



MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL

STRATEGY PROCESSES, PRACTICES AND LEARNING ORGANISATIONS IN MAURITIUS

Final Report

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Strategy Processes, Practices and Learning in Organisations in Mauritius

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Abstract

Strategy matters! It is hard to think of an organisation without a strategy, and one without is pointless. Any organisation, whatever its size and shape, needs strategy to survive, compete and prosper successfully in any given context. Strategy, however, is not a given. It requires a process of thought, choice, decisive action and management, and is prone to change whenever applied. Hence the subject matter of strategic management.

In theory, strategy (or strategic management) concerns the vision or long-term objectives of the organisation and the general means for realizing them; it is different from short-term objectives and routine operations. Strategy is about understanding, shaping and managing a business for its competitive success.

In these times of global economic crisis the need for smart strategic thinking is heightened more than ever as companies, the world over, are struggling their way out of troubled economic waters. Success now demands strategic management of high quality. Mauritius is facing an ever growing challenge to meet the demands of international competitiveness at all levels. Are our firms and managers adequately equipped to envision the state of their industry and the kinds of competition they will be facing down the line?

This study starts to understand this question by investigating the nature of strategy processes, practices and learning in organisations based in Mauritius. Using a mixed methodology of survey and in-depth interviews, it infers that organisations in Mauritius are limited in their approaches to understand, practice and learn the principles and tools of strategic management. Those organisations which do try to practice a strategic approach are either overwhelmed by operational thinking and micro management, or are unclear about several key aspects of the strategy process, and therefore do not seem to benefit. The majority of respondents, however, do recognise the added value of strategic management in enabling their competitive success. In-depth study of some successful enterprises in Mauritius reveals that the basis of their successes overtime has been the astute application of strategic management principles.

This study opens some very important practical and academic avenues for further thinking, application and research on strategic management in Mauritius. It is important to realise that the lasting competitiveness of Mauritian organisations will be a product of the strategic choices they make now; these choices are themselves the outcomes of rigorous analyses and meticulous evaluations of competing options under some very dynamic and uncertain set of assumptions. Nothing therefore can be left to chance. Success depends on applying some smart strategic thinking!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Background

The quality revolution of the 1980s, led by Japanese business firms, was a bold statement to the world that American management literature and principles were not universally applicable (Juran, 1993). Largely, cultural differences seem to account for the heterogeneity of business systems. With the rise of the European Union in the 1990s, a similar assertion was shared by experts in Europe who wondered whether a European management approach would differ to Japanese and American approaches (Smith, 1997). These questions and interests have led to the development of an interesting strand of research/literature on cross-cultural differences in management and their impact on the competitive advantage of organisations and nations. Until recently, similar interests and questions have emerged with regard to the Mauritian context (Wignaraja, Lezama and Joiner, 2004).

Mauritius is changing. Its traditional pillars of economic success have weakened giving way to new rapidly emerging: service industries. Much of this change is driven by the overriding changes of the global economy. With ongoing globalisation- where borders have become meaningless in economic terms -achieving competitiveness of an economy is a constantly moving target. Well-planned strategies are easily upset by such issues- as unforeseen movements in oil prices, labour costs, capital costs, technology shifts, market price/demand shifts, global cross currency exchange rates and so on. In response Mauritius is gradually adopting a new economic model, one that moves away from manufacturing and aims to provide an integrated, clean and efficient, albeit, a 'durable' platform for businesses and industries in the global supply chain, focusing mainly in services and driven by good governance, an open transparent investment climate, high skills and state of the art infrastructure (Competitiveness Foresight, 2004).

But are Mauritian enterprises equipped and ready to contribute towards this vision? In answering this question Percy Mistry, investment banker and Chairman of the Oxford International Group, made the following comment to L'Express "I do not believe the domestic, indigenous private business sector in Mauritius has sufficient knowledge, resources or capacity to take Mauritius where it now needs to go...In the brave new world of tomorrow the kinds of people, firms, industries and sectors that will succeed -- in

Mauritius or anywhere else -- are those that have the capacity, adaptability and flexibility to be competitive and at the cutting edge of their business domains at all times" (L'Express, 2005). To achieve such flexibility and competitiveness at the firm/industry level, we believe that local businesses and their management need *strategic thinking* – the capability to think, choose and implement effective business strategies amidst ongoing change and uncertainty – in order to understand and respond effectively to the continuously changing realities and complexities of the globalised world we live in. In effect, to think strategically urges one to think continuously and proactively about one's future.

But, such 'strategic thinking' is poorly understood since management and competitiveness studies in Mauritius have hitherto not benefited substantially from applied management research. Therefore less is known of how enterprises based in Mauritius manage their sources of competitive advantage; how do they analyse and interpret their business environments; how do they develop core competences; how do they think and decide strategically about their growth and survival; how do they compete; how do they implement their strategies and enable continuous value creation. This does not mean that local firms and their management lack strategic thinking, in fact, far from it! The Mauritian economy is full of exemplary enterprises (example, Compagnie Mauricienne de Textile Ltee) that have marked their strategic success in domestic and international arenas. Such examples of best practices are likely to be as diverse and heterogeneous as the diverse economic sectors in which our businesses operate. Organisations respond to similar pressures in their own unique ways depending largely on the circumstances in which that response is made. What is lacking is a systematic approach or method to study the successful or unsuccessful enterprises, drawing lessons and knowledge for future Mauritian management.

