DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership

Adventist University of Africa

School of Postgraduate Studies

Title: INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

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Date completed: May 2025

This study examined the influence of strategic plan implementation on the performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Its primary objective was to evaluate how effective these institutions convert strategic objectives into practical actions that enhance overall performance. Employing a concurrent mixed-methods approach, the research utilizes questionnaires, interviews, surveys, and document analysis for data collection. Both qualitative and quantitative data was obtained from 248 participants of selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between effective strategic plan implementation and institutional performance.

Institutions adept at translating and executing strategic objectives showed notable improvements in performance metrics, including academic outcomes, student experiences, and stakeholder satisfaction. Successful execution hinges on aligning objectives with available resources, establishing clear accountability, and cultivating a culture of continuous improvement. The study identifies several barriers to effective strategic plan implementation, such as resource constraints and resistance to change. It emphasizes the critical role of leadership, particularly pedagogical leadership, in overcoming these challenges and driving strategic initiative success. The study concluded that there is need to align strategic planning and implementation with the religious principles and educational philosophies underpinning the SDA institutions for improved performance. The study recommends increased autonomy for these institutions, strengthening partnerships, and enhancing stakeholder engagement in decision-making processes. It advocates for aligning organizational culture with strategic goals, addressing resistance to change proactively, and clearly communicating mission statements to all involved parties. Regular monitoring and evaluation of strategic impacts and conducting related workshops is necessary for improved results.

Key Terms: Strategic planning; Strategy implementation; Key performance indicators; Zimbabwe

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A Dissertation

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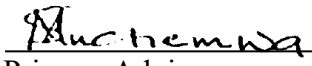

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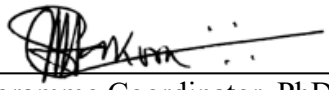

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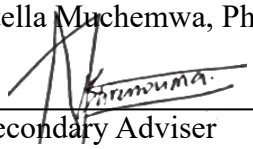

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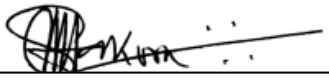

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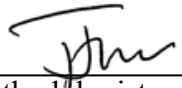

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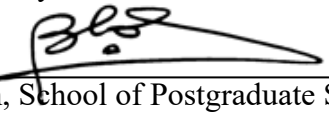

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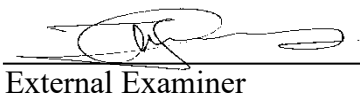

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To God the Father, the Lord and Saviour of Mankind,

my Wife Stabiso, my sons Nyasha, Thabani, and

Thamsaqa, and my daughter Thandoluhle.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CZC	Zimbabwe Central Conference
CSF(s)	Critical Success Factors
EFA	Education for All
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EFR	Enterprise Resource Planning
FOB	Faith Based Organizations
KPI(s)	Key Performance Indicators
NWZC	North West Zimbabwe Conference
RBV	Resource –Based View
SDA	Seventh –day Adventist
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
ZCUC	Zimbabwe Central Union Conference
Zim ASSETS	Zimbabwe Agenda for Socio- Economic Development Goals

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my wife, Stabiso, for supporting me through my dissertation writing. I am also grateful to my parents Janet and my late father, Ezekiel Machila who instilled a passion for God and a desire to study his word. I am thankful to all the Ph.D. students and associates who have pushed my reasoning in this project. Professor Stella Muchemwa, Professor Caren Ouma and Dr Josephine Ganu deserve sincere thanks for their prompt support and direction during the project. Dr. Lilia Ponyatovska the Director of Research, Dr. Lossan Bonde, Dean of SPSS, and Prof Musa Nyakora, Director of Ph.D. Leadership must also be appreciated for their assistance and support. Finally, and most significantly, God ought to be acknowledged for giving me the chance and means to complete this Ph.D. program. This dissertation has been completed thanks to His strength, guidance, and persistent power.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Globally, the implementation of strategic plans in educational institutions has garnered significant interest and importance. As educational landscapes evolve, institutions increasingly recognize the necessity of strategic planning to bolster their performance and competitiveness. The globalization of education has accentuated the importance of benchmarking against international standards and best practices (Kache, 2018), propelling institutions to adopt strategic plans aligned with global trends and standards. The objective is to enhance overall performance and relevance in the global arena. Scholars and researchers from various regions have contributed valuable insights into the role of strategic planning in educational institutions and its impact on effectiveness and success. Mintzberg (1994), in a study based in North America, contends that strategic planning empowers institutions to proactively address external challenges and opportunities, facilitating adaptation to changing educational needs and expectations. By aligning goals and resources with well-defined strategic plans, institutions can judiciously allocate resources, cultivate innovative programs, and fortify their competitive advantage (Baldwin & Hughes, 2017).

Furthermore, Bryson (2018), in his research conducted in the United States, emphasizes that strategic planning enables educational institutions to establish a coherent vision, mission, and objectives, providing a clear pathway for their future

progression. This holistic approach ensures alignment across all aspects of the institution, including curriculum design, pedagogy, staff development, and infrastructure, thereby enhancing their contribution to the attainment of strategic goals.

Adopting a strategic plan in educational institutions also fosters a culture of evidence-based decision-making (Bryson, 2018). Through studies conducted in various educational settings, it has been shown that by collecting and analyzing data on student performance, stakeholder feedback, and market trends, institutions can make informed decisions and continuously improve their educational offerings. This data-driven approach helps institutions identify areas for improvement, allocate resources effectively, and monitor progress towards strategic goals. Moreover, strategic planning enables educational institutions to build partnerships and collaborations at a global level. In an increasingly interconnected world, institutions that have a clear strategic direction and a strong reputation are more likely to attract international students, forge research collaborations, and establish academic partnerships (Knight, 2011), particularly in Europe and North America. Strategic planning helps institutions position themselves as global players, ensuring their programs and services are relevant and competitive in the international market. However, implementing strategic plans in educational institutions is not without challenges. Common obstacles include resistance to change, limited resources, and the need for effective communication and stakeholder engagement (Bryson, 2018).

As indicated in the work of McLeod (2019), numerous systems all around the globe, including those in the United States, have been challenged by the struggles which can be attributed to the lack of strategies that are qualitatively more effective in the carrying out of activities and policies of the church-based education. Areba et al

(2016) discuss issues including the organizational designs, the leadership styles and the dominant trends in these educational systems, with particular reference to Africa. Onyango (2017) provides an overview of issues faced in the implementation of strategic plans, which include, among others, ethnic or cultural differences and belief systems, especially in East Africa. While strategic implementation is important in Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) in the US, existing evidence (Roy et al., 2015) shows that many strategies that have been put in place have massively failed in implementation. Roy (2015) notes that an alarming 90% of the strategies that are neatly presented on paper do not make it past the implementation process. Donna (2018) provides additional data supporting this by saying that strategy implementation problems cause 90% of strategy failures, data collected from various researches conducted in North America being the source of such claims. Owino and Oloko (2015) reveal that 50% of decisions taken within an organization are not executed successfully, while Corboy and Corbin similarly, state that perfectly sound 70% of the strategies do not work in practice, this finding has also been made in Australia. Therefore, the absence of a proper planning mechanism and implementing structures puts doubt on the vision of the organization to achieve its goals, which significantly raises the probability of the collapse of the organization (Ambia, 2012).

In researching the scope of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) in the United Kingdom, Nistor (2018) claims that the likelihood of a strategy not being put into action within the FBOs is low. However, Nistor agrees with Torry (2014) that strategy implementation in FBOs is achieved only in a small degree. Thus, the available literature calls for consideration of the issue of strategy implementation in FBO learning institutions, and especially, its failures (Ngui & Mathenge, 2019). As Roy (2015) explains, within the context of strategy implementation, a good relationship

between the FBOs and government is essential. Likewise, Fu et al. (2021) point out that converting strategies into executions entails a response from FBOs on three levels, which translates into effective performance in the school setting and pointing to other studies done around the world (Bryson, 2015).

With the help of previous conceptualizations and literature dating back to the 1950s on the issue of 'strategy,' 'strategic implementation' as a term and as an activity is in practice accepted nearly in every part of the world and most sectors including Faith Based Organizations (FBOs). This is driven by the addiction on the part of the organizations due to its results on performance, efficiency and achievements. (Thompson et al, 2012). The process of strategic implementation means going through the strategies in detail aimed at the external organization stakeholders that are usually formulated by the top management of the organization. Such strategies include deployment of resources and the outcome expectations in the context of the environment.

Following this view, Prestol-Puesán (2018) argues that strategic plans should be specific to the mission, vision and objectives of the organization. This entails conceptualizing policies and plans which most often take the form of projects and programs intended to achieve those ambitions. Hence essence of strategic implementation does center around the primary objective of organizational goal achievement strategy with regard to internal as well as external factors.

Both historic and contemporary leaders in the field, such as Alfred Chandler, Philip Selznick, Igor Ansoff and Peter Drucker, emphasize the specific importance of strategic implementation for Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) to the highest degree possible. After the formulation of some of these concepts by Chandler, Igor Ansoff came up with a matrix that included strategies like market penetration, product

development, market development, vertical and horizontal integration as well as diversification. Owin and Oloko (2015) realize that strategic implementation is a change management paradigm that allows an organization to mobilize resources towards a desired future state. This view declares that effectiveness of strategies is determined by the structure of the organization and therefore if good economic performance is to be achieved structural changes become necessary. Strategic implementation, therefore, is seen as a continuous process in which organizations seek to realize competitive, financial and operational benefits after formulation of their strategies.

It is also important to note that the said process of implementation requires changes, which in the nature of things, involves risks and uncertainties. Within the African context, a substantial portion of proposed organizational strategies often remain unexecuted. This phenomenon was notably observed in Kenya, as emphasized by Nakhanya et al. (2021). In this scenario, the responsibility for strategy implementation rests on leaders who must navigate the intricacies of communicating changes, clarifying the rationales behind these changes, and ensuring their realization. Nyaga et al. (2021) undertook a study encompassing 125,000 profiles from over 1,000 organizations spanning more than 50 countries, including Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, and South Africa. The study unveiled that approximately 60% of employees evaluated their organizations as inadequate in effectively carrying out strategic plans.

Although Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) have thorough plans, existing literature tends to argue that there are problems in implementing the plans as conceived. In Zimbabwe, the challenges that are encountered when it comes to executing strategic plans tend to revolve around communication, execution and other

enablers (Kandeke, 2015). Furthermore, misfit between the strategy and organizational structure contributes to the problem (Mutisya, 2016).

In South Africa, the effective implementation of strategies is still a great problem to many organizations, this is more so notable in African Adventist education institutions (Kagumu, 2016). Maangi, (2014) argues that, Adventist education systems in African context, more specifically at secondary school level, tend to avoid strategic visioning in favour of the planning process. Owino and Oloko (2015) add that with regard to five-year government planning cycles better planned adjustments to policies are more often than not for inflation and in line with the ruling party in power. Lastly, Nistor (2018) supports the view that the implementation of long-term strategies is often disregarded until the need for a higher degree of strategy execution has presented itself. From a national viewpoint, the prevailing understanding and emphasis on strategy execution and performance of institutions encompasses Zimbabwe as well. This particular aspect makes the influence of strategic plan implementation in the education sector highly pertinent.

The national environment has its own hurdles and advantages which determine how educational institutions perform. The strategic plans and the performance of educational institutions within the country are greatly influenced by such factors as economic environment, political environment, cultural environment, and technology. Most Economical difficulties facing Zimbabwe have adverse effects on the execution of every other educational strategic plan. Lack of inadequate resources, the existence of budgetary limits and unequal allocation of resources may hinder the proper implementation of the strategic plans (Chimombo, 2019). Test of environmental constraints and pressures on educational institutions necessitate an action plan resource allocation model whereby effective use of resources and funds would be

employed Organisation concerned would have to widen its funding base and cut costs on certain processes or practices that do not improve learning outcomes (Gumbo, 2017). Political stability is one of the external factors that affect the degree of success of the embedded strategic plans in directors of education and other relevant ministries in Zimbabwe.

Political transformations, military actions, and changes in public policies can derail the systematic follow up and performance of so-called vision plans meant to outlast generations. To avoid such situations, it is important that the strategic management of the educational institutions allows for timeliness in modification of strategies so as to expenditure of resources does not go into waste (Eduardo, 2018). Hence, it becomes very crucial for educational institutions strategic planning to be quite dynamic taking into account these changes in the political environment in order for the plans to be viable in the longer run (Mangena & Ndofirepi, 2018). Cultural diversity is one of these factors. It influences strategic planning in educational institutions. Zimbabwe is comprised of a range of ethnic, linguistic and cultural traditions. There should be strategic plans which are designed with the needs and expectations of various cultural communities aimed at promoting education for all as well as the need for teaching and learning approaches to be culturally responsive (Makura & Chikoko, 2019).

Inclusive approaches may be such as integration of local language, ethnic oriented curriculum content, and the participation of the community in policy making. The rapid developments in technology create both problems and prospects for educational strategic planning in Zimbabwe. Despite the fact that technological gadgets and digital network may be scarce in some regions, creative ways like mobile learning and internet usage help to break the barriers of distance and promote learning

(Mtebe & Raphael, 2018). Implementation of strategic plans should also include the aspect of technology in overcoming barriers created by the digital divide and improving the delivery and quality of education (Bhebe & Chigona, 2021).

The education structure in Zimbabwe, especially the educational pathway, recognizes the specific functions of the Ministry of Education and Sport in terms of providing recommendations that suggest schools can better cope with 21st century globalization when they define their mission more narrowly and rearrange their resources. This helps them to meet the requirements of their personnel, who are expected to be dynamic and responsive able to cope with the changing demands of the education industry (Ministry of Education, 2020). As part of developing the plans for strategic implementation, education in Zimbabwe has been designed and put in place in a manner that takes the capabilities and preferences of learners into consideration. This model affords learners greater flexibility and options even as it redefines existing educational structures. This change is accomplished in many ways and through different structures like the Vision 2030, Zimbabwe Agenda for Socio-Economic Transformation (2013-2018) – ZimASSET, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and Education for All (EFA) among others.

'Thinking Schools, a Learning Nation' is a new educational vision that has been adopted in Zimbabwe. This is a landmark development in the Education landscape in Zimbabwe as it reflects the Ministry of Education's belief that for Zimbabwe to meet its 2030 targets, the people must learn how to learn in the 21st century (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) 2020). This process of "Thinking Schools, Learning Nation" went on for a number of years and included many other activities that sought to modify education according to the needs and

capabilities of students. This model creates more flexibility and choice for learners as well as bringing about more radical changes in educational systems.

In this regard, there has been a change in the structure and the motivation of the teaching staff, which was also supported by the change in teacher training. In addition, changes in structure and ways of assessing processes have resulted in increased attention to project work and development of students' creative abilities. Significant resources are committed to the Strategic Plan for the years 2019 to 2023, which aims at implementing educational institutions as teaching, research and outreach establishments. At the same time, the plan aims at transforming these establishments into centres of excellence for research whose impact is felt in addressing problems of the world. Equally, this strategic plan has a purpose of facilitating the achievement of a competitive, industrial and modern Zimbabwe through a higher and tertiary education system based on the history of the nation and the development of science and technology. In the heart of the philosophy is the great importance of sourcing and using the latest, advanced, ever-competitive, existing and/or workable technology and knowledge in all social-economic spheres of life across the globe. The Localized Designs approach to product development comes with a great shift in the management patterns of the educational establishments. The Strategic Plan that covers the years 2019 to 2025 seeks to transform the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) into a research-oriented institution that has reached global standards. A scrambling of words: To meet the goals set out in this plan, there is need for staff commitment and professionalism coupled with high integrity.

With a national assigned purpose and persisting in her quest for quality assurance, UZ remains determined to deal with the prevailing issues and propose solutions based on research findings. The intention of such an approach is to produce

graduates with remarkable knowledge and skills grounded on ethics to spearhead the engineering of the necessary social change. In addition to cognitive development, these graduates will have physical, emotional, and spiritual intelligence as well.

Throughout the 2019-2025 period, the University aspires to Train and Produce Leaders of Integrity who will excel and effectively practice in Academics, Citizenship, and Entrepreneurship as per its Vision. Members of the institution define strive ambitiously and earn a position in the top 10 universities in Africa by the year 2020. Achieving such aspirations will also require very robust enhancement of quality assurance mechanisms in place and a commitment to delivery of results.

In order to achieve the aims expressed within the 2019-2025 Strategic Plan, educational institutions have to have the right people in place. However, it is the integrity that is the most essential of all. In compliance with the strategy driven by Zimbabwe Vision 2030, the strategy of these educational institutions is focused on extending the frontiers despite existing difficulties and coming up with evidence-based solutions. This is so that graduates do not only develop cognitive abilities but also knowledge and skills which are grounded on ethics. The additional expectation is that these graduates will also embody physical, emotional, and spiritual intelligence, which will enhance their capacity in bringing about the desired change in Zimbabwean society. In the context of the 21st century, educational agencies seek to enhance and provide their education, citizenship, and entrepreneurship skills on ethical diplomas to be produced as per the vision of the institution.

It is worth noting that when examining the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan, the UZ managed to achieve quite a lot, thanks to the high calibre of personnel as well as the creative potential which that institution possesses. The solid and state of the art facilities are fundamental in the creation of research and learning promoting

environments. Likewise, the examination of the UZ's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan proves that those achieve are based on the calibre of people and their ingenuity in the institution. It has been observed by Nyaza (2013) that the well-developed premium infrastructural facilities of the institution contribute significantly towards building an environment that is conducive for research and learning activities.

Therefore, the gap analysis is used as a catalyst for those strategies that are geared towards ensuring that the achievements are maintained, and in case there is a need to make any changes, to bring about change. These strategies are aimed at improving quality assurance systems and focus on results.

One area in which Adventist schools in Zimbabwe have made commendable progress is in integrating education with the strategic implementation processes. The execution of the plan is the responsibility of the members of the institution, guided by the Vice-Chancellor, as shown in the 2016-2020 strategic plan. It is worth mentioning that the Vice-Chancellor, Senate and the Adventist Education Council, are greatly involved in the provision of materials and human resources, and in ensuring the activities are done timely and effectively. By way of context, in the mammoth activities that characterise the Adventist Church, the executive management committee of the Zimbabwe Central Union Conference has sought to properly manage and develop the Zimbabwe Central Union Conference through a Strategic Plan for a period of Five Years, that is, 2013-2017. The plan is subjected to a year-long review at the Hanging of the Executive Committee of the Zimbabwe Central Union Conference held in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe. The latest addendum of the SDA educational leadership strategic plan is in the General Conference Policy Document for 2021-2022.

Most recent development strategy analysis has developed four situations that may lead to the successful failure of strategic development: initiation of new businesses; stimulating innovation and changes; integration of a merger and acquisition strategy; and coping with the environmental changes. According to Bruggen (2021), it is necessary that research is also oriented at implementation of strategy and its problems and how such strategy planning benefits other sectors including education especially as it regards grades.

Research also offers strategies for improving strategic policy formulation in public secondary schools targeting the education policy makers. Also, it proposes that the top management of the organization should provide resources, time and efforts in the proper performance of the strategies.

Taking into account their decentralized nature, the institutions of learning established by the Seventh-day Adventist Church are important in the mechanism of strategic leadership. It therefore follows that there is a gap in the current literature that needs to be filled in order to assess the effect of the strategic plan for the SDA education system on the operational efficiency of SDA educational systems. In line with this, the objective of the study is also to assess the extent to which the vision and the mission of the strategic

Statement of the Problem

The role of educational institutions in shaping knowledge, skills, and attitudes is pivotal in the development of any society. In Zimbabwe, Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions have traditionally aimed to combine academic excellence with spiritual growth. However, recent assessments reveal a significant decline in academic performance across various levels within these institutions, raising crucial questions about the effectiveness of their strategic plans. According to the Zimbabwe Schools

Examination Council (ZIMSEC), pass rates at advanced level have fallen from 93.4% in 2020 to a disheartening 78.5% in 2022 for schools affiliated with religious organizations, including the SDA institutions (ZIMSEC, 2023). The declining performance indicates that despite existing strategic plans, educational outcomes have not significantly improved.

One of the core problems hindering the academic performance in SDA educational institutions stems from insufficient implementation of strategic plans that directly address curriculum development, teacher training, and resource allocation. A critical evaluation by Musasa et al. (2022) point out that while most SDA schools have formulated strategic plans aimed at improving academic performance, the actual implementation has been irregular and inconsistent. Many teachers report a lack of training regarding the specific strategies outlined in these plans, leading to gaps in the delivery of the curriculum (Matanga, 2023). This inadequacy has greatly contributed to low student engagement and motivation, evident in dwindling participation rates in advanced subjects such as mathematics and science.

Furthermore, the holistic mission of SDA institutions, which integrates spiritual and academic development, often leads to conflicts in prioritization and resource allocation. Although the ethos of these institutions emphasizes both realms, evidence indicates that academic demands frequently take a back seat to spiritual programming. For instance, a recent survey conducted by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (2023) found that 67% of educators felt that spiritual programs detracted from academic focus, resulting in less time for essential curriculum delivery. This imbalance is detrimental, particularly in an increasingly competitive educational environment where academic performance directly correlates with future educational and career opportunities for students.

Efforts have been initiated to address these issues, such as partnerships with governmental educational bodies and the establishment of professional development programs for teachers. However, many of these interventions have not yielded the desired results. A study by Chikozho and Ndofirepi (2022) reveal that although training workshops for teachers had been conducted, less than 45% of the educators reported applying the knowledge gained to their teaching practices due to a lack of ongoing support and follow-up. Additionally, the absence of robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of strategic plans has left many educational leaders guessing about the effectiveness of their initiatives, further compounding the problem (Dube, 2023).

In light of these ongoing challenges, this study endeavours to assess the extent to which strategic plan implementation impacts the academic performance of selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. It aims to identify existing gaps in the strategic planning process and provide concrete recommendations for enhancing the efficacy of these plans. By analyzing data on academic performance metrics in conjunction with strategic plan assessments, this research seeks to illuminate the critical factors that support or hinder successful outcomes in these institutions.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study was to assess how implementation of the strategic plan affects the academic performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the specific objectives and the corresponding research questions are enumerated below.

1. To analyze the impact of strategic plan implementation process on the academic performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

2. To determine the effect of the strategic plan performance assessment criteria on the academic performance of some selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.
3. To analyse how the mission statement of the SDA educational strategic plan aligns with religious principles, educational philosophies and the national educational policies in Zimbabwe.
4. To investigate the effects of core values on selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.
5. To evaluate the effects of the vision statement on selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Research Questions

1. What is the influence of strategic plan implementation process on the academic performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe?
2. How do the strategic plan performance indicators influence academic performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe?
3. How does the mission statement of the SDA educational strategic plan align with religious principles, educational philosophies and the national educational policies in Zimbabwe?
4. How do the core values of the SDA educational strategic plan influence organizational performance and the resolution of implementation challenges in the selected Seventh Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe?

5. To what extent does the vision of the SDA educational strategic plan influence the reputation and recognition of the selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions within the Zimbabwean context?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between effective implementation of strategic plans and the academic performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe.
2. The performance assessment criteria used in strategic plan implementation does not significantly affect the academic outcomes of selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.
3. There is no significant alignment of the SDA educational strategic plan's mission statement with religious principles, educational philosophies and national policies.
4. There is no significant influence on organizational performance as outlined in the core values of the SDA educational strategic plan.
5. There is no significant influence of the SDA vision statement on reputation and recognition in selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Significance of the Study

The study on the influence of strategic plan implementation on academic performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe holds significant value for various stakeholders, including school administrators, policymakers, teachers, students, and parents. By examining how well SDA schools implement their strategic plans and the extent to which these plans influence student

achievement, the research will provide valuable insights for improving institutional effectiveness and academic excellence.

Educational institutions, particularly faith-based schools, often struggle with the practical application of strategic plans due to resource limitations, leadership challenges, and insufficient monitoring mechanisms. This study assessed the strengths and weaknesses of strategic plan implementation in SDA schools, offering school administrators a clearer understanding of what works and what does not. By identifying successful strategic planning models, schools can refine their approaches to ensure better academic outcomes. Schools that struggle with execution can also adopt best practices from institutions that have demonstrated effective strategic plan implementation.

Academic performance is a crucial metric in evaluating the success of any educational institution. This study explored how strategic planning affects various academic performance indicators, such as student engagement, teacher effectiveness, curriculum development, and overall pass rates. The findings will help educators adopt evidence-based strategies that enhance the learning experience and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Additionally, by comparing the academic achievements of schools with well-executed strategic plans to those without, the study established a clear link between strategic planning and student success which can be of help to other institutions.

From a policy perspective, the research will provide useful information for education authorities, both within the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe. Policymakers can use the findings to develop standardized frameworks that guide faith-based schools in their strategic planning processes. By aligning policies with empirical data, educational authorities

can ensure that SDA schools operate within an environment that promotes excellence, accountability, and sustainable development. Furthermore, the insights from this study could be instrumental in shaping national education policies that encourage the adoption of structured strategic planning across different types of schools.

The efficient use of resources is critical in any educational setting. Many schools face financial constraints, staff shortages, and infrastructural challenges that hinder academic success. This study examined whether SDA schools are allocating their resources effectively in line with their strategic goals. By identifying areas where resources are underutilized or mismanaged, the research will provide recommendations for better financial planning, human resource development, and infrastructure investment. Schools can use this information to make data-driven decisions that improve efficiency and maximize the impact of available resources on student learning outcomes.

Beyond its practical implications, this study will contribute to the theoretical body of knowledge on strategic planning in education, particularly within faith-based institutions. The findings will provide empirical evidence on the relationship between strategic planning and academic performance, filling existing gaps in research within the Zimbabwean context. Future scholars can build on this study to explore additional factors influencing strategic planning success, such as leadership styles, community involvement, and the role of technology in education. By expanding the academic discourse on this topic, the study will serve as a foundation for further research and innovation in strategic educational management.

Stakeholder engagement is a key component of effective strategic planning. This study assessed whether SDA schools involve teachers, students, parents, church leaders, and school governing bodies in the development and execution of their

strategic plans. Schools that actively engage stakeholders in decision-making processes are more likely to achieve positive academic outcomes, as collective input fosters a sense of ownership and accountability. The research will therefore encourage SDA schools to adopt a more participatory approach to strategic planning, ensuring that all stakeholders work collaboratively toward shared educational goals.

Many SDA schools face unique challenges that hinder their ability to implement strategic plans effectively. These challenges may include inconsistent funding, outdated teaching materials, lack of qualified teachers, and limited access to modern learning technologies. This study identified specific barriers to successful strategic planning and propose practical solutions to address them. For instance, if financial limitations are a major constraint, the research may suggest alternative funding mechanisms, such as partnerships with private organizations or donor support initiatives. If leadership gaps are affecting plan execution, the study could recommend leadership development programs to strengthen the capacity of school administrators.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The geographical scope of the research was limited to the educational institutions found within the two regional territorial divisions that are the Central Zimbabwe Conference and North West Zimbabwe Conference under the Zimbabwe Union Conference Region. To overcome this restriction, the researcher has proposed possible ways of extending the limits of the study. This may include the addition of educational institutions from different regions throughout Zimbabwe. Moreover, the research may look into the inclusion of institutions from neighbouring countries that have similar education systems and context. This way, a better perspective about the problem being researched was achieved. The rationale is based on the scantiness of the literature on those factors that facilitate the effective strategic implementation

owing to the enormous results that are expected for strategy review. The study presents important standard information for program prospects that relevant authorities expect, so that educational institutions can formulate the best ways of improving strategy implementation. Two areas from the leadership effectiveness research, which address challenge of managerial leadership, because of the roles educational positions play and strategic implementations and how such factors predict leader performance in regard to effective leader behavior are given emphasis. The researcher also undertook an extensive review of existing literature which covers a broader range of determinants concerning strategic implementation to counter this. This included reviewing literature from business management, education and, organization studies among other disciplines.

The study was concerned more with the teaching-staff, however the researcher preferred the inclusion of other relevant groups such as administrators and heads of departments. The wider sample used helped in understanding better the factors that determine the strategic implementation of the educational institutions.

The Strategic implementation constructs the approach but specifically more regarding the structure of implementation. In other words, it involves the designing of a structure that will either direct the group in carrying out the strategies or provide a basic diagram of how the strategies will be implemented. This as Herrera-Sánchez et al (2017) points out this structure also analysis how the roles of the team will affect the success of the strategy being developed and provides a picture of how the picture will fit when the strategies under the strategic plan are being implemented.

On the part of the participants being asked to furnish honest relevant information, there could be some level of reluctance and bias considering the fear of harassment and also the stereotyping associated with the current turbulent and

political climate. This would affect the credibility of the research study. Thus, the researcher earmarked how the participants were to be included taking into consideration the ethical aspects of the study. To mitigate this the researcher emphasized the importance of confidentiality and anonymity in the research process. The researcher also emphasized the ethical considerations

Assumptions

a. The research findings are representative of all Seventh-day Adventist education institutions.
b. The selected schools have prepared and operationalised their strategic plans.
c. All responses obtained from the study participants can reflect the situation of strategic plan implementation in the selected schools.

Operational Definition of Terms

Leadership: Leadership is the process of influencing and guiding individuals or groups to achieve shared objectives (Robbins, Coulter, DeCenzo, & Wolter, 2017).

Organizational Culture: Organizational culture refers to the collective values, beliefs, behaviors, and norms that shape the social and psychological environment of an organization (Robbins et al., 2017).

Strategy Evaluation: Strategy evaluation involves analyzing and assessing the effectiveness of a strategy in achieving organizational objectives, determining what worked, what did not, and why (Mathore, 2016).

Strategy Implementation Procedure: This refers to the systematic actions and processes through which an organization executes its strategic plans, including the

development of programs, budgets, and policies to achieve strategic goals (Carvalho, Correia, & Martins, 2021).

School Mission: A school mission defines its core purpose and values, outlining the institution's goals and the means by which it differentiates itself from others (Carvalho et al., 2021).

Implementation: Implementation is the process of executing a chosen strategy through specific programs, budgets, and procedures to achieve organizational objectives (Rudd, Mills, & Litzinger, 2018).

Organizational Performance: Organizational performance is the measure of how effectively an organization meets its goals and satisfies stakeholder expectations, often evaluated through financial metrics, market share, customer satisfaction, and employee productivity (Robbins et al., 2017).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RELATED STUDIES

This chapter assesses the influence of educational strategic plan implementation within selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe, looking at the factors that exert influence on strategic plans implementation. The organization of this chapter aligns with the objectives of the study. It begins by focusing on theoretical frameworks that underpin the study, it also highlights the strategic implementation approaches or processes as they influence academic performance, it also explored the mission statement of SDA strategic plan and how it aligns with the SDA religious principles, educational philosophies and the national educational policies. Subsequently, it elucidates on the impact of strategic plan implementation on key performance areas of SDA educational institutions. Finally, this section explores how the vision of the SDA educational plan impacts the reputation and recognition of SDA educational institutions, as well as the application and empirical studies review.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The Resource-Based View (RBV)

In 2011, Barney detailed the Resource-Based Theory (also called the Resource-Based View, RBV), which claims that a firm is regarded as a collection of capabilities. This means that resources comprise any and everything in control of the organization, comprising of both physical and non-physical structures, expertise and know-how. In this particular research undertaking, aspects of the theory that explains

capability competencies and availability of resources will be adopted. As such, the theory in reference is concerned with the internal capabilities of an organization in relation to the market in which it seeks to perform its operations. This helps the organisations to offer some earning or profits to them. In this connection, the resource-based view opines that the internal situations of the organization are a more important factor in strategic choices than external contexts. Strategy formulation, in this view, is determined by the specific resources and capabilities that the organization possesses, and not the limitations or threats posed by the environment (Kachru, 2009). Mahoney (2016) contends that such organizational decisions are made at the level of configuring resources, capabilities and opportunities in the environment with the purpose of earning (Jiang, 2014). The present strategic management approach regards an organization’s internal capabilities, skills, and assets as the key to its sustained competitive edge.

