980) in Donselaar (2012) consider systems to all formal and informal procedures that help the organisation to function. In relation to strategy implementation, systems are

related to existence of information technology systems, which assist in implementing strategy, identifying controlling mechanisms and if the effectiveness of the strategy implementation is monitored (Donselaar, 2012). As such, controlling can be in the form of providing feedback to employees, in order to help to check the errors and to take the corrective action so that deviation from standards are minimised and stated goals of the organisation are achieved in the desired way. Thus, in conclusion, Cummings and Worley (2014) in Odeh (2021) reiterate that an organisational system must support the goals of its employees through acquiring and using their feedback on goal clarity to formulate long-term strategy.

The extent, to which the organisation has adequate skills so as to achieve its strategy, is most crucial (Higgins, 2005 in Donselaar et al, 2012). As such, Cummings and Worley (2014) in Odeh (2021) describe skills as the competences and capabilities of the company that help the employee perform at their best and achieve their objectives for the company's overall success. In that sense, Odeh (2021) believes skilling of employees can be achieved through mentoring, task diversity, autonomy and job rotation as this help in boosting creativity and effectiveness in all business activities. Therefore, according to the model, the company's crucial attributes and/or capabilities are the skills and skills are related to the organisation's core competencies and distinctive capabilities (Waterman et al, 1980 in Donselaar et al, 2012).

Style, as the other element of the model, entails the tone and attitude towards work set by the top management through how they interact with the other staff members and make decisions (Odeh,

2021). Accordingly, Waterman et al (1980) relate the 'style' element of the model, to the company's culture and its ability to change, whereas Higgins (2005) refers it to a way of leadership and/or management and stipulates it by the behaviour of leaders/managers when relating to subordinates and other employees (Donselaar (2012). As such, the model identifies style as the typical behaviour patterns of key groups and other professionals and the organisation as a whole (Donselaar (2012). Thus the model postulates that the communication style adopted by leaders play an important role in ensuring that all the employees have a common mind set as the program aims.

According to Odeh (2021), during an organisational change program, managers must provide their staff members with individual attention to increase optimism about change, including encouraging the employees to do away with their personal interests for the sake of teamwork and the organisation in general through the spirit of transformation. Thus, Higgins (2005) in Donselaar et al (2012) refers to staff as the number and types of employees with what types of individual and group competencies the firm needs to meet its strategic purposes. In other terms, the model refers staff to all the human resources including the management and the employees. In support of the assertion, Odeh (2021) affirms that staff is the element concerned with the quality and quantity of employees that the organisation needs for the achievement of its objectives. Moreover, Waterman et al (1980) in Donselaar et al (2012) acknowledge that the category of 'skills' relates to the employees of the company in the sense of "people as a pool of resources to be nurtured, developed, guarded and allocated". Therefore, in the model staff can be defined as human resources in terms of their demographic,

educational and attitudinal characteristics.

In the model, the other element is shared values. This refers to the mission, values and objectives that form the organisational foundation and play a significant role in aligning all fundamental elements to sustain an effective corporate design (Wong and Avery (2008) and Arieli, Sagiv and Roccas (2020) in Odeh (2021). These shared values are about the guiding concepts of an organisation and in the model's interpretation, it is all about how the organisational core beliefs and values influence the organisation's orientation to customers, employees, shareholders and society at large (Donselaar, et al., 2012).

Empirical studies

In Canada, Hendry (2021) evaluated factors for successful policy implementation for intensification and infrastructure investment in Ontario regional governments. In the study, the researcher identified the strategic management factors for successful policy implementation for intensification and infrastructure investment in regional governments. These factors included organisational capabilities, administrative leadership within governments and administrative governance. A qualitative case study analysis was employed to examine the themes. The results implied that strategic planning, information management, public support and acceptance, innovation for continuous improvement and prioritisation models can be leveraged by regional municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to prioritise water and sewer infrastructure to meet new Growth Plan targets. Since the study was done in Canada and innovation for continuous improvement emerged as one of the main

factors affecting successful implementation of strategies, this study sought to explore the extent to which the same factor (technology innovativeness capability) is also affecting strategic management practice in urban councils in Zimbabwe, using a quantitative approach.