This study is therefore exploratory and inspired by the lack of information and knowledge about strategic management in Mauritius. Current research and literature is based on American and Western theory which are increasingly challenge for their universal relevance as we learn more about management in other parts of the world, e.g. Japan, India, China. Yet we have no strategy theory or evidence about what is appropriate and what works well in Mauritius, and what is not appropriate. The solution also does not lie in simply imposing, translating or adapting western management models to Mauritius. What is needed is a cross-cultural research agenda that penetrates

the Mauritian cultural diversity to understand the Mauritian way of doing business and strategy. This is what governs the central thesis of this research.

The next sections of this chapter will describe the rationale and questions that have guided the interests of the researchers. We then outline a chapter structure which ties together the different aspects of the report.

2. Project Rationale

Mauritius is the success story of a small African nation that survived the odds of socio-economic vulnerability and reached the heights of industrial competitiveness (see, Wignaraja et al. 2004 for a comprehensive review of its industrial accomplishments). It went through a remarkable transformation from a mono-crop sugar producer to one of the leading exporters of manufactures in Africa with an emerging services sector. The bases of its success were robust economic policies supported by sound industrialisation strategies to attract foreign investments and exploit preferential market access. However, significant changes in the global competitive environment are now stretching the limits of its economic success and capabilities. Mauritius serves as the example of an African country at the end of a successful economic cycle, when many African countries are still struggling in early stages of economic reforms.

The interest of this study is at the micro level, where Mauritius harbours numerous indigenous champions {large conglomerates like Compagnie Mauricienne de Textile Ltd, State Bank of Mauritius, Mauritius Commercial Bank or small entrepreneurs like Ocean Tropical Fruits (fruits), Surat & Co. Ltd (fruits and vegetables), Gitto's Foods (cereals)} that emerged from its economic success. Several companies which have acted as key players are now forced to reevaluate their success strategies in the light of the above changes. For the most part, how have these organisations evolve strategically overtime; what critical success factors underpin their success and competitive advantage; and how should they now strategise in response to the demands of the new Mauritian/global economy is unaccounted for academically. There has been no systematic study of their strengths and weaknesses, competitive advantage and their strategy practices. Also, important questions remain unanswered with regard to foreign multinational subsidiaries in Mauritius (e.g- Corona Clothing, owned by a Hong Kong group), essentially, how do their strategy processes and practices evolve in the Mauritian context? Where do they fit in the global strategy/value chain of their parent companies? How do they manage global pressures to integrate and domestic pressures

of national responsiveness? What are the policy implications underpinning these questions?

3. Project Description

3.1 The premise of Strategy and Mauritius

So, why is it important for Mauritius to enhance the strategic thinking its management and enterprises? The term 'strategic management' was born in American business schools in the 1960s. For the past sixty years, it has evolved rapidly as an eclectic field in terms its concepts, ideas and theories, drawing from the intellectual heritage of numerous disciplines (Grant, 2004). The notion of strategy is very old. It has been around for thousand of years as a way of thinking about survival and- success. Political and military rulers have always had to choose: on direction and policy; on resources available; on how best to distribute those resources in pursuit of objectives, just as managers of modern organisations do (Segal-Horn, 2004}. The existence of strategy is what gives drive and strategic intent to- an organisation. It directs the future of the organisation and how it should manage change to its advantage. Current studies and debates in strategic management encompass a wealth of issues like resource deployment and optimisation, capability-building, organisation theory and design and competitive dynamics. But their agendas are not always compatible with the needs of Mauritius.

Mauritian enterprise and their managers need to keep pace with a rapidly changing global economy. They need to be equipped- with strategic management knowledge and skills to make a difference to the success of their organisations. Strategic thinking helps managers understand the challenges posed by their business environment, and to see how they can best exploit their organisation's potential sources of advantage. In turn, this means that they need to understand- their organisation, its resources and capabilities, the way it competes for scarce resources and for customers for its products or services. Strategic management recognises that managers must be able to act on incomplete information, uncertain predictions of an unknown future, and seek out sources of innovation in the way their business operates and competes. As a subject it teaches managers how to make appropriate choices, implement effective change and align collective objectives in their organisation to allow new capabilities and skills to be developed (Boojihawon and Segal-Horn, 2004). But, as mentioned before, the state of applied strategic management knowledge, skills-bases and resources for Mauritian

managers operating is relatively poor and in desperate need for academic attention. The literature review (see, Chapter 2) carried out for the purpose of this study revealed no systematic study of strategy processes and practices of enterprises based in Mauritius. We argue that there is a need for a research agenda that penetrates the Mauritian cultural fabric to understand the Mauritian way of doing business or how strategy is done in Mauritius. There is a case of reconstructing the concept of 'strategy' through the lens of Mauritius and from what is known of its cultures, and this where this study starts.