The term resources according to Barney (2011) includes all the assets, capabilities, organizational processes, attributes, information and knowledge the organization controls. Such resources enable the organization to think of and implement strategies which perform better or operate more effectively (Akio, 2005). Such resources allow organizations to strategize and perform better in the quest for fulfilling the purpose for which they exist. Every organization is fully responsible for controlling and managing its resources such as assets, skills, processes, features, information and all the knowledge, which is the resource base of the entire organization. An organization can use the resources it has at its disposal to formulate and execute strategies that will result in greater productivity and even performance resulting in better results. Herein, resources are the building blocks of an organization's capabilities and capabilities are what give the organization an edge over

competition (Grant, 1991). A company's resources make up its core competencies which are the key factors that enable the company to be a leader in that market. Johnson et al. (2005) classifies these resources into various types, including physical, technical, financial, human, and intellectual resources. In simpler terms, resources have been divided into various categories and sub-categories such as risks e.g physical resources, technical know-how, finance, manpower and copyrights.

Figure 1

Strategic Management Resource-Based Model of Above-Average Returns

Source: Scholes, K., Johnson, G., & Whittington, R. (2002). Exploring corporate strategy. Hoboken, NJ, USA: Financial Times Prentice Hall.

As pointed out by Barney (2011), RBV theory divides resources into those who own them and are housed in the organization: tangible resources, intangible resources, and organizational capabilities (Wernerfelt, 2014). To the contrary, tangible resources are linked with facility provisions, finance, and other monetary assets and also include other monetary assets. Tangible assets, for example, walls,

mechanisms, and funds are the most convenient to observe while intangible taxes are made up of such assets as trademarks, agreements, and private data (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2010). In addition, even human resources are a form of asset to the organization by virtue of the expertise, skills, knowledge, and the power of making decisions they have (Grant, 2001).

Human resources are important for any organization since they possess skills, knowledge and expertise to that organization and in order for resources to constitute a competitive advantage, they should valuable, unique, hard to imitate and not substitutable. Human resources are classified as either tangible or intangible depending on the consideration of the scholar; for example, while Penrose (2015) GT and Grant (2012) GT are different authors. The human resource aspect of this research is treated as being intangible owing to its considerable worth as the organization's intellectual capital (Ramona, Frăticiu, & Alexandra, 2014). The resource-based perspective entails that some kinds of resources are critical for the success of the organization.

As per Barney (2011), any resources which provide an organization with an edge above its competitors in a certain line of business must meet the VRIN standard; this implies that it should be valuable, rare, inimitable and non- substitutable. Valuable resources help an organization in exploiting opportunities and defending itself against threats while 'rare' resources are those which only a few rivals have creating strategies that deliver value uniquely. Resources that are owned and controlled by few players in the world are likely to ensure competitive advantage (Barney, 2011).

Finally, since such strategies are expected to be value creating, the specific resources on which such strategies are based must also be difficult to copy, imitate

and replace if one is to avoid succumbing to competition. It is argued within this perspective that the competitive advantage of an organization is derived from a combination of unique resources and relationships (Rumelt, 2014). For such resources to account for sustained competitive advantage, they have to be exceedingly valuable, very few in possession, extremely hard to copy and not capable of being replaced. Competitive advantage as defined by this theory is based on the concept of a unique set of resources and links in an organization, its core capabilities and strategic partnerships.

Despite overwhelming support for the resource-based view of the firm, several critiques have been offered because of bifurcation in its definition, blurring, unresponsiveness to getting better within the environment, and scant attention on how the resources benefit any competition, if they are of any benefit (Newbert, 2007). On the list of many inherent flaws in the resource-based perspective, one of the main criticisms has been its static nature asserted that merely possessing the optimal bundles of resources is not sufficient to create enduring superior performance Typologies of Competitive (Priem and Butler, 2001). In this regard, the dynamic capability perspective was suggested and sought, which has improved the resource-based framework and offered a solution to the challenge of sustained competitive advantage in turbulent markets (Teece et al., 2007). The dynamic capability perspective contextualizes the resource-based view in such a way that coupled with changes in the environment, firms are able to survive competitive pressures over time. This perspective emphasizes the importance of dynamic capabilities of the firm as the firm is able to adjust its current capabilities to changing external environment. This includes the capacity to alter, add or rearrange the skills, assets, and abilities - whether sourced from inside or outside the organization - aided by new technologies (Teece et

al., 2007). This means that in order to maintain a sustainable competitive edge, both the euphoric expansions and the aggressive protection of the current capabilities alongside the creation of new ones must be executed.

The organizations not only need to enhance their existing capabilities but rather, they need to acquire new capabilities, reconfigure, and respond to changes in their environment (Tushman & O'Reilly, 2007). No matter how fast changing the market is, cooperation can manage its assets and also look for new asset, which, for corporations will be helpful surpassing the competition. Understanding research papers in post-socialist countries can often cause confusion as the Resource Based View, or RBV, is still a relatively new concept and dates back less than twenty years. In addition, organizations are extremely dynamic and their environment makes sure that the orientation of resources and capabilities, which are more fixed and stable, remain the primary issue as far as the strategy is concerned (Grant, 2002). In these types of cases, the resources involved and their management influence the competitive advantage of the firms and that advantage is based on resources that are hard to duplicate, and are thus non-possessable nor tradable (Szymaniec-Mlicka, 2014). In this regard, while the resource and based perspective is well understood and embraced in relation to the social institutions and strategic management, this aggressiveness cannot be declared as the primary way of social institutions management in areas filled with turbulence. All the organization requires to outdo its rivals is valuable, rare and inimitable resources, which will help the firm dominate. The RBV strategy is most ideal in looking at this concept when political goals and objectives are being discussed and explored on the example of churches of Seventh-day institutions in Zimbabwe. This may be done while exploring aspects such as the financial, human, physical and even the intangible assets of such organizations (Barney, 1991). It is

believed that the effective use of such resources boosts the increase of operational efficiencies and enhances ingenuity, thus helping to sustain the competitive advantage of the corporation. In addition, the RBV stresses the importance of careful planning and proper execution if a business hopes to achieve above-average returns. This implies the need to align strategies with the objectives of the organization, carry them out successfully, and create a culture of continuous improvement.

The Bureaucratic Management Theory

State schools, which do not aim to make a profit, need to be managed bureaucratically in order to function effectively according to Dwyer, Kelly and Hite (2006). In addition, management has a long history in the context of Western civilization. The person in charge must establish a clear hierarchy regardless of the sector - educational or industrial. Bush (2003) points out that it is never easy to set educational organizations' aims due to the presence of competing priorities, diversity of the stakeholders, and human nature. Moreover, bureaucracy-centric approaches tend to disregard the human factor in organizations by considering the roles of individual members only as a part of the hierarchy (Bush, 2007).

Individuals do not always behave logically; every educational establishment has its own characters with their respective opinions and motivations all of which can have an impact on the resolution of issues. Such irregularities may foster inconsistencies in the processes of making decisions and so undermine the bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is characterized by an emphasis on the various levels of positions in the organization as opposed to talent and skills. This may result in lack of recognition and appreciation of individual efforts and skills. Focus on organizational positions may in turn ignore what specialists in education are capable of doing. Furthermore, it promotes the prevalence of authoritarian style of management such

that within the school system, principals are an authority over teachers with little or no room for dissenting views (Bush, 2007).

Finally, the very notion of schools' stability is incompatible with the ever-changing nature of the world of education (Bush, 2007). Bureaucracy is based on timely and consistent stability of education which is contrary to an ever-dynamic and progressive field such as education. Changes in policy, technology, and pedagogies must take place in educational organizations, but these changes may be difficult to accomplish within the confines of a bureaucratic organization. The bureaucratic approach is especially present in education in Zimbabwe where there are systems with layers and clear line of authority. Teachers are directed by principals who get their instructions from the Ministry of Education. This kind of management style is thought to maintain order in schools enabling everyone to play their part, but in practice, it may restrict the participation of many in making decisions (Chikohomero, 2015). Hence, bogging down intellectuals with hierarchies so that schools can be 'stable' is quite a common perception.

People feel that the bureaucratic model in education delivery enhances stability and consistency enabling the teachers to concentrate on their duties. This, however, may also lead to discouraging the interest of teachers in making any decisions since there may be too little room for them to do so.

The Contingency Theory

Contingency Theory has been practiced across different areas of management and leadership, including education (Wadongo & Abdel-Kader, 2014; Yap & Ferreira, 2011; Greatbanks et al. 2010; Greiling 2010; Moxham 2010; Chenhall, 2006). The theory asserts that there exists no management style that can be effective to all organizations. Worse still, it contends that every management regime should take into

account considerations of the internal and external environment of each and every management regime. That is the management performance is affected quite significantly (Wadongo & Abdel-Kader, 2014; Ferreira & Otley, 2009; Rejc, 2004; Otley, 1980). It is important to note that design and control of management approaches need to be in line with the position of each organization rather than being uniform across organizations. This perspective has also been adopted in different sectors like education where management cannot be divorced from the circumstances of the context.

Consistent with contingency theory, organizations are presented as systems that comprise of a number of subsystems which function together as a whole and interact with the environment (McGrandle, 2017). An organization is a system containing several components which are in relations with the system's environment. organization strategy that is effective but has not been previously employed within the Zimbabwean context. The latter makes it difficult to think of adjustment because the risk of failure remains high.

This approach underscores the interdependence of the various elements of an organization as well as the relationship of the organization with its environment. As such, it calls for a holistic approach to management. Understanding how subsystems interrelate to the environment and to each other, allows an organization to cope with new situations. This allows for an internal and external growth strategies for the organizations. The theory seeks to map the structure of ties within and between subsystems and the environment with all current realities and specific conditions taken into consideration (McGrandle, 2017; Wadongo & Abdel-Kader, 2014). It believes that the most favorable strategy of management is the one that takes into consideration the particular situation and the environment of the organization; it is

impossible to separate any organization from its environment (Wadongo & Abdel-Kader, 2014; Grötsch et al., 2013). Theory also assumes that organizations have their own specific needs and goals which can only be achieved through flexible management systems. Hence, it claims that by looking at each organization within its specific conditions, management systems tend to work better. It Identified and analyzed the relationships between them, and took into account the contexts and conditions so that the actions could be effective as management. This proposition asserts that the performance of organizations is a function of many variables, including forces within the organization and conditions prevailing outside.

The relevance of this theory of management in the present research is that it attacks the problem of the managers in the management practices from other countries to explain the risk of non-adaption. It also enables finding out a management style appropriate for Zimbabwe (Radin, 2006). For this study, the contingency theory has some merits in that it tries to pinpoint good management practices that have taken place elsewhere and assimilates them with the education sector in Zimbabwe. This point of view posits that management should be flexible, and that managerial inflexible leads to management failings.

Looking at the methods of management that have worked in other jurisdictions and taking into account the particularities of the Zimbabwean education system, it allows contingency theory to provide management practices appropriate to the context. Tsolka (2020) further stresses that learning theory postulates for the employment of the ideas of contingency and situational leadership in educational management. One of them is that for proper leadership to occur, there must be proper leadership placed in succession with the condition and workings of the contemporary organization. As Tsolka (2020) explains, the effectiveness of leadership relies on the

congruency of the leadership behaviors with the circumstances present. It is also stated in the contingency theory that a leader should use a particular leadership style depending on the needs of the situation while in situational theory, the urgency that leaders should use the leadership styles according to staff is paramount (Tsolka, 2020). This can also apply to educational settings especially in instances where the principals are openly recruited. Such situations would come under the ambit of contingency planning or forecasting.

On the other hand, situational theory has to do comfortably with education systems where central government controls the selection and appointment of school principals as it permits leaders to tailor their style to the specific school setting (Peretomode, 2012). The contingency theory asserts that management approaches should consider the unique circumstances of each organization, and offer valuable perceptions for effective leadership in education. However, there is a need to account for the cultural and social background of the Zimbabwean and SDA contexts and consider other theoretical approaches that may address the shift towards globalization and social change in education.

McKinsey's 7S Framework

The McKinsey 7S framework is a management model that identifies seven interdependent factors crucial for organizational success. These seven factors are strategy, structure, systems, skills, shared values, style, and staff (Ravanfar and Mohammad, 2015). These elements play a vital role in shaping an organization's effectiveness and performance. Organizations can gain valuable insights into elevating their management policies using the theory. The theory recognizes that organizational success relies on the harmonious configuration of interrelated components.

In analyzing the strategic plan implementation as a driver of performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist education institutions in Zimbabwe, the 7S model was used to determine how well the strategic plan aligns with the structure, systems, culture, leadership and people of the organization. Elements of the framework combined with performance of the SDA education strategic plan presented significant issues regarding the performance of the Mission of Seventh Day Adventist education in Zimbabwe. The 7S framework enables one to view an organization structurally and organization as a whole where the assets within interact and form an organization (Ravanfar & Mohammad, 2015). These internal aspects management interaction also provides scope for planning in the organization, especially regarding management style issues. This also supports the logic that benefits an organization do not only arise with relevant new activities added but how all the activities are integrated. This suggests that the growth of firms can be incremental as certain self-management practices may be incorporated into the management structure already in place.

The McKinsey 7S framework (Jurevicius, 2013) is an elaboration of the components influencing the effectiveness of any particular strategy in the arrangement of the institution. This structure is designed to increase the durability of the institution and at the same time addresses the concerns in the organization structure. As a summarization on the other hand, this model is meant to provide answers to the issues at hand concerning the structure of the organization by assessing the degree to which the policy is implemented relative to the arrangements of the organization. Promotes holistic approach to the problem and encourages synergy rather than individualism. Effective strategy application relies on a methodical approach (Spink et al., 2016). Each method within the framework contributes distinctively to strategic management. The successful execution of the framework can guarantee organisational success.

However, the key lies not in determining one approach as superior to another, but in framing winning approaches that align with an organization's goals.

McKinsey's 7S Framework in the context of strategic implementation and performance within selected Seventh-day Institutions in Zimbabwe can be defined as follows:

1. Strategy: This factor focuses on the organization's general direction and approach to achieving its objectives. In the case of Seventh day institutions in Zimbabwe, this included examining their mission, vision, and goals, including their religious and social objectives.

2. Structure: This element focuses on the hierarchy of the organization, its ways of reporting, and the distribution of work. This study on the Seventh-day institutions in Zimbabwe was about looking at the system of the organization, that is managing the organization of the institution and of its different departments or activities. Most of the institutions are characterized by the bureaucratic system of management (SDA GC Working Policy, 2022). This system is characterized by higher levels of control and supervision, clearly defined roles, standard operating procedures, with an emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness. On the flip side, this system has its demerits too, as it encourages bureaucracy, prolonged time in respect of any kind of decision and very little or no creative thinking which. That is why other institutions have opted to simpler and fluid forms of management in order to progress and get to the top of the competition.

3. Systems: This factor studies the way the operations of the organization are controlled in terms of set procedures, policies and within a definable process. With regards to organizations, it focuses on the possible ways related to institutionalize financial management, human resources and other essential functions.

4. Shared Values: This factor studies the integral values and the culture of the organization. In the case of Seventh Day Institutions, this involved exploring their beliefs either religious or social and effects on their culture and values.

5. Skills: This factor emphasizes the aspects of the organization such as competences and capabilities as well as addresses strengths and weaknesses. In the context of these institutions, this entailed undertaking an analysis of the skills and expertise of the individuals who composed the institutions, including their religious and social skills.

6. Staff: This factor describes the organization regarding its human resource concerning both its amount and its quality. In the case of SDA institutions, this discussed their leadership and the general membership inclusive of their religious standpoint.

In determining the relevance of this framework as the best theoretical one to examine the degree of strategic plan implementation on academic performance of some selected Seventh-day Adventist education institutions in Zimbabwe the following reasons were given:

1. Complete perspective: The 7S is the management tool that identifies the 7 key elements contributing to the success of the organization as, namely, strategy, structure, systems, skills, shared values, style, and staff. In this way, the complete structure of organization's internal forces and their interdependence is possible.

2. Congruence: The 7S framework also emphasizes Congruence in all the elements of the framework. This implies that for one to investigate how the strategic plan implementation correlates with other components like structure, systems, and skills within the Seventh-day Adventist education institution is for the purpose of establishing the level of integration and synergies within their organization.

3. Managing change: strategy is applied in any organization suggest to include the factors of every aspect of the SDA education institution. The 7S model is effective in addressing organizational strategic plan implementation on each level of the organization and controlling change in a sophisticated manner (Ravanfar & Mohammad, 2015)

4. Cultural factors: The shared values element in the 7S model becomes very important in this analysis since it focuses on the particular core values or mission decency of religious based institutions such as Seventh Day Adventist education systems. It addresses the issue of how an organization's culture influences the implementation of strategic plans and thereby affects performance (Ravanfar and Mohammad, 2015). This goes a long way in reinforcing what is effective in cultural or religious setup and what is not.

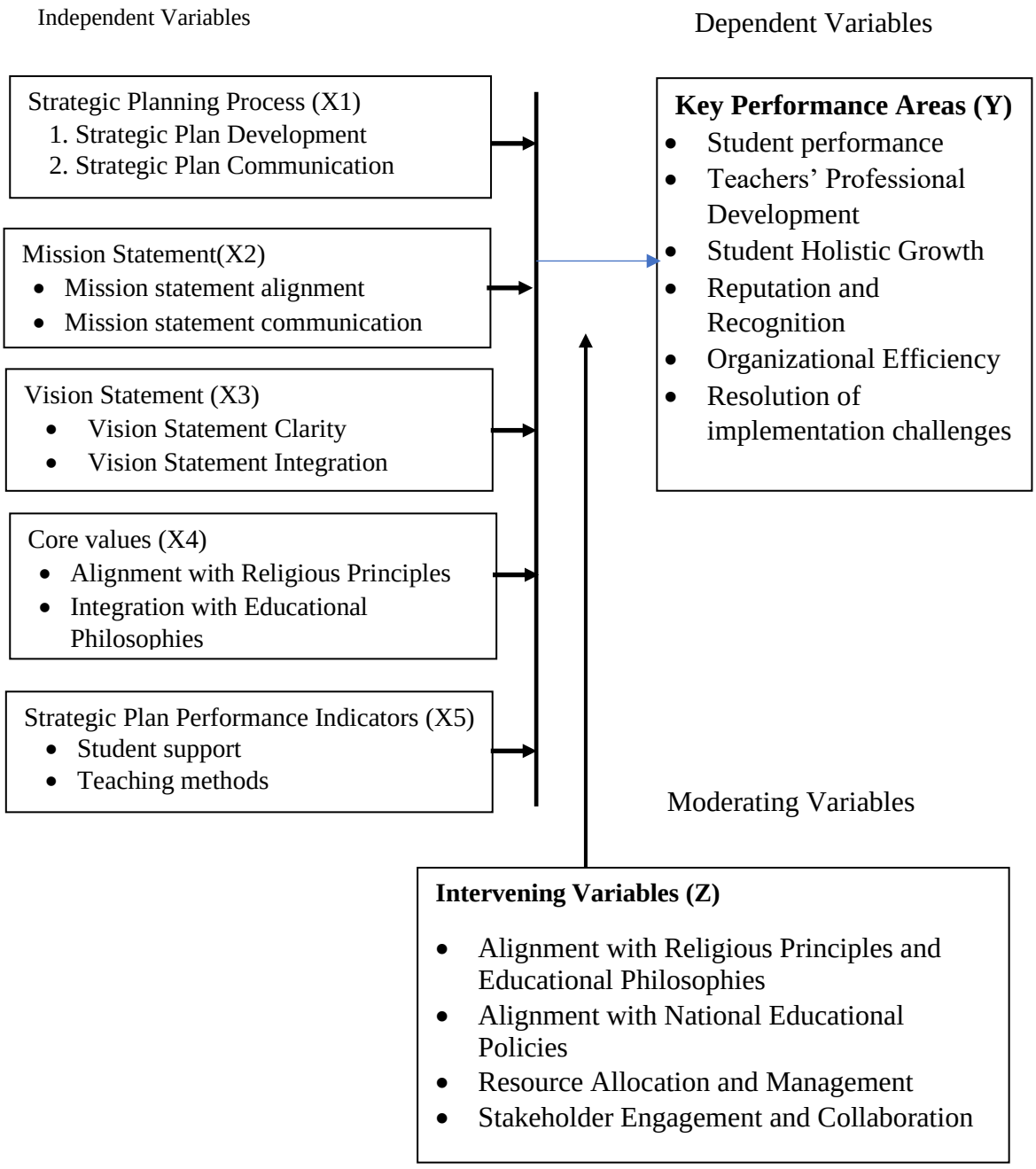
5. Measuring Performance: The 7S model can assist in identifying the metrics that measure the performance of the SDA strategic education plan, basing on the key performance indicators identified. This will also demonstrate the extent of the strategic plan implementation on the performance of the Seventh-Day Adventist education system in Zimbabwe. The McKinsey 7S model is systematic, multi-faceted, and more than capable to address the issue of performance of the Seventh-Day Adventist Educational Institutions in Zimbabwe, focused on strategic plan implementation and its organizational culture dynamics (Ravanfar and Mohammad, 2015). And by assessing all seven factors, such organizations' strengths and weaknesses become apparent, along with the areas for performance enhancement.

Conceptual Framework

The next figure is depicting the conceptual framework of the research, demonstrating the relationship between the study variable**s.**

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework



The evaluation of the internal and external environments of the organization plays a significant role in keeping the institution on a proper course in the achievement of its goals. In the words of Bryson et al. (2017), strategic planning is the kinds of strategies an organization develops to enhance its operations. The purpose of

this research is to assess the impact of the adoption of strategic management practices on the academic performance of some of the Seventh-day Adventists Educational and Educational Institutions in Zimbabwe. There are three dependent variables addressed in the study, which are: the academic accomplishments and character and all-rounded development, and the reputation. There are different internal and external independent and intervening variables responsible for these dependent variables such as strategic plan implementation, adherence to religious and educational philosophies, national education policies, resourcing strategies, and stakeholder management and partnerships.

Strategic plan implementation serves as the central independent variable in this study. It encompasses strategic planning processes within the Seventh-day Adventists Educational Institutions that include strategic plan formulation, strategic plan execution, strategic plan monitoring, and strategic plan evaluation. Where successful implementation occurs, so does the conversion of the strategies into operational actions and initiatives directed towards the accomplishment of strategic plan goals and objectives (Samkange, 2016). Concentrically, strategic plan implementation directs institutions towards enhancing their academic performance in line with their set objectives and goals (Dickson, 2013).

Equally significant intervening factor is the congruence between the strategic plans and the national educational policies and regulations. The ministries and departments responsible for education in Zimbabwe develop and set guidelines, curriculum frameworks, and standards to which all educational institutions must adhere (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2017). The presence of such an alignment between the strategic plans and the policies ensures that there is no contravention of the policies but extends the reputational standing of the institution

within the national education matrix. The factor encourages the establishment of working relations with the relevant Government Bodies which aids in enhancing the status of the institution. Strategic plans can be performed successfully depending on the available resources for allocation and management. Where adequate funding and non-financial resources, for example human capital, infrastructure and teaching aids, are provided (Shumba, 2018). The implementation of strategic initiatives relies on the availability of the necessary resources which is made possible through effective resource management. When optimally utilized, the resources make the institution have the capacity to elevate academic success, assist in character building, and also safeguard an optimistic image of the institution.

The implementation of strategic plans within an organization cannot be achieved without effective engagement and collaboration of the relevant parties. Engagement of students, parents, teachers, administrators and other members of the community creates a sense of belonging and responsibility to all (Maphosa & Chikoko, 2020). Stakeholders especially the supportive ones give their suggestions and assistance towards the cause making the process smoother and results better. This approach allows the stakeholders to integrate their activities, economize on resources and pull together toward the fulfilling of the institution's strategic objectives (Moyo & Zvobgo, 2019Education is an institution, and students' achievements are one of the benchmarks for measuring that institution's performance. In this context, student achievement refers to whether or not the SDA educational strategic plan succeeds in enhancing and maintaining students' academic performance. According to Koshal et al. (2004), a student's performance refers to the extent of fulfilling class or school-based assignments. The academic performance of the students was assessed on the

number of students overall who passed all the four sections of the proficiency test (Koshal et al., 2004).

Teaching and learning of ICT skills also, teachers' professional Development is another key aspect of the study because providing teachers with the means to acquire professional skills is necessary for the attainment of the objectives of the SDA educational strategic plan. Teacher professional learning is of increasing interest as one way to support the increasingly complex skills students need to learn in preparation for further education and work in the century (Hammond et al. 2017).

Student holistic growth is a very vital issue in enhancing and uplifting the students physically, emotionally and even psychologically. The holistic approach in degree programs is one of the performance indices that schools need to ensure their learners achieve and that is why it is innate in these programs to include such growth. Holistic development is the overall development of child that means social, emotional, physical, mental and intellectual growth of the person. (Channawar 2023). One aspect that every organization must have and which is central to public relations is reputation (Sagir, Dos and Cetin, 2014). Reputation, which is an aspect that takes long to achieve, turns into cognitive and emotional precedents that can influence all the organizational messages and conduct of all members, stakeholders and the general public as well (Demir, 2010). In this case restated the performance indicator is the Reputation and Recognition and how SDA institutions are in the good strategic educational planning.

Organizational effectiveness is key for the survival of these types of organizations as it benefits the organizations in numerous ways (Kaawaase, 2019). According to Hussey et al. (2008) organizational effectiveness is made up of the perspectives of an organization, the outputs and inputs. To put it in a simpler way,

outputs are what the organisation managing to produce, in this case these would be the academic output of the students, the image and prestige of the institution and higher school enrolment. Inputs are what the institutions provide in order to achieve the desired outputs, these consist of the SDA educational strategic plan, the advancement of teachers, and the provision of sufficient resources to realize the aim of the institution.

Aspects of SDA Educational Approaches and Principles in Zimbabwe Linking to Conceptual Framework

While SDA educational institutions follow the academic guidelines stipulated by the government, their programs of study present learning in a wholly Christian perspective. These are the approaches they adopt as pointed out in the Seventh-day Adventist Education Departmental Policies as indicated in their 2021-2022 Working Policy.

1. Holistic Education: Holistic education is a popular educational approach among SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe that combines academic achievement and spiritual, physical, and social development of the students. Their goal is to develop the student's character and values and ethical foundation together with education.

2. Education for the Values that the Church Holds Dear: Institutions of Seventh-day Adventist education regard the necessity of value-based education in accordance with the principles of Seventh-day Adventism, which recognizes the values of the denominations. They emphasize suppression and humility, or goodwill, the citizenship, and moral ethics.

3. Reversal of Religion: It is the disuser which perfectly fits the SDA education system because its purpose is to develop a fully-fledged individual within which religion has to be included since it carries the priority over all aspects of life. The

learners may also engage in carrying out studies on religion, participating in prayer, worship, and other related practices which promote good morals.

4. Entrenched Community Engagement: Institutions under the SDA system, strive to build community and encourage the involvement of parents, congregants, and the surrounding communities. It is this very framework that is supposed to sustain the growth and nurturing of the students in a healthy manner.

5. Focus on Physical and Mental Health: Using the health principles professed by the SDA Church, not only is education provided in these institutions but also health and wellness education according to the context is part of these institutions. They promote eating habits and physical activities Establishing ethical accountability and compliance policies in the context of labor management creates a continuous drive among newly admitted students (Rozanna et al., 2019) together with a leadership team that promotes accountability where all constituents are actively involved in decision making and organizational advancement (Yaya,2019). In accordance with Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, in developing and moulding themselves as much as this is a way of motivation, factors such as personal aspiration and goals of the individual employee will also dictate their attitudes and behavior towards the organization. This variation explains the importance of organizational policies concerning job satisfaction, as more favourable behaviour of employees, such as enhanced performance, are results of their satisfaction of the job.

Competence for Innovation as Means of Adjusting to Changes: The research on the innovation capabilities of the religious leaders revealed that the old ways of creating change are not able to tackle the situation anymore (Assouad & Parboteeah, 2018). This framework is evident in the innovation dynamics management established by the leadership of the faith-based institution. This limitation, which is change

management, itself an innovation, is firmly within the realm of the Resource Based View (RBV) of the organization and therefore cannot be ignored for it contributes positively to performance.

Performance in the context of RBV refers to the proper fit between the is to the capabilities of the individual in performing specific tasks and what role that individual plays in the whole organization. It looks at several issues including leaders and how they acquire skills by analyzing a job and the context within which the job is performed as well as other attributes that are not a person's physical endowment that make someone a leader and a qualified professional. Efficient resource allocation is crucial for achieving long-term goals rather than fleeting successes. Overcoming the challenge of resource allocation begins with understanding the spectrum of available resources. However, this understanding isn't static; educational institutions must periodically reassess their resources. This entails regularly reviewing whether financial, human, and time resources are being allocated in the most suitable ways to achieve the institution's goals.

The conceptual framework of this study delves into the impact of management competencies on implementation of educational strategic plans in selected Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) institutions. It aims to determine how management skills influence the performance of these institutions, examine how behaviours following availability of strategic plans can affect successful implementation of the plans in SDA educational institutions.

Strategy Implementation

The introduction of the strategic plan, also called strategic plan implementation, involves a set of steps that include communication, comprehension, acceptance, and carrying out these strategies (Noble, 1999). This activity is

considered to be one of the key determinants of an organization's success. In the argument by Yang et al. (2008), however, the concept of strategy implementation is not as clear cut and there are three angles. These are the process perspective, the behavioural perspective and that of both developed called hybrid, (Yang et al., 2008). Such views are indispensable to the conversion of strategic plans into actions. Communication in this case is very important because it makes each stakeholder involved in the strategy implementation comprehends the part that he or she plays in that aspect. Process wise, a strategy implementation is regarded as a logically developed set of stages to carry out changes.

On the other hand, the behavioural perspective regards this process as a series of more or less simultaneous activities, sequences of events that can be studied through the actions of those engaged in them (Yang et al., 2008). The three perspectives congregate on the understanding that strategy implementation is a process of translating the strategies into a series of actions to be taken within an organization to achieve its goals. It includes subdividing tasks into consist or achievable steps, diagnosing the problem and discriminating the steps to be taken in order to achieve some goals through the provision of the right people, materials, and control system.

In the view of Rajasekar, (2014) the implementation of strategy may also be seen as a sequence of actions and decisions taken by managers and employees that is difficult to determine during its course. As the changes take place During the strategic implementation geo-political internal and external forces impact on the decisions and actions taken to achieve the goals of the strategic plan. The conditions under which individuals or groups are likely to meet organizational objectives differ, to an extent, with different views of the same organization (Salih, 2012). Unlike strategy

formulation which only limits the efforts of the involved parties, strategy implementation calls for the engagement of all operational units and people. Hence, coordination of activities aimed at a common objective necessitates communication (Lindsay et al., 2018). The complexity involved in attempting to put strategies into practice explains why it is possible to have challenges related to the detailed framework of the organization, its size and structure, the industry in which it operates or its culture. Thus, the application is not universal, hence implementation strategies must take into account the unique contexts of the different organizations. Strategy implementation thus underscores the relevance of the need for teamwork as well as the active participation of the employees. It also emphasizes that strategy implementation cannot be left to the top management alone, it is the responsibility of every individual in the organization.

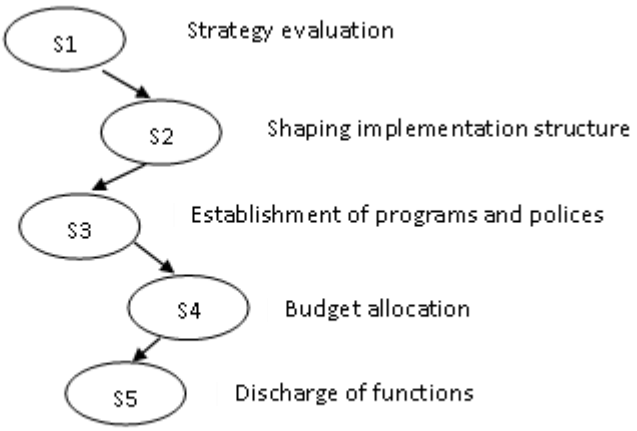
Implementation is also impacted by the organizational environment and the quality of the people brought on board (Lorange, 1998). Top management involvement, appropriate resource provision and engagement of the staff in formulation of the strategy all have a positive effect on the likelihood of success in implementation (Chimanzi & Morgan, 2005). A favorable both organizational context and competent workforce are necessary to the effective utilization of the policies given that they match with the changing economies and deal with the difficulties posed. This also reveals that strategy implementation is intricately acknowledged as a collective and cultural phenomenon that calls for the adoption of a comprehensive approach by organizations. The success of strategy execution relates to the people aspect of project management, while the organization's alignment behind the strategy and its implementation consists of critical elements of the execution process. The development consists of policy implementation.

