

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

BY STATE UNIVERSITIES IN A DEPRESSED AND COMPETITIVE MARKET ENVIRONMENT

in Zimbabwe



Tendai Manyange

Survival Strategies by State Universities in a Depressed and Competitive Market Environment in Zimbabwe

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Dedication

To my beloved Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his protection and love throughout the course of this programme. I also dedicate this project to my husband Thebes and my four sons Thaine, Tanaka, Tinevimbo and Tinodaishe for their patience, maximum support and love.

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Book Synopsis

This study investigated the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy in state universities in Zimbabwe focusing on Midlands State University (MSU). Almost all state universities in Zimbabwe have embarked on the double intake strategy such that the enrolment of state universities in Zimbabwe has grown at a tremendous rate, a phenomenon referred to as “massification”. There is a possibility of quality declining, as state universities have focused on growing student numbers while doing little to raise graduates’ skills. A comprehensive literature review was done in this book and it reveals various perspectives on enrolment expansion and its impact on university performance. While massive literature contributions on the subject exist globally, there is very little contribution to this subject from Zimbabwe. To explore the effects of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion, the study adopted survey research design. The study sample was comprised of 376 respondents who were basically MSU students drawn from MSU campuses. Data were collected using self-administered five-point Likert Scale, and the collected data were analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The major findings of the study established that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has a significant negative effect on university performance, facilities and resources at MSU. An increase in the numbers of students enrolling, while infrastructure and human resources remained constant results in the decrease of quality. Basing on the findings, the study recommended that MSU should match enrolment expansion with the number of teaching staff and physical facilities available. Universities should adopt the use of the three generic business strategies such as cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies to gain competitive advantage. The study concluded by proffering recommendations for further studies that included surveying the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy in all state universities to see if the pattern remains the same.

List of Acronyms

BUSE	-	Bindura University of Science Education
CUT	-	Chinhoyi University of Technology
GZU	-	Great Zimbabwe University
HIT	-	Harare Institute of Technology
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
LSU	-	Lupane State University
MSU	-	Midlands State University
MUIIMP	-	Makerere University Infrastructure Master Plan
NUST	-	National University of Science and Technology
UZ	-	University of Zimbabwe
ZOU	-	Zimbabwe Open University
UNISA	-	University of South Africa

CHAPTER 1: University Statism: Context and Overview

This study seeks to investigate the survival strategies employed by state universities in Zimbabwe focusing on the enrolment expansionism by the Midlands State University (MSU). This chapter provides a study overview that particularly is about the background to the problem, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, research hypothesis, delimitations of the study, significance of the study and research limitations.

Enrolment expansion in state universities has been a central phenomenon of the 21st century in the world (Rumbley *et al*, 2010). Globally, for example, the United States of America (USA) embarked on enrolment expansion in state universities (*Ibid.*). The Great Recession of 2007-2009 induced and accelerated enrolment expansion in state universities (Kim, 2014). In recent times, this has been particularly evident as USA total university enrolment increased from 18.2 million to 21 million between Fall 2007 and Fall 2010 (Barr & Turner, 2013). The University of Alabama in Birmingham showed enrolment expansion as the students were 14,690 in 2011 and the number rose to 18,698 in 2015 (Bentley & Bice, 2016).

Nevertheless, striking feature of the Great Recession was the relative shift from state support and provision of higher education to private and federal support. Tuition increases at public universities were increased during the era of the Great Recession and such escalations shifted the costs of higher education from states to students. The increased tuition served as one of the few channels for revenue generation by government. The federal aid policies, including the Pell grant, became more generous such that many students were eligible to get the education grants resulting in many students enrolling at universities (Barr & Turner, 2013).

China also witnessed enrolment expansion in its university education, with the gross enrolment rate jumping from 9.8% in 1998 to 24.2% in 2009

(Wang & Liu, 2011). There were 29.79 million students enrolled in state universities, making it the largest higher education system in the world in absolute terms. This wave of radical growth began in an intense manner in June 1999, when the central government finished the decision to enlarge the higher education structure in China. The strategy of enrolment expansion was required to accept more students in universities. The rationale of the government included easing the immediate labour market and developing human capital for future development (Beall, 2012).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, most public universities embarked on enrolment expansion in excess of their capacity. This resulted in “massification” and negative consequences on educational quality (Mohamedbhai, 2013). It is posited that Makerere University in Uganda embarked on enrolment expansion as a strategy to introduce new courses and to take in more qualified students (Musaazi, 2014:208). It is also observed that there was a drastic reduction in state funding of higher education in 1989 that translated into a deepening financial crisis at Makerere University (Mamdani, 2008:10). This resulted in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Uganda government signing the first Structural Adjustment Programme that they agreed on privatisation. The strategy of privatisation at the Makerere University was to get the commercial units to become profit-making through enrolment expansion of fee-paying students and so become “income generating units” (*Ibid.*).

Privatisation contributed to enrolment expansion at Makerere University as they pursued profit-maximisation for commercial units and income maximisation for the faculties (Mamdani, 2008:52). Currently Makerere University has 50 000 students (MUIMP, 2014). The university decided to lower entry requirements for evening school, lifting of limits on enrolment and increase in number of students in each program. These decisions opened the floodgates of students (*Ibid.*).

In Kenya, state universities also used the enrolment expansion as a strategy to compete with several private universities that were emerging (Kamau, 2013). It is argued that public universities have been ‘forced’ to expand their programmes, create flexible education schedules and build

up campuses away from their traditional locations (Jowi and Oanda, 2012). The commitment that the people and the government of Kenya made to expand the availability of education at all levels has been a national accomplishment (Mukanji *et al.*, 2016). Since its independence in 1963 universities throughout Kenya have dispersed to the rural areas both as a strategy to expand access and position themselves as business entities while expanding enrolment (Hughes & Mwiria, 2009). It is argued that population increase in Kenya contributed to high demand for education and university education as well. The population in Kenya in 2006 was 38 million and by 2012 it was 43 million showing an increase in population growth (Jowi & Oanda, 2012).

In South Africa, enrolment expansion in state universities has been experienced as well. After the end of the apartheid regime, higher education moved, in its structural features, from a fragmented and operationally racialised system to a relatively (at least formally) more integrated system of many public universities (traditional, comprehensive and universities of technology) such that 990 000 students were enrolled in the state universities (HETS, 2015). The University of South Africa (UNISA) embarked on enrolment expansion as they offer open distance learning to students within their country and other students from the region and the whole world such that in 2010 students were 293 437 2 and the numbers rose to 337 612 in 2015 showing an increase in student enrolment (UNISA, 2015).

Enrolment expansion in South Africa resulted as an element of the restructuring of South African higher education. There was the change in the explanation of those organisations known as technikons to universities of technology (Townsend, 2010). Student enrolment increased from 28 000 in 2013 to 33 711 in 2015 (WITS, 2016).

In Zimbabwe, higher education has grown faster since the attainment of independence in 1980. There are 18 universities of that twelve are state owned and the rest are privately owned (Madzimore, 2016). The state universities in Zimbabwe are Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE), Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT), Great Zimbabwe

University (GZU), Gwanda State University, Harare Institute of Technology (HIT), Lupane State University (LSU), Manicaland State University of Applied Sciences, Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences, Midlands State University (MSU), National University of Science and Technology (NUST), University of Zimbabwe (UZ) and Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) (Zindi, 2015). The major aim of the government after it came into power in 1980 was “education for all” from primary level, secondary education to higher education (Mhere *et al.*, 2014). The increase in population in the country also meant increase in enrolments from primary, secondary and tertiary education. Zindi (2015) posits that the large numbers of secondary school graduates became the tail that began to wag the dog of university enrolment.

Table 1.1 Zimbabwe State Universities and Their Enrolment (*University Rankings, 2017*)

Name of University	Year of Establishment	Enrolment at Inception	Current Enrolment
Bindura University of Science Education	1996* 2001	125	2000
Chinhoyi University of Technology	2001	1200	4000
Great Zimbabwe University	1999	120	3000
Gwanda State University	2012	65	150
Harare Institute of Technology	1988* 2005	300	3000
Lupane State University	2005	81	3000
Manicaland State University of Applied Sciences	2016	350	500
Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences	2015	50	200
Midlands State University	2000	400	25 000
National University of Science and Technology	1991	270	5000
University of Zimbabwe	1955	68 in 1955 1000 in 1980	15 200
Zimbabwe Open University	1999	5000	16 000

Table 1.1 shows that there was an increase in figures of enrolment per each university since its inception showing that there is high demand for university education in Zimbabwe (Matorera, 2016).

The high demand for university education in Zimbabwe encouraged the government to increase the number of universities to cater for this (Mhere *et al.*, 2014). Another reason for the increase in state universities was to build a trained and professional labour force and hence improve productivity in the country (*Ibid.*). However, the massive increase in student enrolment extensively exerted pressure on the national budget (Majoni, 2014). The government found it difficult to provide all the funding required in education, especially higher education whereby the expenditure per student in higher education was over 300% of GNP per capita (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011:4). Lack of funding from government to state universities meant that state universities were left to generate income and realise profit where possible, hence rely less on government funding. This meant that Zimbabwe state universities had to generate income and become self-sufficient (Majoni, 2014).

The fact that the state universities need to generate income and become self-sufficient has paved way for universities to implement survival strategies such as privatisation, commercialisation and enrolment expansion. This has resulted in intense competition among the universities to gain a bigger market share. Hungwe (2011) observes that MSU is among the state universities in Zimbabwe that has embarked on the survival strategy of enrolment expansion. This is supported by the student enrolment that rose since its establishment in March 2000 from 400 to 10 499 in June 2006 (*Ibid.*). MSU has established more campuses and diversification of programmes that have made higher education more accessible at this university but has also raised concerns on the quality of education being provided by the institution (Mupemhi, 2011).

In the past, state universities have implemented different strategies for survival in competitive environments and during the periods of economic structural adjustments. These include privatisation, commercialisation and enrolment expansionism (Mamdani, 2008). This study seeks to investigate into enrolment expansion as a strategy used by state universities in Zimbabwe to gain a competitive advantage over other players in the same industry. The study also explores the perceptions of

stakeholders on the quality of service delivery in state universities and the opportunities for quality university education at MSU.

Almost all state universities in Zimbabwe have embarked on the double intake strategy such that the enrolment of state universities in Zimbabwe is in excess of 55 000, a phenomenon referred to as “massification” (Madzimore, 2016). Midlands State University has not been spared on using this growth strategy and as a result the university has managed to build a bigger clientele base of 23 000 students per year (Hungwe, 2011). These students are distributed to its five campuses namely, Harare, Zvishavane, Mashava, Mutare and Gweru that is the main campus. Having a suitable location in most of the major towns in Zimbabwe and a wide branch network increases market growth and sustainability. However, it is not clear how enrolment expansion as a strategy has affected the performance of public universities in Zimbabwe. There is a possibility of quality declining, as state universities have focused on growing student numbers while doing little to raise graduates’ skills.

Several studies have been done on university education expansion under different contexts in Zimbabwe. Shizha & Kariwo (2011) focused on challenges facing university education expansion in Zimbabwe. The study revealed that due to reduced government funding to state universities, the universities must find strategies of funding themselves. Another study also investigated on university education expansion and noted that political and economic crisis between 2000-2008 affected access of funding by state universities and, as such, state universities had to find strategies for survival (Majoni, 2014). Despite this background, limited studies have been done to investigate into the effects of enrolment expansion on state universities in Zimbabwe as a strategy for survival. This study has been inspired by the need to fill this gap in knowledge. The study, therefore, seeks to investigate the effects of the strategy of enrolment expansion on the performance of state universities in Zimbabwe focusing on MSU.

The main objective of the study is to investigate the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy in state universities in Zimbabwe focusing

on MSU so that we may have insights that can prepare strategists to have foresights. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To explore the effects of survival strategies on performance of state universities in Zimbabwe
2. To establish the impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality of higher education;
3. To proffer policy options to improve the performance of state universities in Zimbabwe.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of survival strategies on performance of state universities in Zimbabwe?
2. What is the impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality of higher education in state universities?
3. What survival strategies should be used by state universities to improve academic performance in higher learning institutions.

Research Hypothesis

- H0: The survival strategy of enrolment expansion does not affect quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe.
- H1: The survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe.

This study may be of great benefit to various stakeholders who either have a direct or indirect interest in higher education in Zimbabwe. The study may provide information on effective survival and competitive strategies among state universities in Zimbabwe to policy makers and scholars. It may help policy-makers in the state universities as they would be able to know for certain what survival and competitive strategies play a role in shaping their operations and how they affect performance and at the same time they would know the best strategies to use to remain competitive.

For scholars, this study may expand their knowledge on strategic responses in universities and identify areas of further study. It may also benefit academic researchers since it will help them in developing theories

concerned with the study. Other stakeholders may benefit by being informed on the competitive challenges affecting state universities and the various ways in that universities respond to increased competition.