Eresia-Eke and Soriakumar (2021) carried out a study on strategy implementation barriers and remedies in public sector organisations in South Africa. From this qualitative study, it emerged that strategy implementation emanate from both the internal and external environment of an organisation. Specific barriers identified were primarily linked to resources, structure of an organisation, organisational culture, politics, stakeholders, infrastructure and government regulations. Since organisational culture and structure emerged as one of the factors affecting strategy implementation in South Africa, this study sought to investigate the impact of these behavioural factors on strategic management practices in urban councils in Zimbabwe using a quantitative methodology.

In Kenya, Weyama (2020) explored the culture effect on strategic planning practices, specifically focusing on a survey of public secondary schools in Migori County. The study employed a descriptive research design. The results of the study indicated that there was an outstanding relationship between organisational culture and strategic management practices. Therefore, this study focused on the extent to which organisational culture is related to strategic management practice in public sector organisations (urban councils) in Zimbabwe using the same quantitative approach.

Efigenia and Kalambehambe (2020) assessed the factors affecting strategy

implementation in public sector organisations in Namibia. The study used a mixed research method. Qualitative data was collected using interviews and quantitative data was collected through questionnaires from forty employees. The study concluded that inadequate resources, mainly in terms of finance and human resources, unclear communication strategy, poor organisational structure, the lack of support from various stakeholders, and lack of leadership in taking corrective measures were among the causes of poor strategy implementation at the chosen organisation. Since organisational structure emerged as one of the factors affecting strategy implementation in public sector organisations in Namibia, using a mixed-method approach, this study sought to explore its impact on public sector organisations (urban councils) in Zimbabwe using the quantitative approach only.

Behavioural organisational factors affecting strategic management practice

Organisational culture

Organisational culture is defined as the values, beliefs and hidden assumptions that organisational members have in common (Cameron and Quinn, 2011; Denison, 1999; Deshpande and Webster 1989 and Miron et al, 2004 in Janjua et al, 2021). Similarly, Schein (1984) in Karlsson et al (2022) refers it to a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems. In that way, appropriate cultural values help organisations rapidly

respond to customer needs and wants, or competitor actions, thus making it strategically relevant (Linnenluecke and Griffiths (2010) in Reddy and Scheepers, 2019). If organisational culture is managed effectively, it can be leveraged to reach the organisational objectives (Rashid et al, 2003; and Lee et al, 2008 in Karlsson et al, 2022). Accordingly, developing an enabling and progressive organisational culture is among the primary management practices and is considered as a critical tool of strategic management (Janjua, et al, 2021). Thus as MacCormack, Dunn and Kemerer (2012) in Reddy and Scheepers (2019) emphasise, those organisations that are unable to understand how their cultures affect their ability to execute strategy, usually set themselves up for disappointment or even failure.

Nevertheless, culture can be a liability when the shared values are not in agreement with those that further the organisation's effectiveness, especially when an organisation's environment is undergoing rapid change, and its entrenched culture may no longer be appropriate (Odera and Muendo, 2017). It can work against an organisation by erecting barriers which prevent the attainment of corporate strategies including resistance to change and lack of commitment (Armstrong, 2014 in Odera and Muendo, 2017).