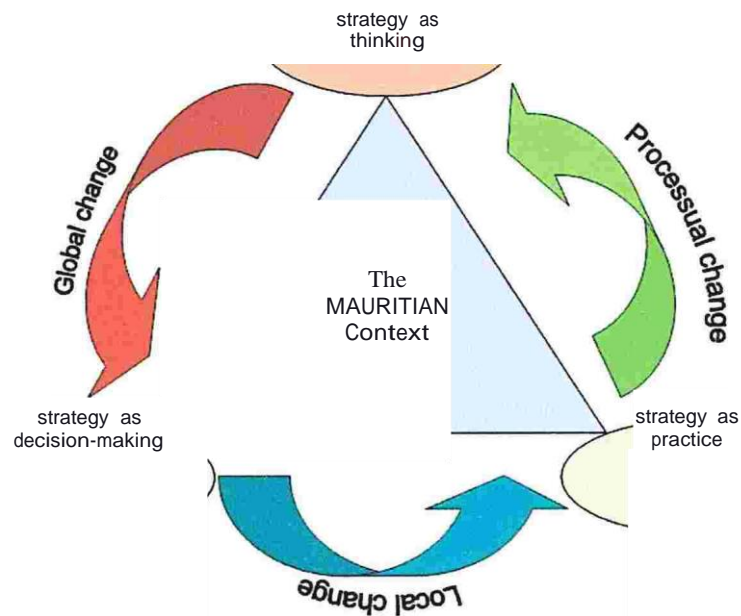
3.2 Research Questions and Objectives

The main question governing this study asks:

*What is the nature of strategy processes and practices in organisations in Mauritius?
And how do managers in Mauritius learn these processes and practices?*

Conceptually, strategy as *process* is interested in how strategic thinking occurs, how strategic decisions are made and put into action. The process approach sees strategy-making as a process within which strategy emerges from a combination of influences within the organisation. Strategy as a process not only reflects the views of top management, but represents a set of pragmatic compromises between various stakeholders of the organisation (Pettigrew, 1985). Merged with this view are two parallel perspectives that are typically concerned with how strategy emerges in organisations in practice. First, is the *Systems school* which sees strategy as embedded in its changing contexts. It argues that contextual differences (including, economic, cultural, social, geographical and political contexts combined) account for the heterogeneity of business systems Granovetter (1985). Viable strategies will therefore be context-specific, where Mauritian strategic thinking may vary considerably from Western approaches. The other perspective added here is the '*Strategy as Practice*' school which is interested in the making and doing of strategy (Whittington, 2004). This school is very recent in its emergence and it focuses how everyday activities of organisational life relate to strategic outcomes. It perceives strategy as social action, where strategy is not something which the firm, market and actors do, bringing it closer to practitioners. Taken together, these three schools of thought offer the theoretical bases to examine and capture a holistic picture of strategy process and practice in changing Mauritius. Figure 1 shows how they complement the focus of this study.

Figure 1: Strategy in Mauritius



Overall, this research has the following objectives:

1. To explore the level or extent of knowledge, understanding and use of strategic management tools and practices in enterprises in Mauritius;
2. To study the best or innovative practices of strategic management in organisations in Mauritius;
3. to develop mixed-methodology approaches to study strategy process and practice in Mauritius;
4. to set up a platform for academic collaboration to further strategy research, knowledge sharing and capacity building in Mauritius.
5. to build or extend theory and the practice of strategic management through empirical investigation in-depth, thereby developing a body of

work that more closely reflects the nature of strategy in the Mauritian economy;

6. to provide recommendations for further research and policy implications

4. Report Structure

In order to achieve the research objectives set out in Section 3.2, the report is organised into five chapters as outlined in Table 1.1. Each chapter relates to one or more of the stated research objectives.

Table 1.1 Report Outline

Chapter	Outline	Objectives
<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>Introduction: sets out the project background, rationale, aims and objectives</i>	1,2
<i>Chapter 2</i>	<i>Literature review: theoretically reviews strategic management literature to draw on possible insights to contribute towards the conceptual framework of the study</i>	1, 5
<i>Chapter 3</i>	<i>Methodology: sets out the methodological basis for the study and the process of data collection and analysis</i>	3,4
<i>Chapter 4</i>	<i>Findings and Discussion: presents the analytical process and key results that emerges from the study</i>	4,5
<i>Chapter 5</i>	<i>Conclusion: sets out the main findings of the study, possible recommendations for practice and identifies avenues for further research</i>	6

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2. Introduction

This study is about the nature of those actions that determine whether an organisation survives, prospers, or dies. Strategy constitutes the process through which such actions are developed and implemented, and is thus critical to the relative success of an organisation in its business context over time, irrespective of how we define 'success'.