Several researchers from different countries, internationally and regionally have studied issues about enrolment expansion in universities but none has examined the effects of enrolment expansion in state universities in Zimbabwe and specifically the Midlands State University in Zimbabwe therefore this study will research on the survival strategy.

The study analyses the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy used by state universities to have a bigger market share. Most of the state universities have embarked on enrolment expansion. The study focuses on Midlands State University only. It covers the period 2000 – 2017.

The research was likely to face some limitations such as that the respondents would be not readily available due to work commitments. To overcome this limitation, appointments were made in advance so that data were collected when respondents have confirmed availability and some questionnaires were sent through email to acquire information from other informants who were not easily available in person. Another potential limitation was that of confidentiality as some MSU students were not allowed to offer MSU information to outsiders. To overcome this limitation, approval was sought from the relevant authorities and all the data collected was treated as confidential and was to be used for the purposes of this study only.

The monograph is made up of five chapters:

Chapter one consists of the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, the research objectives, research questions, hypothesis of the study, justification of the research, the scope of the study, limitations to the study, monograph outline and chapter summary.

Chapter two presents and critically discusses the theoretical underpinnings behind the subject under investigation and the detailed

conceptual definitions of the constructs used in the study. It shows how survival strategies have an influence on quality of university education.

Chapter three is made up of the methodology employed in understanding the research problem. The methodology includes the research design, data collection procedures and data presentation and analysis.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study based on the data collected.

Chapter five provides a detailed discussion of the results and the theoretical and practical implications of the results and giving direction for future studies. At the end of the thesis document, references and a set of appendices will be included that contain the questionnaires of the survey forms used to collect primary data for this work and other supplementary documents of the study.

This chapter has focused on the introduction of the topic, highlighting the background of the research study by providing information on the strategy of enrolment expansion in state universities and how enrolment expansion affects quality of education at MSU. The chapter has also spelt out the statement of the research problem. It also presented the research objectives, questions, hypothesis, and justification of the study, scope and its limitations, monograph outline and then concluded by giving the chapter summary. The next chapter focuses on reviewing literature by other authors in relation to the growth strategies, enrolment expansion and the strategies that can be employed by universities to enhance quality education.

CHAPTER 2: Enrolment Expansion as a University Survival Strategy: A Theoretical Review

The chapter presents a review of the literature related to the objectives and research questions of the study. It seeks to locate gaps from that to launch the thesis argument and familiarise with the phenomenon under study. The fundamental component of the study is to establish the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy used by state universities in Zimbabwe. The current operational set up in the Zimbabwean higher education sector is a dynamic one and highly competitive with the emergence of many state and private universities. To ensure that state universities remain competitive in the market, they need to adopt survival strategies to ensure that they outperform their competitors. The universities that use survival strategies realise a performance advantage over their competitors.

Today almost all state universities in Zimbabwe have embarked on the enrolment expansion strategy to ensure their survival and sustainability in the higher education industry. Moreover, to have a bigger market share in any industry, organisations should understand the forces that shape the sectors' competition as a basis for developing a survival strategy (Sifuna, 2014). To provide adequately on survival strategies, the study looks into the Porter's five forces model of industry analysis and Porter's generic strategies and understand how it helps the study using information from the literature.

A strategy is a firm's game plan that enables the firm to create a competitive advantage (Mhizha, 2016). Strategy is the perspective, position, plan, and pattern used by organisations as a bridge between policy or high-order goals (Nickols, 2016). Strategy and tactics organized connect the gap amid ends and means. The firm needs to analyse itself bearing in mind what the competitors are doing (Nyamwanza, 2014). Strategy can also be defined as a set of decision-making rules for guidance

of organizational behaviour (Kasimoglu, 2009). A strategy is thus used as a yard stick to measure a firm's performance and define its relationship with the external environment (Nickols, 2016).

Organisations operate in environments that are very turbulent and the changes that take place in an environment greatly influence the business activities hence the need for survival strategies. A survival strategy is a sound and coherent pattern that is fixed and implemented to constantly overcome life's encounters to gain sustainability in a chosen environment and in turn gain financial peace (Acho, 2013). Similarly, Wyman (2014) reiterated that the survival strategy helps the firms to relate to their environment and serves as a guide to the organization on what it tries to do and achieve. When survival strategies are used, the business will be able to manage the expectations of its stakeholders.

Survival strategies helps the organisation to understand what is taking place within the external environment and helps strategists to prepare a strategy that ensures long-term profit and growth and this links with Michael Porter's model of competitiveness. The model suggests that to develop effective organisational strategies, managers must understand and react to those forces within an industry that determine an organisation's level of competitiveness within that industry (Omsa *et al.*, 2017). Competitive advantage is a benefit over competitors grown by offering customers greater value also by means of lower prices or by providing benefits and services that justify higher prices (Schuttinga, 2011).

Nganga (2016) defines enrolment as the act of enrolling at an institution or on a course. Rye (2009) views enrolment expansion as the greatest growth in number during the enrolment process. Similarly, Huang (2012) reiterated that enrolment expansion in higher education institutions refers solely to the gross proportion of new entrant students in the university. It means that the student enrolment growth appears to be speeding up (Nganga, 2016). Enrolment expansion in universities can be called the 'massification of higher education' (Bishau & Samkange, 2015). This means that enrolment expansion is a term that is used frequently in higher

education to describe a well-planned strategy and tactic to shape the enrolment of an institution and meet established goals (Rye, 2009).

Most state higher education organisations in Africa, in reaction to historical circumstances, have enrolled learners more than their capability, causing massification (Mohamedbhai, 2014). Enrolment expansion is a strategy used by many universities to enrol several students to be competitive in the higher education sector. It often comprises marketing, admission policies, retention curricula, and financial aid awarding to plan successful results. Competitive efforts to recruit students is a common emphasis of enrolment managers (Nganga, 2016).

Bishau & Samkange (2015) posit that Zimbabwe became part of an ongoing global process of massification of higher education, this came as developing countries were undergoing transition after the colonial elitist academic organisations that encouraged bottle-neck education systems. In higher education, the bottle neck system that used to limit the number of students who were expected to enrol at university was abolished and universities could enrol as many students as they can accommodate (*Ibid.*).

Enrolment expansion is a survival strategy used world-wide by universities and this is supported by Edwards & Radloff (2013) who observes that undergraduate enrolment for domestic students in Australian universities were growing at a remarkable pace over the past few years as there was a sharp rise in the trajectory of enrolments in the last decades. Huang (2012) notes that with quick economic growth and dramatic escalation in the number of scholars in higher learning institutions in various Asian states since the 1990s, higher education systems in these countries have evolved into the stage of mass higher education.

The Porter's five forces model is often used as a starting point to evaluate a company's position in its industry and to assess its level of competitiveness (Porter, 2008). This framework is general and appropriate to any business, it is good if it is used in a specific situation that applies directly to the business undertaking the assessment (Sifuna, 2014). Higher education industry today is in the business triangle that is

constantly subject to external pressures, like competitive forces from the domestic and international education providers, from both public and private higher education institutions (Ogutu, 2015). Porter's model of five forces pays specific consideration to five forces that affect any industry: threat of new entrants, intensity of rivalry, threat of substitutes, bargaining power of buyers and bargaining power of suppliers (Porter, 2008).



Figure 2.1 The Five Forces That Shape Industry Competition (*Adapted from Porter, 2008.*)

Porter's five forces model can assist universities as they describe the parameters within that new rules, partakers and markets continue to surface (Dill, 2009). In Zimbabwe, colleges and universities compete for students, research support, faculty members and financial contributions, and this competition is becoming both increasingly aggressive and global (Pringle & Huisman, 2011). Understanding the industry's structure is, therefore, essential for effective strategic positioning, so that institutions can defend themselves against competition and shape them in their own favour (Porter, 2008).

Ormanidhi & Stringa (2008) argues that to succeed, the most relevant and important aspect of the competitive environment is the industry in that the firm contests. In Porter's language, the industry is the "arena" where struggle takes place (Porter, 2008). Considering Porters' study, industries

are encompassed with firms that yield close substitutes, but the firms' competitive atmosphere has a common structure involving the following five competitive forces:

New entrants to an industry bring new aptitude and a must to gain market stake that exerts pressure on the prices, costs, and the rate of investment necessary to compete. If barriers to entry keep on high, the threat of new entrants will be low (Pringle & Huisman, 2011). The threat of new entrants to the industry drives competition and impacts the industry's profitability (Porter, 2008). Anand (2012) observes that due to relatively loose governmental regulations in higher education sector, the sector is seeing an increase in the number of private universities resulting in increasing competition in the sector. More competition results in more efficiency, advanced quality, innovation, further differentiation and additional choice for customers (Mathooko & Ogutu, 2015).

The competition between firms determines the attractiveness of a sector. Companies struggle to maintain their power. The competition fluctuates basing on sector improvement, diversity and the presence of barriers to enter. In addition, it is an analysis of the number of competitors, products, brands, strengths and weaknesses, strategies and market shares (Chowdhury, 2008). In higher education industry, the intensity of rivalry depends on the objects of the competition that are students, teaching staff, donors or government-based funding and research money (Anand, 2012).

Besanko *et al.* (2013) observes that the availability of substitutes erode the demand for the industry's output. Complements boost industry demand. Once the price elasticity of demand is huge, pressure from substitutes will be important. Variations in demand can in affect internal competition and entry/exit. For the higher learning institutes, the most powerful and increasing force is the risk from the number of alternatives, particularly from distance education and online programmes, that have increased and increasing in numbers and with ICT, the competition is a global one (Anand, 2012). Competitors that offer substitutes often combine convenience, time and application, largely because of expanded delivery options made possible by technology. The availability of and demand for

substitutes for higher education is increasing (Martinez & Wolverton, 2009).

At universities, the buyer is the student or parent in the sense that they purchase education from an institution. The more options the buyer must choose from, the more power the buyer has (Porter, 2008). The new substitutes and the new entrants erode monopoly that traditional universities used to enjoy (Mathooko & Ogutu, 2015). Information such as academic reputation, physical aspects, institutional advertisements and brand image are common higher education selection criteria that allows buyers to compare services in terms of quality and breadth of offering (Hua, 2011). In an industry where options are plentiful, customers have more choices and buyer power increases such that services that are unique and provide a sustainable value to scholars will enhance to the bargaining influence to students (Martinez & Wolverton, 2009).

Population growth is the increase in the number of people that reside within a state or country (Espenshade & Tannen, 2015). *Ceteris paribus*, demography openly affects student enrolments in universities since the size of younger age cohorts is a partial determinant of the total number of learners who will enrol for universities (Stephan, 2008). This is supported by Odundo (2015) who noted that public universities in Kenya have recorded high enrolment rates in the past two decades due to pressure from the extended primary and secondary schooling and increased response for university education amongst the working populace.

This has also been advanced by Mohamedbhai (2014) when the author stated that since independence, the demographic situation in Sub-Saharan African countries has been categorised as having a rapid inhabitant's growth, a situation in that youth made an increasingly larger ratio. Effective measures taken in the 1980s to improve access to primary education resulted in a dramatic increase in output from that sector, and, in due course, increased secondary education enrolment and a steadily burgeoning proportion of secondary education graduates with legitimate expectations for tertiary education (Mwebi & Simatwa, 2013). Higher education institutes then faced huge political and public pressures to

increase their admissions, and they did that well beyond what they might accommodate in spite of serious shortages in human, physical, and monetary resources (Mohamedbhai, 2014).

A government policy statement is a declaration of a government's political activities, plans and intentions relating to a concrete cause (Waller *et al.*, 2009). Government policies have a greater contribution on enrolment expansion as Habibi & El-Hamidi (2016) notes that free university education and guaranteed jobs in the government sector for graduates were the main public policy implements that successive Egyptian governments since Nasser have used to garner popular support in urban areas.

Government policies play a major role in enrolment expansion at state universities. Kanyongo (2009) echoes that when Zimbabwe obtained its independence in 1980, one of its major policy was to extend education (and specifically higher education) to previously disadvantaged groups. This headed to huge pressure on the only university in the country, since a very good number of secondary school graduates were not capable to enrol for higher learning due to limited capability of the university to house the growing demand. This incited the formation of many universities across the country (Mawoyo, 2012). The expansion of university education in the country is continuing because even further state universities are desired to respond to the needs of quality and access in the higher learning sector (Kariwo, 2008).

Bordon *et al.* (2016) argues that government policies in Chile have a bearing on the enrolment expansion at universities. The authors posit that the enrolment growth in colleges was caused by a reform on the student loan program in 2006, that gave access to governmental loans to students enrolled in accredited state and private universities that lifted a significant barricade to entry into the higher learning market. As a result of reforms of this kind, the Chilean higher education system became highly decentralized and competitive.