Organisational structure

In strategic management context, organisational structure refers to the durable arrangement within a business to perform the tasks defined by its strategy and these include the distribution of authority and responsibility, the reporting relationship and the mechanism for integrating its functions (Salau, 2022). It determines how tasks are divided, who reports to whom, and the formal

coordination mechanisms and interaction patterns that will be followed (Hugh and Fildman, 1986, cited in Fauzi, et al, 2021). As such, organisational structures are coherent systems for performing work in the most proficient manner and play a significant role to assist management team to accomplish its objectives and pursue the firm's strategy (Robbin and De Cenzo, 2005 in Yusof, 2021). For an organisation to deliver its plan, the strategy and the structure must be woven together seamlessly and a company's organisational structure must support its strategy (Omar, 2021). Therefore, institutions have to devote time, resources and effort in ensuring that strategy formulation and implementation are constantly aligned to corporate structure, as any mismatch between strategy and these structures is likely to obstruct organisational development and attainment of intended goals (Thompson, 1991; Gerdin and Greve, 2004, and Fullerton et al, 2013, in Maine et al, 2021).

Furthermore, according to Burns and Stalker (1967) in Sahin and Sesen (2021), organisational structures are basically classified into mechanical and organic systems. As such, mechanistic system is described as a rigid and hierarchical structures dominated by high formalisation and top-down management (Burns and Stalker, 1994 and Reigle, 2001 in Yusof, 2021). Increased specialisation and high degrees of formalisation (coercive) indicate mechanistic structure that utilises centralisation (hindering) to determine the distribution of authority (Masnour and David, 2021). Conversely, organic organisations are defined as a low formalisation, network structure of control and authority, and fluid job descriptions (Burns and Stalker, 1994; Reigle, 2001 in Yusof, 2021). In other terms, Dust et al. (2014) in Sahin and

Sesen (2021) describe organic systems as flexible structure characterised by flexible rules, communication and coordination thus allows for quick decision-making powers which are diffused throughout the organisation, and the organisation can adapt to external changes more quickly. This encourages creativity, innovation and collaboration with decisions reached through consensus (Mansour and David, 2021).

Moreover, organisational structures include dimensions of complexity, formality and centralisation (Fauzi, et al, 2021). In this context, complexity describes the degree of differentiation that exists in the firm, level of specialisation, division of labour and extent to which company units are spread (Beersma et al, 2003; Wheelen, 1994 in Fauzi et al, 2021). Specialisation in an organisation is concerned with the extent to which jobs have been defined in details for the required skill, knowledge and experience (Green et al, 2005 in Iranmanesh, 2020). In the same context, formalisation is defined as the extent to which communications, regulations, rules, instructions and procedures are written down upon which the company relies on (Bres et al, 2019, in Iranmanesh, 2020). Additionally, centralisation is described as adversely linked with the dissemination of information and intelligence gathering thus it can decrease the discussion and exchanges of thoughts which are critical for developing entirely new ideas in strategy making (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993 in Iranmanesh, 2020). Conversely, decentralisation is defined as the task of transferring control and coordination from the top management to lower management or employees, who show responsibility for the tasks and commitment to the firm's goals, thus leading to a higher strategic management

practice capability (Moreno-Luzon and Peris, 1998 in Iranmanesh, 2020).

Nonetheless, no single structure is good for all strategies and environment hence the adoption of strategic management fails in some business because of an inability to adapt their structures rapidly to evolving strategies and changing environments (Salau, 2022). Therefore, as Hage and Dewar (1973) and Tatikonda (1999) in Sahin and Sesen (2021) stressed, structures that increase the flexibility of employees and ensure their participation in decision-making processes are effective in the strategic management process, as it provides them with greater autonomy and the opportunity to cope with uncertainty.

Technological innovation capability (TIC)

Technological capability is described as accumulated knowledge, skill, experience and organisational base which enable a firm to acquire, develop and use technology to achieve competitive advantage (Hobbay and Rush, 2007 in Lestari and Ardianti, 2019). On the other end, Ortega (2010) in Lestari and Ardianti (2019) proclaims that technological capability is the company's ability to perform technical functions, to develop new products, to develop new processes, and to operate company facilities effectively. Thus Hung and Chou (2013) in Kalko et al (2022) conclude that technological innovation capability is one of the most important factors for a firm to enhance performance in the current global industry.