Strategic Implementation Approaches

Figure 3 illustrates the strategy implementation process as a five-step approach, encompassing strategy evaluation and communication of the strategic plan, creation of an implementation structure, formulation of implementation-support policies and programs, budgeting and resource allocation, and execution of functions and activities.

Figure 3

Strategic Implementation Approaches



Source: Pushpa Rani: Strategy Implementations: A Conceptual Overview, Maagement 14(3): Page 6

Strategy Evaluation

Strategy implementation process begins with strategic evaluation, as shown in Figure 3. Maleka and Stevens (2014) assert that in the process of evaluation and communication, the organization must go through and analyze all of the available inputs, some performance indicators, budgets, and factors concerning the firm's objectives or goals that may have been ignored in the strategy formulation process, among others. The situation changes in the projects, and businesses have to incorporate changes into their polished plans; for instance, in a strategy, they may illustrate elaborate marketing promotion that would require many team members. This involves various activities like reconciling the plan with the organization's goals to ensure that processes, objectives, and yearly budget estimates are aligned. The organization should as well perform estimations where the is need to find out how best they can spend their funds.

With cultivation of strategies, monitoring of the direction of the organization is also included. It entails how to influence the organization by defining the purpose

of the organization, its objectives and values (mission), its goals and its environment internally and externally. Proposed strategy is what takes shape after discussions with the managers, this is however called the design view of strategy otherwise known strategy development (Johnson, Whittington and Scholes 2011). This strategy is a product of formal mechanisms of planning such as deliberative sessions and strategic retreats, which are largely executive processes. Strategies for developing do not characterize excessive promotion and pressure from management and are usually up-building — their sprouting takes place from the lower levels of the organization (Grant, 2010). This method which suggests carrying out planning has the best of both worlds 'form' and 'decentralized' systems, along with rationality, centralization, and formality, utilizes different layers of hierarchy in the organization (Ansoff, 1965). It is possible to say that problematic policies can result in diluted aim and poor execution. Strategy development is the core of strategic management in business because strategy implementation depends on effective strategy formulation. As illustrated by the studies done by Hrebiniak (2013), very often vague strategies can paralyze the direction and choke the implementation. Established organizations in stable environments tend to adhere to a deliberate strategy. On the other hand, emergent strategies are more pronounced in fast and unpredictable environments. Johnson and Scholes (2008) assert that while strategies should have a set plan, they should also be flexible enough to adapt to changes in the external environment. Reviewing the external environment in strategy development is good but it is also necessary to revise the strategy in view of the changes made to the organization's resources, skills, and abilities. In order to ensure success of implementation, strategies must always come with a degree of adjustability. Making strategies success requires that both tacking

resources are flexible enough and making adjustments to strategy sensibilities in the course of implementing a strategic plan.

Both strategy formulation and implementation are intertwined processes that interact with each other to enable an organization to attain its set goals. Therefore, it is required that organisations not only make but also execute strategies if they are to reach their desired objectives. Strategies cannot also be just objective plans of action. Rather organizations should incorporate tactical amalgamation of top down and bottom-up processes. Participation the so-called cohesion of narrowness and clarity, hierarchy and bureaucracy and give of people on different levels – that is how to do business.

Shaping Implementation Structure

The subsequent component involves designing a roadmap for its execution, which acts as a linguistic scaffold or a nailing block for attaching the strategies. To have a proper functional schematic, there has to be a playbook that elaborates on the scope and boundaries of action by any employee in the organization (Brinkschröder, 2014). This creates a hierarchy of managerial foresight, organisational application of the strategy and provides logic for the interdepartmental relations so as to better distribute powers and responsibilities. A systemic approach not only helps the group but it also informs the vision that governs the application of the strategies in the strategic plan. Besides, it creates a network of interactions that connect diverse sections and levels enhancing authority and responsibility distribution (Spink et al., 2016). This technique involves all the stakeholders of higher education institutions in the making of decisions and the attainment of strategic goals. This allows these institutions to create an appropriate structure of implementation and therefore carry out the strategies as planned and get the results what they aspire for. This type of

framework is an essential method for executing strategies due to its ability to encourage joint efforts. This course of action also includes developing employment policies and projecting ways of engaging respondents during the project. It also includes specifying the main control functions, actions to be carried out and the qualifications needed. This creates a situation where every individual in the educational institutions is involved in making decisions as well as in advancing towards the strategic goals.

Establishment of Policies and Programs

To develop implementation-support policies and programs is also called, as Shomali and Peeples (2018) explained, stressing or strategic approach guidelines or sustained enhancement programs. These policies and programs are mechanisms aimed at ensuring the effective methodologies within the organization. It is important to note that businesses form strategies which are intended to encourage the implementation of the strategy (Herrera-Sánchez, León-Pérez and León-Rubio, 2017). Implementation of such programs and policies ensures that organizations remain relevant within the competitive environment and also contribute to the achievement of their objectives. Performance, on the other hand, should be actively monitored and evaluated because it fosters an environment in which performance is rewarded, and deficiencies are addressed. Mishankova and Kocisova (2014) point out that there must always be an improvement factor even in the presence of a clearly defined process. As stated, it is important to introduce a performance monitoring and appraisal system which will ensure that all achievements are properly accounted for, appreciating completed tasks and highlighting areas that need focus (Seale, Broutet & Narasimhan, 2017). The business unit must develop a performance implementation plan alongside an information and feedback system that captures all necessary information and

motivates staff on performance activities and overall management. Such a system ensures that the strategies that have been formulated are put into practice effectively and the set goals met. Continuous monitoring and evaluation promote organizational learning and innovation, which in turn results in competitive advantage.

Budget Allocation

The fourth level entails providing strategic management staff members with the relevant skills and tools required for them to perform their key functions (Ha-Vikström, 2017). For example, such team may be given devices, money or other necessary things in order to carry out their tasks in any business activity. This proves to be one of the ambiguous aspects of strategy execution, given that well-designed business systems can enhance the effectiveness of an organization (Ha-Vikström, 2017). Even when the team and the strategy may be capable or deep in breadth, without sufficient resources and tools to implement them, the chances of success may be significantly reduced (Shomali and Peeples, 2018). When resources are channelled appropriately, effectiveness in an organization is enhanced, however misappropriation of resources reduces the chances of triumph. There should be apportionment of resources to various sections of the firm in order to minimize wastages or wrong computations in the firm. Also, the firm should perform and maintain records of income and expenditures. There is need, however, for the organizations to establish a sound management information system that allows monitoring of the financial academic performance of all schools under SDA, to ascertain the extent within which their respective divisions possess constraints on expenditure. Afterward, values for the various departments with the appropriate financial strategy in place and in an economically sound manner, are easier to manage. Careful preparation of budgets

makes it possible for a firm to achieve its mission and make the best possible use of all available resources.

Discharge of Functions

Pursuing a specific objective, the team becomes active, and the strategy goes operational. Leadership and participation of the group, for example, becomes very important at this stage of the strategy management process. Moreover, during the entire process, it is important for the organization to keep its workers engaged at all times by having them trained and oriented towards critical tasks that are to be carried out (Chang, 2006). In addition, there should be a proper way a manager should oversee and control the execution of all activities. Evaluation of the performance of Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons and Members on a regular basis is crucial to assist in the discovery of any existing problems and to correct them to avoid similar problems from occurring in the future (Shomali & Peeples, 2018). This study advocates for the need to put in place corrective measures in good time to enhance strategy implementation within the organization and avert challenges in the future. The achievements or results obtained in the fifth step, thus, act as the driving force around which the next hierarchical level revolves, which is the evaluation of the plan hence referred to as the third stage of tactical management.

The Organizational Culture

As a specific purpose is achieved, the team activates, and the strategic approach becomes operational. At this point of the strategy management process, for instance, the control and involvement of the team is of critical importance. Furthermore, throughout the strategy management process, it is essential for the organization should retain all, if not most, its staff to be focused on trained and

oriented on important works to be done (Chang, 2006). Also, it should be clear how a manager should organize and monitor the execution of all the processes. Regular assessment of Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, and Members' performance is necessary to help detect challenges and resolve them so that the same issues do not arise in the future (Shomali & Peeples, 2018). This paper argues for the necessity of taking strategies for disturbances reasonably early in the life of the organization to facilitate effective strategies implementation and avoid problems in the coming years. The achievements or results obtained in step five thus are central to the next hierarchical level which concerns the assessment of the plan hence the third stage of tactical management.

The Organization's Hierarchical and Power Structure

Agencies are framed within a hierarchical structure which in turn governs the distribution of duties, while vague power delegations are a recipe for disengagement of implementation. Implementation of strategies that go against existing ones is most likely a failed strategy. Even the best of plans tent to break down when the implementers are met with complicated organizational and political factors that prevent them from doing what they are supposed to do as intended. Research points to the fact, that some authors such as Olson, Slater, and Hult (2005) focused on the interrelationships between organizational performance, its structure, and employees' behavior towards this structure. Organizational structures that are formalized are contained within Feurer and Chaharbaghi (2015) and they emphasized that they are simply tools that help the already created knowledge by the workers into action for the success of the strategies. Miller et al. (2004) propose the realignment of roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities with the strategy, while Brache (2012) makes the

case for processes which cut across departments in the implementation of strategy, without the need of changing the structure of the organization. Furthermore, Brenes and Mena, (2008) argue that the structure of an organization is necessary in determining what resources to put in place in order to achieve strategy execution.

As indicated by Lynch (2005), it is also important to note that the organizational structure has a say in the internal politics of the organization. Different interest groups may have varying perspectives or preferences regarding changes in strategy. These differences may be objective, or they may be subjective and pertain to the politics surrounding decision making. For this reason, it is important to consider the internal political structure at the outset of strategic planning (Lynch, 2005). The focus on organizational structure reveals how intertwined strategy, structure, and behaviour are when it comes to implementing strategy. Any organization

The Leadership Context

The ability to lead is indispensable for controlling and inspiring workers, who are expected to perform defined duties according to a plan formulated. Leadership has many facets including making the necessary adjustments in the systems, structures, and the people to support the execution of the strategies (Rajasekar, 2014). As it were, commitment from top management to strategy implementation is very key, for without it, implementation cannot be effective (Raps, 2005). Empirical evidence also suggests that for Li et al. (2015), a strategy and commitment towards the management and the roles play a critical role in the successful implementation of a strategy. Good leadership means having the appropriate strategy in place and managing its implementation effectively (Hrebiniak, 2013). In turn, poor coordination is one of the reasons why implementation often fails (Alexander, 2015). Therefore, leaders must have the right skills, right attitude, be capable, and have the right experience in order

to perform their roles. Top management needs to influence employees to embrace the development of the organization s strategy. However, while strategy implementation takes place, top management needs to supervise and evaluate progress of every stratagem adjusted by the organization (Speculand, 2009). Various styles of leadership, management included, may have an effect on how a strategy is executed. For example, under democratic leadership, authority is shared within the members and everyone is actively involved in discussions and decisions (Gastil, 2014). Over and above, allocating available resources is yet another dimension of leadership in the implementation of strategy. The absence of proper allocation of resources especially on the more capital-intensive strategies has been responsible for strategy implementation breakdowns (Sterling, 2003). Proper resource deployment also entails financial scrutiny of the strategic plan to ascertain that all the desired resources are available for the purposes of implementation.

There have been a number of factors that have been put forward as barriers to successful strategy execution.

Bureaucratic Structure

Share the characteristics of almost all organizations. They have a structure based on roles, goals, and rules in managing their core activities, education for learners, and its added value through these correlations, referred to as external and internal environments (Blanchard, 2005). One can imagine both aspects of the stability – the rules as a form of order and the organizational structure as an adaptive mechanism. Furthermore, organizations have standing structures that delimit employment practices, reward systems and management activities while enabling other aspects of the organization such as operations (Coleman & Wilkins, 2005).

Bureaucracy is an essential instrument for improving efficiency and effectiveness of the same and allows the organization to carry out its activities the way it was planned. It reduces irritation and disturbance that may deter progress in the organization through creating order. Such approach makes sure that does not get one out of the normal course of work and it creates trust. Above all, it is this structure that enables bodies of the public or private sector to be prosperous. And this allows the company to address its organizational challenges in the most efficient manner and with the least possible time wastage. Looking towards bureaucratic practices, institutions can help prevent anarchy and fostering a positive but 'safe' growth. This pattern of management is observable in a lot of companies, and even more in schools, where certain characteristics of bureaucracy are further elaborated by researchers such as Bursalıoğlu (2012). These include special functions, teachers' dependency on management, legal regulations, fairness, and professional staff's working in schools (Aydın, 2010).

Social structure and hierarchy do not emanate the birth of bureaucracies, rather, their existence berthed in the need for social action and social order across levels. As the new trends can also be short-lived, schools as one of the primary units of any given society are also generally limited by them.

To draw an account from the literature, complex institutional systems like bureaucracy- pro or anti - ought not to be adhered to any extreme position. In what Craig 2015 sees as enabling strategic change in the positive aspects of Japanese bureaucracy, Adler and Borys, (2016) contend that strategy is used differently in relation to the kind of organisation. Yilmaz (2019) in this study agrees with both Hall and Weber that their concepts of bureaucracy also apply to Turkish as well as Western school systems thus justified in the study of school systems. Bureaucratism consists of

a variety of organizational forms and structures within which some structures derive advantages from it while others view it as a form of control. In other words, an organization cannot just put in place a bureaucratic system about any aspect of the organization's dynamics without considering how that particular aspect will change with different internal bureaucratic structures. For that matter, one can embrace or reject the concept of bureaucracy moulded by circumstances. Indeed, a number of these findings are also shown to be true in the context of education Hoy and Sweetland (2000) carried out research on Entrepreneurial Leadership in American Schools structures and even hierarchy did not change the way teaching and learning took place in the schools. It goes without saying that management of schools is management of a dual system since it involves a mixture of both a formal and informal management system the level of which varies from one unit to another and is also determined by (Hoy and Miskel, 2010). It can be concluded that Hall and Weber's notions are still relevant today because they enable one to grasp how a particular order is run.

In the teaching profession, professionalism revolves around effective teaching and learning quality (Day, 2002). Professionalism correlates with knowledge, ethical behaviour, responsiveness to student needs, and autonomous action (Cerit, 2012). Bureaucracy's impact on professionalism becomes evident in schools with effective bureaucratic structures. These structures empower teachers, enabling collaboration, communication, and differentiation (Hoy and Miskel, 2010; Bayhan, 2011). However, the relationship between bureaucratic structuring and teacher professionalism is nuanced and depends on various factors.

Bureaucratic influence extends to behaviours of both teachers and students, often guided by hierarchy and rules. Hoy and Sweetland (2000) introduce the

concepts of coercive bureaucracy and enabling bureaucracy to gauge bureaucratic effectiveness. Effective formalization in schools allows flexibility in procedures, promoting problem-solving and adaptability (Hoy & Miskel, 2010). Centralization affects how decisions are made and the level of involvement employees have tent to decrease with an increase in centralization (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). This dynamic explains how the norm of red tape can be beneficial or detrimental to the daily activities of teachers depending on the purpose. Heavily stratified organizations such as schools can function without high levels of educational compromise by using bureaucratic strategies to promote such a healthy environment. In this regard, bureaucratic systems in schools can allow for collaboration of staff, and flexibility, and most importantly teacher empowerment which as a result improves students' performance. To put it differently, bureaucracy is essential when it comes to achieving educational goals.

It is acknowledged that properly organized structure and defined chains of command among densely populated institutions may enhance, rather than inhibit…. Teacher empowerment. This vision of innovation policy resonates more closely with the so-called adhocracy culture, which advocates for innovation and entrepreneurial ventures, thereby demonstrating the relationship between bureaucratic practices and outcomes (Lund, 2003; Murat and Açıkgöz, 2007). The effectiveness of bureaucracy can be impacted by changing the ways in which the rules are viewed in schools, resulting in different effects.

Bureaucratic Structure in Developed Countries.

All the educational institutions of Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) across Europe use a vertical organizational structure modelled from the principles and structure of SDA Church. Being part of a global educational system that has primary

and secondary schools, college and universities including the SDA schools in Europe, this aspect is more pronounced in these schools with an emphasis on SDA religious upbringing. In a study done by Cindric and Jaksic (2016) exploring the structure of mission schools in Croatia, mainly the Adventist ones, a bureaucratic hierarchical structure was observed. Such schools are characterized by having a principal, board of directors and all the others at the lowest level where all decisions are made. It also noted the prominence of religious instruction in the school's offered courses.

Damberger and Willems (2013) examined the SDA educational establishments in Germany and they too reported strikingly similar vertical bureaucratic organizational structure featuring a principal and a board of directors. This study also noted that religion occupied a central place in the education system. According to statistics gathered from the SDA Church, there are approximately 86 primary and secondary schools and 17 higher learning institutions in the continent (SDA Yearbook, 2021). These include countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. For most characteristics, SDA educational institutions have a lot of aspects of bureaucracy; there is hierarchy of authority and also a focus on teaching and practice of the religion. The research further discovered that the doctrinal and educational policies are actively determined by the school's board of directors and the mission's president. Inner structure tends to put more value on scholarly discipline and moral cultivation (Gnanapragasam, 2018).

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church (SDA) is a Protestant Christian denomination that has a global network of schools, including primary, secondary, colleges, and universities. According to a research carried out by Lee (2006) which looked at the structure of inspiration-based education system in Korea, found some similarities with Japan model of social institutions which was quite hierarchical in

nature where decision making was a prerogative of a few with an appreciation of high rhetoric and discipline. In another research article by Lee and Kim (2015), the authors examined the organizational culture of SDA institutions within Korea and found it to be tackily and centrally managed leaving very little opportunities for creativity and innovations. The study indicated that the compliance to SDA beliefs was emphasized more than retention of creativity. One could argue that the disciplined approach to education that SDA schools endorse as well as the emphasis placed on SDA beliefs and tenets is not peculiar to SDA schools. School polycentrism and empowerment of decision-makers at all levels may bring about other weaknesses – feelings of disempowerment among the faculty members affected by excess structure in more or less creative educational processes. Goh and Tan (2018) examined the administration of SDA schools in South East Asia, finding a centralized bureaucratic structure where authority is vested at the top. The research observed an absence of autonomy among the teaching staff which resulted in feelings of disempowerment and lack of motivation. Kido and Tada (2021) investigated the leadership and management of SDA schools in Japan and couched their observations in the context of a developing modernization within the structures which they described as recent tendency of delegation that involves active participation of the faculties in the decision-making processes. The importance of cooperation and teamwork among faculty member was also underlined, enhancing the organizational climate.

Pedagogy

The notion of pedagogical leadership has been examined in detail, which has brought forth a number of definitions and theories concerning its effectiveness (Weber, 2016). Development of effective pedagogical leadership has been researched significantly, resulting with much information on its impact. Leadership that is

positive and strong can create an environment that cultivates excellency leading to enhancing and achieving students' success quench as well as to the improvement of teachers' capabilities. Most if not all educational institutions understand pedagogy as a core activity and a primary purpose of their existence (Balika & Akpay, 2018). It is often taken for granted that given the nature of their work, educational authorities cannot be against pedagogy for the very fact they belong to educational structures. All the schools have education as a core purpose while pedagogical skills are used to unearth the hidden talents among the students. The first thing that leaders must do is to focus on teaching and learning; this implies establishing a conducive environment that encourages students' growth as well as development of teachers. Concerned with the issue of pedagogy, schools can enhance students' academic performance and accomplish their objectives. For instance, Nistotskaya and Cingolani (2016) argue that pedagogical leadership advances a model where capacity developing initiatives are extended to students and teachers as enhancing students' social as well as academic capital and production and professional capital of teachers. Such a model of leadership enables the development and efficacy of the learner by ensuring that there are resources that will improve the learner's academic performance. Once leaders get to appreciate capacity-building, enhancement learning for students and effectiveness for teachers becomes a reality. This kind of approach creates an environment that is team-centered thereby focusing on the success of the students as well as the progress of the teachers. When there is a focus on pedagogy, the outcome of the school community is the community benefitting. Leadership within clear parameters of pedagogy assists in positively transforming the school community. The cognitive development and improvement of modern society are affected by globalization and the information age, which offers the need to develop technology for the right

technological age of teaching and learning. Communication has also improved with exuberance of Web 2.0 tools like social networks, 3D virtual spaces and the like which has enabled relationships to go further than the primitive context of student and teacher (Khalifa et al., 2016). They allow acceptance of the integrated learning approach where students, teachers, parents, the community, and the government join efforts to promote the acquisition of knowledge. Consequently, contemporary young people are faced with the challenge of integrating into a much older, more complex society as defined by learning dynamics and more learning activities (Male and Palaiologou, 2015). Hence the need to support learning – and unlearning as making sense of the world becomes critical and that is the reason why such concepts need to be championed by the leaders of such institutions in their organizations. In doing this, they will not only bunch up students, but also students who will be able to adjust to a totally different world.

This outlook coincides with the existing tendencies of expansionism for economic purposes, and the competition among nation-states driven by globalization particularly in higher education (Krersch & Peters, 2017). Learning where acquisition of knowledge is pursued developed and modified. On the contrary, learners are required to be self -driven, and self-created knowledge is expected from them to survive in such an environment. And that is how it is supposed to be in education for postgraduate students where there is stress on evaluation and generation of new ideas, (Heikka et al. 2018). It works well in this day and age when to be successful one has to go through a learning process and success is conceptualized according to the amount of knowledge and inventiveness that one possesses (Bottery, 2006). By promoting and developing an atmosphere of intelligence owing to the extreme.

Restraint and standardization are often the characteristic of education, especially from the application, the present educational leaders may therefore not have been prepared for this transformation. Educational leaders need to embrace situated knowledge. In other words, they do not need to have all the solutions and instead appreciate other people's perspectives (Bullock, 2016). Situating learning as in this case, with other activities, has depicted that it has been taken as an obligation and it has been shown that societies which are dominated by ideas and inventions have advanced at a faster pace (Bottery, 2006). Bullock (2016) maintains that for effectiveness business leaders in a learning organization will have to change how they lead in terms of the acquisition and effective use of human and social capital. Thus, the acknowledged leaders must adopt provisional epistemology whereby their knowledge is limited and the opinions of other groups are embraced and appreciated (Bullock, 2016). In a changing landscape, continuous learning is imperative as the global economy is dependent on the knowledge, creativity, and imagination of the human race (Bottery, 2006). Additionally, there is a need to develop social structures in which individual efforts are subsumed under teamwork (Zahar and Cohen, 2016). In the post-industrial economy, knowledge networks allow individuals to achieve more in groups than they could alone. Leaders must make the creation of these networks a main focus in order to support an atmosphere of cooperation and knowledge sharing.

Implementation of Strategic Plan and its Challenges

Many of the internal organizational forces suggest to its actors the use of rationality as the best way to gather and evaluate the incidence of facts. The forces can also encourage planning, coordination and control. More often, strategies designed due to the influence of rational forces are usually specific, explicit, all-

powerful and all-inclusive within higher levels of the organization. According to Wheelen and Hunger (2003), strategy formulation refers to the anticipation of environmental opportunities and threats and internal strengths and weaknesses with a clear projection of the organization over a longer horizon. In the same manner, Stahl and Grigsby (1997) noted that there are decisions that concern the mission of the organization, the ends to be achieved and the means of achieving them, and these are all strategy formulation. This is the phase that enables the formulation of an organization's vision, mission, goals, strategies, and policy framework. In his writing 'Strategic Planning', Katsidoudes (2002) suggested that on most occasions, before the actual planning takes place, a realistic and practical scope should be set, which may be starting with a SWOT analysis of the internal and external environments of the organization to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the organization.

As described in earlier sections, corporate strategy formulation is about establishing a direction, Armstrong (2006) asserts. This means basically stating what the organization stands for, what it wants to achieve, and assessing its internal organizational capabilities and limitations and the external environment for its opportunities and threats through a SWOT analysis. Also, Bryson (1995) gave a five-step process of strategy formulation, which entailed actionable alternatives, functional barriers, major solutions, actions and work plans. Lorange (1998) posits that people are the most paramount internal strategic resource. Thus, the effective use of employees' competency in his or her area of work is of great importance. While the management has to place people in proper positions and undertake coordinating their efforts, it must also dedicate itself to consolidating these efforts. Such emphasis on the right people for the right jobs is pertinent in this case because it comes into play

especially when a strategy is being put into action. Benis (2017) stresses how crucial it is to refrain from grade allocating.

There are circumstances however when the need to monitor and review processes and the involvement of top management is important, especially when there is shift in the focus from objectives or there is need to redistribute resources. Kalkan (2016) indicates that when a certain level of profitability cannot be reached, that activity can be already abandoned encouraging an efficient allocation of resources on the most promising projects. In order for a strategy to be accepted, one must find a way to harness at the same time control and imagination. Over control can limit the use of innovative thinking, which is a treasured asset in any organization, while having to know the way an organization is going is also important. The types of power that strategic leaders possess and how they use that power can be seen in the culture of the organization (Wheelen et al., 2008). Achieving the goals of the organization requires the quick recognition and control of problems that arise (Wheelen et al., 2008).

The organizational structure defines how tasks are divided, grouped, and coordinated in order to fulfil the mission and achieve the objectives. This is because organization structure determines policy formulation, resource distribution and accomplishment of targets, necessitating changes in such structure where changes in strategy are made (Sababu, 2007). A healthy culture is one that enhances the mission of the organization while clashing cultures hinder the execution of the strategy (Burns et al., 2015). Organizational culture is a reflection of strategic leaders' input (Wheelen et al., 2008).

The fulfilment of a strategy in any organization is highly dependent on the leader's commitment in that it involves direction and cohesion of a group with a

common goal. This is achieved through diffusion of responsibility, motivation, which can be in form of other allowances, training and delegating authority. The functional activity of resource allocation which entails finance, stocks, manpower, technology and supplies among others is quite essential. However, practices such as favouratism and office politics may distort the rational allocation of resources. There is an influence of power and politics in executing the strategy. While power is the ability to control somebody's action, politics is about getting resources for a desired effect (Candido & Santos, 2015).

Zahar and Cohen (2016) noted that a middle manager's desire to carry out strategies may be thwarted by interests which are self-serving. The implementation of a strategy is closely tied to leadership and there is no single way to define organizational performance. Such barriers were also revealed in research carried out by Lazano et al. (2019), Arar (2015) and Hansen, Boyd and Kryder (1998). According to Barrick et al. (2015), comprehensive implementation is a critical factor that is often neglected until the planning has already begun. In order to succeed in carrying out the implementation, the approach must include the determination, the proper mix of changes and conduct an effective core business. To achieve success, strategy and execution should fit, as there is little value in executing a strategy which is incorrect. There are prerequisites pertaining to internal and external factors of execution and they are affected by the degree of organizational adaptability (Lindsay et al., 2018). Motivational issues, governing communication, and planning are addressed by many researchers as main barriers in the process of implementing a strategy. Most organizations face difficulties in executing the successful strategies because of lack of clarity of vision, weak leadership, contradiction in resource allocation to the strategies, and different agendas. Every successful process of implementation has a

set of people, leadership, team work, and most importantly sharing of knowledge clearly laid down (Pietarinen et al, 2017).

According to Andrews (1980), most organizations have strategic planning processes but rarely go a step further to invest in bureaucracy of strategic management systems. Strategic management boards are supportive in the formulation of strategic management goals, strategic vision and its attainment among other factors. Good boards do not simply approve of the strategic plans and wait for their implementation and reviews to take place. Instead, they participate very much in the process (Dandira, 2011). An executive committee in review mostly perspectives and results outcome oriented. Interaction of senior managers with the planners is crucial for the implementation of the strategies, absence of which can threaten any organization's adaptation or in other words its survival in a competitive environment (Thompson et al., 2007). The enhancement of the organization's planning processes is to raise their ability to react and maintain themselves in their environment by introducing feedback loops. Strategies about the role that different actors will play in the planning process are called administrative, purposive, targeting, and information strategies (Brody, Godschalk, & Burby, 2003). The integration of informal and formal processes is perceived as necessary although achieving this can be problematic, given the sometimes contradicting nature of the level of elaboration of plans and processes (Robinson and Pearce, 1983). It is also important that all employees appreciate the business goals and work towards meeting them. National investment directors and their teams should therefore work towards meeting the organizational objectives in order.

Influence of Mission Statement on the Performance of the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Institutions in Zimbabwe

The institutional mission is the bedrock of every educational institution, and it significantly influences the strategic performance of the institution. In Zimbabwe, the SDA educational institutions have a mission that is more focused on the total development of an individual spiritually, academically, socially and even physically. Dube and Mhlanga (2018) assert that the mission of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe is to make the best Christian education available to all. This is in line with the church's universal mission aimed at offering education that embraces the development of the entire person. Innovation competence means the extent to which an institution is able to create new ideas and also adjust in the surrounding conditions. Innovation is important in education because it enables the institutions to stay active and not to lose out to competition. Mhaka and Mhlanga (2018) emphasize that innovation competence is significant in influencing the strategic performance of the SDA institutions of learning in Zimbabwe. The indicated authors also observe that in Zimbabwe, the SDA schools have to be innovative in order to cope with the dynamic and competitive education environment.

Innovation competence is a critical factor that affects the strategic performance of SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. It enables them to adjust and improve their operations in a dynamic market. SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe need to be innovative in their approach to education so as to meet the needs of their students and providing quality education. Different types of innovations include a new technology, new curriculum, and new ways of teaching. It is imperative that SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwean authorities are keen on adaptation and investment in innovation development.

Another important facet of educational institutions' strategic performance is the institutional approach to labour. The labour policy states how the institution goes about recruitment, retention, and reward issue of employees. Mhaka and Mhlanga (2018) argue that there is a gap in provision of a comprehensive policy on human resource issues in SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. One of the gaps identified by the authors is that SDA educational institutions should practice compensation strategies with respect to salaries, benefits and working conditions that are above the average in the market in order to attract and retain qualified personnel. Another important facet of educational institutions' strategic performance is the institutional approach to labour. The labour policy states how the institution goes about recruitment, retention, and reward issues of employees. There is also the need for SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe to have a well understand focused recruitment based human resource policy stat that attracts and retains skilled workforce. Such a policy should stipulate that there are attractive salaries, benefits, and employment standards. There is also the need for SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe to adopt policies geared towards the sustainability of staff in order that staff are not only present but also productive in offering quality education.

Training of staff is the training of employees to implement the policies and objectives of an educational institution. It assists the personnel to gain the required expertise and competencies in order to practice their work well. As noted by Chirikure and Dube (2021), training of staff is one of the strategic performance determinants of SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The authors further assert that SDA educational institutions ought to prioritize staff training for better educational standards. Training of staff is the training of employees to implement the policies and

objectives of an educational institution. It assists the personnel to gain the required expertise and competencies in order to practice their work well.

Educational institutions fulfil many functions which can be classified into cluster of transformational strategies. Mission, vision and values become particularly important in culture change programmes. Potential anticipated challenges are balanced by a reduction of specific disadvantages associated with the change. The result is the production of a series of interrelated, but distinct initiatives. Design interventions which cut across the various strategic initiatives to reinforce and support implementation of the strategic plan. These would include engraining the new design within current organisational systems such as human resource management. Innovative 'move to the next level' initiatives do not however die naturally within the masses and hence adoption can only come after intense canvassing, lobbying and demonstrating their feasibility and rewarding nature. Senior management hopes that after applying change management processes without exceptions, employees will go through required and warranted changes and embrace the innovations initiated. The worst however would come when top management believes that they have established the change structure and processes in the organization; meanwhile majority of the staff are yet to understand the fundamentals. Effects of cultural change, if any, are buried in discounting horizons such that the change essentially becomes instantaneous. This attitude is eve evident in organizations that have attempted radical structures within their system as the commitment for change is always opportunistically absent. The various studies highlight the relative importance of looking at change from a cultural and long-term perspective.

Educational Context in Zimbabwe and Seventh-day Adventist Educational institutions

In Zimbabwe, the education sector has been experiencing metamorphoses over the last few years. Those in charge of administering the schools in Zimbabwe previously adhered to some form of management principles that included, classical planning, organizing, staffing, managing, and controlling. This means that school principals had little to do with the daily management of their institutions, mostly because strategic tools and concepts were inadequately or poorly executed (Moyo, 2020). In relation to this and in order to be in sync with the world and its evolution, appropriate policies as well as their effectiveness to implement them have led the education sector including the Ministry of Education Zimbabwe to come up with several strategic plans to improve the education system. For the strategic plans are specifically developed with the objective and purpose of addressing specific issues and enhancing the education system. Summarizing this particular strategic planning put into practice:

1. Education 5.0: This strategic plan was introduced in 2018 and its aims at reforming the education sector by focusing on technology, then digitalization of education. It is designed for the young generation and helps them to acquire skills compatible with the 21st century and affords education for all.