University education includes all forms of studies, academic training or research or any training at the post – secondary level, provided by higher learning institutions and there is an unprecedented demand for university education globally (Cairns, 2015). Demand for university education includes the investment, consumption aspects, and the expected benefits that influence the proportion of persons who find it economically desirable (Madanji, 2014). Radner & Miller (2010) affirm that, an increase in the cost of education investment, whether in the form of direct charges for tuition or the opportunity costs of attending, may lead to a reduction in enrolment decisions. These authors emphasized that, increases in tuition fees at one institution may result in a re-allocation of students from that institution to another of comparable quality and size, but at lower prices.

Madanji (2014) observes that in Africa, demand for university education has been increasing rapidly in relation to meagre resources, the enrolment has been doubling in every five years that is the fastest rate of increase in the world. This has been prompted by the economic growth in respective African countries that needs university education. The demand for university education is a global phenomenon as countries in the Europe are also experiencing enrolment expansionism. This has also been affirmed by Romero & Rey (2009) who reiterated that the rapid growth of private higher education in response to high demand is a recent phenomenon in most European countries such that higher education market whether public or private university compete for students.

The continued demand for university education resulted in many universities. The government has then upraised the number of state universities to twenty-two by changing fifteen constituent universities to fully fledged campuses (Republic of Kenya, 2012). Also, there were 28 private universities with different levels of accreditations. Between 2000/01 and 2008/09, university admission in Kenya increased by 103% from 59,200 to 120,000 (Muindi, 2009). The number has since risen to 198,300 in 2011 (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

Higher education has currently become increasingly competitive, and many public colleges and universities have begun to adopt market-

oriented strategies as a result (Kristensen *et al.*, 2015). This competitive environment is determined by several things, including the progression in corporate and for-profit organisations, a buyers-market for learners, and advanced telecommunications delivery structures (Naidoo, 2016). As a result, more institutions contest with a recognisable group of other state, private and for-profit institutes for students. And competing for funding from state, corporate world, foundations, and other private sources (Leland & Moore 2009).

The landscape in higher learning institutions is changing. University education is being restructured by globalisation plus digital revolution. There is intensified competition for the portion of the international student market. Institutions are seeing a long-term effect from the universal financial crisis impacting both enrolment numbers and philanthropy, and students have increasing demands and expectations of their learning experience (Bryant, 2013).

Prospective undergraduates are becoming consumer-orientated and creating choices about education accordingly. University rankings will gradually have more effect on positioning universities in the international market, graduate career concern is an increasing student concern (Bordon *et al.*, 2016). Students are looking for access to services and education across new technologies and more flexible delivery options. To be competitive and to meet these expectations, universities will need to invest in expensive facilities and infrastructure. (Bryant, 2013).

Ultimately, a university's ability to differentiate itself in market, recruit a diverse student body, attract and retain staff of international distinction, secure multifaceted partnerships and generate philanthropic support will be key to surviving the challenges that the sector faces (Romero & Rey, 2009). In Chile, the government deregulated the higher education market that increased competition, as a result, universities massively expanded their network of campuses that intensified the competition between universities and rapidly increased enrolment (Bordon *et al.*, 2016).

Economic development is the process by that a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people (Fieldman *et al.*, 2014). Individuals become the agents of change in the process of economic development, they have the freedom to realise their potential (Soo, 2015). The role of education in human development is an important tool in any human society, it makes man develop faster than other creatures Aluede *et al.* (2012).

Improvement in quality of human resources increases efficiency and absorptive ability of the country and later refining economic improvement since higher levels of human capital development lead to increased economic growth (Mbelle & Katabaro, 2009). This was also upheld by Soo (2015) who asserts that the accumulation of human capital is widely perceived to be a key ingredient for increasing per capita income. As workers become more educated and more skilled, their productivity improves, hence raising income levels. It is this line of thought that has led to the rapid expansion of higher education across the developing world.

Kenya's university learning has witnessed drastic growth in enrolment since the gaining of independence as a result of the government's considerable placement of the significance of university education in promoting socio-economic and political development (Mukanji *et al.*, 2016). Accordingly Okebukola (2008) proffered that higher education provides high level human resources for driving the economy and ensuring rapid societal transformation. That is, the greater the chance given to the public for higher learning, the more extensive the horizon for fast social and economic development.

University education is an indispensable element for socioeconomic, political and technological development world over (Odundo *et al.*, 2015). Access to University education is not only one of the fundamental rights of an individual but also, and more importantly, a crucial tool for sustained socioeconomic development and an important exit route from poverty (*Ibid.*). It therefore, plays a crucial role towards achievement of a life of dignity and prosperity for all citizens. Besides, increased investment

in education, particularly at the university level is the most fundamental path to realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Privatization in reference to university education refers to a practice or tendency of institutions and colleges (both public and private) compelling on characteristics of, or operating norms associated with, private enterprises (Johnstone, 2010). Privatisation connotes a greater orientation to the student as a consumer, including the concept of the college education as a "product". Privatization also suggests the adoption of management practices associated with private business, such as contracting out, or outsourcing (Mamdani, 2008).

Privatisation can be a strategy to increase enrolments by universities. This is supported by Habibi & El-Hamidi (2016) when the authors observed that the economic crisis of the 1980s in Egypt forced the Egyptian government to reduce the fiscal burden of higher education by means of privatization reforms. Once a portion of the price of higher education has been shifted to private sector, the government permitted student enrolment to grow sharply in the 1990s. The government responded to the growing fiscal cost of higher education by issuing permits for private universities and by allowing public universities to generate revenue by offering some tuition-based degrees. These policies facilitated further increases in university enrolment.

Institutions of higher education in Chile went through a privatisation reform in the early 1980s. This reform modified the education system structure and its funding mechanisms, resulting in an expanded, more diverse and highly privatized system (Bordon *et al.*, 2016). The number of higher education institutions and enrolment in higher education programs increased significantly following this reform (*Ibid.*).

Mwebi & Simatwa (2013) also observed that in the 1990s, the World Bank concluded that the rate of social return on investments in tertiary education was lower than in basic and primary education and accordingly significantly reduced its tertiary education sector spending in Africa. This policy influenced other donor and development agencies to follow their

lead in reducing spending for tertiary education. This policy had severe repercussions, not only on the development of higher education, but also on development generally in Africa. Hence, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, higher education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa suffered from abandonment and underfunding, thereby opting for privatization of universities (Mohamedbhai, 2014).

Porter's generic strategies model comprise of all those changes and approaches that a business has and is doing to attract consumers, withstand competitive stress and improve its position in the market (Porter, 1985). Competitive strategies are engaged by firms within a specific Industry. The strategies implemented are expected to be relating to performance of the company. There are three generic industry strategies that might be adopted to gain competitive advantage (Porter, 2008). Firms must use these competitive strategies to prepare them to overcome the competitive pressures that they face in the business where they operate (Sifuna, 2014). These generic strategies may help the organisation in coping with the five competitive forces in the business and do far much better than some competitors in the industry. The generic strategies include overall cost leadership, differentiation and focus (Porter, 2008).

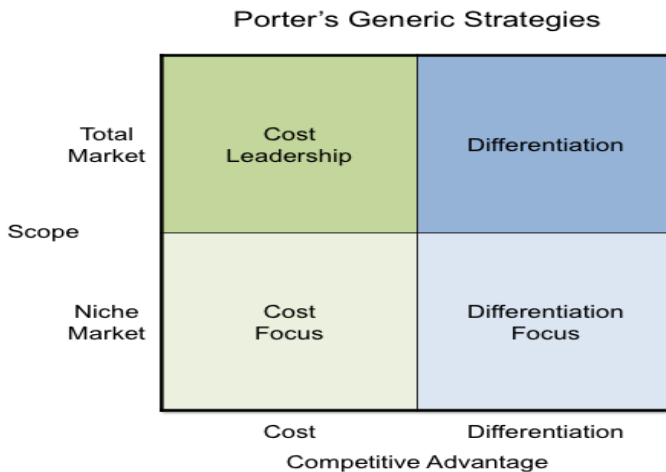


Figure 2.2: Porter's Generic Strategies model (*Adopted from Auka, 2014*)

A strategy is about two things that are deciding where you want your business to go, and deciding how to get there (Tanwar, 2013). A comprehensive definition is based on competitive advantage. The object of most corporate strategy is competitive advantage that grows out of the value that a firm is able to create for its customers that surpasses the business's cost of creating it. Value is what consumers wish to pay for, superior value stems after offering lower fees than competitors for same benefits or providing distinctive benefits more than a higher price. Competitive strategies involve taking offensive or defensive actions to create a defendable position in the industry (Auka, 2014). Strategists should be aware of the cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies (Sifuna, 2014).

Kunc (2010:154) observes that the sources of cost leadership are varied and depend on the structure of the industry, but they are generally economies of scale or highly productive operational processes. If a firm can attain and sustain whole cost leadership, then it may achieve and have overall cost leadership. It will achieve beyond average profits provided it can charge fees at or near the business average (Porter, 1985). To achieve a low-cost advantage, public universities must have a low-cost leadership strategy, low-cost operations with integrated sections/business units, and a workforce committed to the low-cost strategy (Sifuna, 2014).

David (2011) notes that the public universities must be willing to discontinue any activities in that they do not have a cost advantage and should consider outsourcing activities to other public universities with a cost advantage. For an effective cost leadership strategy, public universities must have a large market share. There are many areas to achieve cost leadership such as mass production, mass distribution, economies of scale, technology, services and products design, input cost and capacity utilization of resources (Sifuna, 2014). Porter (1998) says only one firm in the industry can be a cost leader, if that is the only difference between a state university and its competitors, the best strategic choice is the low-cost leadership (David, 2011).

Differentiation strategy can be defined as a business strategy that seeks to build competitive advantage with its product or service by having it different from other available competitive products based on features, performance, or other factors not directly related to cost and price (Ouma & Oloko, 2015). The difference might be one that would be difficult to create and/or challenging to copy or imitate. The generic of differentiation approach involves producing a market position that is alleged as being exclusive industry-wide and sustainable over the long run (Porter, 2008).

Companies that follow a differentiation strategy may strive to make and market distinctive products for varied customer segments. They aim to produce a superior fulfilment of consumer needs in single or several product qualities to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty that often turns out to be used to charge a lowest price for the products (Ouma & Oloko, 2015). A firm that follows a differentiation strategy pursues to create a awareness in the minds of consumers that their products or services possess superior characteristics that are unique from those of its competitors in terms of image and reputation, reliability, design features and quality (Auka, 2014).

Greenley (2011) postulates that differentiation tends to reduce rivalry, increasing the possibility of building competitive advantages, whereas conformity improves the social support of stakeholders and therefore the legitimacy of the firm. Differentiation reduces competitiveness and the fight for scarce resources, thereby improving performance of public universities; but on the other hand, conformity makes all organizations similar and, therefore, the competitive pressures are stronger (Sifuna, 2014). Differentiation will generate benefits and dominant places that will last up until competitors copy a firm's key resources (Porter, 2008).

The focus a firm chooses refers to a specific segment or group of segments in the industry, as it attempts to achieve either cost advantage or differentiation, the premise is that needs of a segment could be better serviced through focusing entirely on it (Auka, 2014). A firm that does not have a complete competitive advantage optimizes on this strategy to serve the needs of the target segments and achieve a customer satisfaction

in them (David, 2011). The focus strategies namely, cost focus or differentiation focus relies on the differences of the given segment from the others in the industry. This involves tailoring the activities of a target segment exclusively to make sure that the needs of a specific segment are fully satisfied. Generic focus strategy is usually not achieved if a business tries to have two broad strategies simultaneously but instead risks being stuck at the middle (Porter, 2008). In the higher education sector, a state university using the focus strategy, targets a specific segment of the market (Porter, 2008). The public university can choose to focus on a select customer group, services and products range, geographical area, or service line (Murage, 2011).

Focus strategy aims at growing market share through operating in a niche market or in markets either not attractive to, or overlooked by, larger competitors (Sifuna, 2014). These niches arise from several factors including geography, buyer characteristics, and services and products specifications or requirements (*Ibid.*). An effective focus strategy depends on an industry segment big enough to have a good growth potential and not of key importance to other major competitors (Porter, 2008). Market penetration or market development can be an important focus strategy. Midsize and large public universities use focus-based strategies but only in conjunction with differentiation or cost leadership generic strategies (Sifuna, 2014). Focus strategies are most effective when consumers have distinct preferences and when the niche has not been pursued by rival public universities (David, 2011).

Performance of a university shows how the managers and governing body put into place and manage programmes (Anand, 2012). Accordingly, Hua (2011) states that the primary goals of universities are to improve the university's effectiveness and efficiency to improve the ability of the university to deliver its services and prosper in the market. Enrolment expansion has an impact on the performance of state universities.