This applies to organisations in all sectors and industries, and regardless of the way strategy is made. For managers, strategy involves a great many activities. Understanding those which make a difference to the success of an organisation is a key skill. Generally, managers should pursue a chosen strategy with consistency and commitment. They need to understand the challenge posed by their organisation's environment, and to see how they can best exploit their organisation's potential sources of advantage. In turn, this means that they need to understand their organisation, its resources and capabilities, the way it competes for scarce resources and for customers for its products or services. Managers must be able to act on incomplete information, uncertain predictions of an unknown future, and seek out sources of innovation in the way their business operates and competes. Managers must also be able to implement effective change and to align collective objectives in their organisation to allow new capabilities and skills to be developed.

Hence, the skills and capabilities of managers to perform these actions are probably what is becoming the basis of competitive success in the business world of the 21st century. In this chapter we aim to provide a critical review on the up-to-date understanding of strategic management, a review of the level of empirical research on the subject in relation to the Sub Saharan African (SSA) context, and deliberate how these thoughts and understanding have contributed towards the conceptual framework of this study. First, let us understand what strategy is and how the strategic management thought and contribution has developed overtime.

2.1 What is strategy?

The essence of strategy lies in how it enables an organisation to succeed (Boojihawon and Segal-Horn, 2004). Whether we look at business, politics, warfare or our own lives, 'success' is rarely the result of pure chance or of possessing superior resources alone.

Successful strategy requires that we recognise opportunities, and develop a clear sense of vision, commitment and flexibility to exploit them to our advantage and for longer-term success. This is the beginning of strategic wisdom.

There are a number of stated or implied definitions of strategy in the literature. Two classic formal definitions are:

"...the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for those goals." (Chandler, 1962)

"...every business organisation, every sub-unit of organisation, and even every individual (ought to) have a clearly defined set of purposes or goals which keeps it moving in a deliberately chosen direction and prevents it drifting in undesired directions." (Andrews, 1971)

Two further implied definitions may be attributed to Porter (1985) and to Henderson (1984) as follows:

"...a process of analysis which is designed to achieve the competitive advantage of one organisation over another in the long term." (Porter, 1985)

"...to enable an organisation to identify, build and deploy resources most effectively towards the attainment of its objectives." (Henderson, 1984)

Despite their differences in emphasis, all four definitions have much in common. They speak of strategy as something concerned with the long term; with determining the goals and objectives of the organisation; and with the deliberate allocation of the resources of the organisation to some activities rather than others, in ways most likely to achieve those organisational objectives. The definitions also imply that strategic management involves a process of analysis which helps to determine what those organisational objectives should be, and how decisions about resource-allocation might be arrived at. It is further implied that some organisations may manage these processes more or less effectively than others. Organisations use strategy to provide direction, to allocate resources effectively and to co-ordinate multiple decisions from different parts of the organisation in pursuit of their objectives or competitive advantage. Indeed, the concept of competitive advantage for an organisation, within the industry or industries in which it competes, is central to how we view of strategy. A useful definition of competitive advantage is given by Porter (1985:3-) as:

"Competitive advantage grows fundamentally out of value a firm is able to create for its buyers that exceeds the firm's cost of creating it."

The value that firm is able to create often depends on how it defines and handles the strategic issues that underpin the creation of a strategy. A strategic issue refers to any internal and/or external developments that are likely to have an important impact on its ability to meet or determine its long term purposes and objectives. Examples may include:

What is the relative potential of an organisation's various business units and their relative potential as areas for future investment?

How is the organisation to achieve necessary levels of economies of scale, or organisational learning, or technical innovation, sufficient to enable it to match or exceed the performance levels of rival organisations?

Which of the organisation's resources and capabilities are likely to need to change over time in line with changes in the marketplace or in technology?

How do we determine the shape, size and purpose of our organisation over time? What changes in organisational structure and processes might be necessary?

Which activities should our organisation continue to perform internally, and which should we rely on other organisations to contribute via out-sourcing or co-operative alliances?

All of these are strategic issues. What they have in common is that they are all: important, involve significant resource commitments and not easily reversible.

But despite its important role, there is no single universally-accepted view of the concept of strategy. The next section therefore provides an overview of the major developments and debates in strategic management. It introduces some contrasting views on strategy to illustrate how critical understanding of strategy has evolved overtime.

2.2 Conceptualisation: the development and influence of strategic management thought

This section takes further our discussion of the nature of strategy and strategic thinking as it has evolved overtime. The term 'strategic management' was born in American business schools in the 1960s. For the past sixty years, it has evolved rapidly as an

eclectic field in terms of its concepts, ideas and theories, drawing from the intellectual heritage of numerous disciplines (Grant, 2004). The notion of strategy is very old indeed. It has been around for thousand of years as a way of thinking about survival and success. Political and military rulers have always had to choose: on- direction and policy; on resources available; on how best to distribute those resources in pursuit of objectives, just as managers of modern organisations do (Segal-Horn, 2004). The existence of strategy is what gives drive and strategic intent to an organisation. It directs the future of the organisation and how it should manage change to its advantage.