2. National Education Policy Framework 2020-2030 (NEPF): This policy framework gives a comprehensive vision of educational development in Zimbabwe. The munificent provision focuses on promoting social justice and equal opportunity in education, enhancing the quality and quantity of teachers, and expanding the access to and provision of education and education throughout life.

3. STEM Education Strategic Plan: Aimed at ensuring the enhancement of STEM education and skills development in Zimbabwe, The Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education Strategic Plan (2013) seeks to expand the teaching and learning of STEM in schools. It also seeks to enhance the levels of students' interest and engagement in the study of STEM subjects along with the improvement of the quality of resources for teaching and learning and the active engagement of schools and industries.

Adapting education transition fund context, the fund addresses infrastructural resources deficit within the schools. It aims at enhancing education by making financing available to the development of infrastructure, learning materials and training of teachers.

National Early Childhood Development (ECD) Strategic Plan: This plan seeks to improve all aspects of early childhood education and development in Zimbabwe. It aims at increasing the availability and quality of sufficient ECD programs, providing training of ECD teachers as well as sensitizing the society on the need to engage in ECD.

These strategic plans formulated in Zimbabwe's education sector seek to cover a number of issues such as information and communication technology, teachers' quality, infrastructure development, curriculum development, and pre-school education among others. It shows how the resources of the government are being utilized in education ensuring that every learner has an opportunity.

The Vision 2030 of Zimbabwe seeks to enhance innovation, entrepreneurship and development with fairness to all the citizens. It seeks to ensure that 80% of households in Zimbabwe will be involved in school activities concerning their children by the year 2030. There is a very good intention behind this where it is

expected that families get involved with their children's school activities and also keeps in touch with what happens in schools (Kakonge, 2017). It aims at very deep cultural issues, namely, of research, innovation and self-governance in the establishments of learning. It goes on to be concerned with creating a conducive learner-oriented system that supports critical thinking, problem solving and learning through the use of technology. These tend to focus on making employment ready students and self-directed learners (Education 5.0, 2018). Business expansion is greatly aided by the execution of a strategic plan. It covers vision, mission, and values as well as structure and strategies in order to accomplish strategic aims.

Policies and their Effects

Numerous pupils have one-of-a-kind classes wherein they categorize the institutional regulations. Springfield (2017) researched strategic making plans within the church's establishments in Kenya. The church's strategic planning process in Kenya was found to be disconnected from its mission, with key performance indicators not aligning with its goals. This disconnect hindered the church's ability to effectively achieve its objectives. The study highlighted the need for alignment between strategic planning and mission to ensure effective goal achievement. By prioritizing mission alignment, the church can enhance its overall performance. Institutional regulations play a crucial role in shaping strategic execution, with a strong correlation between the two. However, private institutions tend to prioritize traditional approaches, hindering their ability to adapt to changing circumstances. To remain competitive, these institutions must adopt innovative strategies to address emerging challenges. By embracing new approaches, private institutions can enhance their strategic execution (Njeri, Ngui & Mathenge, 2019). Cramer's coefficient showed a sturdy affiliation between institutional regulations and strategic execution.

Thus, it found out non-public establishments as basically conventional orientation and should locate new approaches to managing the problems dealing with them encompass crowning glory from different establishments (Nistor, 2018). As a result, it highlighted private institutions as having a mostly conventional perspective and needing to develop new methods to cope with difficulties such as competition from other institutions.

Mutuvi (2013) discovered that management practices connected to internal organizational elements do not encourage the seamless implementation of strategic plans in his study on crucial factors impacting NGOs during strategic implementation. Thus, the failure associated with the plan of action was ascribed to the absence of expertise within local communication concerns which are normally inclusive of good pay, incentives, resource mobilization, and worker participation in decision-making (Barnhill, Smith, and Gac, 2021). Strategic plan implementation in NGOs is often hindered by internal organizational factors, leading to inadequate execution. To enhance implementation, NGOs must address these internal factors and prioritize inclusive decision-making. By doing so, NGOs can improve their strategic plan execution. NGOs must prioritize inclusive decision-making, addressing issues such as pay, incentives, resource mobilization, and employee participation. By adopting a collaborative approach, NGOs can enhance their strategic plan execution and achieve their goals more effectively. It advised that strategy implementation be addressed as a one-time event rather than a process requiring dialogue. As a result, organizations must collaborate to address this prevalent predicament connected to institutional policies.

These were classified into three groups which were cognizant of career planning, alternative job planning, and offshore job planning. Doelmann et al. (2021)

divided the ideas into four categories: time, cash, direct services and information-based. In addition, categories of rules and regulations, institutional policy development, conduct, depend on management consciousness and organizational norms. Understanding these categories is essential for effective policy development and implementation. By recognizing the diverse needs of employees, institutions can develop targeted policies that enhance their well-being and productivity. Recently, a concise and complete picture of institutional efforts has been revealed by Oldayo et al. (2015) who highlighted that initiatives should be titled based on the difficulties that employees encounter. Employee initiatives are often categorized based on the challenges they face, highlighting the need for targeted support. Institutions must prioritize employee well-being and productivity by developing policies that address their diverse needs. By doing so, institutions can enhance employee satisfaction and overall performance.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe is a diverse and rapidly growing religious organization, with over 85,000 members in 2019 (Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2021). To effectively implement its strategic objectives, the church has put in place various policies and guidelines to guide its operations. This literature review will examine the policies and their effects on strategic implementation within Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Europe. One of the key policies that guide the operations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe is the strategic plan. The strategic plan is developed by the church's leadership and outlines the organization's goals, objectives, and strategies for a specific period of time. According to Bösl and De Vries (2019), the strategic plan is an important tool for ensuring consistent and effective implementation of the church's strategic objectives. The plan provides clear guidelines on how the church should allocate resources, how leaders should be

appointed, and how programs should be developed and evaluated. This helps to minimize confusion and conflict within the organization. Another important policy that has contributed to the successful implementation of the church's strategic objectives is the emphasis on education. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe has a strong network of schools, from primary to tertiary level, that provide quality education to its members and the wider community.

According to Bösl and De Vries (2019), the church's emphasis on education has improved the standard of living of its members, as education is a key driver of economic and social development. This has also helped to create a pool of skilled workers who can contribute to the development of the region. The church's health policies also have a significant impact on strategic implementation. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe is known for its emphasis on healthy living, including a vegetarian diet, regular exercise, and avoidance of harmful substances such as tobacco and alcohol. According to Grønborg and Pedersen (2016), the church's health policies have helped to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. This has improved the health status of its members and also reduced healthcare costs, allowing for greater investment in other strategic initiatives.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a Christian denomination that operates institutions of higher learning, hospitals, and other organizations across Africa. The institutions have varying levels of autonomy and are subject to both internal policies and external regulations. The implementation of policies in these institutions can have a significant impact on their strategic direction and success. This literature review will examine the policies and their effects on strategic implementation within Seventh-day institutions in Africa. The Seventh-day Adventist Church operates several institutions

of higher learning, including universities, colleges, and nursing schools, across Africa. The institutions are owned and operated by the church, and their mission is to provide education and healthcare services to the community. These institutions are subject to the policies of the church, which are designed to ensure that they operate according to the church's values and principles. The policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are designed to guide the operations of its institutions in Africa. These policies cover various areas, including governance, finance, human resources, curriculum, and student life. The implementation of these policies can have a significant impact on the strategic direction of the institutions. For example, the church's policy on governance requires that the institutions be governed by a board of trustees appointed by the church.

The board is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the institution and ensuring that it operates according to the church's values and principles. The implementation of this policy can have a significant impact on the strategic direction of the institution, as the board's decisions will shape the institution's future. Similarly, the church's policy on curriculum requires that the institutions provide education that is consistent with the church's values and principles. The implementation of this policy can impact the strategic direction of the institution by shaping the type of education that is offered and the values that are promoted. The implementation of policies in Seventh-day Adventist institutions can have both positive and negative effects on strategic implementation. On the positive side, policies can provide guidance and structure to institutions, ensuring that they operate in accordance with the church's values and principles. This can help to promote the mission of the institution and enhance its reputation. On the negative side, policies can also limit the flexibility and creativity of institutions, making it difficult for them to adapt to

changing circumstances. For example, if a policy requires that a certain curriculum be taught, it may be difficult for the institution to introduce new courses or programs that are not consistent with the policy.

Several studies have examined the policies and their effects on strategic implementation within Seventh-day institutions in Africa. A study by Kinyua and Waithaka (2016) examined the implementation of policies in Seventh-day Adventist universities in Africa. The study found that the policies were generally well-implemented, but that there were challenges in areas such as governance and financial management. Another study by Njoroge and Olweny (2016) examined the impact of policies on the quality of education in Seventh-day Adventist universities in Kenya. The study found that the policies had a positive impact on the quality of education, but that there were challenges in areas such as curriculum development and faculty recruitment.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe is one of the largest religious organizations in the country, with over 500,000 members as of 2021 (Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2021). The church has a strong emphasis on health and education, with a network of hospitals, clinics, and schools across the country. To effectively implement its strategic objectives, the church has put in place various policies and guidelines to guide its operations. This literature review will examine the policies and their effects on strategic implementation within Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. One of the key policies that guide the operations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe is the church manual. The church manual outlines the policies and procedures that govern the operations of the church, including administrative structures, worship services, and financial management. According to Muzvidziwa (2018), the church manual is an important tool for ensuring consistent

and effective implementation of the church's strategic objectives. The manual provides clear guidelines on how the church should be organized, how leaders should be appointed, and how resources should be managed. The church manual outlines its administrative structures, worship services, and financial management. This helps to minimize confusion and conflict within the organization, allowing for a more focused and efficient implementation of the church's strategies. The church's emphasis on education and health has contributed to its success, improving the standard of living and health status of its members.

Another important policy that has contributed to the successful implementation of the church's strategic objectives is the emphasis on education. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe has a strong network of schools, from primary to tertiary level, that provide quality education to its members and the wider community. According to Mthombeni and Muzvidziwa (2020), the church's emphasis on education has helped to improve the standard of living of its members, as education is a key driver of economic and social development. This has also helped to create a pool of skilled workers who can contribute to the development of the country. The church's health policies have also had a significant impact on strategic implementation. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe is known for its emphasis on healthy living, including a vegetarian diet, regular exercise, and avoidance of harmful substances such as tobacco and alcohol. According to Nyamunda and Mugwagwa (2015), the church's health policies have helped to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. This has not only improved the health status of its members but has also reduced healthcare costs, allowing for greater investment in other strategic initiatives.

Impact of Strategic Plan Implementation on Key Performance Areas

Strategic plan implementation is a key determinant of successful educational institutions, and the Seventh-day Adventist educational system is no exception. In this literature review, we will discuss the impact of strategic plan implementation on key performance areas in relation to student performance in Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Australia and the United States, citing relevant literature from the past two decades.

Nyakera's (2014) research on the variables influencing the execution of strategic plans for newly founded private colleges studied the substance of mission statements from ten Kenyan institutions. Nyakeriga (2014) discovered that the execution of strategic plans at newly founded institutions was impacted by pre-existing human resource management policies, organizational and management systems, effective communication, and consensus. Moyo (2019) also found that companies with a strong vision are efficient in predicting future events, preparing for change and innovation, boldly facing the future, predicting changes in customer demands, and improving employees and also pointed out that it helps to improve. The survey concluded that senior management primarily created mission statements and did not update them regularly (Keytan, 2017). Therefore, if an organization with other factors does not intervene, a proper and strong purpose statement is most likely to generate increased retention (Liu et al., 2019). As a result, the mission statement assists the Church in successfully achieving its goals through promotion of initiatives of social responsibility to communities.

In another study which was conducted by Harwiki (2016) on the factors that influence strategic planning in Kenya revealed that management’s commitment and access to resources for strategic decision-making has a considerable effect on strategy

execution at private institutions. The leadership style adopted by educational leaders in SDA institutions in Zimbabwe either positively or negatively impact organizational performance in strategic plan implementation. The transformational leadership style has been associated with improved organizational performance in education institutions. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers to achieve the goals of the organization through personal development and empowerment (Maphosa, Ncube, & Mulaudzi, 2020). On the other hand, transactional leadership, characterized by a focus on rewards and punishments, has been linked to lower levels of organizational performance (Zhu and Akhtar, 2014). Educational leadership positions have been found to have a significant influence on organizational performance in strategic plan implementation in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. In a study conducted by Makura and Mavhunga (2017), it was found that educational leaders play a crucial role in the implementation of strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. The study surveyed 50 educational leaders from different institutions and found that effective leadership was positively correlated with successful implementation of strategic plans. The study also identified key leadership practices that were associated with successful implementation, including effective communication, collaboration, and alignment of resources with strategic objectives. Similarly, in a study conducted by Mawere and Gwarinda (2018), it was found that educational leaders who were able to provide a clear and compelling vision for their institutions were more successful in implementing strategic plans. The study surveyed 100 educational leaders from Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe and found that those who were able to articulate a clear vision were more likely to have staff who were committed to the implementation process.

In a more recent study conducted by Chikunda and Chimhenga (2021), it was found that educational leaders who were able to create a culture of accountability were more successful in implementing strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. The study surveyed 60 educational leaders and found that those who were able to hold their staff accountable for meeting strategic objectives were more likely to achieve their goals. Finally, in a study conducted by Mungania et al. (2020), it was found that educational leaders who were able to create a culture of innovation were more successful in implementing strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. The study surveyed 80 educational leaders and found that those who were able to encourage innovation and experimentation were more likely to achieve their strategic objectives.

A study done by Masunungure, Bhebhe, and Chivandi (2018), found that educational leaders who were able to create a supportive and empowering environment for staff were more successful in implementing strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. The study surveyed 50 educational leaders and found that those who were able to foster a positive workplace culture were more likely to have staff who were committed to the implementation process. Moreover, Nyakutsey and Moyo (2019) found that educational leaders who were able to effectively manage change were more successful in implementing strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. The study surveyed 100 educational leaders and found that those who were able to manage resistance to change and facilitate the adoption of new practices were more likely to achieve their strategic objectives. In a study by Mahlangu (2021), it was found that educational leaders who were able to effectively communicate the strategic plan to stakeholders were more successful in implementing strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in

Zimbabwe. The study surveyed 60 educational leaders and found that those who were able to communicate the plan clearly and regularly to staff, students, and other stakeholders were more likely to have their support and commitment. In a study by Mhaka-Mutepfa, Mungania, and Njovu (2021), it was found that educational leaders who were able to promote a culture of continuous improvement were more successful in implementing strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. The study surveyed 80 educational leaders and found that those who were able to encourage staff to identify areas for improvement and implement changes were more likely to achieve their strategic objectives.

In recent years, educational leadership positions have become increasingly important in promoting and maintaining organizational performance in Zimbabwe. A number of studies have been conducted to examine the impact of educational leadership positions on organizational performance in Zimbabwe. Muteswa et al. (2018) found that there is a positive relationship between educational leadership positions and school performance, with better performance being associated with educational leaders who are knowledgeable and competent in their roles. The study also showed that effective leadership is linked to improved student learning outcomes, teacher motivation and retention, and increased organizational efficiency. In another study conducted by Chitiyo and Chirikure (2020), it was found that effective educational leaders are essential for the success of an organization. The authors found that educational leadership positions can facilitate the development of a shared vision, increase teacher motivation, promote professional development, and foster collaboration between different stakeholders. They also found that educational leaders can influence classroom practice and student achievement.

A further study conducted by Phekani (2019) found that effective educational leadership is critical for improving teaching and learning in Zimbabwe. The study found that educational leaders had a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are used to manage the financial, operational, and administrative processes of an organization. This type of system can be beneficial for educational institutions as it can improve the accuracy and speed of record-keeping, reduce paperwork, and streamline the sharing of information between departments. A study by M. Kostić et al. (2020) found that ERP systems have the potential to improve efficiency and effectiveness in SDA educational institutions in Europe. They conducted a survey of SDA universities and schools in the region and found that most of them had implemented ERP systems, with the majority of those being full ERP systems. The study also found that the use of ERP systems was associated with improved performance in terms of financial management, student administration, and operational processes. A study by S. Stanisavljević et al. (2019) looked at the challenges faced by SDA educational institutions when implementing ERP systems in Europe. They found that the lack of standardization and the complexity of the systems were the main challenges. In addition, lack of staff training, inadequate communication between departments, and the lack of a unified strategy for implementation were also challenges that were when implementing ERP systems. The authors suggested that organizations should ensure that they have adequate resources and support available to ensure successful implementation. The implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational institutions in the United States and Canada has been widely studied, with a range of sources demonstrating the effectiveness of such implementations. One study, conducted by Wooten et al.,

(2018), found that the usage of ERP systems in SDA schools increased student outcomes in terms of both academic performance and operational efficiency. The study compared two SDA schools, one that had implemented an ERP system and one that had not. The study concluded that the school with the ERP system had significantly better student outcomes. The study also found that the ERP system allowed efficient sharing of resources and information between departments, leading to improved operational efficiency. A similar study, conducted by Smith et al. (2017), found that the implementation of ERP systems led to an increase in the efficiency of finance and accounting operations. The study examined the impact of ERP systems on the finance and accounting practices of three SDA institutions and found that the ERP systems allowed for greater accuracy and transparency in financial reporting. The study also found that the ERP systems led to improved communication between departments and an overall increase in operational efficiency.

This literature review provided an overview of the most relevant findings related to this topic. A study conducted by Li et al. (2010) in Australia examined the impact of ERP implementation in a Seventh-day Adventist school and found that there was a significant improvement in staff morale and a reduction in paperwork associated with administrative tasks. In addition, they reported that the ERP systems helped to increase productivity and reduce costs. They also reported that the system helped to streamline processes and facilitate more efficient decision-making. Studies conducted in various countries have shed light on the impact of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational institutions and their associated benefits.

In Germany, Kühne et al. (2014) found that ERP implementation in SDA schools led to improved data accuracy, more efficient business processes, reduced

administrative task times, and real-time access to information. Similarly, in Germany, Hess et al. (2016) reported that ERP implementation in an SDA school increased collaboration. Asian countries have also witnessed a rise in ERP adoption among SDA educational institutions. Kim and Lee (2019) found that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and compatibility influenced ERP adoption in SDA universities in South Korea. In China, Zhou et al. (2017) observed positive impacts of ERP implementation on SDA university performance. In India, Shetty et al. (2015) noted reduced costs, streamlined processes, and improved customer service as outcomes of ERP implementation in SDA universities. Likewise, in South Africa and Botswana, ERP systems were found to improve efficiency and communication in SDA educational institutions (Van Rooyen, 2003; Maboea & Ramarumo, 2009; Tshimangadzo et al., 2017). Nigeria and Tanzania also experienced ERP adoption benefits. Oluwole et al. (2017) found that ERP implementation in SDA secondary schools in Nigeria improved efficiency and student performance. Ukpere et al. (2017) observed that ERP systems enhanced operational efficiency and financial performance in both countries.

Resource planning has also been a focus of study. In Kenya, Mumbua and Mingaine (2015) emphasized the importance of adequate resources for strategic plan execution. In Zimbabwe, studies highlighted the positive relationship between effective resource planning and strategic implementation (Muzondo et al., 2019; Ndlovu and Ncube, 2020), as well as financial performance (Mhlanga and Muzondo, 2018). Chinyamurindi et al. (2019) linked effective resource planning to improved organizational performance. The establishment of the Zimbabwe East Union Conference (ZEUC) exemplified successful resource planning and strategic implementation in Zimbabwe (ZEUC, 2016). The consolidation of conferences aimed to enhance efficiency and mission impact through careful resource planning and

stakeholder involvement. Collectively, these studies showcase the potential benefits of ERP adoption and effective resource planning for SDA educational institutions across different regions.

According to the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (GC) (2008) the effectiveness of a school's strategic plan is strongly linked to student performance and satisfaction. The study found that well-structured schools have better academic outcomes, higher morale among staff and students, and better communication between stakeholders. Moreover, it was found that well-structured schools tend to be more efficient, with lower administrative costs and increased accountability. GC (2012) further investigated the impact of strategic plan on educational institutions in the United States and Australia. The study found that schools with well-structured strategic plans have higher levels of performance, accountability, and efficiency. It also found that well-structured bureaucracies help to ensure consistency throughout the entire organization, as well as promote collaboration and communication among stakeholders. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) (2016) examined the impact strategic plan implementation on Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in the region. The study found that well-structured strategic plans can lead to higher student achievement.

A study by Parsons (2010) also examined the impact of strategic plan implementation on the organizational culture of Seventh-day Adventist schools in England and Wales. The study found that strategy implementation had a significant influence on the culture of the schools, with the primary focus on hierarchy, rules, regulations, and centralization of decision-making. It was also found that strategic plans could have both positive and negative effects on the schools, with greater

efficiency being achieved through greater use of rules and regulations, but also leading to a more rigid and inflexible organizational culture. A study by Grigore (2012) looked at the impact of strategic plan on the instructional practices of Seventh-day Adventist schools in Romania. The study found that strategy implementation had a significant effect on the instructional practices of the schools, with a focus on hierarchies, rules and regulations, and centralized decision-making. A study by Soutar (2015) examined the impact of strategy implementation on the management of Seventh-day Adventist schools in Germany. The study found that educational strategic plan implementation had a significant impact on the management of the schools, with greater emphasis being placed on student compliance and accountability.

The impact of strategic plan implementation on performance of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Russia and Canada has been studied extensively. The impact is a complex phenomenon that requires multi-faceted examination. In relation to the Russian and Canadian context, a study conducted by Solomatin (2015) in Russia, it was found that the adoption of educational strategic plans on Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions affected both the academic outcomes of students and their overall educational experience. The study found that the presence of bureaucratic structures limited opportunities for students to express their creativity and critical thinking skills, while also creating an environment of intense competition and stress. This had a negative effect on student outcomes, as well as on student motivation and engagement. Additionally, the bureaucratic structures of the educational institutions hindered teachers' ability to create effective learning environments and to provide personalized instruction to their students. In a separate study conducted by Shevchenko (2017), it was found that the strategic plan of

Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Russia had a significant impact on the quality of education. The study found that the mission of the strategic plan hindered teacher autonomy and creativity, as well as impeded the development of innovative teaching methods. Moreover, the strategy also prevented teachers from providing personalized instruction to their students. In particular, the study found that the strategic plan led to a lack of communication between teachers and students.

The impact of educational strategic plan implementation on Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in France and Spain has been studied extensively in the literature. Several studies have focused on the organizational characteristics of these institutions and their influence on the educational strategic plan outcomes on students. In a recent study conducted by Gomis and Velazquez (2019), the authors examined the implementation of Adventist schools in France and Spain. They found that a clear vision of an educational strategic plan was associated with higher levels of academic performance, better student behaviour, and more positive attitudes towards the school's mission. In addition, they found that the level of commitment among students increased as the number of students enrolled at the school increased. A similar study conducted by Phillips et al. (2015) examined the impact of strategy implementation on the academic achievement of students attending Adventist schools in France and Spain. They found that strategic plan adoption was associated with higher student achievement in both countries. Furthermore, they found that the level of bureaucracy was positively related to the quality of educational leadership and the availability of resources.

A study by Odeleye and Oladimeji (2014) compared the performance of students in Adventist secondary schools in Nigeria with those in other non-Adventist schools. The study found that students attending Adventist schools scored higher than

those in non-Adventist schools on tests of academic achievement, with the largest difference being in mathematics. In addition, the study found that students in Adventist schools exhibited more self-discipline, better time management skills, and were more likely to use study strategies such as studying in groups. Another study by Oliyide et al. (2015), explored the impact of strategic plan adoption in Seventh-day Adventist schools in Nigeria. The authors found that strategic plan implementation had a significant impact on student achievement associated with higher student performance. Additionally, the authors found that bureaucratic structures had a negative effect on teacher quality, with higher levels of bureaucracy leading to lower teacher quality. The authors concluded that strategic plan adoption can have a significant impact on student outcomes and teacher quality, and that further research is needed to understand the longer-term effects of bureaucracy on Seventh-day Adventist schools in Africa.

Another study, conducted by Kariuki et al. (2011), explored the impact of strategic plan adoption on Seventh-day Adventist schools in Kenya. The authors found that strategic plan adoption had a significant impact on school governance leading to more effective school governance. Additionally, the authors found that strategic planning had a positive effect on financial management, with higher levels of strategic plan leading to better financial management. A study conducted by Namane and Ledwaba (2011) examined the impact of strategic plan implementation on the performance of Seventh-day Adventist schools in South Africa. They analysed the available data from three schools in the Western Cape Province and found that the bureaucratic structures of the schools had a significant effect on the performance of the students, teachers and administrators. The study also found that the strategy implementation of the schools was associated with the school's ability to provide

quality education. In another study, Mabuza, Mthiyane, and Sithole (2015) investigated the effect of strategy implementation on the performance of Seventh-day Adventist schools in Malawi. They found that strategic plan adoption of the schools had a significant effect on the performance of the students, teachers, and administrators.

Influence of the Vision of the Educational Strategic Plan on Reputation and Recognition of Seventh – day Adventist Educational Institutions

Performance management has been identified as the most popular strategy among the universities visited by the authors. Based on the findings of the research conducted, Greeks and Finnish strategists consider the performance management system as a means of raising the involvement levels of employees and managers in achieving organizational goals. Marthiya and Rajaratnam (2020) on the impact of strategic planning on the performance of Adventist schools in Australia found that strategic planning positively impacted academic outcomes, student retention, and financial stability. The study demonstrated that institutions that involved stakeholders in the planning process, set measurable goals, and monitored progress regularly achieved better academic outcomes, higher student retention, and improved financial performance. Similarly, a study by Khokhlova and Korobova (2020) on the impact of strategic planning on the performance of Adventist schools in Russia found that strategic planning positively impacted academic quality, student enrolment, and financial performance. The study demonstrated that institutions that implemented a data-driven strategic planning process, allocated resources efficiently, and assessed plan implementation regularly achieved improved academic quality, higher student enrolments, and enhanced financial performance. Furthermore, effective communication and engagement of employees are critical factors in successful

strategic implementation in selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Australia and Russia.

A study by Yung and Bae (2019) on strategic implementation in Adventist universities in Australia highlighting the role of employee engagement discovered that employee engagement had a positive relationship with the implementation of the strategic plan. The research found that organizations that developed and promoted a culture of trust, teamwork, and creativity outperformed others in executing the strategic plan. Furthermore, the study indicates that aligning the skills and competencies of the personnel to the strategic vision is also critical in ensuring successful strategic execution in some Seventh-day Adventist learning institution in Australia and Russia. Papaleontiou (2019) conducted a similar study focusing on the workforce competency alignment in Adventist schools in Russia and its effect on the successful execution of the strategic plan used in these schools concluded that employee feel competence alignment measured how successful the strategy ‘s implementation was. The research also pointed out that where the alignment of the employee competencies and the objectives of the plan was done, there was better strategic plan implementation. SDA educational institutions pursue not only academic excellence but also carry out a religious and socially responsible agenda which is that of offering education geared towards the spiritual, mental and social growth of individuals. Over the last decade however, the SDA systems of education in some of the Asian countries have been under the threat of irrelevance and competition in the educational sector. Therein is where strategic implementation has come into play as an important step of these institutions in reaching their objectives and enhancing their effectiveness. A number of research has been conducted with respect to the relationship between strategic implementation and organizational performance in the

sector of education. For instance, the equation Robek and Swidi (2017) analyzed the correlation between implementation of strategy and performance of organizational structure in the higher educational among Omani institutes.

Another study by Lee and Kim (2017) investigated the impact of strategic implementation on the performance of Korean universities. The study found that strategic implementation had a positive impact on the performance of these universities. One study by Tan and Pan (2020) examined the impact of strategic implementation on the performance of SDA educational institutions in China. The study found that strategic implementation had a positive impact on the financial and non-financial performance of these institutions. Specifically, strategic implementation was found to positively influence student enrolment, faculty development, resource allocation, and financial sustainability. Another study by Lee and Jang (2021) investigated the impact of strategic implementation on the performance of SDA educational institutions in Korea. The study found that strategic implementation had a significant positive impact on the performance of these institutions. The study also found that leadership support, organizational culture, and stakeholder engagement were important factors that influenced the effectiveness of strategic implementation. In addition, a study by Kim and Lee (2018) examined the impact of strategic implementation on the performance of SDA educational institutions in the Philippines. The study found that strategic implementation had a positive impact on the financial and non-financial performance of these institutions. The study also found that leadership support and stakeholder engagement were important factors that influenced the effectiveness of strategic implementation.

Strategic implementation is a critical factor that determines the success of an organization. In the context of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in

Africa, strategic implementation can be defined as the process of putting in place plans and activities that align with the institution's mission, vision, and goals to achieve optimal performance. The Seventh-day Adventist Church operates several educational institutions in Africa; these include primary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities. These institutions provide education for Adventist and non-Adventist students, and they are expected to maintain high standards of academic excellence while upholding the church's values and principles. Strategic implementation is essential for these institutions to achieve their goals and objectives. According to a study by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005), strategic implementation is a critical factor in the success of educational institutions. The authors conducted a survey of 109 educational institutions in the United States, and the results showed that strategic implementation was positively related to institutional effectiveness. The study found that institutions that had a well-defined strategic plan and implemented it effectively had higher levels of performance than those that did not have a strategic plan or did not implement it effectively. Similarly, a study by Oyewole and Adekunle (2018) examined the relationship between strategic implementation and organizational performance in private universities in Nigeria. The authors found that strategic implementation had a significant positive effect on organizational performance, as measured by student enrolment, faculty productivity, research output, and financial performance. The study concluded that private universities that effectively implemented their strategic plans were more likely to achieve their goals and objectives and improve their overall performance.

In the context of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Africa, a study by Nthiga (2015) examined the impact of strategic planning on the performance of Adventist secondary schools in Kenya. The author found that schools that had a

well-defined strategic plan and effectively implemented it had higher levels of academic performance than those that did not have a strategic plan or did not implement it effectively. The study also found that strategic planning had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, student discipline, and overall school management. Another study by Kibet (2016) examined the impact of strategic planning on the performance of Adventist universities in East Africa. The author found that universities that had a well-defined strategic plan and effectively implemented it had higher levels of academic excellence, research productivity, and financial performance than those that did not have a strategic plan or did not implement it effectively. The study also found that strategic planning had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, faculty development, and overall university management. A study by Agbenyega and Afrifa (2019) examined the impact of strategic implementation on the performance of Adventist educational institutions in Ghana. The study found that institutions that had a clearly defined strategic plan and effectively implemented it had higher levels of academic excellence, student enrolment, and financial performance than those that did not have a strategic plan or did not implement it effectively. The study also found that strategic implementation had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, faculty development, and overall institutional effectiveness. Similarly, a study by Masuku and Mungwe (2016) examined the impact of strategic implementation on the performance of Adventist educational institutions in South Africa. The study found that institutions that had a well-defined strategic plan and effectively implemented it had higher levels of academic excellence, student enrolment, and financial performance than those that did not have a strategic plan or did not implement it effectively. The study also found that strategic implementation had a positive impact

on the quality of teaching and learning, faculty development, and overall institutional effectiveness.

In Ghana, a study by Kyei and Kofi (2013) examined the impact of strategic planning on the performance of Adventist secondary schools. The study found that schools that had a well-defined strategic plan and effectively implemented it had higher levels of academic performance, student enrolment, and financial performance than those that did not have a strategic plan or did not implement it effectively. The study also found that strategic planning has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, student discipline, and overall school management. Similarly, in South Africa, a study by Mabaso and Mthembu (2018) examined the impact of strategic planning on the performance of Adventist secondary schools. The study found that schools that had a well-defined strategic plan and effectively implemented it had higher levels of academic performance, student enrolment, and financial performance than those that did not have a strategic plan or did not implement it effectively. The study also found that strategic planning had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, student discipline, and overall school management.

A study by Mwakisole, Rugarabamu, and Macha (2018) examined the relationship between strategic implementation and organizational performance in selected Seventh-day Adventist tertiary institutions in Tanzania. The study revealed a significant positive relationship between strategic implementation and organizational performance. The authors recommended that educational institutions should focus on effective strategic implementation to enhance their performance. Similarly, a study by Muluneh and Biruk (2021) examined the impact of strategic planning on the performance of higher education institutions in Ethiopia. The study found that there was a significant positive relationship between strategic planning and organizational

performance. The authors recommended that higher education institutions should adopt effective strategic planning practices to enhance their performance.