Several researchers in Africa have also documented empirical evidence on the effects of enrolment expansion on performance of state universities. For instance, Mukanji *et al.* (2016) argues that Higher education in Kenya

has experienced tremendous growth since independence, consequently, there were concerns that have been raised about the instructional effectiveness and the quality of learning provided in state universities in Kenya. It was noted that while the student population was increasing, African governments' capability to offer monetary support to public services reduced and this suggests that quality of training in African universities was deteriorating because of increased enrolment against the reduced funding and universities in Kenya were also not an exception. This trend showed in the falling scholars scores on examinations, also reduced rigor on recruitment, promotion criteria, reduced research and and complaints by employers on the inability of university graduates to perform and achieve as per expected standards.

Odundo *et al.* (2015) conducted a study to establish the effects of enrolment expansion on in Nairobi. The study showed that sudden increment in students' enrolments resulted in additional administrative challenges to the University of Nairobi's governance structures. The challenges cited included, meeting the expanding need for infrastructure, sourcing of academic staff, staff welfare and remuneration, meeting training needs of staff and addressing students' welfare issues in time to uphold tranquillity. Other issues pointed out included management of registration, fees collection, inadequate and inappropriate lecture rooms for increased student population, inadequate staff and management of lecture schedules among others. Additional challenges included, managing the disciplinary process and addressing increasing discontent among staff on low remuneration against the increasing workload.

A similar study on effects of enrolment expansion on university performance was conducted in Nigeria by Ajayi & Adeniji (2009). The findings identified that enrolment expansion placed more burden and pressure on the university education system. The main problem was shortage of academic staff. The implications of this obvious short fall in the number of academic staff might include high lecturer - student ratio and pressure on the academic staff on ground. This short fall in the number of academic staff led to low productivity and decline in the quality of teaching in the Nigerian University System (Okebukola, 2009).

Basing on these findings, it can be argued that enrolment expansion has negative impacts on the performance of universities. The studies showed that the discordance between government funding and the rising enrolment had impacted negatively on development and operations of the universities. For instance, most capital development projects such as buildings, roads, parking lots, electrical installation, water installation and sewage maintenance were postponed (Odundo *et al.*, 2015).

High quality and relevant university education is able to equip students with knowledge, skills and core transferable competences that are necessary after graduation, this is achievable within a high-quality teaching environment that observes and supports good teaching (Matorera, 2016). Quality assurance allows people to have confidence in the quality of higher education (Garwe, 2014).

Studies on the impact of enrolment expansion on quality of university education were carried out by Reisberg & Rumbley (2011) who investigated on the challenges faced by Ethiopian university after enrolment growth. The findings identified that the major hinderance of quality education in Ethiopian universities was teacher-student ratio that grew because when the enrolment nearly quadrupled the teaching staff barely doubled. Quality was also constrained by infrastructure, the construction of classroom space, expansion of library collections, addition of computer laboratories, and the development of electronic networks lagged behind enrolment expansion.

At National Taiwan University, Chen & Chang (2010) conducted a study to establish the effects of enrolment expansion on quality of the university education. The findings showed that a crisis in higher education occurs because of inefficiency associated with unexpected outcomes due to the rapid enrolment expansion. When there is enrolment expansion without balanced development and improvement of instruction and learning facilities, staff and other resources, quality of education offered by the institutions could be compromised. The study concluded that reduced government funding coupled with increased enrolment without

commensurate improvement in available facilities poses a bigger challenge to quality education in Taiwanese universities.

A study that assessed the impact of effects of enrolment expansion on quality of university education in Italian universities at the University of Sapienza that offers Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors was conducted in Italy by Bianchi (2016). This study identified that the strategy of enrolment expansion led to overcrowding of universities, straining resources and reducing the quality of education. If university resources do not fully adjust to enrolment changes, educational expansion congests access to university inputs, lowers resources per student, and may decrease the quality of education. An enrolment increase, for example, may lower the amount of time that a teacher can dedicate to each student, increasing the probability that some students do not receive needed help with coursework. The overall conclusion was that enrolment expansion had a long-lasting negative effect on the returns to STEM degrees in Italy, quality was compromised through growth.

The allocation of resources in universities is important, it affects the quality and performance of higher education (Muindi, 2009). Several researchers were done globally on the impact of enrolment expansion on higher education resources such as Gudo *et al.* (2011) who carried a study on the effects of enrolment expansion on the adequacy of resources in public universities in Kenya. Their findings showed that as a result of increased enrolments, public universities in Kenya were experiencing overcrowding in hostels and classrooms that contributed to falling academic standards. As such, some students listen to lectures while standing outside the lecture halls. They also noted that the level of satisfaction among students in relation to lecture rooms was significantly low in public universities. The study reported overcrowding in public universities that hampers effective teaching and learning.

The study revealed that lack of proper sitting space results in lack of concentration and learner's attention to the lecturer who delivers a lesson, encouraging rote learning. These findings are supported by Misaro *et al.* (2013) who noted that as a result of the enrolment expansion witnessed in

the university education in Kenya, the number of students and teaching staff overwhelm library resources and local universities were forced to work under adverse conditions including shortage of resources for coaching and learning material as textbooks, journals and research equipment.

An investigation on the effects of enrolment expansion on higher education resources was done at the University of Adelaide in Australia (Byrant, 2013). The findings identified that the enrolment expansion of university education amid inadequate provision of teaching and learning facilities poses serious challenges on the instructional effectiveness. Other identified findings were of some resource challenges that included food security, sustainable energy and abundant clean water at the university. The university, however, intended to build several new facilities such as a new integrated medical, nursing, dental school and the campus and to intensify the use of their existing spaces.

Another study on the impact of enrolment expansion at Makerere University in Uganda was done by Court (2009). The findings noted that though Makerere University had more than doubled student enrolment, it prompted major improvements in the physical buildings, academic infrastructure and extremely reduced its traditional monetary dependence upon the state. The university had a restructuring reform that had three central and interrelated elements that were implementing alternative financing strategies, installing new management structures and introducing demand driven courses. This helped Makerere university to have a diversified financial base and reduced its reliance on government by encouraging privately sponsored students, commercialising service units and institutionalizing consultancy arrangements. Educational resources were adequate. Quality of education was achieved. The overall outcome of this study is that that enrolment expansion and the maintenance of quality can be achieved simultaneously if the management are able to run income generating reforms.

Several researchers in Africa have also documented empirical evidence on the effects of enrolment expansion on skills of graduates. For instance,

Habibi & El-Hamidi (2016) conducted a study to establish the effects of enrolment expansion on the skills of graduates in Egypt. The findings identified that higher education reform that was adopted in 2009 had no restriction on increasing student enrolment. As a result of the expansion witnessed in the university education there was deficiency of resources for learning and teaching material such as research equipment, textbooks and journals. This caused lowering of academic values and quality of graduates who were found to be deficient in written documents, communication and technical proficiency that make them unfit for the job market. University education in Egypt has been accused of churning graduates who are not adequately equipped with the desired competencies required in the world of work. The overall outcome of this study is that the poor quality of university education in Egypt is one of the reasons that university graduates could not find adequate employment.

In the Chinese university industry, Soo (2015) also conducted a study to establish the effects of enrolment expansion on the graduate skills and the findings established that the Chinese university sector have been affected by enrolment expansion in public universities. Colleges ended up taking students with lower passes to enter universities due to enrolment expansion and as a result, the average university graduate just pass the degree with a pass hence this affects the skills of the graduates in the world of work.

Muindi (2009) investigated on the impact of enrolment expansion on graduate skills at Maseno University in Kenya. The findings showed that there was insufficient provision of teaching resources that match the growing enrolment due to inadequate finance. Consequently, this has led to high student-lecturer ratios that hamper instructional effectiveness in the universities. This state led stakeholders raising questions on the teaching processes and quality of learning provided at Maseno University that have been accused of producing half-baked graduates (Muindi, 2009). Basing on this finding, it can be argued that enrolment expansion at universities leads to inadequate resources that affects graduate skills as supported by Mukwenji *et al.* (2016) that some Kenya universities were

churning graduates who were not adequately equipped with the desired competencies required in the world of work.

Although literature on enrolment expansion is widespread both in Africa and in Europe, evidence on the impact of enrolment expansion in universities is not congruent. Findings from both the African studies and the European studies indicate varied and to some extent conflicting results for example the impact of enrolment expansion on resources at Makerere University differs from other findings. The reviewed literature has managed to establish a trend of the impact of enrolment expansion. It has negative impact on the performance of university education, quality of university education and skills of graduates. Court (2009) identified positive effects of enrolment expansion on university performance and argues that it does not affect the quality of education.

This contrast suggests a need to add the Zimbabwean favour with particular reference to the university education in Zimbabwe. There is need to establish how the Zimbabwe findings will fit or link with the aforesaid studies. This need is born out of the realisation that whilst some studies affirm positive impact of enrolment expansion, Mukanji *et al.* (2016) among others find negative impact of enrolment expansion. What is apparent in these studies is that none of them focused on the Midlands State University. This is the major inherent gap that this study is covering. Although some of these studies were done in the African continent, no studies have been done to investigate into the effects of enrolment expansion on state universities in Zimbabwe as a strategy for survival.

A conceptual framework is a figure that shows the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. In this study the dependent variable is the performance of state universities while the independent variable is the survival strategy that is the enrolment expansion. Based on the reviewed literature, the researcher developed a conceptual framework shown below as figure 2.3:

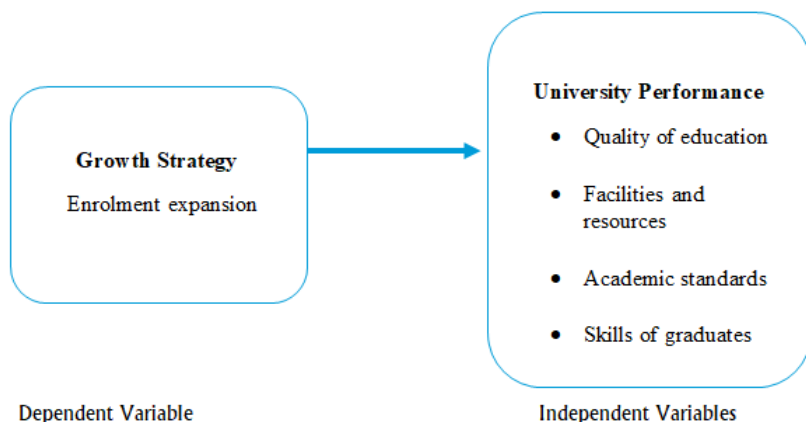


Figure 2.3 Conceptual framework (*Author compilation*)

This chapter reviewed literature related to the objectives and research questions of the study to familiarise with the phenomenon at pre-analysis stage. It is apparent that so far many studies have explored the impact of enrolment expansion on university performance. Most of the reviewed literature on enrolment expansion from Africa, China and Europe. Thus, this study had a launch pad from that to embark. The literature review was intended to help attain insights on methodology, theories and data to facilitate a comparative analysis for broadening our readership of the salient issues. In the chapter a conceptual framework was developed in line with the identified research gap. Chapter three provides the methodologies that will be used in exploring the outcomes of enrolment expansion on university performance.

CHAPTER 3: Study Design and Methodology

The chapter explores the methodology of this study, that is, the way in that knowledge is discovered in a systematic way. It provides a specific and practical overview of the methods used to undertake this book project. It begins by identifying the underlying philosophical position of the researcher, and then details the research strategy to be used. The specific sampling methods utilised in the research are discussed, alongside ethical considerations.

The purpose of the study was to investigate on the survival strategies employed by state universities in Zimbabwe specifically, enrolment expansion at Midlands State University. In so doing, it assists the university in gaining an in-depth understanding of how enrolment expansion affect university performance and quality of education. There would then be scope for the development of new strategies that supports the growth and quality of education at the university.

The research procedures are the steps followed by the researcher in an endeavour to find answers to the research questions and also in an attempt to solve the research problem research should be viewed as a circular (Leedy, 2010). This view is derived from the observation that research facts (data) that are pertinent to the solution of the research problem give rise to the problem that is potentially fact-laden. As such, the research methodology becomes the procedure for implementing the scientific methods, in the study of reality within the research cycle. Research methodology and design are bound by two basic principles namely: (i) to provide answers to the research questions and (ii), to measure the experimental and extraneous so that the error variance can be controlled (Mouton, 2014). This therefore implies that the research design sets the stage upon that the relationships among variables can be established. This therefore means that the research design is there to guide the researcher on the observations to make, how to make them and how to analyse the quantitative representations of the observations.

The research design spells out the road map to data collection, data analysis and the presentation of the findings (Mouton, 2014). This study adopted a systematic enquiry to research to enquire the research problem, and the research enquiry was structured in the following format:

- To statistically manipulate data so that meaningful relations could be established;
- So that conclusions can be drawn from the emerging relationships and or their absence thereof;
- So that the results could motivate a new thinking or understanding that could lead to the conclusions;
- Indications for areas of further enquiry could be derived (Kerlinger and Lee, 2009).

This, therefore, makes the research design the most important aspect of the entire research process. This is because it lays the foundation for making the possible conclusions from the data (Oppenheim, 2015). The design also lays the path for the research process, thus, making the research problem researchable amenable to research in such a way that it will generate answers specific to the research questions and research problem (Oppenheim, 2015).