Most of its rapid evolution has taken place in the last sixty years where it has developed rapidly as an eclectic field in terms of its concepts, ideas and theories, drawing from the intellectual heritage of numerous disciplines (Grant, 2004). Yet because of this evolution over time, Richardson (1994) attests that a definitional problem exists over the meaning of strategic management. As such, there are a variety of meanings and interpretation of the term depending on the author and the source. A review of the literature, however, does provide a degree of consensus about several key characteristics such as decision-making and the long-term clarification and specification of goals and objectives. Johnson and Scholes (1993); for example, suggest that strategic management is a framework within which choices are made concerning the nature and direction of the organisation. By nature and direction, they imply that strategic decisions are of fundamental importance to the organisation. In contrast, Richardson (1994) views the term as a series of related organisation/environment components, which need to be monitored and reorganised as necessary to create a more effective organisation.

Some of the most influential thoughts in the field emerged from the earlier works of Porter (1980, 1985) who argued that the ability of an organisation to gain- any advantage over its competition depends on the structure of the industry within which it is placed and its choice of competitive position within that industry. He outlines an analytical framework, known as the Five Forces Model to help understand the key influences on competition in a given industry, and therefore the factors that underpin competition in that industry. Understanding the nature of industry structure, and therefore the rules of competition in that industry, means evaluating the industry's attractiveness in terms of profitability and growth, and this helps to determine a competitive strategy to "cope with and, ideally to change those rules in the organisation's favour" (1985, p.4). A defensible competitive position, therefore, depends on how well the organisation directs its activities

1

and resources to meet the opportunities or challenges of its markets in a unique and profitable way.

Porter's idea on positioning build on earlier ideas on strategy proposed in the 1950s and 1960s by Ansoff (1965), Chandler (1962), Sloan (1963) and Andrews (1971), known as the classical school of strategic management. This school argues that profitability is the main goal of any business organisation. Therefore, the fundamental strategic challenge of an organisation is to position itself suitably in those markets in which profits could be earned. The classic approach further supports a top-down approach to strategy making, placing strong faith in senior managers' readiness and ability to adopt profit maximising strategies through rational long term planning. In this process of rational planning (or Strategic planning), the conception of strategy is separated from its execution. Strategy formulation becomes a process explicitly controlled by top management and strategy implementation is a distinct phase that rests primarily as the responsibility of middle managers.

The ideas of the classical school assumed that the external environment was manageable, and evolving changes could be anticipated and influenced to the firm's advantage by the rational decisions of top management. However, the late 1970s and 1980s challenged the relevance and applicability of the classical theorists. Classical strategic thinking failed to respond quickly to the transformation of international competition with the rapid rise of Japanese and other South-East Asian businesses, from sectors as diverse as steel, consumer electronics, automobiles and semiconductors, and which was based on changing the rules of competition in many industries. A well-known example of this is the impact on the global automobile industry, and on the American 'Big Three' car firms in particular (Chrysler, General Motors & Ford), of the implementation of what became known as 'lean manufacturing' techniques in the Japanese automobile industry in the 1970's, which permanently transformed the quality/price ratios in that industry and from which the US automobile industry has never completely recovered. In that period, the Japanese competed mainly on the basis of process improvements in operational efficiency, through focus on quality, cycle time, reengineering and teamwork (Ohmae, 1985). The success of Japanese firms in these areas influenced organisations in the North America and Europe to focus on efficient operations management as the main source of competitive advantage, and overwhelmed strategic thinking with their focus on operational efficiency.

Porter (1996) criticised this overwhelming focus on the careful implementation of operational activities, since it had led managers to neglect strategy. Porter stresses the necessity to distinguish between operational effectiveness and strategy, although both are essential for superior performance.

Operational thinking relates to those activities, or sets of activities that characterise the internal functioning of an organisation on a day-to-day basis. Examples of such activities include procedures to control quality of input and output, systems for handling of customer complaints, techniques for minimising costs or cycle time, systems for managing recruitment or performance-related rewards and so on. These activities are set in place to create, produce, sell, and deliver products or services. Superior management of such activities enables an organisation to better utilise its inputs, better regulate its cost and risk levels, and enhance its ability to manage itself effectively.

Strategic thinking, by contrast, considers the performance of such systems and activities in their entirety. It is a way of thinking that reflects on how all these activities connect and relate to each other in achieving the objectives or mission of the organisation. Strategic thinking asks not only how these activities work together, but also how they can be aligned, combined or performed differently to deliver a product or service of distinct value to the market. Operational effectiveness is essential to strategy implementation but it is not a substitute for strategic thinking and decision making. Many managers confuse the two. Clarity between operational and strategic thinking is needed in order to understand and manage the implications arising from an organisation's choice of a particular way to compete.

As Porter strongly argues, operational effectiveness is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for superior performance. For superior performance, strategy is essential in order to guide and shape the operational activities

Amongst other economic and technological shifts occurring in the 1990's that required attention at a strategic, rather than an operational, level was the trend towards technological convergence (i.e. integration in the development of certain technologies and in their applications to different products and services). In chemical and electronic

organisations, computing and communications components and consumer electronics, financial services, food, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, this technological convergence had begun breaking down traditional industry structures and boundaries. Large and historically successful organisations such as Sony, the Japanese electronics group, Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch consumer group, Revlon or L'Oreal, the US and French cosmetics groups, all had to come to terms with the changes that technological convergence, rapid growth of information and communication technologies (ICT), and the impact and spread of the Internet and microelectronics, have brought.