There are three elements of organisational technology innovation, namely technology acquisition, absorptive capacity and technology transfer. External technology acquisition is regarded as the

process of absorbing technologies from sources outside an organisation, such as through in-licensing or strategic alliances. This is supported by the knowledge-based view which states that firms gain a competitive advantage through exploring, exploiting and integrating different specialised skills and knowledge through external technology acquisition and internal research and development activities (Kalko, et al, 2022). Moreover, Amesho et al (2021) reiterates that organisations, including city governments, metropolitan cities and municipalities, anticipate having sustainable competitive advantage and this can be achieved through managing technology and innovation.

On the other hand, absorptive capacity is the ability of firms to perceive the importance of new information, assimilate it, and apply it to business goals (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990, cited in Kalko et al., 2022). It is defined as a company's ability to use external knowledge through the acquisition, assimilation, transformation and exploitation phases of organisational learning processes (Lewin, Massini and Peeters, 2011 and Zahara and George, 2002 in Kalko, et al, 2022). Therefore, technology absorptive capacity is dynamic and can affect the firm's potential for the creation and deployment of the knowledge required to develop other organisational capabilities, including organisational learning and organisational innovation, which provide the firm the fundamentals for the development of competitive advantage that produces performance excellence (Barney, 1991; Kumar and Nti, 1998; Dyer and Singeh, 1998 and Kim, 1998 in Saadi and Che Razak, 2019).

In the same context, technology transfer is defined as the process of transferring novel methods, technologies, inventions

and specialised technical abilities and skills from one organisation to another to foster creativity, innovation, and firm performance (Appiah-Adu, Okpattah, and Djokoto, 2016 in Kalko, et al, 2022). According to Zahra and Kirchoff (2001) and Dollinger (1995) in Saadi and Che Razak (2019) technology capability has a significant effect on economic growth, employee's productivity, environment, organisational strategy, sustainable competitive advantage, firm success, corporate social responsibility as well as organisational performance and sustainability. Therefore, to assure the attainment of organisational vision and goals, organisations must identify and manage technology transfer operations and activities (Bozeman, 2000, in Kalko et al, 2022).

Method, data and analysis

The study adopted the quantitative research approach. A sample of 341 participants was drawn from a population of 2936 using a Krejcie and Morgan sampling determination technique. A questionnaire was used in the collection of data from the 341 participants drawn from the six urban councils in Zimbabwe. SPSS Version 23 was used in the analysis of the collected data. For reliability evaluations on quantifiable data, the instrument's internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. Each research construct was subjected to reliability tests. The Cronbach's alpha for each research item was higher than 0.7 showing that the instrument was typically suitable and acceptable as the scale goes from excellent to decent to ok to terrible to unacceptable at 0.5. The data gathering provides evidence that the study instrument items were consistent and convergent across all research categories, which gives the collected data

believability. The used questionnaire was reliable because it adhered to internal consistency standards. Tables were used for data presentation.

Results and discussion

Descriptive statistics was applied in the assessment of behavioural organisational

factors affecting strategic management practice in urban councils in Zimbabwe. The assessment was done in terms of the flexibility in the organisation’s culture, organisational structure and the technology innovativeness capability of an organisation. Mean score, standard deviation; minimum and maximum values were used to describe the factors as presented on table 1 below.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on organisational factors affecting strategic management practice

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Mean response | Std. Deviation |
|--|-----|---------|---------|------|---------------|----------------|
| Flexibility of culture for SM practices | 241 | 1 | 5 | 2.38 | Disagree | .860 |
| Do the policies support SM practices | 241 | 1 | 5 | 2.25 | Disagree | .761 |
| Tall structure support SM practices | 241 | 1 | 5 | 3.65 | Agree | .926 |
| Flat structure supports SM practices | 241 | 1 | 5 | 2.80 | Neutral | .880 |
| Technological infrastructure available for SM practice | 241 | 1 | 5 | 2.00 | Disagree | .642 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 241 | | | | | |