Furthermore, a study by Asmare and Tadesse (2019) explored the impact of strategic leadership on the performance of private higher education institutions in Ethiopia. The study revealed a significant positive relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance. The authors recommended that private higher education institutions should adopt effective strategic leadership practices to enhance their performance. In addition, a study by Belayneh (2018) examined the impact of strategic management on the performance of Ethiopian higher education institutions. The study found that there was a significant positive relationship between strategic management and organizational performance. The author recommended that higher education institutions should adopt effective strategic management practices to enhance their performance. Moreover, a study by Kibret and Tadesse (2019) explored the impact of strategic planning on the performance of private higher education institutions in Ethiopia. The study revealed a significant positive relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance. The authors recommended that private higher education institutions should adopt effective strategic planning practices to enhance their performance.

Studies have shown that effective strategic implementation positively impacts organizational performance in both Malawii and Botswana. For instance, a study by Chawinga and Zgambo (2016) on the impact of strategic planning on the performance of higher education institutions in Malawi found that strategic planning significantly improves organizational performance. The study demonstrated that strategic planning positively correlates with organizational performance, particularly in academic literacy skills, quality of teaching, and learning, and overall institutional efficiency. In

Botswana, a study by Malekane and Mokori (2019) on the impact of strategic planning on the performance of higher education institutions found that strategic planning significantly improves institutional performance. The study showed that strategic planning was positively associated with academic quality, service delivery, and institutional sustainability. Furthermore, the implementation of a well-designed strategic plan is more effective when there is effective communication concerning the implementation process and expected outcomes.

In a study by Kaluwa and Bupe (2018) on the impact of communication on strategic plan implementation in higher education institutions in Malawi, the study found that effective communication was positively associated with successful strategic implementation. The study emphasized that effective communication is essential for ensuring that all stakeholders understand the strategic plan, thus, encouraging their commitment to the plan and promoting its successful implementation. The alignment of employee skills and competencies with the strategy is essential in successful strategic implementation in both Malawi and Botswana. A study by Khotso and Maphalala (2021) on the impact of employee competency alignment on strategic plan implementation found that employee competency alignment positively influenced successful strategic implementation. The study demonstrated that employee competencies were essential in implementing strategies, ensuring that the institution's knowledge and expertise supported the plan's goals and objectives.

The implementation of a well-designed strategic plan has a positive impact on the performance of organizations, including educational institutions. A study by Johaadien and Hecker (2018) on the impact of strategic planning on the performance of South African Christian private schools found that strategic planning positively

impacts organizational performance. Strategic planning is a process that helps organizations to align their resources, capabilities, and competencies with their vision and mission, leading to improved decision making and efficient resource allocation. In Zimbabwe, a study by Chikodzi and Du Toit (2016) on the impact of strategic planning on the performance of private higher education institutions noted that strategic planning leads to improved performance. The study found that a well-designed strategic plan could improve the financial performance of private higher education institutions by providing a clear direction and enabling resources allocation based on priorities. The impact of strategic implementation on organizational performance can be further enhanced when the strategy is effectively communicated to all stakeholders within the organization.

A study by Makina and Nel (2015) on the impact of communicative competence on the successful implementation of strategic plans in public universities in Zimbabwe found that effective communication of the strategic plan to all stakeholders enhances the implementation process and ensures the achievement of the desired outcomes. Furthermore, strategic implementation is more effective when there is a clear alignment between the organizational strategy and the workforce's knowledge, skills, and expertise. A study by Gwisai and Muzondo (2021) on the impact of employee skills and competencies on the implementation of strategic plans in Zimbabwean universities found that the alignment of employee skills and competencies with the organizational strategy was crucial in the successful implementation of the strategy.

Operationalization of Variables and Hypotheses Testing

Table 1 below summarizes the operational definitions of the variables and explains independent variables and hypothesis testing.

Table 1

Independent Variables and Hypothesis Testing

Independent Variable (X)	Sub Constructs	Hypothesis	Hypothesis Testing
Strategic Planning Process (X1)	1. Strategic Plan Development	H_1: The strategic planning processes is positively correlated with the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation and performance of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.	Ordinal Regression. Reject if $p \leq .05$, else Accept
Strategic Planning Process (X1)	2. Strategic Plan Communication	H_1: The strategic planning processes is positively correlated with the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation and performance of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.	Ordinal Regression. Reject if $p \leq .05$, else Accept
Impact of Strategic Plan Implementation on Performance Indicators and Performance (X2)	1. Performance Indicator 1	H_2: Effective strategic plan Performance indicators positively influence performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.	Regression Analysis. Reject if $p \leq .05$, else Accept
Impact of Strategic Plan Implementation on Performance Indicators and Performance (X2)	2. Performance Indicator 2	H_2: Effective strategic plan Performance indicators positively influence performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.	Regression Analysis. Reject if $p \leq .05$, else Accept
Mission Statement Alignment (X3)	1. Formal Structure	H_3: A strong alignment between the mission statement and strategic goals positively influences the organizational performance of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.	ANOVA. Reject if $p \leq .05$, else Accept
Impact of Core Values of the SDA Educational Strategic Plan on	1. Core Value 1	H_4: The core values of the SDA educational strategic plan positively influence organizational	Regression Analysis. Reject if $p \leq$

Organizational Performance (X4)		performance and enhances the resolution of implementation challenges in selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.	.05, else Accept
Impact of Core Values of the SDA Educational Strategic Plan on Organizational Performance (X4)	2. Core Value 2	H_4: The core values of the SDA educational strategic plan positively influence organizational performance and enhances the resolution of implementation challenges in selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.	Regression Analysis. Reject if $p \leq .05$, else Accept
The Impact of Vision Statement on Performance (X5)	1. Alignment	H_5: The clarity and alignment of the vision statement with the strategic direction of educational institutions significantly influence organizational performance and decision-making processes in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe.	ANOVA. Reject if $p \leq .05$, else Accept

Research Gap and Summary

The successful implementation of strategic plans relies on the commitment, satisfaction, and empowerment of the individuals responsible for carrying them out (Tran, 2015). Strategy implementation involves assessing an organization's position compared to competitors and addressing internal and external opportunities and challenges (Tran, 2015). Strategic management encompasses the planning and implementation processes necessary for an organization's success, with the planned objectives influencing the organization's culture (Berry, 2007). Assessing an organization's competitive position and addressing internal and external factors is crucial for successful strategy implementation. Strategic management encompasses

planning and implementation processes that drive organizational success, influencing the organization's culture and values. By adopting a strategic approach, organizations can achieve their goals and objectives.

In the context of schools, strategic plans help administrators evaluate the effectiveness of team members in fulfilling the organization's mission and vision (Berry, 2007). Strategic plans help schools shape their students' future achievements and success. School leaders must possess strategic management skills, be visionary, and efficient in problem-solving to avoid crisis-oriented leadership. Strategic management skills are essential for school leaders to drive organizational success. Implementing educational strategies also allows schools to proactively shape their students' future achievements (Al-Seghayer, 2014; Salmah, 2005). It is essential for school principals to possess strategic management skills and be visionary, capable, and efficient in problem-solving to avoid being crisis-oriented leaders (Abas, 2005). Educational leadership, including the competency of school leaders, significantly impacts student performance (Bambrick-Santoyo, Lemov, & Peiser, 2012). The leaders must be capable of managing diversity, curriculum implementation, and creating a conducive learning environment. Strategic management skills are essential for school leaders to drive organizational success and improve student outcomes. Strategic management skills are essential for school leaders to create a conducive learning environment and improve student outcomes.

The role of school principals and educational leaders has evolved to include a focus on professional development, learner-centered decision making, and managing diversity (Supovitz, Sirinides & May, 2010). The quality of school management and teaching staff is crucial for student success (Robbins & Alvy, 2014). It is essential for schools to establish a strategic alignment between external factors and internal

processes, particularly in curriculum implementation, to achieve success (Robbins, 2012). Principals and leaders play a vital role in managing diverse student factors influenced by globalization and changes in the educational landscape (Denson & Chang, 2009). Strategic planning helps schools achieve their goals and objectives, improving student outcomes and performance.

Creating a conducive learning environment is crucial for successful learning, considering factors like access to learning materials, educational achievements, high-quality teaching, and effective leadership (Hsieh, Jang, Hwang, & Chen, 2011). Learners' abilities are influenced by teacher support and guidance tailored to their specific needs (Hwang, Yang, Tsai, & Yang, 2009). Cross-cultural interaction among administrators is linked to enhanced learning among ethnic minorities and majority students (Denson & Chang, 2009). Educational management is essential for achieving broader objectives and resolving obstacles hindering effective school administration (Buhai, 2011).

The pivotal role of school principals in education reform cannot be denied, as they are responsible for meeting various stakeholders' needs and driving reforms (Abas, 2005; Normore, 2010). Principals are expected to transform from controllers to planners, setting goals and implementing strategies collaboratively with stakeholders (Abas, 2005; Buhai, 2011; Normore, 2010). Strategic plans have become crucial in Zimbabwe's educational institutions, aligning with educational reforms (Buhai, 2010). However, societal, economic, behavioural, and organizational factors, including Saudi traditions and behaviours, pose challenges for principals in Zimbabwe (Kadir, 2014).

This study thus explored the implementation of strategic plans in SDA educational institutions while considering the vision, mission of the strategic plan, its impact on performance of SDA educational institutions. It responds to the Education

Strategic Plan (2021-2025) (Government of Zimbabwe, 2021) and the recommendation to study strategic plan application in faith-based schools (Moyo, 2020).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study, including the research approach, paradigm, and design. It also covers the target population, sampling procedures, data collection tools, analysis, and research ethics.

Research Approach

A research approach refers to the overall strategy or plan used by a researcher to integrate different components of a study in a coherent and logical manner. It determines how data is collected, analyzed, and interpreted to address research objectives. Research approaches can generally be categorized into three types: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, a mixed-methods approach was employed, which integrates both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The mixed approach is particularly relevant because it allows for triangulation, which enhances the validity and reliability of the findings by combining numerical data with contextual insights (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

The quantitative aspect of the study followed a deductive methodology, where existing theories are tested through empirical evidence. This is essential for measuring and analyzing structured data related to the strategic plan's implementation and its impact on academic performance. By using statistical tools, the study can objectively evaluate cause-and-effect relationships.

On the other hand, the qualitative component followed an inductive methodology, which is useful for exploring the lived experiences of stakeholders, such as school administrators and teachers. This approach helps in identifying emerging themes, patterns, and deeper insights that may not be captured by numerical data alone (Kumar, 2018). The relevance of the mixed-methods approach in this study lies in its ability to capture both objective and subjective dimensions of the research problem. Since strategic plan implementation in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational institutions involves measurable performance indicators as well as organizational culture and leadership dynamics, integrating both methodologies ensures a more holistic understanding of the topic. By merging statistical evidence with rich qualitative descriptions, the study is better positioned to draw well-rounded conclusions and actionable recommendations for improving academic performance in SDA schools in Zimbabwe.

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is associated with the processes of gathering, interpreting and utilizing information about any given phenomenon. Campbell et al. (2019) describe the principles of pragmatism as beliefs and understandings that form a basis where the truth and usefulness of something as it pertains to research practice is evaluated. Pragmatism encompasses both, the positivist and interpretivism camps under one research depending on the research questions. Hence this research is informed by both positivism and interpretivism. Positivism postulates that there exists an objective reality that can be ascribed, without biases, in an explicit way devoid of any interference with the phenomenon under investigation, (Kelly, 2016). This, therefore, suggests that the research focusing on the subject should be the only one engaged in the ‘treatment’ of that subject and somewhere, repetition of the

observations should be possible. This involves controlling for one independent variable and seeking to detect patterns in the interplay of the various components constituting the social system. Alternatively, meekness or interpretivism has been consider to be more appropriate philosophy for social and human sciences. Besides, Kelly (2016) thesis maintained that such a stance is a necessity that people ought to have, the attitude towards science has to be earned rather than simply enjoyed.

Some of the major criticisms of positivism have also been developed by the very same positivists. The heart of the pragmatists nostalgia was in knowing the development of the historical and the critical self- developed ideas in their efforts to create. In conclusions, therefore through reconsidering the use of tolerance this study adopted the two-way approach in this study as it was pragmatic to do so as to use questionnaires and in depth interviews. Since this is a dissertation, both quantitative and qualitative approaches have to be emphasized. The pragmatism philosophy was selected since it determines the best ways of resolving the research problem. A positivist approach is valuable for examining the phenomenon of strategic plan implementation and its impact on performance in Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions. This methodology enables a systematic and objective analysis of the relationship between strategic planning and performance metrics. Park, Konge, and Artino (2020) emphasize that the primary goal of positivist research is to establish explanatory links or causal relationships that aid in predicting and controlling the phenomena under investigation. On the other hand, incorporating interpretivism allows for the consideration of social and human dimensions involved in executing strategic plans. Scauso (2020) argues that a pragmatist philosophy facilitates a deeper understanding of the perspectives, motivations, and behaviors of individuals within these institutions, offering a more comprehensive view of the topic. This dual

approach encourages the use of both questionnaires and in-depth interviews to capture a holistic understanding of how strategic plan implementation influences performance (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018).

The pragmatic and triangulation approach provides a balanced and rigorous exploration of the research problem by integrating various data collection methods and focusing on practical solutions. It also underscores the real-world challenges of implementing strategic plans in educational institutions, delving beyond simple variable relationships to uncover more detailed insights.

Research Design

A research design is the structured plan that outlines how a study was conducted, guiding the data collection, analysis, and interpretation processes to ensure the reliability and validity of findings. It serves as a framework that helps researchers systematically address their research objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Research designs are typically classified into qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods, depending on the nature of the study.

For this study, a mixed methods research design was adopted, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive analysis of the influence of strategic plan implementation on academic performance in selected Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational institutions in Zimbabwe. This design was chosen because it allows for the triangulation of findings, enhancing their validity by combining statistical analysis with deeper contextual insights (Saraswati & Devi, 2023). The mixed methods approach ensures a more holistic understanding of how the implementation of strategic plans impacts school performance.

Application of Mixed Methods Design

The study employed an explanatory sequential design, which involves two distinct phases. The first phase focused on collecting quantitative data using structured questionnaires administered to a diverse sample of respondents from the selected SDA institutions. This phase aimed to measure the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation by evaluating key performance indicators such as student academic outcomes, teacher development, infrastructure allocation, and resource distribution. The results from this phase provided statistical trends and relationships that formed the foundation for further investigation.

The second phase involved the collection of qualitative data through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including school administrators, instructors, and students. These interviews provided rich insights into their experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the strategic implementation process. By analyzing these perspectives, the study was able to explore beyond quantitative trends and capture the human and organizational factors influencing strategic plan implementation. By integrating quantitative and qualitative data, this mixed methods approach allowed the researcher to validate findings, identify patterns, and explore underlying factors influencing academic performance. The explanatory sequential design ensured that quantitative results were complemented by qualitative insights, leading to a well-rounded and evidence-based analysis of strategic plan implementation in SDA schools in Zimbabwe.

Population and Sampling Procedure

Target Population

The target population consists of academic staff members from Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) institutions within the Zimbabwe Central Union Conference, reflecting a strategic selection of respondents who are directly involved in the implementation of strategic plans and educational performance outcomes. The study included both urban and rural schools to ensure a balanced representation of institutional environments. In secondary schools, there were 4 urban schools and 11 rural schools, totalling 15 institutions.

The administration staff comprised 4 members in urban schools and 42 in rural schools, bringing the total to 46 participants.

The teaching staff included 58 teachers in urban schools and 126 in rural schools, summing up to 184 educators. The Heads of Departments (HODs) were 36 in urban schools and 344 in rural schools, and 380 department heads. In total, the study population consisted of 98 academic staff members in urban SDA schools and 512 in rural SDA schools, leading to a final sample of 610 participants.

As part of the qualitative aspect of the study, interviews were conducted with relevant administrators, instructors, and students to gather rich insights into their perceptions, experiences, and challenges regarding the implementation of strategic plans. These interviews played a critical role in complementing the quantitative data, allowing the researcher to look beyond surface-level performance indicators and explore deeper contextual factors affecting strategy execution. The quantitative component involved administering structured questionnaires to a wider population within the selected SDA institutions. These questionnaires were designed to measure various performance dimensions, offering empirical evidence on the effectiveness of

strategic plan implementation. The collected data enabled the researcher to identify trends, relationships, and key determinants of institutional performance.

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, the study employed a mixed methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data. This methodological combination allowed for cross-validation of findings, providing a multi-dimensional perspective on strategic implementation and academic performance. The concurrent mixed methods research design facilitated a thorough investigation into the interplay between strategic planning and institutional outcomes in SDA schools across Zimbabwe. By incorporating respondents from diverse academic roles across both urban and rural institutions, the study ensured a well-rounded understanding of the factors influencing strategic plan implementation and its impact on academic performance in Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Sampling Procedures

A sampling procedure refers to the systematic process of selecting a subset of individuals, tasks, or elements from a larger population for research purposes. The goal is to ensure that the selected sample accurately represents the broader population, enabling researchers to draw valid and generalizable conclusions (Creswell, 2014).

Sampling involves several key steps:

1. Developing a sampling frame – identifying a list or set of characteristics that define the population.
2. Choosing an appropriate sampling method – selecting a technique that ensures the sample is representative.
3. Determining the sample size – ensuring that the sample is large enough to produce reliable and applicable results.

Advantages of Sampling Procedures. Using a structured sampling procedure offers several benefits:

Cost-effectiveness – Conducting a study on a sample rather than an entire population reduces financial and logistical constraints (Creswell, 2014).

Time efficiency – It allows for quicker data collection and analysis, leading to faster results (Vogt, 2011).

Accuracy and reliability – Proper sampling techniques help in obtaining a representative sample, minimizing biases and increasing the validity of the research findings (Saraswati & Devi, 2023).

Feasibility – Sampling makes it possible to study large populations by analyzing smaller, manageable groups while maintaining the study's integrity.

Disadvantages of Sampling Procedures. Despite its advantages, sampling has some limitations:

Risk of bias – If the sample is not properly selected, it may not accurately represent the population, leading to skewed results (Vogt, 2011).

Sampling errors – Differences between the sample and the population may lead to incorrect generalizations (Creswell, 2014).

Limited scope – Some unique characteristics of the population may not be fully captured, especially in small sample sizes (Saraswati & Devi, 2023).

Complexity in selection – Choosing an appropriate sampling method and ensuring proper representation requires careful planning and expertise.

Probability Sampling

One of the most reliable sampling techniques is probability sampling, where every member of the population has a known, non-zero chance of being selected

(Vogt, 2011). This approach ensures that the sample data can be compared to the total population based on critical characteristics or research outcomes.

They are perhaps the most important considerations in any research methodology. In sampling, the researcher identifies some individuals, tasks, or things from amongst bigger group of participants with the intention of carrying out a study or a survey. This is done in a series of steps where first a sampling frame is developed that is, a list or a set of specifies that other the population. Next, appropriate sampling methods are chosen and the sample size determined to make the results valid and applicable to the entire target population.

Creswell (2014) argues that one should choose a sampling method that warrants representation of the target population and that the sample obtained has similar attributes as the best group. This means that the sample selected should incorporate the range and features of the population being studied, so that the results can be effectively applied back to the whole population.

Thus, probability sampling is one of the sampling designs in which there is a known, non-zero probability of selection for every single member of the population of interest. This enables comparison of the sample data obtained with the total population in regard to important characteristics or the outcomes of the research. This is very important in deriving conclusions about the population with reference to the results obtained from the sample.

As per Vogt (2011), probability sampling refers to a sampling method that is used in such a manner that every subject under the population can be measured quantitatively, in terms of chances or probabilities of selection in the sample. In probability sampling methods, every sample has a specific probability of being chosen which is what eliminates the risk in the populations that are being studied.

Probabilistic sampling enables the researcher to determine the extent to which their sample is a true reflection of the study population, thus allowing the researcher to draw appropriate statistical conclusions based on the sample alone.

Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling

The research used the proportional stratified sample strategy advocated by Burns (2014) to select representative church-governed institutions from a homogeneous group of secondary school administrators and teaching members of staff. The regional system of the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Education was modelled after Adventist educational systems to develop diverse urban and rural Adventist schools. The clustering design is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Cluster Sampling of Adventist Secondary Schools and Job Holders

Schools: Regional Clusters			Population Percentage		
Adventist Schools	Urban Schools	Rural Schools	Total	Urban	Rural
Secondary Schools	4	11	15	26.67%	73.33%
Academic Staff: Zimbabwe Central Union Conference Cluster					
				Percentage	
Administration	4	42		46	7.54 %
Teaching staff	58	126		1248	30.16 %
Head of Department	36	344		380	62.30 %
Total Job Holders	98	512		610	

Source: 2022 Annual Report advance release of membership statistics by Division for 2022, General Statistics by Divisions, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Office of Archives, Statistics and Research (ASTR).

The study employed a stratified random sampling technique while selecting the participants for the study. This technique is the one when the population is divided into teachers, head of departments and also administrators from the selected Seventh day Adventist Colleges in Zimbabwe, sub-divisions and then they draw samples from

each of the bigger divisions by use of systematic sampling or simple random sampling. Likewise, the strata random sampling technique was also employed in order to come up with the strata because that is the purpose of use of both techniques; to assist the researcher in the selection of units that makes the sample. Two probability sampling techniques were used which are random sampling and stratified sampling. Random Sampling in this context is understood as taking a sample without any draw pattern and can also be called as haphazard Zhao and Dang (2019). Random Sampling which also goes by the name of probability sampling in relation to sampling in this case is one in which every item of the universe stands an equal chance of being selected to make up the sample (Kothari, 2008; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Oribhabar and Anyanwu (2019) explain that in the case of random sampling every combination of objects in the target population has an equal probability of being drawn in the sample.

Therefore, in order to get the required respondents, the researchers assigned numbers to each individual subject in the population at the selected Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe and then selected the required number of subjects by using a random number table. Then, the subjects with corresponding numbers were picked to be included in the sample. In order, to obtain the sample the researcher divided the entire population into different subgroups which included Seventh-day Adventist institutions in rural and urban areas. It is from these groups that the sample was randomly selected. In other words, it ensures that each subgroup of the population is properly represented in the sample. As a result, stratified random sampling provides better population coverage because the researchers have more control over the subgroups and can ensure that all of them are included in the

sampling. The Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1967) was used to calculate sample size, which is represented as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+Ne2}$$

n = N/(1+Ne2)

Where n = required sample size

N = population size

e = 10 percent point error / accuracy level (Yamane, 1967)

Where, N is population size, n is sample size and e= level of precision. Given a population of 610 and the level of precision of 10%, the representative sample size for the study was found to be 86 using the aforementioned Yamane's formula.

As a consequence, the proportional grouping was responsible for making sure that positions in the organization are proportional to the administration and staff cluster's population size. To describe the ratios of sample representation, a thorough sample distribution proportion is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Sample Distribution

Academic Staff	Sample size Representation	Sample Size proportions	Sample
Administration	46	16%	7
Teaching staff	380	50%	190
Head of Department	1248	29%	51
Total	610	100	248

Sampling Procedure for Qualitative

The study employed a stratified random sampling technique while selecting the participants for the study. This technique is the one when the population is divided into teachers, head of departments and also administrators from the selected Seventh day Adventist Colleges in Zimbabwe, sub-divisions and then they draw samples from

each of the bigger divisions by use of systematic sampling or simple random sampling. Likewise, the strata random sampling technique was also employed in order to come up with the strata because that is the purpose of use of both techniques; to assist the researcher in the selection of units that made the sample. Two probability sampling techniques were used which are random sampling and stratified sampling. Random Sampling in this context is understood as taking a sample without any draw pattern and can also be called as haphazard Zhao and Dang (2019). Random Sampling which also goes by the name of probability sampling in relation to sampling in this case is one in which every item of the universe stands an equal chance of being selected to make up the sample (Kothari, 2008; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Oribhabar and Anyanwu (2019) explain that in the case of random sampling every combination of objects in the target population has an equal probability of being drawn in the sample.

Instrument(s) for Data

For the purpose of collecting quantitative data, the study employed a self-structured questionnaire (Appendix B) as the primary data collection tool. A structured questionnaire is defined as a pre-prepared set of questions on a piece of paper and respondents are asked to fill up the answers against these questions. Normally, the questions provide narrowly defined options thereby enabling the researcher to study only those things which can be seen (Kothari, 2014).

The data collected comprised of both continuous and categorical measures of demographic and institutional factors as well as strategic implementation factors (see Appendix B). A five-point Likert type scale (Likert, 1932) was applied whereby 1=Strongly Agree (SA), 2= Moderately Agree (MA), 3=Agree (A), 4=Moderately Disagree (MD), and 5=Strongly Disagree (SD) were applied. This was selected

because it is less cognitive, promotes sampling with a less distorted sample, fosters normality, and improves the ease of comparison across member-checking responses.

Moreover, qualitative data were to be sought using an interview guide (see appendix D). In-depth interviews serve to ‘map’ the general direction of trends in leadership strategy implementation, but also to show which biases – if any – exist today, and which can be expect in the future in terms of the strategic implementation of plans. Thus, for example giving the highest amount of information as well as quality of information, as exemplified in Creswell (2014).

Instrument Reliability

Instrument dependability was determined by analysing consistency and stability using (1) Stability Measures and (2) Reliability Measures.

The surveys were pre-tested with 15 individuals to assess consistency, accuracy, manageability, and appropriateness. Attention was paid to selecting pilot study respondents within a subject population that is outside the main study sample but has matching characteristics.

The measure of stability ensures the ability of measurements to remain the same over time, regardless of the respondent's condition. The goodness of a measure concerning the stability of the measure is supported by the reliability of the consistency to test the consistency of the respondent's response to the five- scale items in the measure. The Cronbach coefficient function of the Social Science Statistics Software Statistics Package (SPSS 20.0 version) is a relevant indicator of the reliability of consistency calculated in terms of average inter correlation and between the elements that measure the concept. Based on the rules of thumb of George and Mallery (2003), the closer the Cronbach's alpha is to 1, the more reliable the internal consistency is, and the higher the coefficient, the more reliable the questionnaire.

The pilot data was examined to assess information interpretability and utility in addressing the study goals while keeping the time spent on each questionnaire in mind and the reliability coefficient for the structured questionnaire was 0.893.

Trustworthiness, Credibility, Dependability, Transferability and Conformability

Trustworthiness. In this study, trustworthiness was ensured by employing rigorous data collection and analysis methods to guarantee accurate and reliable findings regarding the implementation of strategic plans in Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, allowed for triangulation, thereby increasing confidence in the study's results. Additionally, multiple data sources, including administrators, instructors, and students, were used to verify the consistency and authenticity of responses. To further enhance trustworthiness, ethical considerations such as confidentiality and informed consent were upheld to ensure that participants shared their perspectives openly and honestly.

Credibility. Credibility in this study was achieved by ensuring that the data accurately represents the views and experiences of participants involved in strategic plan implementation within SDA institutions. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews and surveys, allowing participants to express their experiences and perceptions in a detailed manner. Member checking was employed, where participants were given an opportunity to review and confirm the accuracy of transcribed interviews to prevent misinterpretation. Additionally, prolonged engagement with respondents ensured that responses were authentic and reflective of real-world experiences. The use of methodological triangulation, combining qualitative and

quantitative approaches, further strengthened the credibility of the study by cross-verifying findings.

Dependability. To establish dependability, the research followed a structured and consistent methodological approach, ensuring that the study could be replicated under similar conditions with comparable results. A detailed audit trail was maintained, documenting research procedures, data collection processes, coding techniques, and analysis steps. This transparency allowed for external verification and ensured that the study's findings were not the result of random occurrences. The use of explanatory sequential design, where qualitative data was collected after quantitative findings, enhanced the systematic flow and logical progression of the research process. Additionally, the pilot testing of questionnaires and preliminary discussions with key informants ensured that the research instruments were reliable and could be applied consistently across different Seventh-day Adventist institutions.

Transferability. The findings of this study can be transferred and applied to similar educational institutions beyond the Seventh-day Adventist education sector in Zimbabwe, particularly those that implement strategic plans to enhance organizational performance. By providing rich, contextual descriptions of the study setting, including the demographics of SDA schools, their governance structures, and the challenges faced in strategy implementation, other researchers and educational policymakers can determine the applicability of the findings to their own contexts. The inclusion of diverse respondents from urban and rural SDA schools, as well as from various job roles within the institutions, further increases the generalizability and relevance of the findings to similar educational settings.

Confirmability. Confirmability was ensured by maintaining objectivity throughout the research process, ensuring that findings were based on participant

responses rather than researcher bias. The researcher adopted a neutral stance, allowing participants to express their genuine experiences regarding strategic implementation without external influence. Triangulation of data sources, including surveys, interviews, and document analysis, further strengthened the objectivity of the findings. A researcher's reflexivity journal was maintained to document any potential biases, preconceptions, or influences that could have affected the interpretation of results. Additionally, audit trails and methodological documentation ensured that the research process could be reviewed and verified by independent evaluators, enhancing the study's overall reliability and integrity.

Data Collection Procedure

For the purpose of conducting the interviews, the researcher made an appointment through email or phone call to the administrators, the heads of the departments and the teaching staff in the selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions. Appendix D in view of signing and examining, and those who did not agree promptly, the researcher tried to reach them through direct contacts or e-mail informing them of the need to clarify their agreement. This informed consent form stated that all of the information collected for research purposes would be protected by the researcher. Consent papers were provided after participants had expressed their willingness to participate in the research.

After which recruiting materials as attached in Appendix D that is the consent forms would be availed to participants through emails to solicit their participation in the research. The recruitment materials were accompanied by an introduction and the objective of the study which was aimed at assessing strategic implementation and performance of the selected Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. The recruitment materials provided details of inclusion criteria, current role within the

SDA educational institutions as well as length of service. The interviewees were given an informed consent to sign before taking part in the study (see Appendix D).

The questionnaires were issued on first return basis, and the researcher subsequently placed the names of the respondents against the numbers in my personal records, to ensure that their identity was not revealed and kept sealed. With this approach it was also easy for the researcher to keep track of the schools the participants were from (see Appendix I).

The researcher prepared an interview protocol, which included open-ended research questions for the purpose of providing an integrated perspective on the study (see Appendix C). Even though the questions were not asked some p 36 how do u do that different from others approaches, new themes emerge. After the virtual meetings with individual interviewees, the researcher sent a "thank you" note to each participant. Additionally, the general messages provided by various senior managers of different banks were assured to be transformed into an easily accessible format. When needed, the researcher transcribed the audio interview sessions. The transcribed content was then provided as a soft copy to the interviewees for review to ensure accuracy. After the study was completed, the information was ready for analysis.

Methods of Data Analysis

At first, the data were handled through descriptive as well as inferential techniques. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software package was used to analyze the data. Finally, thematic analysis was applied in the presentation of qualitative aspects of the data.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were employed in the analysis to provide detailed statistical characterization of the respondents (Mean, standard deviation, standard error variance) by indicating, for example, the number of individuals who on the basis of their gender, educational status and length of working in the institutions would have obtained specific scores on the scores. Descriptive (Arkkelin, 2014:77) says that the aim of descriptive is to achieve the highest split density in all the available data with the help of effective simple data presentation, error detection that is systemized and the number of measures. Also, Crosstabs was useful in addressing the first research question regarding the existence and nature of the relationship between the educational rank one holds and the tenure spent in the institution. For instance, one might reasonably hypothesize that senior educational leaders have a greater representation in the strategic implementation decision making positions than their junior counterparts, and that there female less than males in the implementation of strategies because they have lesser experience.

The Correlation

A correlational approach to understanding the effect of educational leadership positions on the challenges of strategy implementation faced by managerial leadership in implementing plans was undertaken. The two-sample Wisdom Coefficient was descriptively analyzed and proved that there exists a relationship between the positions and the challenges experienced by managerial leadership in strategies implementation of the plans. The bivariate Pearson's technique was also applied where variables were measured to ascertain if there are exist links between the two variables and in some instances, whether they were positively or negatively linked. In the opinion of Shukran (2003), Pearson correlation is +1 for completely increasing (positive) linear correlation and -1 for all other cases which represent degree of linear

relationship between the two variables under consideration. The farther the correlation is from 1.0, the more the association is negative, whereas the closer the correlation to +1, the more the relationship becomes positive. An association of that figure correlates with a lack of correlation. Correlation matrix tables that include information about the interrelationships of effective organizational performance attributes.