In addition to rapid and complex technological change, there followed a wave of deregulation and privatisation undertaken in public sector (often state-owned) industries, involving critical industries such as telecommunications, power and water, healthcare, and financial services. Deregulation and privatisation spread from Europe to India, Russia, Brazil and China, with varying degrees of success in terms of economic and political change, and levels of service delivery. Changing international social and consumption patterns, growing ecological sensitivities, and the influence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Greenpeace, an environmental campaigning organisation, the role and impact of the World Trade Organisation on international trade, are all features of the global economy that need to be incorporated into contemporary strategic thinking (Prahalad, 1999).

The overall picture is that of an external environment both dynamic and complex. Exchange rate volatility, dramatic reduction in life cycles of products and firms, reduced transaction costs and times to market, broadened supply of information, all speeded up and intensified competition. D'Aveni (1994) sees these conditions as a state of 'hypercompetition', where market stability is replaced by instability and constant change. It is worth noting Porter's (1996) comment on this argument:

"In many industries, however, what some call *hypercompetition* is a self-inflicted wound, not the inevitable outcome of a changing paradigm of competition."

Coming from a different angle, Hamel and Prahalad- (1993) put forward a similar argument to Porter when they advised managers to 'stretch' their strategic thinking to be more ambitious in their targets and objectives, to yield new opportunities. Hamel and Prahalad (1993) argued that "leveraging resources is as important as allocating them". What they meant by this concept of 'leveraging' is that although resource allocation

across businesses and geographic locations is a strategic task, it can be done more creatively than in the traditional view of a 'fit' between existing resources and existing opportunities. They recommended that resources and capabilities may be used more intensively (leveraged), so that a smaller resource base may be used to achieve more ambitious strategic objectives ('stretch'). They were suggesting a different strategic vision of how to approach risk and uncertainty in given contexts. The use of the word 'context' means that the authors conceive of strategy as something that is done in a specific situation (of place and time). This is interesting as it suggests that location, or context is important and that where and when strategy is enacted influences how it is accomplished. From this perspective, time and place actively shape what is done, and in order to understand strategy we need to have some appreciation of these contextual factors; hence the case for doing this research in the context of Mauritius.

Until recently, more pragmatic views have emerged looking at strategy from the point of view of the people who enact and deliver strategy. This has come to be known as the 'strategy as practice' school (Whittington, 2006; Jarzabkowski et al. 2007). This school emphasises means that strategy is carried out by people in a social setting, such as an organisation or a group of co-workers. In this view strategy is something people do. Jarzabkowski et al.'s (2007) conceptualisation frames strategy as an activity, rather than a thing, and this activity is accomplished by people. Hence it exists only as 'socially accomplished' process. A sociological perspective on strategy encourages us to look: 'Who are strategists?', 'What do they do?' and 'What are their motivations; why these actions and not others?' To say that strategy is an 'activity' that is 'socially accomplished' simply affirms that it involves more than one person and that these people need to work together in order to enact their ideas. This is true of practically any activity at work, but not all such activity is strategic. Jarzabkowski et al. (2007) assert that what marks out some activities as strategic are their longer-term consequences. So, for them, what makes an activity 'strategic' is the fact that it is consequential for (i.e., it affects) the strategic outcomes, directions, survival and competitive advantage of the firm. They also acknowledge that strategic activity may not necessarily result in intended or formally articulated strategic outcomes. From this point of view, their perspective on strategy has something in common with Mintzberg's – whose 'pattern' definition of strategy recognises that strategy can emerge in unintended ways (Mintzberg et al. 2003).

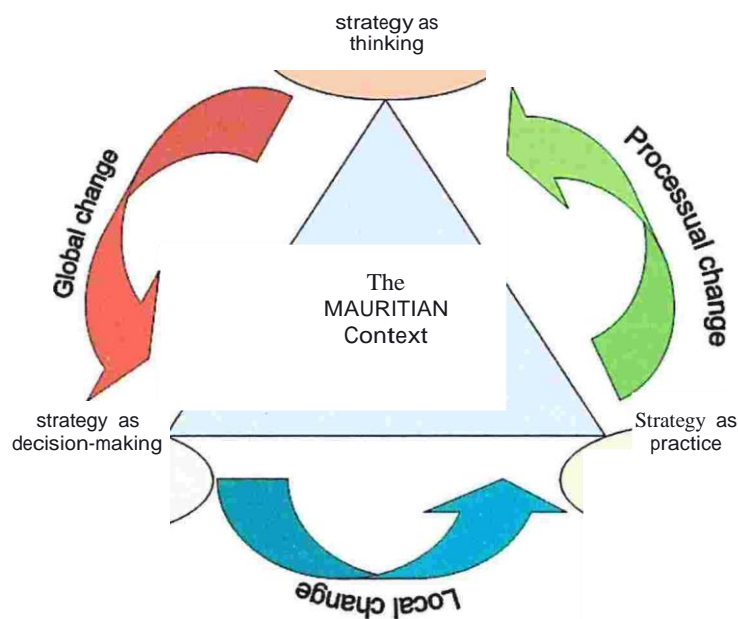
What is clear from this evolution of thoughts is that in an increasingly uncertain and complex global world all organisations, of whatever type, are located within a continuously changing external environment. They all have a particular set of internal resources peculiar to each, set within a specific type of organisation structure, culture and operating systems which influence their competitive advantages in very, unique ways. Strategic management helps managers (as individuals) to identify and co-ordinate all of these elements over time for better advantage and success. Strategic thinking is the ability to create an integrated perspective from these elements and 'have the imagination to foresee alternative actions and the logic to analyse their consequences' (Henderson, 1984).