A look at behavioural organisational factors affecting strategic management in urban councils in Zimbabwe show that organisational culture flexibility, policy supporting strategic management practice, and availability of technological infrastructure for strategic management practices show mean score of (2.38, 2.25 and 2.0 respectively). The mean score corresponds with disagree mean response, thus urban councils` culture was found to be not flexible to support strategic management practice while the available policies and technological infrastructure

were not supportive of strategic management practice. The existence on non-zero standard deviation however imply that some respondents could have been agreeing to the items while some were indifferent though the overall impression was a “disagree”. Organizational structure measured both on availability of tall structure (3.65) and flat structure (2.80) corresponds to mean response of agree and neutral respectively implying that urban councils have tall organizational structure which delays decision making in organisations thus not

in sync with strategic management practice.

The research hypotheses were tested using the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), in order to support as true or not support as false, the statements of claim or associations between the study variables. A Standard Regression Weight (SRW), Critical Ratio (CR) and profitability (p) were used in the determination. Standard regression weight was used to correct for heteroscedasticity and the expected condition is ($1 < SRW > 0.09$). This therefore, means that SRW values

must not exceed 1 and as such values above 0.09 are preferred. On the other hand, Hair et al (2014) asserts that critical ratios are expected to be huge enough above 2 ($CR > 2$) at the significant level p value of less than 0.001 ($p < 0.001$). Moreso, the authors indicate that a hypothesis should meet more than one of the required statistics so as to allow for the acceptance of the proclamations and more importantly that the p value must not be very huge above the stated cut-off of $p < 0.001$. Thus the lower the p value, the greater the confidence and the lower the chances of data errors.

Table 2: Results of hypotheses testing

| Hypothesis | Hypothesised relationship | SRW | CR | Remark |
|----------------|---------------------------|--------|------------|-----------|
| H ₁ | OC - SMP | -0.410 | -10.772*** | Supported |
| H ₂ | OS - SMP | 0.101 | 7.525*** | Supported |
| H ₃ | TIC - SMP | -0.151 | -8.281*** | Supported |

Notes: SRW standard regression weight, CR critical ratio, *** significant at $p < 0.001$, adjusted R² =0.56

Source: Survey data (2023)

Results presented in Table 2 above clearly show that organisational culture is a significant predictor of strategic management practice. A standardised regression weight of -0.410 imply that urban councils culture as it obtains now is negatively related to strategic management practice as it is not flexible and does not encourage innovation. Similarly, technology innovativeness capability (TIC) was also found to be statistically significant at 0.001 in explaining variability in strategic management practice in urban councils. A standardised regression weight (SRW) of 0.151 imply that there is a negative association between technology

innovativeness capability and strategic management practice as a unit change in the factor would lead to a 0.151 unit change in the opposite direction in strategic management practice. Additionally, organisational structure was found to be positively related to strategic management practice as reflected by a standardised regression weight of 0.101. The three variables which were found to be significant in explaining strategic management practice were then reduced to a structural equation modelling path as presented on figure 1 below.