Regression Analysis

To put it mathematically, regression analysis can be expressed as $Y = a + bX + E$, where Y represents the variable being predicted, X represents the variable doing the predicting, a is known as the constant term or intercept, b is known as the coefficient or slope, and E is known as the error term or residual. The research question 4 utilized experimental method to represent a method used by scientists to establish a cause-and-effect link between two or more variables. As per the factors that dictate strategic implementation, the dependent variable was controlled or altered to act as an independent variable in assessing if there is a difference in the challenges that educational leaders fasten. Hence, this included allocating participants to educational positions focusing on strategic implementing of plans and finding out managerial challenges faced depending on the educational positions across a selected Seventh-day Adventist institution in Zimbabwe.

An analysis of covariance was used in the attempt to answer research question with respect to the control of the external variables that potentially interfered with the dependent variable. In this case, multivariate procedures distinctively allow analysis of covariance and causal relationships by integrating correlational and experimental designs (Arkkelin, 2014). Therefore, this examined regression analysis as another research approach is based on variations of a general linear model.

Thematic Analysis

The qualitative data collected by interviews were triangulated through thematic analysis in order to articulate thick description on the concepts, theories and frameworks using a methodological approach based on the understanding of the respective research objectives and the determining concepts that cut across the strategic implementation determinants. The initial cross-cutting themes that were derived from the findings were matched with the four strategic implementation framework conceptual entries in order to find any elements to be described in strategic implementation determinants under more than one secondary school education point of view. Finally, once tentative cross-cutting themes are established, their relationship with key informants' direct references, researcher's views and third-party views (i.e., the study team's views) was sought in relation to each theme.

Ethical Considerations

Informed Consent:

Informed consent of the participant refers to management process that includes a letter (see Appendix 2) addressed to the participant. Respondents were tasked to sign/confirm a voluntary consent form for the survey at no cost. According to Vogt (2011), this provides an avenue for enhancing the credibility and trust of the research and encouraging the respondents to give out truthful responses based on their willingness.

Explaining Purpose

Subjects were forewarned about the survey's aim and why they would be expected to complete the questionnaire and reasons that point out possible causes for

consequences that might justify presenting false representations of the survey nature were explained (Vogt, 2011).

Confidentiality

Participant's identity is kept anonymous and no personal encroaching details ought to be gathered or documented in an intrusive manner to the participants that would, according to Vogt (2011), make them reluctant to express their opinions honestly without any conditions.

Data Collection Boundaries

All the participants may choose to withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason. As Vogt (2011) notes, it encourages respondents to come clean and admit to previous wrong assessments.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section gives a recap of the research conducted, and there is a discussion of the results with respect to the specific objectives pertaining to strategic implementation and performance assessment of Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. Consequently, the main focus is on presenting, analyzing and interpreting the research findings.

Study Area Setting

The field research was carried out in some Seventh-day Adventist churches across the country. Midlands Province is the central region of Zimbabwe and is among the ten provinces of the country. The provincial administration is anchored in a city known as Gweru and it happens to the big city in the province.

Response Rate

According to Table 4, 248 questionnaires were distributed to participants, and 243 were returned fully completed, resulting in a response rate of 98%. This high response rate significantly exceeds the benchmark rates for credible results. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), a 50% response rate is considered adequate, 60% is good, 70% is very good, and a response rate of 75% or higher represents an excellent population representation. Table 4 shows the rate of response of the participants.

Table 4

Response Rate

Description	Target	Responses Received	Response Rate %
Questionnaires	248	243	98%

A high response rate is crucial in survey research as it minimizes the potential for bias, increases the representativeness of the sample, and ensures the reliability and validity of the results (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Achieving a 98% response rate is a remarkable achievement, demonstrating strong participant engagement and dedication. Such a high response rate suggests that the study's findings are robust and provide an accurate reflection of the target population's perspectives and experiences.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

This section outlines the demographic characteristics of the participants, including their gender, job positions, job tenure, and institutional affiliations.

Gender

The study included both male and female participants to gather diverse perspectives. As shown in Table 5, females accounted for 54.8% of the participants, while males made up the 45.2%. This indicates a greater number of female participants than males, reflecting a higher female presence in Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe.

Table 5

Gender of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	110	45.3	45.3	45.3
Female	133	54.7	54.7	100.0
Total	243	100.0	100.0	

Several factors may account for the higher number of females in the study sample. One possible explanation is that women tend to be more actively involved in Adventist institutions (Arthur, 2018). The Adventist Review (2019) reports that women constitute approximately 60% of the global membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This substantial female representation likely extends to significant roles in the operations and decision-making within these institutions.

Moreover, studies suggest that women often possess superior communication and collaboration skills compared to men, which are crucial for effective strategic implementation (Karim & Khan, 2017). Leadership styles commonly associated with women, such as transformational and democratic leadership, have also been found to be more effective in implementing strategies (Daff & Storberg-Walker, 2015). Another plausible reason is that women are generally more inclined to participate in research studies. Research indicates that women are often more cooperative and willing to engage in research compared to men (Peterson et al., 2017). This tendency can facilitate higher female recruitment, contributing to an increased response rate.

These findings align with broader trends within the Seventh-day Adventist Church and emphasize the significant contributions of women in these institutions. The higher female participation in this study not only reflects the demographic makeup of the church but also highlights the critical roles women play. The higher female participation in this study not only mirrors the demographic composition of the church but also underscores the critical contributions of women to strategic implementation and organizational performance within Adventist institutions.

Position Held at Adventist Institutions

This study sought to determine the position of the participants as it influences their understanding on the strategic implementation and performance within selected

Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. In Table 6, it was revealed that 14.3% of the participants were administrators, 48.8% were teachers, and 36.9% were heads of departments.

Table 6

Positions Held at Adventist Institutions

Position held	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Administrator	33	14	14.3
Teacher	120	49	63.1
Head of Department	90	37	100.0
Total	243	100.0	

The sample was balanced in that it included administrators, teachers, and head of departments for the study on strategic implementation in Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe which conforms to the hierarchy in education. Therefore, it was correct to have these proportions since they denote different levels of responsibilities where the individuals are charged with executing the strategies. The reason why it is important to have a mixture of decision makers in a study on strategic implementation is because the roles and responsibilities of persons at the various levels of the institution is not uniformly shared. As noted in Bommert and Reinartz (2018) strategic decision making is a top tier level management function which corresponds with the different levels of strategic implementation, where each level of staff has its role.

The role of an administrator is to ensure that the strategy is in harmony with the mission and objectives of the institution, while teachers and heads of departments carry out the actual work and fit it into the strategy (Walter, 2022). In addition to this, many researchers have corroborated that participation of various levels of decision makers in the process of implementation improves the chances of successful implementation (Boateng, 2023). For instance, in one of the studies on how leadership styles affect educational institutions, it was discovered that including teachers in the

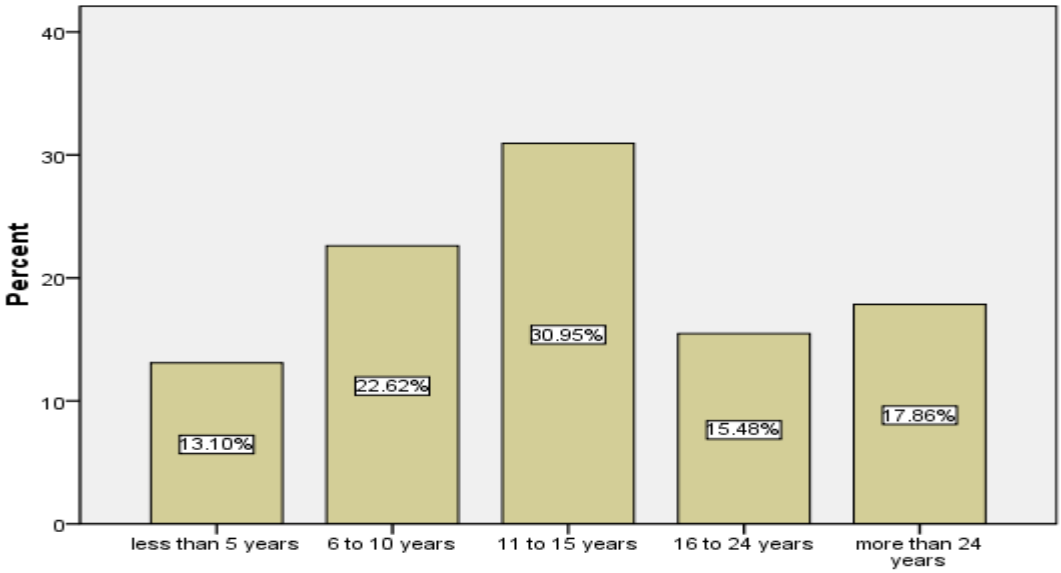
decision-making process within a school, enhanced strategy implementation as opposed to the usual dictatorial approach (Cavanaugh et al., 2017). The sample of administrators, teachers, and heads of departments embraced a good level of diversity and distribution in regard to decision-making levels. This is one of the weaknesses as it made it possible to understand the context of decision-making within strategic implementation with regards to the different roles of decision-makers as well as the different aspects of the institution (Fergurson, 2019).

Job Tenure

Figure 4 shows the distribution of participants' experience in the education sector in terms of how long they have worked in their organizations. It reveals that 13.10% of participants have been in the sector for less than 5 years, 22.62% for 6-10 years, and 30.95% for 11-15 years. Additionally, 15.48% have 16-20 years of experience, and 17.86% have been in the education sector for more than 24 years. These findings indicate that the majority of participants, 30.95%, have been in the education sector for 11-15 years, suggesting that the study predominantly involved individuals with substantial experience in education.

Figure 4

Duration at the Organization



The results indicate that the participants were informed enough for the purposes of the study. The percentages of the sample with different years of work experiences within the education sector in the study regarding strategic implementation at the Adventist Institutions in Zimbabwe were appropriate since they portrayed a range of experiences among the staff in educational institutions. Each of the participants has been a teacher for varying years which brings different levels of understanding from an inexperienced to an experienced teacher thus enhancing the insight into the strategic implementation. Literature states that years of experience in the education sector prepare teachers with varying levels of skill which can affect the strategic implementation (Mark & Sam, 2019). Previous research has reported that veteran educational practitioners are more likely to execute strategic action plans in their institutions as they have in-depth information concerning the organizational culture of institutions. This allows them to foresee difficulties encountered during the implementation period of the strategic plan (Gregory & Carroll 2011).

On the contrary, beginner teachers may arrive with new visions and thoughts that are useful in the process of strategy creation and implementation (Nguyen et al., 2019). Furthermore, the middle-aged teachers (having worked for 6-15 years) may have more knowledge in practical implementation and help provide a combination of answers (Morgans, 2023). Having participants of different years of exposure in the study made it easier to comprehend the role of experience in the strategic implementation process as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Institutional Affiliation of Participants

Institution	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Lower Gwelo	50	20.2	20.2	21.4
Hanke	43	16.7	16.7	38.1
Mundondo	81	33.3	33.3	71.4
Anderson	69	28.6	28.6	100.0
Total	243	100.0	100.0	

The study considered respondents from Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) institutions for it aimed at evaluating impacts of strategic implementation on performance strategies of certain SDA educational programs. This allowed the study to utilize participants with an extremely focused religious background in a homogeneous community as there are a number of beliefs within the SDA institution. The similarity of the sampling tires to minimize the effect of the external variable on the study outcome. Additionally, since the SDA population is known to have a fair level of similarity in culture, attitudes and other social characteristics, the results of the study are expected to be more applicable to all SDAs (Saarelem etal 2020). Research has demonstrated that the relevant implementation of strategies can significantly impact an organization's mission and vision, even though that influence

will tend to vary according to particular SDA tenets (Neeleman, et al., 2004; Augustinavicius, et al., 2019).

Descriptive Statistics

Mean, percentage and standard deviation being descriptive statistics were computed in order to understand the strategic implementation in terms of the presented SDA institutions in Zimbabwe. A Likert scale of 1-5 was used to rank the level of agreeableness: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree and 5 = Strongly Disagree.

Research Question One

Impact of strategic plan implementation process on the academic performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

The first research question examined the strategic planning process employed in the selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The participants were asked if they know the strategic planning processes being employed in the SDA educational institutions (Anderson, Hanke, Mundondo and Lower Gwelo Adventist School). Table 8 displays the results.

Table 8

Determinants of Strategic Planning Processes

	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strategy Formulation	243	300	3.58	1.217
Strategy Evaluation	243	305	3.62	1.291
Implementation Structure	243	245	2.92	1.559
Formulation of Implementation Support policies	243	299	3.57	1.375
Budget and Resource Allocation	243	279	3.32	.944
Execution of Functions and Activities	243	307	3.65	1.331
Average mean			3.41	
Valid N ANOVA	243			
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-statistic
Between Groups (SSB)	5023.13	5	1004.63	1.0265
Within Groups (SSW)	487708.66	498	978.78	
Total (SST)	492731.78	503		

Table 9

Regression Analysis Results

Independent Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error (SE)	t-statistic (t)	p-value
Hiring Qualified Teachers (β_1)	0.45	0.10	4.50	0.0005
Adopting Technology (β_2)	0.30	0.12	2.50	0.015
Coping with Environmental Changes (β_3)	0.05	0.20	0.25	0.805

The analysis of the relationship between various factors and performance reveals important insights into the effectiveness of educational strategies. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between hiring qualified teachers and performance, with a coefficient (β_1) of 0.45. This suggests that for each unit increase in the hiring of qualified teachers, there is an expected increase of 0.45 units in performance, assuming all other variables remain constant. This finding aligns with

existing literature that emphasizes the critical role of teacher qualifications in enhancing student outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

In addition to qualified teachers, the adoption of technology also demonstrates a significant positive relationship with performance. The coefficient for this variable (β_2) is 0.30, indicate that an increase in the adoption of technology by one unit is associated with a 0.30 unit increase in performance, holding other factors constant. This supports contemporary research advocating for the integration of technology in educational settings, which has been shown to facilitate improved learning experiences and outcomes (Hattie, 2009; Russel etal, 2022; Benififal etal 2023).

Conversely, the variable related to coping with environmental changes (β_3) shows no significant relationship with performance. The lack of statistical significance suggests that this factor does not meaningfully predict performance outcomes in the context of this study. This finding may indicate that while adaptability is vital in educational settings, it does not directly translate to measurable performance improvements (Fullan, 2001).

When assessing the overall model, the F-statistic of 1.0265, along with its associated p-value, indicates that the model as a whole is not statistically significant. This suggests that the independent variables, collectively, do not provide a reliable prediction of performance. Furthermore, the R-squared value, although not provided, would typically shed light on the proportion of variance in performance explained by these variables. A low R-squared value would further imply that the model lacks a good fit for the data, suggesting that other unexamined factors might be influencing performance outcomes (Field, 2013).

Table 8 shows that respondents agreed that SDA institutions are characterized by a clearly formulated strategic plan, as indicated by a high mean score of 3.58. This

suggested that the participants of the study believe that SDA's strategic plan was formulated well. Strategy formulation within SDA educational institutions emerges from an integrated approach which merges both planned and decentralized processes, amalgamating elements of rationality, centralization, and formalization with the involvement of various hierarchical levels within the organisation (Dreker, 2022). Participants reported that the implementation of the strategic plan within SDA institutions was not effective, as indicated by a below average mean score of 2.92. This shows that the strategic plan is not being effectively is SDA institutions.

The findings of the study also revealed that respondents agreed that SDA institutions are characterized by a strategic plan evaluation process as indicated by a high mean of 3.62. This shows that SDA institutions engage in a monitoring and evaluation process which is supported by scholars such as Gupta et al. (2019). The participants of the study revealed that SDA institutions are relatively characterized by budget and resource allocation, with an above average mean score of 3.32. This indicates that the institutions should ensure careful management and allocation of resources within these institutions. Studies by Chen and Huang (2018) highlighted the importance of effective communication and resource allocation in the implementation process. Respondents agreed that SDA institutions are characterized by execution of functions and activities as indicated by a mean score of 3.65. This shows that operational effectiveness is a notable feature of SDA institutions.

The overall of 3.41 shows that on average respondents were relatively with regards to the strategic planning processes employed within the selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe. This neutrality indicates that while there the majority of respondents were in support of the strategic planning process, there are certain areas that need improvements such as resource allocation and strategic plan effectiveness.

The overall ANOVA findings on the determinants of Strategic Planning Processes indicate significant variability in how respondents perceived Strategy Formulation and Strategy Evaluation Implementation Structure (SSB = 5023.13, df = 5, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that different schools use similar approaches. This suggests that while there are notable differences in perceptions of strategy formulation and evaluation implementation across institutions, they tend to employ comparable methods or frameworks in their approach.

On the other hand, within-group variability is significantly high (SSW = 487708.66, df = 498), signifying that most variability in strategic planning happens within each separate stage rather than among the stages. The total variability was SST = 492731.78, df = 503 showed that despite the uniformity of how the strategic planning process was perceived by the respondents, there is need for the schools to improve the strategic planning process within its different stages so as to improve its complete efficiency. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in how schools perceive and implement the strategic planning process.

The Strategic Planning Processes Employed within the selected SDA Institutions in Zimbabwe

Strategy formulation

The term strategy formulation in any organization refers to the process of establishing a basis of options from which the organization chooses its own future (Anfielder, 2021). It therefore involves directional control of the organization by stating its existence, its purpose, and how it intends to achieve this purpose considering the internal and environmental factors. As it has been observed in results, it is true that these institutions of the SDA are implementing what they designed.

Educational strategic working plan has, however, conceptualized well and incorporated within the General Conference of 2021-2022 ADEC (SDA conference report, 2022). This strategy that is proposed comes from the management level in civilian terms “the design view of the strategy development” (Johnson et al, 2011). This strategy of design is the result from decision making processes such as board of directors meeting or planning meetings and is structured from the top management down to the rest. On the other hand, emergent strategies are organic and arise from the lower levels of the organization (Grant, 2010). Strategy formulation in SDA academic institutions is the result of a hybrid approach that combines the top-down and bottom-up strategies characterized by the elements of rationality, centralization, and formalization in relation to all levels in the hierarchy of the firm (Petros etal 2021). As indicated in table 8, the results indicated ineffectiveness in strategic plan implementation. This indicated that the levels of implementations were low and unsatisfactory, meaning that although there were clear implementation structures in the school’s and designed strategic plans, most schools did not effectively implement these strategies designed to improve performance thus yielding weak performance.

This phase of strategic planning process involves establishing an implementation framework, which serves as a guiding structure for the team or a foundation for executing the strategies. A well-structured plan necessitates a framework or playbook that outlines the parameters within which all employee actions unfold (Brinkschröder, 2014). From the study results, the respondents indicated that they were aware that within SDA educational institutions the implementation structure is guided by the General Conference of 2021-2022 Working Policy which specifies the educational departments working plan clarifying its vision, mission, objectives, roles, educational administration outline among others. It was

also established that respondents indicated although having a clearly defined framework policy document, the team members were somewhat not yet comprehended their respective roles and how these roles collectively contribute to the performance of the institutions. A structured framework not only assists the team in this regard but also creates a guiding vision that shapes the implementation of the strategies embedded in the strategic plan (Grabrieller, 2019). Moreover, it establishes a coherent system of coordination among different departments and divisions, thereby enhancing the allocation of authority and responsibility (Spink et al., 2016).

Formulation of Implementation Support Policies

This process involves formulating policies and strategies that will be followed during project execution. Respondents indicated that within the GC Working policy, there is a clearly defined administrative that outlines the composition and Structure of the Board of educational departments. Additionally, it entails outlining the primary oversight activities and tasks to be performed, along with the requisite skills, and these are spelt out within the GC Working Policy under objectives of each Seventh-day Adventist Education department from elementary school, secondary schools, mid-level institutions, higher education and graduate level. This approach serves as a critical technique in strategy implementation. It establishes an environment wherein all participants within educational institutions are engaged in decision-making and progress towards the strategic objectives. All this is clearly outlined in the GC Working Policy of the SDA church, as it addresses educational departments.

These authors demonstrated that the existence of protective policies and programs act as a driving force towards the use of appropriate methodologies in an organization. In this regard, Herrera-Sánchez, León-Pérez, and León-Rubio (2017) argue that organizations implement strategies such as programs or policies in order to

promote the execution of the strategy at hand. For instance, even if there is an approach that is well articulated, there is always a better way of doing it: enacting programs and policies in order to remain competitive (Misankova and Kocisova, 2014) is a precursor to failure in an organization. The same is true for the work of Seale, Broutet and Narasimhan (2017), who advocate for the development of a system for performance control and evaluation, which is fundamental in setting targets, evaluating what has been achieved and what requires intervention (Seale, Broutet and Narasimhan, 2017).

Strategy Evaluation

At this stage of assessing and relaying the strategic plan, the organization analyses numerous inputs, performance indicators, allocations, and other parameters associated with the company's objectives or aims, which might have been ignored during the due course of strategy making (Roselyner, 2022). Often, business establishment is required to revise the plan in the event that an unpredicted circumstance happens. So, Teachers commented the following:

Employees at lower levels have been significantly deprived of autonomy due to centralization such that all decisions are reserved for the top most hierarchical level.

This, however, breeds irresponsibility in making decisions since such decisions are made without regard to the people that they will impact.

Other Head of Departments commented the following:

This has, however, created a situation whereby there is no creativity, as all levels of staff are not allowed to participate in the decision-making process.

This in turn has caused an escalation in the bureaucracy as there are more forms and paperwork that need to be filled out in order for a decision to be reached.

Inefficiency has also been brought about by the centralization in that decisions are made while neglecting the most efficient courses of action.

For instance: a marketing campaign laid out within the strategy documents may specify the period of time required and the people needed for its realization. This is a multi-step process that includes defining business goals, ensuring that policies support the goals, controlling year-budgets, and costing exercises for the most efficient use of available resources (Petros, 2022). Centralization is the process of concentrating decision-making power in an organization at a single point or person, typically the top of the chain of command. It is a feature of many bureaucratic organizations, and is often seen as a source of power and control. In Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe, centralization has resulted in centralized decisions made at the top level of the hierarchy, without any input from lower-level staff. This can lead to decisions without considering all relevant factors, or without taking into account the views of those who will be affected by them.

Standardization of Practices

Standardization of practices also emerged as another major theme on the strategic planning processes employed within selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The standardization of practice is the undertaking where the systemic formulation and enforcement of particular policies, procedures and practices aimed at eliminating waste and promoting harmony in the organization are put in place. Given the Seventh-day Adventist learning institutions in Zimbabwe, standardization of practices has also been a result of the bureaucratic structure which involves making central decisions and giving prior instructions on when, how and what to do without failure. This has brought benefits and challenges to

the institutions. Consequently, one of the Administrators gave the following comments:

It is an undeniable fact that standardisation has enhanced the operations of SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. In such a way that it has enabled them to integrate all the processes of the institutions and cut off wastage and overlap of tasks. For instance, there are standard forms for admissions, registration and all other office work that does not take much time or effort to do since everything is computerized. Hence why such institutions operate leaning back.

There have been serious limitations in the autonomy and innovation of educational institutions in SDA standardisation Zimbabwe (SDA school annual report, 2021). Because such institutions tend to stick to pre-set rules and regulations, this means there is no room for imagination and risk taking. Other respondents indicated that the result of standardisation of processes showed that the strategic planning processes employed in selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe leave a mixed impact. One of the Administrators gave the following remark in relation to this:

The standardisation of SDA strategic planning processes in the selected SDA educational institutions used in the study in Zimbabwe has left a mixed impact and this depends on the context of application. For example, some institutions may benefit from the standardization of practices if they lack the resources or expertise to develop their own policies and procedures. However, other institutions may be negatively affected if they have unique challenges or opportunities that require a more customized approach. Therefore, the impact of standardisation of processes among SDA institutions in Zimbabwe is not always clear-cut, and requires careful consideration of the context and the specific needs and goals of each institution.

Budget Allocation and Resources

The fourth level implies putting in place means and competencies to the strategic management teams so as to perform their core duties effectively (Ha-Vikström, 2017). For example, the team may be given use of certain equipment, finance, or any other support that may be needed in the execution of their work as a process within the organization. This represents an integral part of the strategy implementation phase since it is evident that efficiently managed business processes can greatly improve the performance of an organization (Ha-Vikström, 2017). Nevertheless, even if the team and the strategy are massive, the existence of any proper way of executing them without means and tools will largely reduce the possibilities of accolades (Shomali and Peeples, 2018). There should be active working capabilities of the team if the success of the strategy is to be assured, in addition to having enough resources.

Resource allocation on the other hand should be carefully done in a bid to avoid waste or loss in the organization, hence the need for financial analysis and documentation. Together with a procedure put in place to facilitate checking of financial balances and monitoring of expenditures by departments. Thus, with a comprehensive approach to financial planning, it becomes easier to insist on provision of funds to different departments for judicious use.

Execution of Functions and Activities

At this point, the members of the team take it upon themselves to execute, and the strategy enters its execution phase. Consequently, factors such as leadership and participation of the team comes into play Chang (2006) argues that the organization should seek to keep all of its employees involved throughout the process by offering training and orientation on critical duties. In addition, all activities carried out ought

to be managed based on the right management style (Audrelicue, 2020). Periodic assessment of performance is needed at all levels to uncover any deficiencies that exist and undertake corrective measures so that such occurrences do not happen again (Shomali and Peeples, 2018). The findings indicate how important it is for an organization to take steps to remedy the situation and correct the errors made in strategy implementation, before the organization finds itself in the same situation once again. As a rule, results or achievements in the fifth step become inputs in the next level which is the third phase of tactical administration dealing with the evaluation of the plan in question. Multiplicity also appeared as yet another major subtheme concerning the performance of task and activities among the studied Seventh day Adventists educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Several insights were given to demonstrate how the bureaucratic system of leadership either helps or hinders efficiency in the functioning of the institutions. Thus, Head of Departments have the following views:

Because of centralised, standardised and bureaucratic structures of leadership, this impact negatively on efficiency of the organisation. Such systems can create a slow decision-making process, which hinders institutional efficiency. For instance, "the need to follow strict hierarchical structures before decisions can be made can lead to delays and inefficiencies."

Another effect of such structures I can possibly highlight is creation of duplication of roles and functions, leading to inefficiencies. For instance, the presence of multiple layers of approval processes may lead to a duplication of roles and functions, which can reduce institutional efficiency.

Hierarchical Control

Hierarchical Control also emerged as another major theme of factors that impact negatively on execution of functions and activities within the selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Teachers gave the following remarks:

The Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe leadership system indicates that there are several levels of decision-making within the organization. Power and authority rest primarily with individuals occupying higher positions within the organization, leaving little room for participation and collaboration among those at lower levels. This creates a top-down approach that runs the risk of leaving valuable input and expertise untapped thus impacting on functions and activities to be executed.

Discussion of findings on the strategic planning processes employed within the selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe indicated that, strategic planning processes are followed with differing results or impact on the organization's performance. Though it was determined that the necessary steps in strategy formulation and implementation were being followed, they yielded variable results and impact on academic performance. It was established that SDA educational institutions have strategic plan documents that they adhere to though the strategic plan implementation structure was somewhat questionable. The impact to strategic planning processes employed in the implementation of the plan was owing to a number of factors as indicated by the results which is summarised in chapter 5.

Research Question Two

Effect of the strategic plan performance assessment criteria on the academic performance of some selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Research question two sought to examine how educational strategic plan implementation shapes organizational performance indicators in selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Before delving into this, the study sought to look at the educational strategic plan implementation at the selected Seventh-day Institutions in Zimbabwe. The researcher adopted descriptive statistics to analyse the findings based on means, as shown on the table 9 and 10 below.

Table 10

Influence of Strategic Plan Implementation on Academic Performance

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Regression Coefficient (β)	Significance (p-value)
Hiring qualified teachers and adopting technology	0.65	0.45	< 0.01
Strategy implementation enabling schools to cope with environmental changes	0.40	0.30	< 0.05
Partnerships and collaborations with other institutions	0.35	0.25	0.07
Resources allocated according to budget	0.42	0.35	< 0.05
Equitable allocation of teaching time for effective teaching	0.30	0.20	0.10
Alignment of institutional policies to strategic objectives	0.55	0.50	< 0.01
Influence of strategy on syllabus completion	0.48	0.38	< 0.05
Focus on reducing politics in institutions	0.10	0.05	0.30

Table 11

Hypothesis Testing Results

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Regression Coefficient (β)	Significance (p-value)	Decision
Hiring qualified teachers and adopting technology	0.65	0.45	< 0.01	Reject H_0
Strategy implementation enabling schools to cope with environmental changes	0.40	0.30	< 0.05	Reject H_0

Partnerships and collaborations with other institutions	0.35	0.25	0.07	Fail to reject H_0
Resources allocated according to budget	0.42	0.35	< 0.05	Reject H_0
Equitable allocation of teaching time for effective teaching	0.30	0.20	0.10	Fail to reject H_0
Alignment of institutional policies to strategic objectives	0.55	0.50	< 0.01	Reject H_0
Influence of strategy on syllabus completion	0.48	0.38	< 0.05	Reject H_0
Focus on reducing politics in institutions	0.10	0.05	0.30	Fail to reject H_0

Respondents agreed that SDA institutions hire qualified teachers as indicated by a more significant mean score of 3.92. This shows that SDA institutions have qualified teachers, in essence hiring qualified teachers ensure that learners perform well, thereby contributing to the overall academic performance.

The findings of the study also revealed that SDA institutions have been able to adapt technology and strategy implementation has enables the schools to cope with changes in the environment as indicated by a more significant mean score of 3.53. This shows that the SDA institutions have adopted technology so as to enhance the performance of their students. This approach is supported by Bhebhe and Chigona (2021) who notes that Strategic plans should consider leveraging technology to bridge the digital divide, enhance pedagogical practices, and improve educational outcomes. However, the participants of the study revealed that SDA's strategic plan does not reduce politics in institutions, as indicated by a significant mean of 2.82. Candido and Santos (2015) suggest that power and politics impact strategy execution. This justifies why the participants in the study indicated earlier in the first objective that the strategic implementation process was ineffective.

The findings indicated that respondents were neutral regarding several aspects such as the institutions' implementation of partnerships and collaborations with other entities, their ability to equally allocate teaching time for effective teaching, and the allocation of resources according to budget. Mean scores ranged from 3.00 to 3.45 show that implementation of partnerships and resource allocation are not contributing effectively to the overall academic performance of SDA institutions.

Respondents agreed that the institutional policies are aligned to the strategic objectives and the strategic implementation influences completion of syllabus in institutions as yielded by means of 4.00 and 3.78 respectively. The overall mean 3.44 shows that on average respondents were indifferent with regards to the strategic implementation at the selected Seventh-day Institutions in Zimbabwe.

How Strategic Implementation Shapes Key Performance Indicators In Selected SDA Educational Institutions In Zimbabwe

Based on the interviews, alignment - of values and objectives, leadership, organizational culture and limited financial resources, have been identified as the main themes in understanding strategic implementation of selected performance indicators in SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The teachers had the following opinions:

In cases where the values and the objectives of the educational institutions are not aligned with the strategic plans, conflicts and oppositions from the stakeholders will hinder success in the implementation.

Moreover, where the values and objectives of the educational institutions do not agree with the strategic plans, there are high chances that the faculty will have low commitment resulting in ineffective implementation of strategies.

Leadership

Another key theme that also emerged was Leadership as a facilitator of the Key Performance Indicators in strategic implementation in some SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Administrators said:

Leadership is important in putting strategic plans into action, which leads to improvement in the performance of the organization. A leader has to come up with a vision for the institution and seek to pass this message down to all relevant parties. Staff has to be motivated and encouraged to work towards the attainment of the objectives of the strategic plan.

Nevertheless, Head of Departments revealed that strategic plans can be difficult to execute due to poor leadership. The HODs told an important thing:

Ineffective leadership also poses a challenge to strategic plans and the overall performance of an engine. There are leaders who are visionless, cannot speak to their followers and motivate their staff, and such leaders will have a problem with the implementation of the strategic action plan.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture also emerged as another major theme on how strategic implementation shapes key performance indicators in selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Teachers gave the following comments:

Theorisations on group dynamics of the personnel concerned may be inclined to considering the members of society as a group. Conversely, since the organization's strategic framework may be designed by consultant agencies, implementing this may pose a considerable challenge.