Conceptually, the content and organisation of this study is structured around the framework presented in Figure 1. The study views strategy as an iterative process through time. It argues that all forms of strategic thinking and decision-making, (from analysis all the way through to implementation) are influenced by a combination of internal and external factors, and take place in dynamic contexts, and within an uncertain future. The implicit assumption is that the manager of a given organisation: objectively assess the organisation or firm and its environment (analysis); formulate and select a pattern of activities that maximises the chances for success (choice); and implement the selected pattern of activities within the constraints of dynamic internal and external contexts (implementation).

Strategy as *process* is interested in how strategic thinking occurs, how strategic decisions are made and put into action. The process approach sees strategy-making as a process within which strategy emerges from a combination of influences within the organisation. Strategy as a process not only reflects the views of top management, but represents a set of pragmatic compromises between various stakeholders of the organisation (Pettigrew, 1985). Merged with this view are two parallel perspectives that are typically concerned with how strategy emerges in organisations in practice. First, is the *Systems school* which sees strategy as embedded in its changing contexts. It argues that contextual differences (including, economic, cultural, social, geographical and political contexts combined) account for the heterogeneity of business systems Granovetter (1985). Viable strategies will therefore be context-specific, where Mauritian strategic thinking may vary considerably from Western approaches. The other

perspective added here is the '*Strategy as Practice*' school which is interested in the making and doing of strategy (Whittington, 2004). As mentioned earlier, this school is very recent in its emergence and it focuses how everyday activities of organisational life relate to strategic outcomes. It perceives strategy as social action, where strategy is not something which the firm, market and actors do, bringing it closer to practitioners. Taken together, these three schools of thought offer the theoretical bases to examine and capture a holistic picture of strategy process and practice in changing Mauritius. Figure 1 shows how they complement the focus of this study.

Figure 1: Strategy in Mauritius



2.3 Strategic management in Sub Saharan Africa

As we have seen so far, the field of strategic management now offers many different views on how to compete for resources. This implies that strategic decision-making is a complex activity and difficult particularly if we consider contexts which are continuously changing and culturally diverse. The gradual examination of strategy theory in new grounds is proof of it being a vibrant subject continuously responding to the needs of organisations and managers around the world.

In that respect, the rapid growth of emerging economies has received increased attention in recent years. Since the first major overview of 'strategy in emerging economies' by Hoskisson and colleagues (2000), numerous efforts have appeared to push the frontier of this interest. In addition to journal articles (Peng, 2003; Wright et al 2005,) books which cover more than one country or region in this area include Cavusgil et al. (2002), Estrin and Meyer (2004), Hooke (2001), Mathews (2002), and Peng (2000). Most of these studies warn against the 'wholesale adoption of developed economy-based theoretical and methodological' (Wright et al, p.2) strategy approaches in emerging economies. They contend that these economies are very heterogeneous and such differences are magnified when their economic and institutional developments are considered. These variations mean that existing strategy theories and methodologies are not equally effective in driving a strategy research agenda among emerging economies and have to be appropriately examined and tested.

Some very similar observations are made by some researchers who have attempted to study management behaviour within the African context (see, Thomas et al. 2008 for a comprehensive review). Sinha and Kao (1988) reasoned that in an attempt to accelerate industrial development, developing countries have imported modern management theories and techniques, without considering fundamental differences in socio-cultural constraints and local environment conditions and circumstances. Kanungo and Jaeger (1990) argue that this uncritical use of Western management theories has not only resulted in organisational ineffectiveness and inefficiency but also to resentment and negative feelings related to the perception of being forced to adopt and accept practices which run counter to deeply held values and assumptions of the local culture. They further explain that the management of organisations requires a thorough understanding of the dynamic relationships within the internal environment and the relationship to the external environment with which the system is in constant interaction.

An overall impression is the general scarcity of texts, materials and reference to Africa in organisation studies (Nkomo, 2006). True to the 'African Way', African theories are seldom captured in literature – the wisdom of the ages usually used to be passed on through the oral tradition. Nevertheless, the existing literature on management in Africa presents a picture which sees management in these countries as fatalistic, resistant to

change, reactive, short-termist, authoritarian, risk reducing, context dependent, and basing decisions on relationship criteria, rather than universalistic criteria.