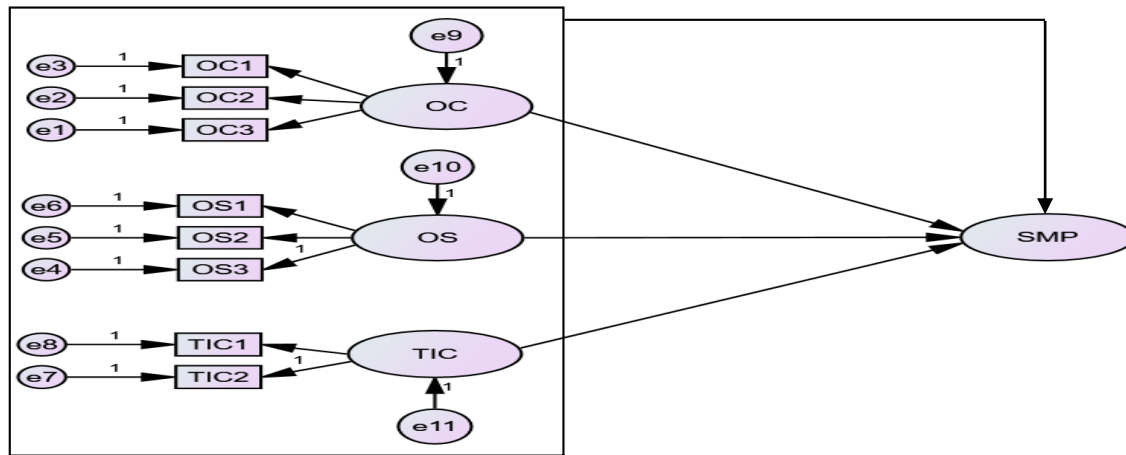


Figure 2: Structural Equation Modelling path diagram

The structural equation modelling path was used to test the associations with the results in the standardised formats as the model is used to either support or refute study hypothesis. Additionally, the structural equation modelling path demonstrates how the study’s constructs or key variables, stand to represent the suggested research model. Therefore, from the above structural equation modelling path diagram on figure 2 above, organisational culture (OC), organisational structure (OS) and technology innovativeness capability (TIC) emerged as the main variables significant in explaining strategic management practice in urban councils in Zimbabwe.

Conclusions

The paper sought to explore behavioural organisational factors affecting strategic management practices in urban councils in

Zimbabwe. Three variables, namely organisational culture, organisational structure and technology innovativeness capability were selected for analysis. Results from the quantitative analysis showed that inflexible organisational culture and tall organisational structures characterises the majority of urban councils in Zimbabwe. The results also revealed that the majority of urban councils are still low in terms of technology innovativeness capability. Therefore, it can be concluded that the flexibility of organisational culture, the size of the organisational structure and the degree of technology innovativeness capability have a significant effect on strategic management practice in urban councils in Zimbabwe. A conceptual framework was developed drawn from the conclusions made, as indicated on Figure 3, below.

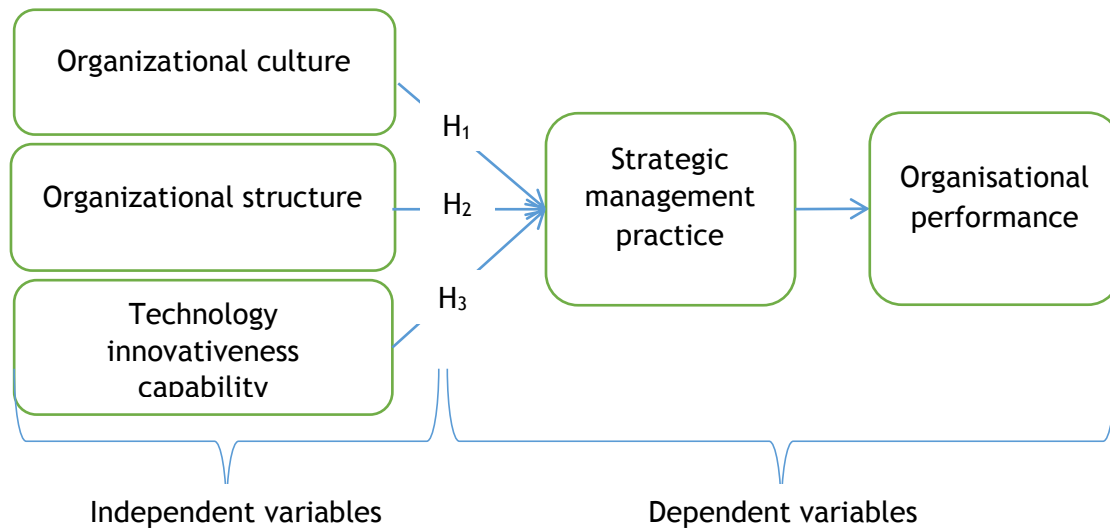


Figure 3. Behavioural organisational factors affecting strategic management practices