This study adopted a quantitative research design that was cross-sectional. This is also called a non-experimental design. This form of a design is characterised by a systematic and empirical methods of enquiry. The researcher under this form of a design does not have any control over the dependence and the independent variables. This is mainly because the manifestations would have already occurred. At times it could be that they cannot be manipulated (Kerlinger & Lee, 2009). In this form of a design, inferences about relations between variables are made. However, it is imperative to mention that such inferences are made without the direct interventions of the in independent and dependent variables (Kerlinger & Lee, 2009). This design is best suited for testing the empirical validity of the “if x and then y” type of statement.

Therefore, this study adopted a survey method to collect data from the sampled respondents. The study preferred a research method so that it would be able to gather data from Midlands State University in a systematic fashion. When it comes to the selection of respondents, the study adopted a simple random sampling. The sampled respondents were mainly students from Midlands State University.

Ontology and epistemology are the building blocks of research philosophy and provides a research paradigm, it is a way of thinking about the world (Guba & Lincoln, 2013). This study was built on the positivism philosophy as it is associated with the quantitative approaches to the research and it emphasises on numerical analysis and objectivity while it produces reliable and it makes replication of results possible.

The researcher's approach was from the ontological point of view employing deductive approach for the study since there was a clear hypothesis derived from the literature. Smith (2010) views ontology as the realities of different phenomenon. Quantitative methods are those methods that utilise statistical analyses to prove or disprove a hypothesis (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). As this study is measuring the extent at that enrolment expansion as a survival strategy affects quality and performance at state university, statistical analysis is appropriate and more suitable. This study used the quantitative research methods, utilising deductive approach to explain the effects of enrolment expansion on state universities.

Data collection basically refers to the process of gathering data for the purposes of measuring the targeted variables in a well-coordinated fashion (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The gathered information is what is then used to answer the stated research questions and research problem. In this study, the researcher used the survey method to gain insight into the problem at hand. The survey was built on identified factors and issues that point to the variables spelt out.

The primary data collection technique explored the originality of data by collecting information significant to the study. Primary data were

obtained from respondents who graduated and those who were still studying at Midlands State University. Lancaster (2012) posits that primary data refers to data that is collected for the first time during the research process, and it involves the use of instruments such as questionnaires, interviews or observations. For this study the data were collected using a questionnaire, that took the form of a 5 point Likert scale. Secondary data were obtained from MSU annual reports, MSU strategic plans, monographs, text books, the internet and other materials such as journals found useful to the study. This kind of data collection method was also important to the study especially in the literature review and chapter five of this study.

The population from that the sample was drawn comprised of graduates and students from Midlands State University in Zimbabwe. The categories of students that constituted the population understudy included undergraduate final year students, Masters and Doctor of Philosophy students. The graduating classes were chosen because the students have experienced the impact, effects, extent and performance of enrolment expansion and how it has affected them both in the academic and industrial spheres that are a critical element in measuring the effects of enrolment expansion. Both undergraduate and post graduate students have both academic and industrial experiences as they are employed or were from industrial attachment. The study population was 8000 students from Gweru, Zvishavane, Mutare and Harare campuses.

Generally, there are two types of sampling namely probability and non-probability from that a researcher can choose a desired sample. This study adopted probability sampling technique because this type of sampling is associated with the quantitative research design adopted for this study. Probability sampling designs, are characterised by random selection of respondents. In this technique research participants are selected by following rigorous established scientific rules and procedures, and every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Probability sampling was found appropriate for the study as it would enable research findings to be generalised to other state universities.

To avoid un-guided generalisation, the researcher chose to sample as suggested by Amin (2011), who suggested that sampling is important in selecting elements from a population in such a way that the sample elements selected represent the population. In this study a total of 397 students constituted the sample drawn from a total of 8000 students from the five campuses of the Midlands State University outlined in the preceding section of the study. A sample size calculator, a computer application software was used to compute the sample size at 95% confidence level and 5% confidence interval. The Sample Size Calculator is Creative Research System survey software. It can determine the size of respondents needed to respond to a survey that reflect from the target population. Below is the how the sample size was computed.

Table 3.1: Determination of Sample Size (Sample Size Calculator)
(www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm)

Confidence Level	95%
Confidence Interval	5%
Population	8000
Sample size needed	397

Questionnaires were chosen because of their ability to reduce any bias and the collection of authentic data important for data analysis. However, one of the limitation to this study was that since the study was self-administered, the researcher noted inconsistencies in answering and returning of the questionnaires. The questionnaire utilised Likert scales on all statements stating the extent of agreement or disagreement from 1-5 and other aspects that needed ranking. Appearance and layout of the questionnaire is of great importance in any survey especially where the

questionnaire is to be completed by the respondents independently (Cooper and Schindler, 2013).

The Multifactor Enrolment Expansion Dimension Questionnaire (MEEDQ) was developed with three sections; the impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality, the effects of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources, and the extent that enrolment expansion affect the skills of graduates. Enrolment expansion dimension was measured with a five point likert scale rated as follows: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree and 5-strongly agree. The dimensions were found to be reliable and acceptable for this study with Cronbach's Alpha values of $r > 0.7$ (Kline, 2013).

The university performance was adopted and measured performance using a 5-point likert scale rated as follows: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-moderately agree, 4-agree and 5- strongly agree. In the current study a reliability of 0.808 was recorded for university performance. A Cronbach's Alpha of this magnitude was considered excellent for this study (Kline, 2013).

A pilot study was done to judge the suitability of the instrument in addressing the research objectives and study hypothesis. The researcher developed and pilot tested a survey questionnaire on 25 trial participants of the fourth-year students from the MSU based in Harare. Of importance was to establish from these respondents if they judged that the questions were adequate in addressing the research hypothesis and needs. Information obtained from the respondents led to the dropping out of certain questions that were considered irrelevant and also led to the revision of the wording of certain questions so that they were easily understood.

Questionnaires were hand delivered to the targeted participants and before they participated the researcher shed light on the survival strategy of enrolment expansion at universities and citing the importance of the research to the participants. Reliability and validity constitute an integral

component of the research process since they are pivotal in establishing the reliability and dependability of the research findings.

To ensure the reliability in this study the pilot study's responses from the 25 respondents were tested for internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha. This resulted in some questions being considered as irrelevant, inconsistencies and consequently being dropped out, leading to the revision of the questionnaire. All items measuring the impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality and university performance were consistent with a reliability coefficient of $r > 0.7$, so changes were made. Some inconsistencies were noted on items measuring the effects of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources, and the extent enrolment expansion affect graduate skills whose reliability coefficients were $r < 0.7$. Using Item-Total Statistics resolved the inconsistencies by deleting question regarding adequacy of examination venues and skills imparted been of paramount importance in future. Deleting these questions raised the internal consistency from 0.641 and 0.457 to and 0.705 and 0.772 respectively. Tables 3. and 3. indicates the deleted items.

Correlation matrix was run before the actual data collection to check for perfect multi-collinearity and no relationship between variables. No such relationships existed suggesting that variables point in one direction.

Table 3.2 Reliability of impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality

Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items		
.641		8		
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
sbq1	21.80	10.691	.463	.570
sbq2	22.32	9.535	.603	.518
sbq3	22.16	11.318	.632	.549
sbq4	22.70	13.412	.100	.665
sbq5	21.93	13.525	.117	.657
sbq6	23.64	10.478	.430	.580
sbq7	22.96	11.184	.499	.567
sbq8	21.99	14.581	-.088	.705

Table 3.3 Reliability of extent of enrolment expansion strategy affects the skills of graduates

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha			No. of Items	
.457			5	
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
sbq21	13.58	5.132	.197	.438
sbq22	12.03	5.948	.137	.465
sbq23	11.72	4.636	.423	.272
sbq24	12.88	2.944	.600	.006
sbq25	10.44	7.237	-.149	.772

There are basically two forms of measuring validity and these are content validity and face validity. In this study therefore the research instrument was measured on whether it measured the variables that it intended to measure. This was done using management gurus who assessed whether the Likert items were well phrased. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was derived from previously used researches and validated items derived from the literature. Nevertheless a pilot test was still conducted to ensure that the participants fully understood the questionnaire and accurately completed it to the best of their ability. Some items were removed from the original instrument and the some questions had to be re-arranged and re-worded in simple grammar that the participants could comprehend without the assistance of the researcher.

Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS version 25) was used a data analysis tool. A data dictionary of the questionnaire was first designed in the variable view. The design process entailed allocating nominal responses on the five point Likert scale with numeric equivalents as the SPSS processor can only handle numbers. Raw data were then captured into a data view, then cleaned and subsequently analysed. Data cleaning ensured errors due to both human and systematic were reduced thus improving the validity of the findings.

Data analysis was done based on participant's data in two perspectives: Descriptive data and inferential data analysis. According to Amin (2014)

descriptive statistics aids researchers with the techniques of analysing numerical data and presenting it either in tabular form or graphically. The graphical form entails using pie-charts, bar graphs and histograms. In this study pie-charts and bar graphs were used.

One-Sample T-Test was employed to test the impact, effect, extent and level of performance that was as a result of enrolment expansion in state universities. One-sample t-test compares the mean score from the field data and the mean score assumed to be the population mean, in this case Test Value=3 (neutral). One-Sample t-test was utilized only after nominal data were aggregated from categorical to numerical representation that could be handled by numerical methods. In this regards the Transform command was employed to compute the means scores the enrolment dimensions and performance dimensions. Use of parametric tests requires data be ratio or interval.

Ethics generally spell out our responsibility to research participants ought to percolate in the complete scholarly practice (Laws *et al.*, 2013). Ethics define what moral research procedure involves, what is legitimate to do or not (Neuman, 2011). In essence, ethical considerations are, besides our comprehension of prior knowledge of informed consent, privacy and confidentiality as spelt out in professional codes of ethics, contingent upon the situations that confront the researcher in the field and prompt swift decisions.

The student confirmation letter from the Graduate School of Management, that communicated the academic purpose of my research, enabled me to start formal interactions with MSU. The academic registry of MSU authorised this booker to carry out the study. As a requirement, participants must get to understand the nature and purpose of the research without any undue influence, prior to participation (Burns, 2010). Upon initial contact with every potential respondent, the researcher introduced themselves, outlined the purpose of the study, why the particular participant was selected, how the research was to be executed, the rights of participants to privacy and confidentiality, voluntary participation, right to withdraw any time.

The ethical considerations procedures were followed within this study to keep abreast with the required ethical conduct of researchers. This is done to ensure that the research participants were not subjected to harm and also to ensure that their anonymity was maintained. The ethical conduct of researchers has become under the scrutiny because over the years they are a bunch of researchers who conducted their studies in an ethical manner and this predisposed research participants to harm and violation of their rights. Hence, the ethical considerations were followed in this study.

The explanatory research design was chosen for this study because of its ability to explain the relationships between variables under the study. The researcher adopted the positivism philosophy because it is economical in collecting large amounts of data whilst it allows comparing variables and deducing the cause and effect relationship. The chapter also outlined the data collection procedures that were followed to elicit the responses from the sampled respondents. The primary data were collected using a questionnaire that was in the form of a 5 point Likert scale. When it comes to the collection of the secondary data the study heavily relied on peer reviewed journals, published books and the strategic plan of MSU. The internet was also consulted for secondary data collection purposes. In chapter four the results of the data analysis will be presented.

CHAPTER 4: Evidence from the Midlands State University

In this chapter a summary of the results of the study were analysed, interpreted, discussed and presented. Descriptive statistics used to examine whether enrolment expansion strategy had any impact on quality of education, facilities, resources, skills of graduates and on the university performance. One sample t-test was employed to test the hypothesis of the study that predicted that survival strategy of enrolment expansion does affect quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe. As outlined in the methodological section of the study a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to compute the statistics that gave answers to the research objectives.

The demographic distribution of the respondents including age, gender, marital status and highest educational qualifications are also considered in this chapter.

Response rate could be defined as the number of people who completed your survey divided by the number of people who make up the total sample group (Morton *et al.*, 2012). It is usually expressed in the form of a percentage. Table 4.1 below shows the response rate for this study.

Table 4.1 Response rate (*Field data, 2018*)

Number of questionnaires distributed	Number of questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
397	319	80.4

Table 4.1 illustrates the number of questionnaires that the researcher distributed to the targeted participants. A total of 397 questionnaires were distributed and 319 were correctly administered and returned. This represents a response rate of 80.4%. A response rate of this magnitude is sufficiently high to warrant the generalizability of the findings to the entire population as external validity threats are minimised due to large samples. A response rate of 70% or more is enough to justify study finding's validity

(Babbie, 2012). This response rate was high because of the personal distribution of the questionnaires by the researcher and the use of well-trained research assistants who happen to be some students of MSU contributed to high level of response.