The Mission and Vision statements of the strategic plan could be at variance with the normative culture of the institution. For instance, if the strategic plan has objectives that lean towards innovation and creativity and however, the institution has a culture that shields its practices and is conservative, staff will not be receptive.

Discussion of Findings

The research results suggested that in Zimbabwe's selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions, the alignment of key performance indicators and targets to strategic plans is essential to the success of implementation of strategic plans. This finding is in line with the available literature which emphasizes the importance of alignment and common purpose as a prerequisite for achieving the intended targets (Kaplan and Norton, 2004). It was also established in the findings that aggressive leadership was fundamental to external strategy execution and firm performance. It is not enough for leaders to have a vision of the organization. They should also be able to share and distribute the vision appropriately, in addition to enforcing a work ethic in their subordinates to realize the objectives of the strategic plan. Additionally, these results are in line with Hitt et al., (2017) who studied and argued that leadership was a necessary ingredient for the success of strategy implementation and performance of the organization. There are studies that found out that strategizing resource factors is vital in achievement of strategic plans enhancement of organizational productivity, thus the culture of the organization is very important in the execution of strategies so managers must learn the culture of the institution and ensure that the strategy fits that culture to get support from staff. Hence, these studies correspond with Camero and Quinn (2011) who conducted studies and observed that every culture gets its own conducive element towards achieving strategic implementations and the outfitting organization itself. It was

evident that resource allocation was also apportioned from the study results assisting in efficient enforcement of the strategic plans aimed at organizational development Therefore, these findings confirmed what Ramasubbu, and Sambamurthy (2011) established in their findings about strategic implementation and organizational performance with regard to resource allocation. Organizational leadership was identified as the most significant factor since it opened the door for strategic implementation and affected the staff's feelings of commitment. There were other factors such as employee participation and efficient interaction which turned out to be very significant as all the expected staff members knew their duties and were determined to pursue the objectives of the institution.

Findings indicated that resource allocation, as well as monitoring and evaluation, was crucial in ensuring that resources needed for the course of action, were made available and that those plans were allowed to progress and be assessed. These outcomes are further supported by other scholars in the same discipline such as Katsikeas et al. (2015) who have provided evidence of the role played by leadership and employee engagement in strategy implementation. This is further supported by the works of Chen and Huang (2018) who in their studies discussed resource distribution and effective communication as key elements in the process of implementation. Other authors have also advanced the argument that monitoring and evaluation are also critical in ensuring implementation leading to success in the long run (Gupta et al., 2019).

The research's conclusions regarding the need for organisational congruence in the execution of strategy can be explained by the specific context in which the Seventh-day Adventist education system in Zimbabwe operates. Such educational institutions tend to cherish core values such as ethics, altruism, and social service.

Therefore, strategic plans that consider these values stand a better chance of success in their implementation because they are in line with the vision and mission of the institution. The conclusions reached in this study are important since they address the issue of implementation of strategy and draw the readers' attention to the necessity of its alignment.

Research Question Three

Analysis of the mission statement of the SDA educational strategic plan aligns with religious principles, educational philosophies and the national educational policies in Zimbabwe.

The research question sought to establish how the mission statement of the SDA educational strategic plan aligns with religious principles, educational philosophies and the national educational policies in Zimbabwe. The researcher adopted descriptive statistics to analyse the findings based on means and standard deviations as shown on the table 12 below.

Table 12

Alignment of Mission Statement to Performance

Descriptive Statistics	N	Sum	Mean
Knowledge of the mission statement of the SDA Educational Strategic plan	243	391	3.80
Committed to National Educational policies	243	251	2.99
Alignment with Religious Principles	243	252	3.00
Commitment to Educational Philosophies	243	324	3.86
Overall mean	243		3.41
Valid N (listwise)	243		

Table 13

Alignment of Mission Statement to Performance

Core Value	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated t	Critical t (±1.96)	Decision
Honesty and Integrity	3.07	1.170	-2.71	Reject H_0	
Compassion and Empathy	3.43	0.682	-0.23	Fail to reject H_0	
Teamwork and Collaboration	3.68	0.907	2.50	Reject H_0	
Adherence to Core Values	3.74	0.852	2.96	Reject H_0	

Discussion

Core Values of Honesty and Integrity. The results indicate that the institutions are perceived as falling short in terms of honesty and integrity. This finding contradicts previous research (Brown, 2015) that emphasized the foundational role of integrity in institutional performance. The institutions may need to implement strategies to reinforce these core values among staff and students.

Core Values of Compassion and Empathy. While compassion is valued, the results suggest that it may not have a significant impact on measurable performance outcomes (Johnson, 2012). Further research is needed to explore the practical implications of compassion in institutional settings.

Core Values of Teamwork and Collaboration. The institutions are regarded as having a robust culture of teamwork and collaboration. This aligns with earlier studies, such as Smith (2010), which emphasize the critical role of collaborative practices in achieving institutional success.

Adherence to Core Values. A strong commitment to core values is linked to a positive institutional reputation (Kirkpatrick, 2006). It is essential for these

institutions to continue emphasizing and upholding their core values to strengthen their credibility and overall performance.

The analysis shows that familiarity with the mission statement and dedication to educational philosophies play a significant role in influencing performance within SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. However, a lack of commitment to national educational policies and weak alignment with religious principles have been identified as areas requiring improvement. These findings enhance our understanding of the factors affecting educational performance and provide insights for future research and policy initiatives aimed at improving institutional effectiveness. In the evaluation of the alignment of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Educational Strategic Plan with religious principles, educational philosophies, and national educational policies, important insights were revealed that guide both institutional practices and strategic adjustments.

The relatively high mean score of 3.80 indicate have a solid understanding of SDA's mission statement by the participants. This reflects a clear comprehension of the organization’s strategic direction, including its guiding principles and goals. Such understanding is essential for alignment with the mission and facilitating informed decision-making actions within the institution. This finding aligns with the work of Smith et al. (2018), who highlighted the importance of effective communication and awareness of strategic plans for successful implementation within organizations.

Conversely, the results indicate a moderate level of commitment to "National Educational Policies," evidenced by a mean score of 2.99. This raises concerns about whether SDA educational institutions should strengthen the integration of national policies into their strategic planning processes. This observation supports the

argument by Jones and Brown (2019), who suggested that aligning organizational strategies with external policies can improve performance outcomes.

A strong alignment with "Religious Principles" (mean score of 3.00) is a noteworthy strength, showcasing the deep connection between the mission of SDA educational institutions and their religious values. This finding is consistent with Lee (2017), who noted that organizations with a solid alignment between their mission and core values often experience higher employee engagement and improved performance.

Additionally, the high level of commitment to "Educational Philosophies" (mean score of 3.86) emphasizes the importance of maintaining the core philosophies that guide SDA educational institutions. This is in line with the findings of White and Black (2020), who highlighted the critical role of organizational culture and values in the effective execution of strategic plans and overall institutional performance.

From the interviews it emerged that participants' knowledge of the mission statement of the SDA educational plan, commitment to national educational policies, alignment with religious principles and commitment to educational philosophies are major themes of how the mission statement of the SDA educational strategic plan align with religious principles, educational philosophies and the national educational policies in Zimbabwe. Teachers gave the following remarks in relation to knowledge of the mission statement of the educational plan:

Because our assumption as teachers is of the opinion that the strategic plan document was formulated on basis of stakeholders' consultation, we have high level of awareness to what the policy document entails among us as teachers and from our point of call to duty, we are oriented to the vision and mission of educational policy. We as teachers also receive training and support in teaching methodologies as highlighted in the educational strategic plan and thus equipping us for effective

classroom management and are better equipped to deliver quality education to our students.

To support our commitment to educational philosophies

We also have teacher learner forums that facilitates collaboration among teachers and students which can lead to sharing of resources, teaching methodologies, and best practices, resulting in an overall improvement in student performance thus somewhat meeting some of the outlined objectives of the policy documents though faced with such challenges and leadership interference, lack of sufficient resources and bureaucratic structural of management.

Commitment to National Policies

Disintegration of national policies practices in SDA educational plan emerged as a theme on how SDA mission statement align with commitment to national educational policies in the selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Head of Departments said:

Although guided by national policy frameworks on execution of educational practices, our schools adhere more and are inclined to operate from a theological, religious perspective, to which some of our teaching practices we determine the course of action and outcomes for our learners. As such, at time one finds self in dilemma to create a balance between national policy demands versus what would work in our organisational culture, for instance there is always a debate towards 'corporate punishment for learners who are mischievous in school setting vs spare the rod spoil the child biblical principle' just to highlight a critical area.

Other situations that have risen that have seen us deflecting from national policies are in relation to new curriculum setup that the government introduced vs what we have determined as teaching framework within our institutions and as a

private sector player we then go for internal practices adopting what works best within our setting thus somewhat causing disintegration between some of our practices to those prescribed by national educational policies.

Administrators gave the following comments:

We have seen hoe teachers are struggling to integrate the new curriculum to the teaching framework provisional by SDA educational plan. This has also impacted on their teaching skills and engagement thus somewhat affecting student learning outcomes.

The new curriculum is complex to what could work for an average learner and teacher expertise to have positive outcome; hence we have resorted to our conventional mode of teaching strategies that can also foster a culture of collaboration among teachers and learners creating a supportive learning community that facilitates ongoing growth and improvement.

Improved Student Outcomes

Improved student outcomes also emerged as a theme in relation to deep-rooted alignment with religious principles and educational philosophies of the educational strategic plan in selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Teachers gave the following remarks:

Adherence to religious philosophies and a culture rooted in commitment to educational philosophies has created a positive learning environment that fosters student engagement and academic success. This has resulted in support of the implementation of evidence-based teaching practices that have been shown to enhance student learning outcomes. By providing teachers with the necessary support and awareness to the educational strategic plan mission, the school leaders have

helped ensure that students receive high-quality instruction that is aligned with their learning needs.

In the context the influence of strategic plan implementation on the key performance areas of selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe, the findings suggest that a deep-rooted alignment with religious principles and educational philosophies can positively impact performance. However, there may be opportunities for further integration of national educational policies to enhance strategic plan effectiveness and ultimately improve performance outcomes.

In conclusion, while the alignment with religious principles and educational philosophies is strong, it is essential for SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe to consider integrating national educational policies more effectively into their strategic planning processes to achieve optimal performance outcomes. This critical analysis underscores the need for a holistic approach that balances internal values with external mandates for successful strategic plan implementation and improved performance.

Research Question Four

Effects of core values on selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

This research question sought to establish the influence of core values on performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The researcher adopted descriptive statistics to analyse the findings based on means and standard deviations as shown on the table 14 below.

Table 14

Influence of Core Values on Performance

Descriptive statistics	N	Sum	Mean	Standard deviation
Core values of honesty and integrity are practiced	243	258	3.07	1.170
Core values of compassion and empathy in foster a supportive environment for students and staff	248	288	3.43	.682
Core values of teamwork and collaboration achieve academic and administrative goals	248	309	3.68	.907
Adherence to the core values influences the overall reputation of the institution	243	314	3.74	0.852
Overall mean	243		3.48	
Valid N (listwise)	243			

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	*SS*	*Df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	23.15179	3	7.717262	9.127571	8.05E-06	2.631811
Within Groups	280.7024	332	0.2485489			
Total	303.8542	335				

Table 15

Hypotheses

Core Value	Hypothesized Mean (μ)	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Null Hypothesis (H_0)	Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)
Honesty and Integrity	3.5	3.07	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$
Compassion and Empathy	3.5	3.43	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$
Teamwork and Collaboration	3.5	3.68	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$
Adherence to Core Values	3.5	3.74	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$

Table 16

T-Test Calculations

Core Value	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Hypothesized Mean (μ)	Standard Deviation (s)	Calculated t	Critical t (± 1.96)	Decision
Honesty and Integrity	3.07	3.5	1.170	-2.71	Reject H_0	
Compassion and Empathy	3.43	3.5	0.682	-0.23	Fail to reject H_0	
Teamwork and Collaboration	3.68	3.5	0.907	2.50	Reject H_0	
Adherence to Core Values	3.74	3.5	0.852	2.96	Reject H_0	

Hypothesis Testing Results and Discussions

Honesty and Integrity:

- **Calculated t:** $-2.71 < -1.96 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0.**
- **Discussion:** The institutions have a significantly lower mean score (3.07) for honesty and integrity than the hypothesized mean (3.5). This suggests that the institutions may need to focus on improving their adherence to these core values.

Compassion and Empathy:

- **Calculated t:** $-0.23 > -1.96$ and $-0.23 < 1.96 \rightarrow$ **Fail to reject H_0.**
- **Discussion:** The institutions' mean score (3.43) for compassion and empathy is not significantly different from the hypothesized mean (3.5). While compassion is important, its impact on measurable performance outcomes may be limited.

Teamwork and Collaboration:

- **Calculated t:** $2.50 > 1.96 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0.**

- **Discussion:** The institutions have a significantly higher mean score (3.68) for teamwork and collaboration than the hypothesized mean (3.5). This suggests that the institutions are effectively fostering a collaborative environment.

Adherence to Core Values:

- **Calculated t:** $2.96 > 1.96 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0.**
- **Discussion:** The institutions' mean score (3.74) for adherence to core values is significantly higher than the hypothesized mean (3.5). This indicates that the institutions are generally perceived as adhering to their core values, which can positively impact their reputation and overall performance.

The findings from the descriptive statistics analysis related to influence of core values on performance of selected SDA Education Institutions in provided valuable insights into various factors. The mean scores on how the core values in the strategic plan influences performance are as follows:

The findings reveal that the respondents of the study were indifferent on whether core values of honesty and integrity are practiced at SDA institutions as indicated by a significant mean score of 3.07. This shows that the participants had mixed feelings with regards to how these values are practiced within the institutions, as indicated by the high variations in responses (variance = 1.37). This brings out the need for SDA institutions to strengthen the practice of honesty and integrity because the mean is lower and the participants had varied opinions. The findings of the study also show that participants moderately agree that compassion and empathy foster a supportive environment as indicated by the mean score of 3.43 and a low variation of 0.46.

The participants of the study significantly agree that teamwork and collaboration are practiced to achieve academic and administrative goals with a more

significant mean score of 3.68 and a moderate variation of 0.82. This shows that team work and collaboration are part of the SDA's institutions ethos.

The institutions' adherence to core values and reputation is significant as indicated by a more significant mean score of 3.74 and a moderate variation in responses of 0.73. The significant mean score shows that adherence to core values promotes the reputation of SDA institutions.

The between groups sum of squares (23.15) and the significant F-ratio (9.13) with a very low p-value (8.05e-06) show that participants have different views with regards to how core values influence the performance of SDA institutions. This shows that SDA Schools should work on instilling its core values to both the institutions' staff and students so as to effectively promote its reputation. The within groups sum of squares (280.70) represents the variability due to differences within each group. The F-ratio (9.13) is greater than the critical value (2.63), meaning that there are significant differences between at least some of the groups.

From the interviews that were conducted with the participants, student performance, student holistic growth, teacher's professional development emerged as major themes on the influence of core values on the performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe

Teachers gave the following remarks in relation to:

Student Performance

The institution's core values directly influence the performance of students' failure to align with the values have resulted in students performing poorly in class

However, I believe student performance is influenced by various factors, including their level of engagement in class activities and their access to educational

resources. As teachers, we play a crucial role in providing support and guidance to students to help enhance their academic achievements.

Other Administrators said

workload or a perceived decrease in privileges may negatively affect student performance.

Second Administrator respondent: Based on my experience, the performance of students can also be influenced by the quality of teaching methods used within the institution. It is crucial for educators to adopt innovative and effective teaching strategies to address the diverse learning needs of students.

Another Head of Department remarked: I believe that fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment is essential for boosting academic performance. When students feel valued and supported, they are more likely to achieve academic success.

At the institutional level, it is vital to prioritize continuous improvement initiatives and rely on data-driven decision-making to enhance student outcomes. By analyzing student performance data, institutions can identify areas for improvement and implement strategies to drive success.

At the institutional level, it is important to focus on continuous improvement strategies and data-driven decision-making to enhance student performance. By analysing student performance data and implementing tailored interventions, we can better support our students' academic growth.

Head of Departments gave the following comment:

Lack of human resources may also impact the successful implementation of the strategic plan. If there are not enough staff members with the necessary skills and knowledge to execute the plan, it may be challenging to achieve the desired outcomes.

Teachers' Professional Development

The professional development of teachers was identified as a significant theme regarding the influence of core values on key performance areas in selected Seventh-day Adventist Educational Institutions in Zimbabwe.

Teacher Respondent One: Newly qualified teachers should be educated about SDA core values, as they may lack the necessary understanding to implement strategic plans effectively.

Teacher Respondent Two: The absence of professional development opportunities for teachers limits our ability to adapt to new educational trends and best practices. Without regular training, it becomes difficult to implement strategic plans that require updated teaching methods.

Administrator: Professional development is crucial for providing teachers with the knowledge and skills required to align with the strategic plan's objectives. Investing in teacher training not only improves individual performance but also enhances the overall execution of institutional goals.

Head of Departments gave the following comment:

As a leader within the educational institution, I recognize the pivotal role of teacher professional development in driving strategic plan implementation. Providing opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills and expertise can lead to improved student outcomes and overall institutional success. I think our focus now to ensure successful implementation of our educational plan will be investing in professional development of our teachers and all staff members and also educating them about our core values.

Student Holistic Growth

Student holistic growth also emerged as major themes on the managerial leadership challenges in the strategic implementation of plans in selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Head of Departments said:

Strategic plan implementation should align with the goal of promoting student holistic growth to create well-rounded individuals prepared for future challenges. By integrating co-curricular activities, mental health support, and character development into the plan, institutions can nurture the complete potential of their students.

Teachers said:

I strongly believe that nurturing student holistic growth is foundational to our role in education. By focusing on not just academic achievement but also on fostering social, emotional, and physical well-being, we can create a supportive learning environment where students can thrive. When schools prioritize student holistic development in their strategic plans, it not only benefits the individual learners but also enhances the overall educational experience for everyone involved.

Integrating strategies for holistic growth, such as promoting values, character development, and life skills alongside academic learning, can help students become well-rounded individuals who are better prepared for the challenges they will face in their future endeavours. As educators, we play a crucial role in guiding and supporting students in their journey towards holistic development, and aligning our efforts with the goals outlined in the strategic plan can provide a roadmap for effectively nurturing students in all aspects of their growth.

By collaborating with colleagues, parents, and the broader community, we can create a holistic approach to education that values each student's unique

strengths and needs. Encouraging student engagement in co-curricular activities, promoting mental health and well-being, and fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity can significantly impact student outcomes and contribute to the overall success of our educational institution. Ensuring that student holistic growth is a central focus in our strategic planning efforts can lead to a more fulfilling and impactful educational experience for our students.

One of the administrators said:

Student holistic growth is not only about academic outcomes but also about cultivating essential life skills, values, and attitudes. Strategic planning should emphasize a balanced approach that considers the diverse needs of students and supports their overall development beyond the classroom.

Discussion of findings on the impact of educational strategic plan implementation on key performance areas in selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

In examining the findings related to student performance, poor resource allocation, teachers' professional development, and student holistic growth in the context of core values within Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational institutions in Zimbabwe, a critical analysis reveals several essential insights.

The study indicated that student performance was impacted by core values of honesty and integrity, with participants acknowledging its low significance (Mean = 3.07). The core values such as honesty and integrity can positively influence the academic outcomes of students. This shows that the core values of the SDA institutions should be instilled in both teachers and learners to minimise academic dishonesty or a lack of trust in the institution’s administration. The core values can positively influence student outcomes by aligning educational objectives, teaching

methodologies, and assessment practices towards enhancing learning experiences (Participants 1, 2). Institutional focus on student performance within the strategic plan can lead to improved academic achievement and overall educational quality (Northouse, 2018).

The study emphasized core values of compassion and empathy (Mean: 3.43, Variance: 0.465), this showed that a supportive environment is essential for teachers' professional development, because when teachers are given the necessary tools and opportunities, they support institutional goals. Participants recognized that ongoing training and growth opportunities are vital for educators to support institutional goals and student success (Participants 2, 5). Effective professional development can enhance teaching practices, increase teacher effectiveness, and ultimately improve student learning outcomes (Bryson, 2011).

Participants highlighted the significance of adhering to core values and reputation (Mean: 3.74, Variance: 0.726). Adherence to core values promotes the reputation of the institution and also impacts student holistic growth. Addressing students' social, emotional, physical, and academic needs can foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment (Participants 1, 4). Integrating strategies for holistic development can create well-rounded individuals prepared for future challenges and success (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

Research Question Five

The effects of the vision statement on selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

The research question sought to establish extent does the vision of the SDA educational strategic plan influence the reputation and recognition of the selected Seventh-day Adventists Educational Institutions within the Zimbabwean context. The

researcher adopted descriptive statistics to analyse the findings based on means and standard deviations as shown on the Tables 17 and 19 below.

Table 17

Influence of Vision Statement on Performance

Descriptive Statistics	N	Sum	Mean
Recognition	248	391	3.88
Reputation	248	354	3.67
Partnerships and Collaborations	248	252	3.00
Diversity and Inclusivity	248	324	3.86
Overall mean	248		3.41
Valid N (listwise)	248		

Table 18

Hypotheses

Component	Hypothesized Mean (μ)	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Null Hypothesis (H_0)	Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)
Recognition	3.5	3.88	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$
Reputation	3.5	3.67	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$
Partnerships and Collaborations	3.5	3.00	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$
Diversity and Inclusivity	3.5	3.86	$H_0: \mu = 3.5$	$H_1: \mu \neq 3.5$

Table 19

T-Test Calculations

Component	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Hypothesized Mean (μ)	Standard Deviation (s)	Calculated t	Critical t (±1.96)	Decision
Recognition	3.88	3.5	0.8	4.75	Reject H_0	
Reputation	3.67	3.5	0.9	2.73	Reject H_0	
Partnerships and Collaborations	3.00	3.5	0.7	-4.83	Reject H_0	
Diversity and Inclusivity	3.86	3.5	0.9	2.77	Reject H_0	

Hypothesis Testing Results and Discussions

Recognition:

- **Calculated t:** $4.75 > 1.96 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0.**

- **Discussion:** The institutions have a significantly higher mean score (3.88) for recognition than the hypothesized mean (3.5). This indicates that the SDA educational strategic plan is effectively influencing the institutions' visibility and reputation.

Reputation:

- **Calculated t:** $2.73 > 1.96 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0.**
- **Discussion:** The institutions' mean score (3.67) for reputation is significantly higher than the hypothesized mean (3.5). This suggests that the strategic plan is positively impacting how the institutions are perceived by stakeholders.

Partnerships and Collaborations:

- **Calculated t:** $-4.83 < -1.96 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0.**
- **Discussion:** The institutions' mean score (3.00) for partnerships and collaborations is significantly lower than the hypothesized mean (3.5). This indicates a need for improvement in this area, suggesting that the strategic plan may not be effectively supporting the development of collaborative relationships.

Diversity and Inclusivity:

- **Calculated t:** $2.77 > 1.96 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0.**
- **Discussion:** The institutions' mean score (3.86) for diversity and inclusivity is significantly higher than the hypothesized mean (3.5). This suggests that the strategic plan is effectively promoting a diverse and inclusive educational environment.

The provided descriptive statistics analysis on how the vision of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Strategic Plan influences the reputation and recognition of selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe reveals insightful data on various

aspects. The mean scores for different factors related to reputation and recognition are as follows:

The findings revealed a more significant mean score of 3.88 for recognition, indicating that the vision outlined in the SDA Strategic Plan has a positive impact on the recognition of the selected SDA educational institutions. This suggests that the institutions are being acknowledged and appreciated for their contributions and achievements within the educational sector. This corresponds with research by Smith and Jones (2019) which highlighted the significance of a clear vision in driving organizational reputation and shaping stakeholder perceptions.

With a more significant mean score of 3.67, the reputation of the selected SDA educational institutions seems to be influenced by the vision of the SDA Strategic Plan. A positive reputation is crucial for attracting students, faculty, and stakeholders, and this score indicates a favourable perception of the institutions among key stakeholders. To provide a critical analysis of these results, it is important to consider the strategic importance of reputation management and the role of vision in shaping institutional identity.

Partnerships and Collaborations scored a significant mean score of 3.00, which shows that there is need for SDA to strengthen partnerships and collaborations with other institutions, organizations, and stakeholders so as to enhance the reputation and recognition of the SDA educational institutions. Effective partnerships and collaborations play a vital role in enhancing the reputation of educational institutions (Brown et al., 2018). By fostering strategic alliances with industry other educational institutions, and community organizations, SDA educational institutions can amplify their impact and visibility. With a more significant mean score of 3.86, it is evident that the vision outlined in the SDA Strategic Plan emphasizes diversity and inclusivity

within the institutions. Promoting diversity and inclusivity can contribute to a positive reputation and increased recognition among students, staff, and the broader community. Promoting diversity and inclusivity within the educational environment is crucial for building a strong reputation and fostering a culture of equity and respect (García et al., 2020).

Institutions that prioritize diversity initiatives and create inclusive spaces are more likely to be recognized for their commitment to social responsibility. The overall mean score of 3.41 indicates that SDA the influence of the vision of the SDA Strategic Plan on the reputation and recognition of the selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe is relative. There are areas such as partnerships and collaborations that may require more focus and attention to further enhance the institutions' standing.

From the interviews that were conducted with the participants on how the vision of SDA educational strategic plan influence reputation and recognition of the selected Seventh-day Adventists Educational Institutions in Zimbabwe, diversity and inclusivity, partnerships and collaborations, academic excellence emerged as major themes and the results are presented as follows:

Vision's Influence on Reputation and Recognition

Teachers gave the following remarks:

The clear and aspirational vision set forth in the SDA educational plan has played a pivotal role in garnering recognition for our institution. Stakeholders, including parents and the local community, acknowledge our commitment to academic excellence and values-based education.

Head of departments had this to say:

The collective impact of the vision outlined in the SDA educational plan on our institution's reputation and recognition cannot be understated. By aligning our practices with the core values and principles set forth in the plan, we have strengthened our standing within the educational sector and garnered recognition for our dedication to academic excellence and values-driven education.

One of the administrators added that:

The reputation of our SDA institution has been positively influenced by the values and goals articulated in the educational plan. Our emphasis on holistic development and service-oriented learning has resonated with students and contributed to a positive perception of our institution.

Partnerships and collaborations also emerged as major themes on how the vision of SDA educational strategic plan influence reputation and recognition of the selected Seventh-day Adventists Educational Institutions in Zimbabwe, and the teachers had this to say:

Partnerships and Collaborations

Teachers said:

The partnerships established through the vision of the SDA educational plan have had a direct impact on our students' experiences and opportunities. Through collaborative programs and initiatives, students have access to a wider range of resources, support networks, and real-world learning experiences.

The administrators shared these sentiments:

By aligning our initiatives with the core values and goals of the plan, we have been able to forge meaningful and strategic alliances that benefit our students and community.

The head of departments said:

The vision of the SDA educational plan has fuelled our institution's commitment to community engagement and outreach. By collaborating with local organizations and stakeholders, we have been able to enrich our educational programs and activities while creating a positive impact beyond the campus boundaries.

Exploring the impact of the vision outlined in the SDA educational plan on diversity and inclusivity within SDA institutions in Zimbabwe revealed significant insights from participants. These responses highlighted the pivotal role of the educational plan's vision in promoting diversity, fostering inclusivity, and cultivating a welcoming environment for all members of the educational community.

One of administrators said:

By embracing inclusivity and celebrating different perspectives, we have created a vibrant and multicultural campus environment that values the uniqueness of each individual. Incorporating diversity initiatives into our strategic approach, we have fostered a more welcoming and supportive learning environment.

The head of departments said:

Aligning with our vision, we have focused on promoting cultural competence and sensitivity. Through targeted initiatives and programs, we are equipping students, faculty, and staff with the tools and skills necessary to engage effectively in a diverse and inclusive community.

By fostering collaborative partnerships and outreach efforts, we are embracing diversity and inclusivity both within and beyond our campus borders.

Teachers said:

The vision of the SDA educational plan has empowered students to actively participate in promoting diversity and inclusivity on campus. Through student-led

initiatives and advocacy efforts, we are championing a culture of inclusiveness that embraces the rich diversity of our student body.

Discussion of findings:

An analysis of the impact of the vision outlined in the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational plan on reputation and recognition, partnerships and collaborations, as well as diversity and inclusivity within SDA institutions, showed that these elements play a crucial role in shaping the overall educational landscape.

Strategic alignment with the values embedded in the educational plan not only enhances institutional reputation but also fosters collaborative efforts and promotes a culture of diversity and inclusivity. This critical analysis emphasizes the importance of a well-articulated vision in driving positive change, fostering meaningful relationships, and building a strong foundation for academic excellence and institutional success within SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that the vision of the SDA Strategic Plan positively influences the recognition and reputation of selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe. By further leveraging partnerships, embracing diversity, and continuously prioritizing stakeholder engagement, these institutions can enhance their standing and strengthen their reputation within the educational landscape.

Inferential Statistics

To test the study hypotheses, the researcher performed multiple regression analysis. The probability values (p-values) were used to assess whether or not a determined influence was significant, which may result in the research hypothesis being accepted or rejected.

Table 20

Regression Analysis of Hypotheses

Variable	beta (β)	t-value	p-value	R2
Strategic planning processes correlates with performance	0.62	5.782	0.000*	0.629
Strategic plan implementation and performance	0.52	4.439	-0.000*	0.596
Mission statement influence academic performance	0.64	5.821	0.000*	0.723
Core values influence academic performance	0.59	4.852	0.000*	0.579
Influence of vision statement on performance	0.57	4.792	0.000*	0.576

*Significant at 1%
Source: Primary Data

1 – There is no significant relationship between effective implementation of strategic plans and academic performance of selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.

According to Szucs and Ioannidis (2017), if p value is < 0.000 it means we accept the hypothesis. In this study p value is 000 therefore it means we are accepting the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between adoption of educational strategic planning processes and performance of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Investigating the impact of the vision outlined in the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational plan on academic excellence within SDA institutions in Zimbabwe revealed valuable insights from participants. These results shed light on the pivotal role of the educational plan's vision in fostering a culture of high academic standards, student achievement, and continuous improvement within these institutions. By aligning our educational practices with the goal of academic excellence, we are nurturing a culture of scholarship and intellectual growth among our students. By enhancing teaching practices and staying current with educational trends, we are better equipped to support student learning and promote academic excellence. By promoting a culture of inquiry, critical thinking, and problem-solving, we are cultivating a community of scholars dedicated to advancing knowledge and making meaningful contributions to their fields. The participants' responses

underscored the transformative impact of the vision outlined in the SDA educational plan on fostering academic excellence within SDA institutions. By prioritizing rigorous curriculum standards, professional development, student support services, technology integration, and a focus on research and innovation, institutions are creating an environment conducive to academic success, scholarship, and continuous improvement.

2- The performance assessment criteria used in strategic plan implementation does not significantly affect the academic outcomes of selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.

The interpretation of the p-value also depends on its value. For instance, Szucs and Ioannidis (2017) interpret a site p value of less than 0.000 as accepting the hypothesis. In this study p value is negative thus it implies that the hypothesis which states that there is a positive correlation between strategic implementation and the performance of SDA education institutions is not accepted. The strategies and structures put in place by Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe for their educational strategic plan do not seem to help in the realisation of the objectives of the plans in question. Key among these is the failure to comprehend the strategic plan, inadequate partnership and teamwork, suboptimal funding, an ambiguous culture within the organization, and inefficient control systems which hinder managers from implementing their strategies effectively. For this reason, it is important to consider these challenges and assist the leaders of SDA educational Arts institutions in Zimbabwe in the effective implementation of strategic plans. They look at it as education; anyone effective strategic plan and execution of a policy in the education mainly considers Bryson (2011). However, issues of communication, collaboration,

and team play in strategic planning and strategy execution are further articulated by other authors like Van der Heijden (1996).

3- There is no significant alignment of the SDA educational strategic plan’s mission statement with religious principles, educational philosophies and national policies.