Implications, limitations and suggestion

The study contributes to the body of knowledge in the fields of business management, organisational behaviour and strategic management. It also acts as a guide to decision making processes in public sector organisations, in general and urban councils, in particular. Conversely, the study has some scope and methodological limitations. The study focused on urban councils in Zimbabwe, whose strategic management challenges differ from other public entities either locally or in other countries. Methodologically, a quantitative approach was used which has its own peculiar limitations. Therefore, in those circumstances, a further study is suggested, focusing on other profit and non-profit organisations either in Zimbabwe or outside the country, using a different methodology.

References

Amesho, K.T.T., Edoun, E.I., Naidoo, V. & Pooe, S. (2021). Managing competitive advantage through

technology and innovation systems and its impacts on service delivery within Kaohsinny city government in Taiwan. *South African Journal of information management* 23(1), a1348.

<https://doi.org/10.4102/sajim.v23i1.1348>

Amesho, K.T.T., Edoun, E.I., Gara, A.K. & Pooe, S. (2021). Key challenges facing metropolitan Cities or Municipalities in managing competitive advantage through technology and innovation. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 9 (1) a507.

<https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v9i1.507>

Donselaar, R.V. (2012). The organisational drivers and barriers of strategy implementation within a non-profit organisation: A case study at the Netherlands Red Cross. *University of Twente*

Efigenia, S. & Kalambehambe, N. (2020). Assessing factors affecting public sector strategy implementation - A

- Namibian case study. *Current Business Issues Journal (CBIJ)*, 3(2), 10-39
- Eresia-Eke, C.E. & Soriakumar, A.D. (2021). Strategy Implementation Barriers and Remedies in Public Sector Organisations. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 12(1), 47 - 62
- Fauzi, T.H., Santosa, P., Purwanti, Y. & Nurhayati. (2021). The effect of internal elements of strategic management of organisational structure, management role and employee behaviour on Corporate Mission. *Management Science Letters*, 11 (2021), 1189 - 1196
- Gokdeniz, I., Kartal, C. & Komuren, K. (2017). Strategic assessment based on 7S McKinsey model for a business by using Analytic Network Process (ANP). *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(6), 342 - 353
- Gure, A.K. & Karugu, J. (2018). Strategic Management practices and performance of small and micro enterprises in Nairobi City County, Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 3(1), 1-26
- Hendry, V. 'Strategic Management in Ontario Regional Government: Evaluating the factors for successful policy implementation for intensification and infrastructure investment', (2021). MPA Major Research Papers. 206. <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/lgp-mrps/206>
- Hitt, M., Ireland, R., Sirmon, D. & Cheryl, T. (2012). Strategic Entrepreneurship: Creating Value for Individuals, Organisations and Society. (January 28, 2012). *Mays Business School Research paper*, <https://doi.org.10.2139/ssrn.1994491>
- Huttasin, N., Dinkoksung, S. & Foster, M.J. (2018). Applying McKinsey 7S model in Community-based tourism development. *International Journal of Management and Applied Science*, 4(11), 83 - 88
- Iranmanesh, M., Kumar, K.M., Foroughi, B., Mavi, R.K. & Min, N.H. (2020). The impacts of organisational structure on operational performance through innovation, capability: innovstive culture as moderator. *Review of managerial science*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11846-020-00407-y>
- Janjua, Q.R., Hanif, A. & Baig, M. (2021). The impact of organisational culture on job satisfaction in universities of Pakistan: A Competing Values Framework Perspective. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 3(3), 340 - 351
- Kalko, M.M., Erena, O.T. & Debele, S.A. (2022). Technology management practices and innovation: Empirical evidence from medium and large scale manufacturing firms in Ethiopia. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, <https://doi:10.1080/20421338.2022.2040828>
- Karlsson, M., Karlsson, F., Astron, J. & Denk, T. (2021). The effect of perceived organisational culture on employees' information