Demographics are characteristics of a population (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Characteristics such as gender, age, education, profession, and marital status are the typical examples of demographics that were used in this study.

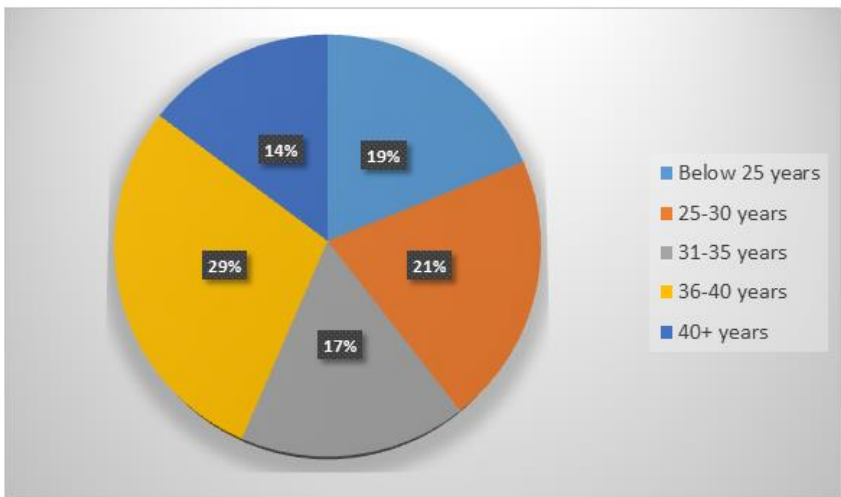


Figure 4.1 Age of Respondents (*Field data, 2018*)

Figure 4.1 above is a summary of the distribution of the respondents by their chronological age. Results clearly shows that most of the respondents (29%) were aged between 36 and 40 years, followed by the 25 to 30 years age range. Only 14% were under the age of 25 years, less than those aged over 40 years. Results suggest that education at state universities is inclusive of all age groups, with more middle aged adults pursuing university education. The more satellite campuses of MSU in different towns in Zimbabwe including Harare has resulted in increased enrolment for those employed.

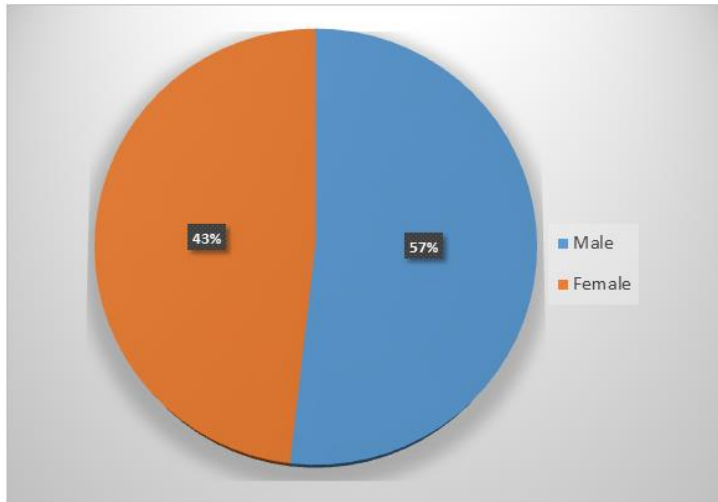


Figure 4.2 Gender of Participants (*Research data, 2018*)

As shown in Figure 4.2 there are more males (57%) than females (43%) who took part in the study. The differences can be attributed to the student population distribution where there are more male students than females (Midlands State University newsletter, 2017).

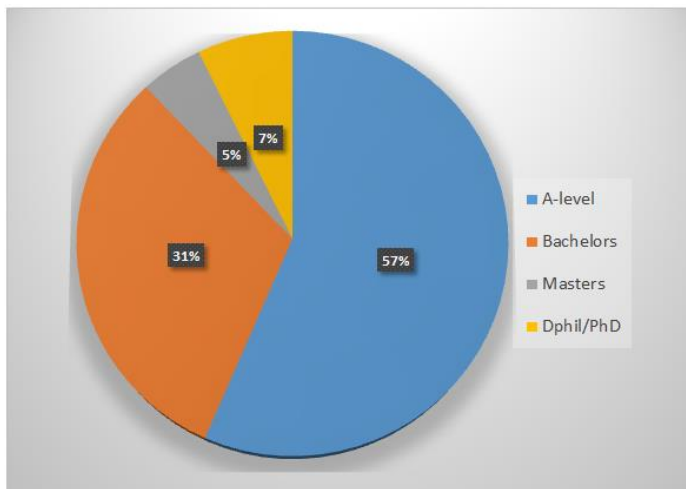


Figure 4.3 Educational Qualifications of Participants (*Research data, 2018*)

Figure 4.3 illustrates the sample distribution by highest educational qualifications of the students. Results indicate that the majority, 57% were A-level graduates who were pursuing a tertiary qualification, these are the students who are doing their final year studies at MSU. A significant number of students (31%) were holders of a bachelor's degree, these are the students who graduated with first degrees at MSU followed by 7% of masters students while the remainder, 5% were students doing their Doctor of Philosophy degrees. The respondents were well qualified to provide information since the students were doing their final year or post graduate students, implying that they could provide reliable responses.

Table 4.2 Sample distribution (Normality test of the sample)

Enrolment expansion dimension	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig
Impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality	0.872	309	0.654
Effects of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources	0.790	262	0.556
Extent enrolment expansion affects the skills of graduates	0.891	262	0.457
University performance	0.860	262	0.658

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction (*Field data, 2018*)

The reliability of the questionnaire is an indicator of how internally consistent the instrument utilised is and is a key determinant of how valid findings are. The reliability of the questionnaire was measured by computing Cronbach's Alpha that provides an insight to the researcher about the information pertaining to the internal consistency of a sample variable. The higher the coefficient the greater the capacity of the questionnaire to measure what it is supposed to measure in a given environment and hence its suitability to provide accurate data.

Table 4.3 Reliability analysis (*Field data, 2018*)

Variables	Number of items
Impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality	8
Impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality	12
Extent to that enrolment expansion strategy affects skills of graduates	12
Impact of enrolment expansion strategy on university performance	19

Table 4.3 above is a summary of the reliability statistics of the questionnaire used for this study. Results indicate that the instrument was highly consistent across all aspects of enrolment expansion dimensions: Impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality ($r=0.705$), Impact of enrolment expansion strategy on quality ($r=0.901$), Extent to that enrolment expansion strategy affects the skills of graduates ($r=0.772$), Impact of enrolment expansion strategy on university performance ($r=0.838$) and overall ($r=0.764$). The minimum acceptable reliability is 0,7 (Schneider & George, 2011). Computed values of Cronbach Alpha can imply that the questionnaire is a good instrument and measures what it is supposed to measure in this environment.

Face validity refers to the extent an instrument represent all the characteristics required on a given construct (Schneider & George, 2011). In this study prior to the use of the questionnaire, it was send to experts in the Education Faculty at the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education who perused it and made appropriate recommendations paying attention to detail on the survival strategy of enrolment expansion and its effects on quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe. In addition, also paying attention on subject matter, education experts were consulted with regards of disparity to measurement scale and no such disparity was noted. According to Mehta and Pillay (2011) any disparity in the questionnaire from selected respondents would entail that amendments be made on the questionnaire.

A correlational matrix was computed to check for convergence validity and the results revealed that sample variables appear to point in the same direction as relationship between variables ranged from ($r>0.3$) and ($r<0.8$) and none were ($r>0.9$). Relationships of less than 0.2 and those above 0.9 are not wanted and could have resulted in the variables affected being removed from the analysis. Correlational matrix checked for perfect multi-co linearity between variables that was not found suggesting that variables point in one direction.

To establish the impact, effects and the extent to that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has on education quality and university performance of state universities in Zimbabwe, descriptive statistics and one sample t-test were utilised.

To provide answers to the research objective that was to establish the impact of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on quality of higher education, respondents were asked if they felt that the university was of their choice, if lecturers were committed to their work by coming to work on time and marking assignments on time, they were asked if there was enough transport for field work and if there were adequate staff particularly in the library. Table 4.4 and 4.5 indicate the results of the impact of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on quality of education at MSU.

Table 4.4. Impact of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on quality of education (*Field data, 2018*)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Disagreeing	Neutral	Agreeing
sbq1	319	1	5	3.86	.056,996	8(5.7)	118(37.0)	183(57.4)
sbq2	319	1	5	3.34	.0601,066	100(31.3)	48(15)	171(53.6)
sbq3	319	2	5	3.49	.038,682	13(4.1)	158(49.5)	148(46.4)
sbq4	318	2	5	2.94	.047,835	106(33.2)	138(43.3)	74(23.2)
sbq5	315	1	5	3.71	.042,737	29(9.1)	48(15.0)	238(74.6)
sbq6	316	1	5	2.02	.0621,094	236(75)	33(10.3)	47(14.8)
sbq7	317	1	5	2.68	.047,841	157(49.2)	105(32.9)	55(17.2)
sbq8	319	1	5	3.65	.046,822	41(12.9)	39(12.2)	239(74.9)
Valid N (listwise)	309							

Results suggest that enrolment expansion strategy employed by state universities as a means of survival strategy has mixed implications with regards to the quality of the product (graduate). Results indicate that the institution under study still remains one of the most preferred universities, lecturers are still committed despite increased workload, lecturers are punctual in terms of coming to work, marking of assignments and there are adequate examination venues as indicated by 57.4%, 53.6%, 46.4%, 74.6% and 74.9% of the students respectively. Results show that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has resulted in lowly qualified staff being recruited in (33.2%) of the cases, reduced field trips due to inadequate transport (75%) and inadequate library staff (49.2%).

Table 4.5 One-Sample t-test statistics on the impact of survival strategy of enrolment expansion on quality of education (*Field data, 2018*)

One-Sample Statistics						
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
impact	309	1.7841	.38433	.02186		
One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval	
					of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
impact	-55.613	308	.000	-1.21590	-1.2589	-1.1729

A one-sample test analysis of variances model shows that enrolment expansion in state universities has significant negative impact on the quality of educational services rendered by the state institution (mean=1.784, Std=.384; $t(308)=-55.613$, $p<0.000$). Results suggest that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has negative impact with regards to the quality of the learner produced. The major causes being shortage of highly qualified staff and support services such as transport for field trips to meet the demands of the increased number of students.

Respondents rated how strongly they agreed or disagreed with having enough lecture rooms for lectures, if the lecture rooms were spacious, if there were adequate reading materials in the library, if they had adequate

examination venues, if they had modern facilities at the university, if there was enough accommodation at the hostels and if ablution services were adequate. Table 4.6 and 4.7 indicate the results of the impact of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources.

Table 4.6 Effects of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources (*Field data, 2018*)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Disagreeing	Neutral	Agreeing	
sbq9	317	1	5	2.40	.054	958	229(71.8)	27(8.5)	61(19.1)
sbq10	319	1	5	3.00	.057	1.026	134(42)	56(17.6)	129(40.5)
sbq11	315	1	5	2.07	.066	1.167	235(73.7)	25(7.8)	55(17.3)
sbq12	313	1	5	1.79	.063	1.114	243(76.2)	27(8.5)	43(13.5)
sbq13	318	1	5	1.75	.062	1.098	243(76.1)	41(12.9)	34(10.7)
sbq14	317	1	5	2.42	.048	.852	190(59.5)	90(28.2)	37(11.6)
sbq15	317	1	5	2.55	.045	.800	164(51.5)	116(36.4)	37(11.6)
sbq16	313	1	5	1.57	.057	1.004	259(81.2)	26(8.2)	28(8.7)
sbq17	317	1	5	1.98	.056	.995	249(78.1)	28(8.8)	40(12.5)
sbq18	318	1	5	3.46	.054	.958	47(14.7)	65(20.4)	206(64.5)
sbq19	314	1	5	2.84	.054	.957	134(42.1)	79(24.8)	101(31.6)
sbq20	317	1	5	1.79	.067	1.200	236(74)	27(8.5)	54(17)
Valid N (listwise)	299								

Table 4.6 presents the descriptive summary of the impact of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources at state universities. Results reveal that MSU has inadequate lecture rooms (71.8%), libraries are inadequately resourced (73.7%), lack modern facilities (76.1%), lack of and poorly equipped computer laboratories (59.5%), inadequate accommodation at the hostels (51.5%), lack catering enough catering services and unavailability of printing services to adequately cater for the increased student population.

Table 4.7: One-Sample t-test statistics on the effects of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources (*Field data, 2018*)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
effects	299	2.3872	.64213	.03714		
	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
impact	-55.613	308	.000	-1.21590	-1.2589	-1.1729
effects	-16.502	298	.000	-.61281	-.6859	-.5397

As shown in table 4.7 above, a significant negative effect on facilities and resources was found because of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion at MSU (mean=2.3387, Std=0.642; $t(298) = -16.502, p < 0.05$). Results suggest that enrolment expansion has resulted in inadequate infrastructure at state universities. There are infrastructure deficits at MSU on lecture rooms, reading materials in the library, ablution facilities, accommodation and catering services. The university also does not provide students with other services like printing.