According to Szucs and Ioannidis (2017), if p value is < 0.000 it means we accept the hypothesis. In this study p value is 000 therefore it means we are accepting the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between mission statement and performance of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The clear and aspirational mission statement set forth in the SDA educational plan has played a pivotal role in garnering recognition for our institution. Stakeholders, including parents and the local community, acknowledge the commitment to academic excellence and values-based education. The reputation of SDA institutions has been positively influenced by the values and goals articulated in the educational plan. Emphasis on holistic development and service-oriented learning has resonated with students and contributed to a positive perception of our institution. The findings highlight the profound influence of the SDA educational plan's vision on the reputation and recognition of SDA institutions, emphasizing the importance of strategic alignment with core values and goals in shaping institutional identity and standing within the educational community.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter aims to summarise the key findings of the study, conclusions, and recommendations. The study's key findings are summarized in connection to the goals and open questions of the study. The suggestions, on the other hand, are centred on the significant ideas that the study was able to develop, and the conclusions elucidate the main conclusions made from the study's findings.

This study examined the influence of strategic plan implementation on the performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational institutions in Zimbabwe. Its primary objective was to evaluate how effective these institutions convert strategic objectives into practical actions that enhance overall performance. Employing a concurrent mixed-methods approach, the research utilizes questionnaires, interviews, surveys, and document analysis for data collection. Both qualitative and quantitative data was obtained from 248 participants of selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.

Summary of Findings

This research focused on evaluating the influence of strategic plan implementation on the performance of selected Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The study addressed five specific research objectives:

Examination of Strategic Planning Processes

The research analysed the strategic planning processes employed within selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe, including formulation, implementation, and evaluation of educational strategic plans. Through a thorough investigation and analysis, several key findings emerged:

The study revealed that the formulation of educational strategic plans in SDA institutions in Zimbabwe is often a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders, including administrators, faculty members, and sometimes students and parents. It was observed that the strategic plans tended to emphasize long-term objectives aligned with the vision and mission of the institutions, indicating a forward-looking approach to educational development. Many institutions incorporated elements of stakeholder engagement and consultation during the formulation stage to ensure buy-in and alignment with the overall strategic direction.

Findings indicated that while strategic plans in SDA educational institutions were comprehensive and well-crafted, challenges existed in the effective implementation of these plans. Common implementation challenges included resource constraints, resistance to change, and difficulties in maintaining momentum and focus over the plan's duration. Successful implementation initiatives were often characterized by strong leadership support, clear communication of strategic goals, and a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

Though it was determined that the necessary steps in strategy formulation and implementation were being followed, they yielded variable results and impact to organizational performance. It was established that SDA educational institutions have strategic plan document that they adhere to though the strategic plan implementation structure was somewhat questionable.

The outcomes of the study indicated that the decision-making processes being centralized at the institutions, tends to limit the independence of individual schools, together with their ability to make context appropriate decisions. This creates a common strategy in all operations which is harmful to the efficacy and productivity of the institutions. The study findings also revealed that controlling uniformity of curriculum content, teaching methods, and evaluation processes kills creativity and innovativeness in the teaching and learning processes. Standardization might also imply that children will not be exposed to certain things that the particular school environment provides or prohibits and in which makes the education experience incomplete. While it is vital to put in place controls for standards of quality, it is counterproductive to discourage the autonomy of schools in the design and implementation of teachings and learning. The study findings also revealed that the organizational structure of the Seventh Day Adventist education system in Zimbabwe is that there are different levels of decision making within the institution. Power and authority is mainly vested in the higher ranked offices and little to no input is encouraged or allowed from the lower ranks. This does not encourage upward movement or respect for opinions from junior ranks which can have useful input. The study findings also revealed that the Seventh Day Adventist education system in Zimbabwe has put in place standard operating procedures that regulate the day to day running of the schools.

Impact of Educational Strategic Plan Performance Indicators on performance

The study explored how the educational strategic plans performance indicators shape organizational performance in selected SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

The findings of the study established that the majority of the managerial leaders in Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions had very little understanding of the strategic plans, which can lead to underperformance od SDA institutions. This was primarily due to inadequate training methods and lack of communication between the leadership and management levels. Collaboration between the management and the leadership levels was also a significant challenge. Leaders who failed to cooperate with the management level often hindered the smooth implementation of the strategic performance indicators. The findings of the study also established that Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions lacked adequate resources to support the successful implementation of their strategic plans. The findings further established that failure to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategic plan was a significant challenge, leading to a lack of insight into the effectiveness of the plans and how they should be adjusted for future execution.

Findings from the study established that factors such as leadership commitment, employee involvement, effective communication, resource allocation, and monitoring and evaluation were critical in shaping strategic implementation of performance indicators is SDA' educational institutions. These factors were found to have a direct impact on both academic and non-academic performance of the institution. Leadership commitment was identified as the most important factor, as it set the direction for strategic implementation and influenced the motivation of staff members. Employee involvement and effective communication were identified as important factors, as they ensured that staff members understood their roles and responsibilities and were committed to achieving the institution's goals. Resource allocation and monitoring and evaluation were found to be important in ensuring that

adequate resources were available to implement strategies and that progress was being tracked and evaluated.

How the mission statement of the SDA educational strategic plan aligns with religious philosophies and the national policies of Zimbabwe

The research investigated how the mission statement of the SDA educational strategic plan aligns with religious principles, educational philosophies, and national educational policies in Zimbabwe. The analysis indicated a positive alignment between the SDA Educational Strategic Plan's mission statement and religious principles as well as educational philosophies. However, there may be challenges in fully integrating national educational policies into the strategic planning processes:

The analysis revealed valuable insights that shed light on the perceptions and practices within SDA educational institutions in relation to these elements.

In relation to Knowledge of the Mission Statement, the high mean score for the awareness of the mission statement among participants reflects a strong understanding of the strategic direction set forth by the SDA Educational Strategic Plan. This clarity and awareness are essential for effective implementation and alignment with organizational goals.

The moderate mean score for alignment with religious principles indicates a connection between the mission of SDA educational institutions and their religious values. This alignment has fostered a positive learning environment and contributed to academic success by upholding religious philosophies.

Participants displayed a high level of commitment to educational philosophies, emphasizing the significance of upholding core values and guiding principles within SDA educational institutions. This commitment has positively influenced teaching practices and student outcomes.

While participants showed a moderate commitment to national educational policies, challenges emerged in fully integrating these policies into the organizational culture and practices. Balancing national policy demands with institutional values and practices remains a key consideration for administrators and educators.

Impact of Core Values on Performance

The research delved into the impact of core on performance of selected Seventh-day Adventist Educational Institutions in Zimbabwe, focusing on student performance, teachers' professional development, student holistic growth, and resource allocation. The study revealed valuable insights through descriptive statistics analysis and participant interviews, shedding light on the challenges and successes tied to strategic plan implementation:

The study revealed that the practice of core values such as honesty and integrity within SDA institutions were relative. The study highlighted that these values play a crucial role in influencing student performance and institutional trust. Aligning educational practices with these core values can mitigate academic dishonesty and enhance overall institutional integrity. This shows that emphasizing the importance of creating a conducive learning environment that supports student engagement and participation. However, challenges may arise due to cultural resistance to change and inadequate resource allocation.

The study highlighted the importance of compassion and empathy in fostering a supportive environment within educational institutions. Participants recognized the role of a supportive environment in facilitating teachers' professional development. They emphasized that ongoing training and growth opportunities are essential for educators to effectively support institutional goals and enhance student learning outcomes.

Poor resource allocation emerged as a notable challenge in strategic plan implementation, affecting the institutions' ability to execute the plan effectively. Addressing resource constraints is essential for supporting the successful implementation of strategic initiatives and improving overall performance outcomes.

Respondents significantly agreed that teamwork and collaboration are integral to achieving academic and administrative goals within SDA institutions. This aspect reflects the institutional ethos of promoting collective efforts towards shared objectives, contributing to a cohesive and effective educational environment.

The findings revealed that core values play a critical role in promoting student holistic growth, encompassing social, emotional, and physical well-being, beyond academic achievements. Creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment is vital for nurturing well-rounded individuals prepared for future challenges.

The challenges that were identified in strategic plan implementation include lack of cultural alignment, resource allocation, and institutional support for holistic student development. Addressing these challenges is essential for ensuring that strategic plans effectively support the mission and goals of SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.

These findings highlight the importance of aligning institutional practices with core values, fostering a supportive environment for professional growth, and prioritizing student holistic development within strategic planning efforts.

Extent to Which the Vision of SDA Educational Strategic Plan Influence Performance

The research explored the extent to which the vision of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) educational strategic plan influences the reputation and recognition of selected SDA educational institutions within the Zimbabwean context. Through

descriptive statistics and participant interviews, the study provided valuable insights into the impact of the plan's vision on various factors such as recognition, reputation, partnerships and collaborations, and diversity and inclusivity.

The analysis revealed that the vision outlined in the SDA Strategic Plan positively influences the recognition and reputation of selected SDA educational institutions. Stakeholders acknowledge the commitment to academic excellence and values-based education, leading to a favourable perception of the institutions among the community and key stakeholders.

While partnerships and collaborations scored lower in the analysis, the study emphasized the importance of strengthening these alliances to enhance the institutions' reputation and recognition. Strategic partnerships with external organizations and stakeholders can amplify impact and visibility, benefiting students and the broader educational community.

The emphasis on diversity and inclusivity within the SDA educational plan was highlighted as a key factor in fostering a welcoming and supportive environment for students from diverse backgrounds. Embracing diversity not only enriches the educational experience but also prepares students for success in a globalized world.

The vision promoted in the SDA educational plan facilitates strategic partnerships and collaborations for SDA institutions. These alliances not only enhance academic offerings but also bolster the institution's reputation as a hub of innovation and collaboration (Lee, 2017). Strategic partnerships can amplify institutional impact, broaden learning opportunities, and foster knowledge exchange, ultimately benefiting students and the broader educational community (Bryson, 2011).

The focus on diversity and inclusivity within the SDA educational plan fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment for students from all backgrounds. By

prioritizing diversity, institutions build a reputation for equity and inclusiveness, attracting a diverse student body and promoting a culture of respect and understanding (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Embracing diversity not only enriches the educational experience but also prepares students for success in a globalized world (Smith et al., 2018).

Conclusions

The results of the investigation demonstrated that the processes of strategic planning are affected by the bureaucratic leadership model which is prevalent in the Seventh-day Adventist higher learning institutions chosen within Zimbabwe. It was found that growing control over the decision-making, across the board application of a defined curriculum regardless of the institution, exogenous control and measures of running a given organization are the core facets of the bureaucratic institution. Such structures tend to produce inflexible systems, which renders it difficult for members at individual schools to address arising issues within the education sector. The study also concluded that effective pedagogical leadership is a precondition for the growth of an educational institution. These include a well-articulated vision; a relevant and active curriculum; continuous professional development; and a shift towards the needs of the students. Such factors are associated with better evaluation results of students and are beneficial to the teachers in those institutions. Thus, these results correspond to the one presented by Bush et al., (2011), who stated that pedagogical leadership leads to enhanced academic performance in students, improved occupational health of teachers and better ethos in the school.

The study also established that the challenges faced during the execution of the educational strategic plan in some of the selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe restrict the attainment of the goals set by the

plans. Furthermore, the absence of comprehension of the strategies, excessive dependence on hierarchy, inapt resource provisioning, absence of clearly articulated organizational culture and weak evaluation and assessment reports are some of the factors that constrain managers. The study also concluded that SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe exhibit a strong alignment with religious principles and educational philosophies, contributing to a positive learning environment and improved student outcomes. However, there are opportunities for further integration of national educational policies to enhance strategic plan effectiveness and overall performance outcomes. While the commitment to educational philosophies is robust, considerations for aligning with external policies are crucial for comprehensive strategic plan implementation.

The study concluded that core values play a critical role in shaping organizational performance in SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe thus impacting its key performance areas. Leadership commitment, employee involvement, effective communication, resource allocation, and monitoring and evaluation are critical factors that need to be considered in the implementation process. Therefore, SDA educational institutions in Zimbabwe need to invest in developing these factors to enhance their organizational performance

Strategic plan implementation has been shown to positively influence student academic achievement by fostering a conducive learning environment that promotes student engagement and participation. However, challenges such as cultural resistance to change and inadequate resource allocation can impede the successful execution of strategic initiatives, highlighting the importance of addressing these barriers to enhance educational outcomes.

The interconnectedness of student performance, resource allocation, teachers' professional development, and student holistic growth underscores the holistic approach necessary for effective strategic planning in educational institutions. By addressing challenges related to resource constraints, investing in professional development opportunities for teachers, and prioritizing student holistic growth in strategic planning efforts, educational institutions can enhance their capacity to deliver high-quality education and foster a comprehensive and enriching learning experience for students. The alignment of these key areas is essential for advancing educational outcomes and promoting student success within Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

In a comprehensive view, the study also concluded that the interplay between reputation and recognition, partnerships and collaborations, and diversity and inclusivity underscore the holistic impact of the SDA educational plan's vision on institutional growth and success. By aligning strategic objectives with these key pillars, SDA institutions can enhance their standing in the educational landscape, cultivate valuable partnerships, and create inclusive learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of students. The emphasis on a clear and aspirational vision in the SDA educational plan contributes significantly to the reputation and recognition of SDA institutions. Stakeholders recognize the commitment to academic excellence and values-based education, leading to positive perceptions of the institution within the community (Jones & Brown, 2019). This aligns with the notion that a well-defined vision can enhance institutional reputation and credibility, attracting stakeholders and fostering a positive image in the educational sector (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

Recommendations

Based on the objectives of the study related to examining strategic plan implementation and its impact on selected Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe, here are some recommendations:

Strategic plan implementation processes adopted had loopholes for successful implementation of strategic plan within the institutions hence it is recommended that there is a need to increase autonomy by giving individual schools independence to make decisions tailored to the specific needs of their student populations. Focus should also be made on strengthening partnerships and collaborations with external organizations, industry partners, and community stakeholders to enhance the institutions' reputation, expand academic offerings, and provide students with diverse learning opportunities. This also entails engaging different stakeholders for instance, Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe should engage parents and community members in the decision-making processes. This will build trust and a sense of ownership, creating a more robust education system that is better suited to the needs of the students. There is also need to emphasize continuous professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their skills, knowledge, and effectiveness in supporting the strategic objectives outlined in the educational plan. Investing in professional growth can lead to improved performance outcomes and student success. Addressing resource constraints is essential for supporting the successful implementation of strategic initiatives and improving overall performance outcomes so is ensuring appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to be in place to assess the effectiveness of the strategic plans and identify areas that need improvement.

To establish the influence of strategic plan implementation on academic performance, it is recommended that there be a clear core values that aligns with the strategic plan's goals and objectives to ensure the successful implementation of the plans. Collaboration and teamwork should be encouraged and emphasized in all levels of the organization as they play a crucial role in successful planning and implementation of strategic plans. There is also need to challenge cultural resistance to change, thus mitigating cultural barriers to change by fostering trust, communication, and alignment between the institution's culture and the goals of the strategic plan. Encourage open dialogue and collaboration to drive cultural shifts effectively.

To determine influence of mission statement on performance, it is recommended that evaluation be done to assess how effectively the mission statement is communicated, understood, and integrated into daily operations. This can be done through conducting focus groups or workshops to explore stakeholder perceptions of the mission statement's impact. Communication of the mission statement to all stakeholders within the institution creates a sense of shared purpose and commitment to achieving the outlined objectives. Clear communication can help align institutional practices and initiatives with the mission and values of the organisation.

To enhance success of strategic plan performance indicators implementation and its influence performance, the performance indicators must be well defined and aligned to the organization’s vision, planned operations, with monitoring and measurement variables that are adaptable to any situation arising. Developing performance metrics and indicators for each key objective area, such as student performance, teachers' professional development, student holistic growth, and resource allocation must be prioritised and these must be identified and tracked over

time. This tracks progress towards a desirable outcome. This must be tied together with other frameworks for successful implementation which include Critical Success Factors (CSF). These are factors needed at the most basic levels for a project to achieve success hence with regards to implementing educational strategic plans, such factors should be clearly defined within the SDA educational institutions. Implement regular workshops and training sessions focused on ethics and integrity for both students and staff.

With regards to the influence of strategic plan core values there is need for the development of clear guidelines that promote and enforce honesty and integrity across all institutional activities. SDA should establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the adherence to core values, with transparency and accountability as key components.

The major aim of strategic plan implementation is to translate organization's vision into actionable goals, it is imperative for SDA management to take cognizance of this and be in a position to frame its vision around its customers, employees, finances organizational processes. The vision must be accompanied with clear goals for time, quality and performance and service to their employees and customers with specific measures. This can be enhanced by a continuous and ongoing review of the vision statement to assess the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the vision statement with the strategic direction of the institutions. This must also entail engaging with stakeholders including community and parents of learners to evaluate the extent to which the vision statement motivates and guides decision-making and actions within the institutions. Consideration must be taken to conduct workshops or visioning sessions to enhance buy-in and understanding of the vision statement.

These recommendations aim to provide guidance on how to effectively address each objective of the study and generate meaningful insights into the relationship between strategic planning, mission and vision statements, and organizational performance within Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Suggestions for Further Research

It can be said that new research must be done regarding the comparative analysis of the strategic implementation processes to the performance of SDA Church-related organizations in Zimbabwe and other African countries so that their similarities and variations can be deducted. In addition to the above, there is a need to explore the influence of organizational culture on strategy operationalization and academic performance of SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.

Executive Globalization and Organizational Development are New Business Concepts: In addition, there is a need to investigate the role of e-strategy on the strategizing processes and academic performance of SDA institutions in Zimbabwe. Technology is considered as a productivity enhancer and organizational enabler, assess the level of technology application in these institutions towards the realization of their strategies and the improvement of performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF REQUEST

Adventist University of Africa
Private Bag Mbagathi
Magadi Rd, Nariobi, Kenya
July 2022
The Executive Secretary
Zimbabwe Central Union Conference
Kwekwe

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR INSTITUTION

I am a student in the School of Postgraduate Studies at the Adventist University of Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. I am pursuing a Ph.D. in Leadership. As part of the program requirements, I am currently undertaking research leading to the production of a dissertation on the topic: Determinants of Strategic Implementation on Performance in Selected Seventh-day Adventist Institutions in Zimbabwe.

I am therefore seeking permission to conduct my research. The objective is to gather data on the relationship between strategic implementation determinants and effective organizational performance and how they affect Institution operations and activities. The information obtained from this research study will be solely for academic purposes and will be treated with confidentiality.

Regards

Machila Jalabani

Approved/Not Approved (circle one)

For and on behalf of your organization

Name…… Signature……..……

Designation…… Date……/…...../……

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

You are being asked to participate in a research study entitled: Determinants of Strategy Implementation on Performance in Selected Seventh-day Adventist Institutions in Zimbabwe. The purpose of this study is to discover the factors affecting strategic management implementation practices in selected SDA institutions in Zimbabwe.

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that has 35 items. Finishing the questionnaire should take approximately ten minutes.
Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you sign the bottom of this Form, it means that you are giving your consent to be in the study. You will NOT be asked to write your name on the questionnaire and this Form is separate from the questionnaire—this ensures that your identity will not be revealed. No one, other than the researcher(s), will have access to the data and all data will be kept on a password-protected computer.

If you do not want to participate in the study, do not begin filling out the questionnaire or participating in other research activities. If you start to fill out the questionnaire and decide, you do not want to participate, stop filling it, out and give it to the researcher. There is no penalty for not participating and your questionnaire will not be used.

If you participate, you will contribute to knowledge about strategy implementations in SDA institutions, which may help them to succeed as they face challenges. There are no identifiable risks to you from participation.

The researcher will answer any questions that you have about the study and you should ask them now.

If you have complaints or concerns about this research, please contact the supervisor of the research: Musa Nyakora Ph.D. email nyakoram@aua.ac.ke

Thank you.

Jalabani Machila, the primary researcher

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research.

Signature_____Date_____

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS, HEAD OF DEPARTMENTS, AND BUSINESS MANAGERS
STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE WITHIN SELECTED SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST INSTITUTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

General Instruction:
There are two sections. Kindly respond to all items by ticking the appropriate response. Please do not write your name anywhere.
INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

1	Secondary Institution	Lower Gwelo [ ] Hanke [ ] Mundondo [ ] Anderson [ ]

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	Please tick where appropriate	
1	Gender	Male [ ] Female [ ]
2	Educational position involved	Administration [ ] Teaching [ ] Head of Department (Language, Business, Science) [ ]
	Experience in the institution	Less than 5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ] 11-15 years [ ] 16 -24 years [ ] More than 24years [ ]

To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements relating to strategic implementation and performance at your institution? Indicate your response on a scale of 1-5 *where 1= strongly agree; 2= moderately agree; 3= agree; 4= moderately disagree; 5= strongly disagree*

Section B

	Determinants of bureaucratic structure	1	2	3	4	5
1	Clear hierarchical structure					
2	Specialization.					
3	Set of formal rules.					
4	Standard operating procedure.					
6	Strict chain of command.					
7	Strategy implementation	1	2	3	4	5
8	The institution hires qualified teachers					

9	Strategy implementation has enabled the schools to cope with changes in the environment					
10	The institutions have been able to adopt technology					
11	The institutions have signed and implemented a number of partnerships and collaborations with other institutions					
12	Resources in our institutions are allocated according to the budget					
13	The institutions are able to allocate teaching time equally for effective teaching					
14	The institutional policies are aligned to the strategic objectives.					
15	The strategic implementation influences completion of syllabus in institutions					
16	The strategy is focused on reducing politics in institutions					
17	Characteristics of pedagogical leadership	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*
18	Providing learning centric leadership					
19	Committed to change management					
20	Ensuring order in chaos					
21	Providing thought leadership					
22	Influence of core values on performance	*1*	*2*	*3*	*3*	*5*
23	Core values of honesty and integrity are practiced within your institution					
24	The core values of compassion and empathy is in fostering a supportive environment for students and staff					
25	Core values of teamwork and collaboration in achieving academic and administrative goals					
26	Adherence to the core values influences the overall reputation of the institution					

27	Challenges in Strategic Implementing of Plans	1	2	3	4	5
28	Lack of top management commitment and poor communication in institutions					
29	Resistance to change					
30	Poor leadership styles in institutions					
31	Poor Resource allocation					
32	**The impact of strategic plan implementation on academic performance**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
33	To what degree do you believe the strategic plan is aligned with the curriculum in place at your institution?					
34	To what extent do you feel that the strategic plan has contributed to the achievement of academic goals within your institution?					
35	How strongly do you believe that the implementation of the strategic plan has enhanced student engagement and participation in academic activities?					
36	To what degree do you agree that the strategic plan has positively impacted faculty performance and teaching quality?					

37	How much do you agree that the strategic plan has led to improved access to academic resources (e.g., libraries, laboratories) for students?					
38	How strongly do you agree that the strategic plan allows for adaptation and flexibility in response to changing educational needs?					
39	To what extent do you believe that the strategic plan implementation has had a positive overall impact on the academic performance of students?					
40	How much do you agree that the strategic plan includes initiatives for ongoing professional development for educators to improve their teaching effectiveness?					

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SDA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. Can you walk me through the step-by-step process of how the strategic plan is developed and implemented at your institution?
2. How do you ensure that the strategic plan aligns with the mission, vision and core values of the institution during the implementation process?
3. In your opinion, what specific outcomes or improvements have been directly attributed to the successful implementation of the strategic plan at your institution?
4. How do you measure and track the impact of the strategic plan on key performance indicators of the institution?
5. How does the mission statement of your institution guide decision-making processes and daily operations to enhance performance outcomes?
6. Can you provide examples of instances where the mission statement has influenced the organizational culture and performance positively?
7. How has the strategic plan implementation specifically impacted student performance and achievements within the institution?
8. In what ways does the strategic plan address the allocation of resources and infrastructure to support key performance areas such as student growth and teachers' professional development?
9. How is the vision statement of your institution used to inspire and motivate stakeholders towards achieving performance excellence?
10. Can you share examples where the vision statement has played a significant role in setting strategic priorities and driving organizational performance in alignment with the vision?

Your contribution is greatly appreciated for success of this study, thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX E

DEBRIEF FORM

This study is concerned with the determinants of strategy implementation on performance in selected Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe. Previous studies have found ineffective organizational performance problems associated with poor leadership, poor communication, lack of resources, lack of stakeholder policy involvement, and poor academic development. Although WFP`s Zimbabwe Strategic Plan (2017 -2020) under the Ministry of Education plays a unique role in the education sector, there is evidence to suggest the understudied examination of administrators, heads of departments, and business managers as a cultural group.

How will it be ted?

In this study, you are asked to fill structured closed-ended questions on a 5 -point Likert scale. All participants will be asked to complete the strategic implementation questionnaire, judged to be familiar with the strategic implementation process and content, including the formulation, execution, and performance monitoring, while reporting perceptions, views, opinions, feelings, and attitudes on determinants of strategy implementation on performance. The data will be analysed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software tool to compute values selectively for determinants of strategic implementation data. Various tests relating to frequencies, analysis of covariance, chi-square test of independence, and regression analysis will be utilized.

Objectives and main questions:

I expect to determine if institutional strategic implementation, institutional policies, management competency, resource allocation, and church culture are predictors of institutional performance. When I assess the impact of every construct: institutional strategic implementation, institutional policies, management competency, resource allocation, and institutional culture, as predictors of institutional performance, I expect to adapt an instrument to measure every variable: institutional strategic implementation, institutional policies, management competency, resource allocation, institutional culture, and institutional performance

I am also interested in assessing the impact of demographic variables as predictors. I suspect that gender, age, management position, type of institution, and experience affect strategy implementation of the selected Seventh-day Adventist institution in Zimbabwe and this relationship increases the understanding of the relationship between the administration and staff members and the selected Adventist institutions. So, I expect more focus on member care strategies, life-long learning, leadership styles, denominational media, budgetary provisions, institutional resources, and the Adventist mission. I predict a model for strategic implementation on the performance of religious-based institutions.

Why is this important to study?

The determinants of strategy implementation on performance may be relevant to provide crucial baseline information to facilitate the design of appropriate methods geared towards improvement in their strategy implementation in Religious owned institutions. Academicians who wish to contribute more to strategy implementation and its challenges in church-owned institutions would also benefit from bridging the strategy implementation gap among Zimbabwe's religious-owned institutions and make recommendations for further research. Policymakers would also be assisted in formulating policies that assist the religious organization industry to improve their service delivery through better and more efficient processes. The question of improving the religious organization sub-sector with a general aim of promoting the development of the economy.

What if I want to know more?

If you are interested in learning more about determinants of strategy implementation on performance in selected Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Zimbabwe, you may want to consult:

Anene, E, B (2021). Determinants of Strategy Implementation on Performance of the Aviation Industry in Kenya. JKUAT-COHRECOHEED you would like to receive a report of this research when it is completed (or a summary of the findings), please contact (Machila Jalabani) at (+263 772287155 and machilaj@aua.ac.ke).

If you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this experiment, please contact the AUA IRB Secretary.

Your signature below indicates that you have been debriefed, and have had all of your questions answered.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Thank you again for your participation.

APPENDIX F

WORK PLAN

Task	Start Date	Duration (Days)	End Date
PHASE 1: PREPARATIONS	20 March 2022	55	20 May 2022
Proposal preparation, presentation, and defense	20 March 2022	30	21 April 2022
Literature Review	22 April 2022	15	9 May 2022
Revise Design of Methodology	10 May 2022	10	20 May 2022
PHASE 2: DATA COLLECTION	21 May 2022	45	6 July 2022
Data Collection	21 May 2022	30	20 June 2022
Data Collection (Questionnaires, fieldwork, desk review)	21 June 2022	15	6 July 2022
PHASE 3: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION	7 July 2022	70	19 Sept. 2022
Data Analysis (desk review, fieldwork)	7 July 2022	30	6 August 2022
Preliminary Data Findings Release	7 August 2022	1	8 August 2022
Revision of Preliminary Data Findings	9 August 2022	30	10 Sept. 2022
Statement of Analysis	11 Sept. 2022	1	11 Sept. 2022
Conclusion of Research	12 Sept. 2022	1	12 Sept. 2022
Final Research Report Writing	13 Sept. 2022	6	18 Sept. 2022
Dissemination and presentation of findings	19 Sept. 2022	1	19 Sept. 2022
Total		170	

APPENDIX G

BUDGET

Task	Amount in $USD
Proposal preparation, presentation and, defense	10
Literature Review	10
Revise Design of Methodology	20
Data Collection	30
Data Collection (Questionnaires, fieldwork, desk review)	150
Data Analysis (desk review, fieldwork)	300
Preliminary Data Findings Release	10
Revision of Preliminary Data Findings	10
Statement of Analysis	10
Conclusion of Research	10
Final Research Report Writing	100
Dissemination and presentation of findings	30
Total	690

APPENDIX H

POPULATION TABLE

Unions Conference Institutions			Total
Zimbabwe Central Union Conference	Zimbabwe West Union Conference	Zimbabwe East Union Conference	3
6 regional territory divisions			
Central Zimbabwe Conference	South Zimbabwe Conference	East Zimbabwe Conference	6
North West Zimbabwe Conference	West Zimbabwe Conference	North Zimbabwe Conference	
2	2	2	6
Educational Institutions			
31 Primary Schools 15 Secondary Schools	Solusi University 12 Primary School 8 Secondary Schools	55 Primary Schools 23 Secondary Schools	1 tertiary 98 Primary 46 Secondary
46	20	78	
Administration and Teaching Staff			
46 School Chaplin 1248 Business Managers 380 Head of Departments	20 School Chaplin 80 Business Managers 164 Head of Departments	78 School Chaplin 312 Business Managers 640 Head of Departments	144 School Chaplin 576 Business Managers 11248 Head of Departments
610	264	1030	1904

APPENDIX I

NUMBERING SYSTEM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Participant	Pseudonym
Administrators	A1
Head of Departments	H1
Teaching staff	T1

CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Details

- **Surname**: Machila
- **Name**: Jalabani
- **Gender**: Male
- **Marital Status**: Married
- **Nationality**: Zimbabwean
- **Date of Birth**: 1 October 1970
- **Postal Address**: Plot 12 Umsungwe Gweru Zimbabwe
- **Telephone Number**: +263 772287155
- **Email**: **machilaj@aua.ac.ke**

Academic Information

- 1983: Grade 7, Sandara Primary School Gweru Zimbabwe.
- 1987: Ordinary Level, Mambo High School, Gweru, Zimbabwe.
- 1994: Advance level, Top light College, Gweru, Zimbabwe.
- 2004: BA Theology, Solusi University, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.
- 2010: M A Religion, Solusi University, Bulawayo Zimbabwe.

Professional Information

1. 1994- 1996. Frontline Pastor Chiredzi South District (4 Churches), Central Zimbabwe Conference.
2. 1997-1998: Front line Pastor Mandora District (7 churches) Central Zimbabwe Conference
3. 1999 – 2000 Frontline Pastor Sanyathi District (10 churches) Central Zimbabwe Conference
4. 2004 Front-line Pastor Masvingo North District Central Zimbabwe Conference
5. 2006 Front Line Pastor Hanke / Nhema District (17 Churches) Central Zimbabwe Conference
6. 2006 Frontline Pastor Chiredzi District (11 Churches), Central Zimbabwe Conference
7. 2007 Frontline Pastor Kadoma District (9 churches) Central Zimbabwe Conference
8. 2009 Stewardship Director, Central Zimbabwe Conference
9. 2011 Front line Pastor, Gweru West District (8 Churches) Central Zimbabwe Conference
10. 2015 Stewardship Director Central Zimbabwe Conference
11. 2019 Chaplain at Anderson Adventist High, Central Zimbabwe Conference
12. 2022 Front lone Pastor Shurugwi District (9 churches) Central Zimbabwe Conference
13. 2024 Front line Pastor Gweru South District 7(churches), Central Zimbabwe Conference

14. 2025 Present Chaplain Hanke Adventist high School, Central Zimbabwe Conference.

Ordination

- **2**007 -ordained to the Seventh day Adventist Gospel Ministry by Zimbabwe Union Conference

Endorsement

2017 -Endorsed Chaplain by Southern Africa Indian-Ocean Division

Publications

Machila, J. (2025) Delegation practice as influencing staff commitment of Adventist Schools in Zimbabwe Union Conference Division. Internal Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science. https://rsisibternstional.org/

Machila, J. (2025) The impact of strategic leadership on operational performance of firms in the haulage transport sector in Zimbabwe. Internal Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science. https://rsisibternstional.org/