- security compliance. *London. Emerald.*
- Lestari, E.R. & Ardianti, F.L. (2019). Technological capability and business success: The mediating role of innovation, IOP conference series. *Earth Environment Sciences* (250) <https://doi:10.1088/1755-1315/250/1/012039>
- Maine, J., Samuelsson, E.F. & Uman, T. (2021). Ambidextrous sustainability, organisational structure and performance in Hybrid organisations. *Emerald, AAAJ*, 35(3), 734 - 769
- Murugi, N.C. & Ongoto, H.K. (2018). Strategic management practices and change implementation in selected public universities in Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 3(4), 124 - 149
- Masnour, H.F. and David, S.A. (2021). Teachers' organisational commitment in Mechanistic school structures: A study conducted on the job characteristics of a private school in Abu Dhabi. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Educational Management Research*, 6(1), 11 - 26
- Odeh, G. (2021). Implementing Mckinsey 7S model of Organisational diagnosis and planned change, Best Western Italy case analysis. *Journal of International Business and Management*, 11(4), 1 - 8
- Odera, D.A. & Muendo, D. (2017). Factors affecting strategic change management in the public sector: A case of the Ministry of energy and Petroleum. *The Strategic Journal of Business and Change Management*, 4(4), 1122 - 1144
- Omar, A.Y. (2021). The effect of strategic plan on organisational performance in Remittance companies in Mogadishu, Somalia. *EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal*, 7(1), 192 - 198
- Reddy, M. & Scheepers, C. (2019). *Influence of organisational culture on strategy execution in South African organisations*. The Journal of Applied Business Research. Vol. 35. No. 4, pp 109 - 128
- Regional, Town & Country Planning Act (Chapter 29:12)
- Report of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Local Government, Rural and Urban Development report on service delivery (2016). *Parliament of Zimbabwe.*
- Report of the Auditor-General (2016). Report of the Auditor-General Financial year ended 31 December 2018. *Zimbabwe Office of the Auditor-General.*
- Report of the Auditor-General (2019). Report of the Auditor-General Financial year ended 31 December 2021. *Zimbabwe Office of the Auditor-General.*
- Retnandari, N.D. (2022). Implementation of Strategic Planning in Regional/Municipal Governments, obstacles and challenges. *Policy and Governance Review* 6(2), 155-175. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30589/pgr.v6i2.556>
- Saad, I.A. & Che Razak, R. (2019). Technological capability innovative, human capital and organisational sustainability: A

- proposal framework. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 10(6), 219 - 228
- Sahin, K. & Sesen, H. (2021). Intrapreneurship and Process Innovation in the Banking sector: The mediating role of organisational structure. *Revista Argentina de Clinica Psicologica*, x (1), 645 - 657
- Salau, A.N. (2022). Appraisal of the effect of strategic management on the performance of small and medium Enterprises: A case study of some selected SMEs in Lagos State. *Iconic Research and Engineering Journals*, 5(8),162 – 171
- Weyama, J.A. (2020). Organisational culture: Its effects on strategic planning practices in Kenya (A survey of public Secondary Schools in Migori County). *Global Journal of Management and Business Research: A Administration and Management*, 20(8)
- Yusof, M.S. (2021). Entrepreneurial Competencies, Organisational structure and Small and Medium Enterprises' performance in Northern Malaysia. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Management Practices*. 4(16), 30 - 37
- Zaei, M.E., Yarahamadzei, M.H. & Abtin, A. (2013). Strategic Management Practice in the Local Authorities: Factors associated with adoption of strategic management practice in the Local Authorities. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 5(3), 739 - 744