This section sought to explore the impact of enrolment expansion on the skills of graduates. Respondents rated how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statements that related to skills such as if graduates from MSU were highly sought after, if companies look for graduate trainees from MSU, if they were offered many practical sessions during their study, if they go for attachments and if they felt that they were getting adequate skills from MSU. Table 4.8 and 4.9 indicate the results of the extent of that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has on the skills of graduates.

Table 4.8 Effects of enrolment expansion strategy on skills of graduates (*Field data, 2018*)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Disagreeing	Neutral	Agreeing
sbq21	302	1	5	1.59	.060	1.046	247(77.4)	20(6.3)
sbq22	313	1	5	3.11	.046	.805	41(12.8)	188(58.9)
sbq23	317	1	5	3.44	.052	.925	41(12.8)	120(37.6)

sbq25	316	1	5	2.27	.070	1.237	209(65.5)	42(13.2)	65(20.4)
sbq24	313	2	5	4.72	.035	.625	4(1.3)	17(5.3)	292(93.3)
Valid N (listwise)	296								

Table 4.8 indicate that graduates from the institution understudy are not sought highly after, 77.4% of the sample shared the view. The majority of the respondents, 58.9% lacked knowledge with regards to whether companies employ student from the institution as graduate trainees. The majority, 93.3% consented that they go for attachment in their third year of study and a significant number 48.9% indicated receiving practical lessons as their part of learning process. The majority, 65.5% viewed that the skills they were acquiring were not of paramount importance in their future careers.

Table 4.9 One-Sample t-test statistics on the extent of enrolment expansion strategy on the skills of graduates (*Field data, 2018*)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
Extent	296	3.0324	.53390	.03103		
One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
extent	1.045	295	.297	.03243	-.0286	.0935

Table 4.9 shows that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has no significant effect on skills of the graduates (mean=3.032, Std=0.534; t (295) =1.045, $p>0.05$). Results suggest that the skills that the graduates were acquiring were indifferent from those skills that they would have acquired if there was no enrolment expansion.

To provide answers to the research objective that was to investigate the effects of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on performance of state universities in Zimbabwe, Respondents rated how strongly they agreed or disagreed on if they were committed to the university, if they

were satisfied with their education, if they received required materials for their learning, if the quality of studying environment was acceptable, if lecturer student ratio was acceptable and if they were taught by highly qualified lecturers. Table 4.10 indicates the results of the extent of enrolment expansion strategy on the skills of graduates.

Table 4.10 Effects of enrolment expansion on the performance of state universities (*Field data (2018)*)

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Response		
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Disagreeing	Neutral	Agreeing
scq1	291	3.72	.046	.790	.624	10(3.4)	104(35.7)	177(60.9)
scq2	291	3.51	.044	.758	.575	17(5.8)	138(47.4)	136(46.7)
scq3	291	3.62	.044	.744	.553	14(4.8)	108(37.1)	169(58.1)
scq4	291	3.51	.044	.744	.554	20(6.2)	121(41.6)	150(51.6)
scq5	289	2.39	.047	.796	.634	216(74.8)	34(11.8)	39(14.5)
scq6	291	2.09	.056	.962	.926	238(78.4)	32(11.0)	31(10.6)
scq7	287	3.24	.041	.692	.479	33(11.5)	151(52.6)	103(35.8)
scq8	291	3.98	.058	.993	.986	36(12.4)	23(7.9)	232(79.7)
scq9	289	2.66	.050	.848	.719	137(47.4)	108(37.4)	44(15.2)
scq10	291	3.02	.077	1.313	1.724	159(54.6)	25(8.6)	107(36.8)
scq12	291	2.29	.042	.715	.511	215(73.9)	54(18.6)	22(7.5)
scq13	291	2.37	.112	1.908	3.640	232(80.7)	25(8.6)	33(11.4)
scq14	289	3.05	.038	.638	.407	34(11.7)	210(72.7)	45(15.6)
scq15	291	1.85	.059	.999	.998	241(82.8)	18(6.2)	32(11.0)

Table 4.10 indicates most students, 60.9% are committed to their studies, while 45.4% were undecided with regards to being satisfied with their education and 41.1% were not sure whether the education was of high quality. The majority, 74.8% felt that the required education materials were scarce. 78.4% of the respondents felt that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion portrayed unfavourable image to the outside world. 79.7% of the respondents felt that the study environment was acceptable though the lecturer to student ration was unacceptable (47.4%). Most of the students, 54.6% indicated that they were being taught by under qualified lecturers and a greater percentage of them, 73.9% felt that the programs being offered by the institution were not dynamic to meet the demands of the ever-changing environment. Most of the students 80.7%

indicated that MSU graduates were the most preferred by industry. In terms of affordability of tuition 72.7% were undecided, but the majority 82% were not satisfied by the cost of education at Midlands State University.

The study hypotheses were as follows:

- H0: The survival strategy of enrolment expansion does not affect quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe.
- H1: The survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe.

Regression analysis was used to establish whether the assumption that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion employed by state universities does affect the quality of University education in Zimbabwe. University need to generate income, become self-sufficient as they counter the negative impact of unstable economic conditions and fight competition in the market (Majoni, 2014). The assumption is with increased numbers of student enrolling, while infrastructure and human resources remaining constant the quality is expected to decrease. It was hypothesised that:

- H0: Survival strategy of enrolment expansion does not have effects on the quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe is rejected and the alternative;
- H1: The survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe is adopted.

The table 4.11 below shows a negative relationship ($r=-0.978$) between predictor (enrolment expansion) and dependent variable (quality of education). The changes in the quality of education in state owned universities, in 95.7% of the instances is influenced by changes in increase in number of students enrolled at a given time ($R\text{-Squared} = 0.957$), and a regression model can be drawn in this regard to predict future effects, $F(1)=222.78$, $p<0.05$.

Table 4.11 The impact of enrolment expansion on quality of university education (*Field data*)

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate		
1	.978 ^a	.957	.953	.49304		
Predictors: (Constant), Enrolment_expansion						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	54.156	1	54.156	222.784	.000 ^b
	Residual	2.431	10	.243		
	Total	56.587	11			
a. Dependent Variable: Quality						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Enrolment_expansion						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.312	.350		5.577	.000
	Enrolment_expansion	-.937	.038	-.943	-1.926	.000

Table 4.8 above shows the results of the regression analysis on the effect of enrolment expansion in state universities on quality of university education. Results indicate that enrolment expansion has negative impact on the quality of education in state owned institutions, H0 is rejected and the alternative H1 is adopted. The quality of the product decreases at rate of 94,3% each time the intake increases. The standardised coefficients (B=-0.943, p=0.000) reveals the effect. The following model represents the impact of enrolment expansion on quality in state owned universities:

$$Quality = 9.312 - 0.943 \text{ Expansion}$$

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy in state universities in Zimbabwe focusing on MSU. It was noted that all state universities have embarked on double intake strategy, parallel programmes and block release programs, a situation referred to as “massification” (Madzimure, 2016). The increasing number of students registered at the country’s universities and the increase

of cost of education confirms the commercialisation of education (Mushava, 2014). Some universities are admitting more students than their physical facilities and human resources can manage to raise cash to meet the costs of running the institutions (*Ibid.*). Following this, it was important to study the impact of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion and know how it affects the quality of the product, the learner. To test the hypotheses, data were collected from students and graduates from MSU campuses. The results from the empirical study supported the hypotheses in a highly significant way.

The empirical results support H1 that predicted that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe. As shown in the table 4.5 a one-sample t-test analysis of variances model shows that enrolment expansion in state universities has significant negative impact on the quality of educational services rendered by MSU (mean=1.784, Std=0.384; $t(308)=-55.613$, $p<0.000$). These results confirm previous findings that indicated that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion led to overcrowding of universities, strain resources and reduce the quality of education. If university resources do not fully adjust to enrolment changes, educational expansion congests access to university inputs, lowers resources per student, and may decrease the quality of education (Bianchi, 2016; Chen & Chang, 2010).

The empirical results support H1 that predicted that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has negative effects on facilities and resources at universities. As shown in table 4.7, a one-sample t-test statistics showed a significant negative effect of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on facilities and resources (mean=2.3387, Std=0.642; $t(298)=-16.502$, $p<0.05$). This implies that increased enrolments results in overcrowding in hostels and lecture rooms that contributes to falling academic standards because some students listen to lectures while standing outside the lecture halls (Gudo *et al.*, 2011). These findings are consistent with previous research, for example Mwiria & Nyukuri (2015) did a similar research and revealed that effective training in public universities was hindered by lack of adequate lecture rooms. Thus, some learners ended up with no sitting

space during lectures or attended lectures as they sat outside the lecture rooms. Lack of suitable sitting space affects concentration and student attention to the lecturer who delivers a lesson. This stimulated rote learning as students greatly relied on lecture notes.

The findings on whether the survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects the skills of the graduates does not confirm with H1. The one-sample t-test statistics on table 4.9 shows that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has no significant effect on skills of the graduates (mean=3.032, Std=0.534; $t(295) = 1.045$, $p > 0.05$). The reviewed literature differs with these findings. The study done by Habibi & El-Hamidi (2016) on the effects of enrolment expansion on skills of graduates showed that enrolment expansion affects the skills of graduates. Habibi & El-Hamidi (2016) revealed in their study that enrolment expansion results in the lowering of academic standards and quality of graduates who were found deficient in written communication and technical proficiency that would make them unfit for the job market. These findings were also consistent with the study by Mukwenji *et al.* (2016) who showed that enrolment expansion at universities leads to inadequate resources that affects students' skills and universities were churning graduates who were not adequately equipped with the desired competencies required in the world of work.

The reviewed literature agrees that enrolment expansion at state universities leads to inadequate resources that affects the quality of graduates resulting in universities producing half-baked graduates. However, the findings of this study has proved that enrolment expansion does not affect the skills of the graduates probably because of the commitment of lecturers and students. This is supported by Nielson (2016) who posit that the leading cause behind students' success at college is motivation. Motivation influences students' attitudes, study habits and academic readiness.

H1 supported that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects the performance of state universities. This is supported by the results of one-sample t-test statistics on table 4.8 that suggest that the survival strategy of

enrolment expansion has negative effect on the performance of state universities (mean=2.765, Std=0.484; $t(299) = -7.191$, $p < 0.05$). The findings are consistent with the study of Odundo *et al.* (2015) who studied the effects of enrolment expansion at the University of Nairobi. Their results revealed that sudden increment in students' enrolments resulted in additional administrative challenges to the University of Nairobi's governance structures. The challenges cited included, meeting the expanding need for infrastructure, sourcing of academic staff, staff welfare and remuneration, meeting training needs of staff and addressing students' welfare issues in time to uphold tranquillity. These results are also supported by Ajayi & Adeniji (2009) who also conducted a similar study on the effects of enrolment expansion on university performance in Nigeria. The findings identified that enrolment expansion placed more burden and pressure on the university education system. Therefore, it can be said that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects the performance of state universities.

Regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis of the study. The findings of the study supported H1: The survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe. A negative relationship ($r = -0.978$) between predictor (enrolment expansion) and dependent variable (quality of education) shows that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion compromises university performance. Quality of university education is compromised due to unacceptable lecturer to pupil ratio, recruitment of incompetent lecturers, inadequate resources and static curriculum that is rarely reviewed to meet ever-changing demands of modern global village. These results are confirming earlier studies done by Mukanji *et al.* (2016) who also found that enrolment expansion has negative effects on the quality of education on state universities.

In this chapter data were analysed, interpreted and discussed in line with the research objectives. The analysed and presented sections include the introduction to the chapter, descriptive analysis of bio-data and the response rate. Normality test of the sample was done to check whether the data were normally distributed, an assumption that had to be met to

conduct the One-Sample T-test (parametric test). Shapiro-Wilk was used in this regard. The reliability and the validity of the instruments were also analysed, Cronbach Alpha was employed. The extent and effect of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on quality of education, on facilities and resources, on graduate skills and on university performance were analysed and measured using One-Sample t-test. The survival strategy of enrolment expansion was found to have a significant negative influence on quality of the learning process and also on facilities and resources. Lastly the hypothesis was analysed and presented using regression analysis. The null hypothesis (H0) : The survival strategy of environment expansion does not effect on quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe was rejected and the alternative: (H1) : The survival strategy of environment expansion affects quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe was adopted.

CHAPTER 5: Turning Fortunes Around the Expanded Enrolment in State University

This chapter summarises the study, offers the conclusions and recommendations of the entire study findings of this book. Key to this chapter is the assessment of the linkages between the literature reviewed and the study findings, to offer useful insights to academics, policy makers and the management of universities. Areas of future research related to this study are identified and proposed. In this chapter, conclusions and recommendations were linked to the research objectives.

The problem statement as presented in Chapter 1 indicated that almost all state universities in Zimbabwe have embarked on the double intake strategy such that the enrolment of state universities in Zimbabwe is in excess of 55 000, a phenomenon referred to as “massification” (Madzimure, 2016). There is a possibility of quality declining, as state universities have focused on growing student numbers while doing little on the quality of education at the state universities. It is against this background that the research sought to investigate the effects of the strategy of enrolment expansion on the performance of state universities in Zimbabwe. Hence, the main objective of the study was to investigate the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy used by state universities in Zimbabwe focusing on MSU.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on the quality of education in state universities in Zimbabwe. To achieve the objectives, correlation analysis, regression analysis and one sample t-test statistics were carried out.

The study established that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects the performance of state universities. The results of the one-sample t-test statistics showed that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has negative effect on the performance of state universities (mean=2.765, Std=0.484; $t(299) = -7.191$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that if the required education materials were scarce and the lecturer to student ratio

was high there will be poor performance of the university because under such circumstances, it is almost impossible to have students interact meaningfully with their lecturers.

Increment in students' enrolments resulted in additional administrative challenges to the University (Odundo *et al.*, 2015). Support for the results of this study was found in studies carried out by Ajayi & Adeniji (2009) who discovered that enrolment expansion placed more burden and pressure on the university education system. This study concluded that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion compromises university performance due to incompetent lecturers, inadequate resources and static curriculum.

The study concluded that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has negative effects on the quality of education. The results of the study showed that there were several factors that contribute to the low quality of education such as shortage of lecture theatres, lack of residence accommodation for students, lowly qualified staff being recruited, reduced field trips due to inadequate transport, inadequate reading materials in the library and inadequate library staff. These results were confirmed by a one-sample t-test analysis of variances model that showed that enrolment expansion in state universities has significant negative impact on the quality of educational services rendered by the state institution (mean=1.784, Std=0.384; $t(308)=-55.613$, $p<0.000$). These results are consistent with some previous studies. For example, Gudo *et al.* (2011) found that lack of enough physical facilities such as lecture rooms, computer laboratories and laboratory equipment negatively affected the quality of teaching and learning in state universities.

In the circumstances that state universities are experiencing shortage in learning and teaching materials, it will lead to further deterioration of quality teaching and learning services offered by the state universities (Gudo *et al.*, 2011). In line with these findings, this study concluded that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion compromises quality of education at state universities.

The study established that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has a negative impact on facilities and resources at state universities. The findings of the study showed a significant negative effect on facilities and resources at MSU (mean=2.3387, Std=0.642; $t(298)=-16.502$, $p<0.05$). There are infrastructure deficits at MSU on lecture rooms, reading materials in the library, ablution facilities, accommodation and catering services. The findings of this study corroborate findings by Mukhanji *et al.* (2016) who states that when lecture spaces are not easily accessible, both students and lecturers will likely waste time trying to access them, or completely fail to access them to conduct teaching and learning hence affecting the quality of education provided.

These views were also aired by Mwebi & Simatwa (2013) who contends that the arithmetic increase in enrolment of students without a corresponding increase in the resources and facilities poses a greater threat to the quality of education in higher education institutions. In view of these findings this study concluded that the survival strategy of enrolment affects negatively on the quality of university education especially if there is enrolment expansion without further development of infrastructure.

The study established that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has slight effects on the skills of graduates. One-sample t-test statistics showed that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has no significant effect on skills of the graduates (mean=3.032, Std=0.534; $t(295)=1.045$, $p>0.05$). The study concluded that the skills acquired by MSU students were indifferent from those skills that they would have acquired if there was no enrolment expansion. This finding is not consistent with some previous studies. For example, Odundo *et al.* (2015) carried a study on the effects of mass university enrolment and their study found that massification had resulted in numerous administrative challenges, financial and governance challenges resulting in the production of half-baked graduates.

Most universities embark on enrolment expansion without the qualitative and quantitative growth in physical facilities implying that the quality of graduates will be in jeopardy (Mwebi & Simatwa, 2013). However, the

findings of this study concluded that enrolment expansion does not affect the skills of the graduates probably because of the commitment of lecturers and students (Felfe, 2014). The survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects negatively on the quality of higher education in state universities in Zimbabwe. This was fully accepted because of the statistically significant results that were achieved in the study. The assertion is supported as analysed using the regression analysis.

The findings of this study have contributed to the existing literature and the body of knowledge on the survival strategy of enrolment expansion in state universities. The researcher hopes that findings from this study would suggest more sustainable and viable intervention strategies that will lead to quality of education at state university. The results of this study have demonstrated that enrolment expansion affects the university performance, it affects the quality of education and has negative effects on the resources and facilities of the university. The research findings subsequently affirmed the hypothesis depicted by the conceptual framework in figure 5.1 below:

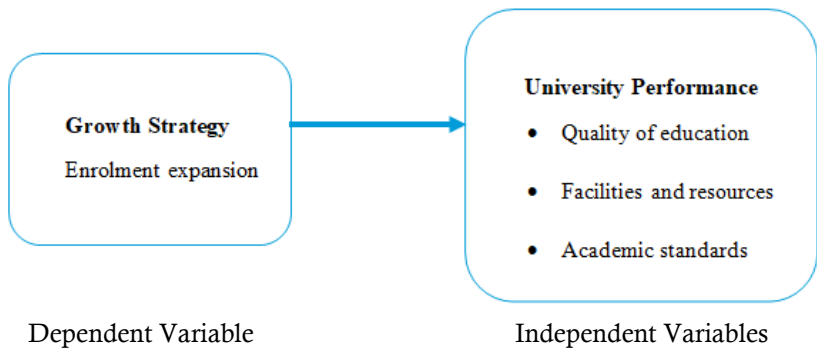


Figure 5.1 Amended Conceptual Framework (*Author compilation*)

Figure 5.1 above shows the modified conceptual framework after considering the information from Chapter 4. In this conceptual framework, we observe that enrolment expansion affects the

quality of education, facilities and resources and academic standards. The study showed that the skills of the graduates may not be affected by enrolment expansion. Hence, the conceptual framework is accepted as shown by figure 5.1 above.

Most studies that have been conducted to investigate the effects of enrolment expansion at universities were qualitative in nature. This study sought to offer, a quantitative contribution to the study thereby assisting colleges and universities in the higher and tertiary education industry to come up with better strategies and programs that enhance quality education.

The study has unravelled a wealth of quantitative data that can be used to statistically and conclusively identify the results of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion at universities. The results can be used to improve higher and tertiary education performance in the country. Most studies done on survival strategy of enrolment expansion have largely depended on qualitative data, the collection of quantitative data and statistical hypothesis testing has brought new insight that lays the foundation for more detailed industry wide studies.

In line with the findings of the survey, universities need to create strategies that ensure that the higher education institutions align with quality. Universities should have clear strategies to acquire a bigger market share in the higher education industry. A university can use growth strategies that does not affect the quality of education such as the differentiation strategy. The differentiation strategy aims at developing and marketing unique services and products for different customer segments whilst maintaining quality. As such a university can offer programs that suits high school graduates, parallel programs and block release or weekend classes for those who are employed who wish to advance their education. This will enable universities to maximize production while minimizing their cost of operation and growing their market share.

Based on the findings of this study, management should adopt and implement the following recommendations:

- a) The study indicated that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion in state universities has significant negative impact on the quality of educational services rendered by the state institution. This study recommends that enrolment expansion should be commensurate with expansion of number of teaching staff at state universities. Where enrolments must be increased, an appropriate recruitment of staff needs to be done to cater for operations such as preparation of notes, teaching, marking of assignments and marking of examination scripts in time to enhance quality. All teaching staff should be holders of a PhD and those who have Master's degree only should upgrade to Doctoral degrees.
- b) The results of the study showed that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has negative effects on facilities and resources at universities. This study recommends that university physical resources like furniture, teaching aids, equipment, lecture halls, libraries and laboratories should be well maintained and expanded to cater for the growing numbers of students.
- c) Another purpose of this study was to find out if the survival strategy of enrolment expansion affected the skills of the graduates. The results showed that enrolment expansion does not affect the skills of graduates. This study recommends that universities should increase the human resource to improve on teacher-student ratio to improve quality of learning and develop the skills of graduates.
- d) The results of the study indicated that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion affects the performance of state universities. This study recommends that university management should develop and implement comprehensive coaching and development programs of the strategic plan to the administrators of the university, faculty heads and department heads to empower them with competencies to select and apply the right survival strategies and stronger focus on quality.

- e) In line with the outcomes of this book, the study recommends that universities should first understand and know their purpose and ability before adopting any growth strategy. This study recommends that to survive, universities should adopt the use of the three generic business strategies to gain competitive advantage. These strategies include cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies (Porter, 2008).
- f) Government should have consistent policies that promote strategy formulation and implementation while creating enabling environment for competitive advantage among state universities.

The study covered one state university in the higher and tertiary industry (MSU) out of a total of ten state owned universities in Zimbabwe. The findings can be generalized to other universities in Zimbabwe that were not covered in this study and use multiple methods that include observations, interviews and focus group discussions so that the results can easily be generalized. The findings can also be generalized to other organisations that have similar settings.

Whilst the research resulted in significant correlation findings between enrolment expansion and quality of education at state universities that contribute important findings to the literature, several limitations exist. First, the data were collected from MSU students only in Zimbabwe, possibly, the results would be more enlightening if data were from all state universities in the country. For further development of this current conceptual framework, more study is needed in a large data set for all students in different universities to carry out industry wide analysis. Another limitation of the study was the students' personalities and preferences of the university performance. Personality and personal preferences would affect people's perceptions on the university performance and on what one defines to be quality education. In the current study, these factors were not controlled.

Another limitation was that some questionnaires were sent through email and the response rate was very low such that the researcher had to go

physically to meet the respondents. The researcher also suffered from limited access to participants due to the vacation period that meant that participants could only be contacted during the semester. The researcher ended up soliciting the help of the research assistants to contact students who were on block release and those who were doing research at MSU premises to communicate with and persuade target respondents to complete the questionnaires.

The results of this study suggest several interesting avenues for further investigations. The present study sample was obtained from MSU only, to enhance the validity, future studies should obtain a sample from more universities. Subsequent research should envisage replicating this study in other similar and developing countries in Africa to allow for comparisons of results. Furthermore, the study was a case study of one university, it is recommended that a longitudinal study be undertaken to see if the pattern remains the same.

State universities are now defined by massification, commercialisation of learning, commodification of knowledge and corporatization of governance (managerialism) all that have raised apprehensions about the nature of knowledge generation and transmission. Issues of quality assurance have taken center stage in contemporary narratives of higher education development in Zimbabwe. The purpose of the study was to establish the effect of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion on quality of education at state universities. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of enrolment expansion on university performance, on quality, on resources and facilities and on the skills of graduates. The study revealed that the strategy of enrolment expansion affected performance of the state universities to a great extent.

The study concluded that shortage of academic staff resulted in an increased lecture – student ratio that is a serious threat to offering quality university education. Shortage of physical facilities such as lecture rooms, reading materials in the library and few library staff affected negatively the quality of teaching and learning in the state universities leading to a lowering of academic standards and quality of education.

The study also concluded that to accommodate the survival strategy of enrolment expansion, state universities would first require that the capacity of physical facilities for teaching and academic staff is enhanced to adequately facilitate quality of delivery. The study recommends that the management of universities should be encouraged to use the best strategy to gain a bigger market share. The generic strategies that includes cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies can be employed.

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Synopsis

This study investigated the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy in state universities in Zimbabwe focusing on Midlands State University (MSU). Almost all state universities in Zimbabwe have embarked on the double intake strategy such that the enrolment of state universities in Zimbabwe has grown at a tremendous rate, a phenomenon referred to as “massification”. There is a possibility of quality declining, as state universities have focused on growing student numbers while doing little to raise graduates' skills. A comprehensive literature review was done in this book and it reveals various perspectives on enrolment expansion and its impact on university performance. While massive literature contributions on the subject exist globally, there is very little contribution to this subject from Zimbabwe. To explore the effects of the survival strategy of enrolment expansion, the study adopted survey research design. The study sample was comprised of 376 respondents who were basically MSU students drawn from MSU campuses. Data were collected using self-administered five-point Likert Scale, and the collected data were analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The major findings of the study established that the survival strategy of enrolment expansion has a significant negative effect on university performance, facilities and resources at MSU. An increase in the numbers of students enrolling, while infrastructure and human resources remained constant results in the decrease of quality. Basing on the findings, the study recommended that MSU should match enrolment expansion with the number of teaching staff and physical facilities available. Universities should adopt the use of the three generic business strategies such as cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies to gain competitive advantage. The study concluded by proffering recommendations for further studies that included surveying the impact of enrolment expansion as a survival strategy in all state universities to see if the pattern remains the same.

About the Author



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