Kiggundu (1988), for example, described the internal climate of organisations as understaffing of competent people, poor motivation, risk-aversion, unwillingness to take independent action, close supervision of subordinates with little delegation, operations being inefficient and high-cost with low productivity, over-staffing of non-qualified personnel, under-utilisation of capacity, poor pay, and poor morale indicated by high turnover and absenteeism. Top leaders and managers were likely to be overworked, while reluctant to delegate work, and were generally learned, articulate and well travelled. However, there was at the middle management level inadequate managerial expertise and skills, combined with a lack of industrial knowledge.

Along the same lines, what do we know of the behaviours of African managers? One early study of the actual behaviour of African managers was by Montgomery (1987), who employed diary studies from managers in the public, private and parastatal sectors in nine southern Africa countries, including narrative reports of almost 2000 'management events', to explore five common 'images of the African manager'. The study found support for four of these, namely: personalism as an African management style; emphasis on internal management rather than looking outwards towards policy, strategy or development implications; the relative unimportance of the private sector; and general resistance to change. However, the notion that the private sector was 'administratively superior' was not supported by the evidence, and neither was the suggestion that African management is 'smothered in ideological and political fantasy'. Montgomery concludes that there are 'no special defects in the administrative systems' of southern African countries which might explain the failures of international aid.

In the mid 1990s, the 'African Management in the 1990s' study (Dia, 1996) recommended 'reconciling indigenous and transplanted institutions', basing its argument on a number of empirical examples, both of where such reconciliation has taken place successfully and of less successful cases. This line of thinking has been taken up by the Economic Commission for Africa (e.g. 2007) in its research on the relevance of traditional institutions of governance, but there is still a need for a strand of this research to include more empirical studies of manager behaviour in the context of the relationship, reconciled or otherwise, between modern and traditional institutions.

There have been few similar empirical studies of African managers since then. One exception is the work of Munene et al (2000), which found them to rely on formal rules and consultation with superiors in reaching decisions. Day-to-day coping mechanisms within a patronage- based system which allows little discretion to the individual manager include informal networking and indirect criticisms rather than direct questioning of authority, directives and transplanted codified knowledge, even where managers' experience suggests that these will not work in the practical context they know well. Other observers agree, finding that current management in Africa can be characterised as astute relationship management to accumulate political power, including uncritically implementing transferred Western technical knowledge and management models less questioning authority than complying with established bureaucratic rules. (Thomas et al., 2008).

By contrast, Johnson and Thomas (2007), in a study of individual learning- and organizational capacity building which included case studies of 18 development managers, mostly in Africa, found that several of them were able to apply learning from courses in development policy and management to generate change in their organizational contexts. However, several of the cases were of managers in NGOs or in senior positions with more than the usual degree of discretion. In the minority of cases where managers found difficulty in using an action learning framework they may have had less discretion. More empirical studies of African managers' behaviour are needed to explore what is a management in ambiguities, uncertainties and competing and contradicting values, cultures and frames of reference.

There is immense diversity in African traditional cultural values (Zeffane and Rugimbana, 2008). Nevertheless, there have been some attempts at identifying shared elements of African culture and how these might or should influence African management practices. Most importantly, traditional African society is generally agreed to be *communitarian* in nature and this enables *participative management and consensual decision making*. Others provide evidence that African cultures emphasise *hierarchy, embeddedness and mastery* - although African scholars debate the variation in the common values implied. African cultural values generally sit uneasily with Western models of management. There is often a degree of *incompatibility* between a given exposition of African values and the values implicit in Western corporate governance.

Thus, while there is considerable agreement on the desirability of an African management based on African culture, there remain unresolved ambiguities about what it would look like. For instance, would it be an adaptation of traditional Western management to African contexts (Jackson, 2002, 2004); or a strengthening of traditional institutions of governance upon which modern management would be based (Economic Commission for Africa, 2007)? Would it mean discarding Western management paradigms altogether and replacing them with new African models developed by Africans? Thus, based on the discussion and conclusions thus far, we argue for a management model which is neither totally indigenous nor transplanted, but a) takes into account global pressures, issues, realities and ideas; b) is oriented towards development in some sense; and, c) is both embedded in and enables African culture(s) seems to be the way forward (Thomas et al 2008). The competitiveness and survival of African firms and nations will depend on their managers' ability to strategically understand and respond to external forces shaping the global economy of the twenty first century. As suggested by Dogbey (2004):

"It is clear, therefore, that Africa has to do its own homework well in terms of strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation on a country specific basis. Strategic management will be very crucial in helping pull Africa out of the socio economic doldrums. In the light of this, strategic management, which is the art and science of formulating, implementing and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organisation to achieve its objectives, becomes very relevant. Unlike a corporate organisation, state objectives are carved as visions, which are specific results that the nation seeks to achieve. a shared national vision helps in ensuring the success of nations by providing direction, aiding in evaluation, creating synergy, revealing priorities, and allowing coordination of policies. It is also the basis for effective planning, organisation, motivation, and control of activities". (p.44)

2.4 Strategic Management and Mauritius

Mauritius could epitomise the above words of Dogbey. The economic success of Mauritius in the past four decades owes significantly to the strategic management wisdom and capability of its governments and their subsequent tenacity to achieve their strategic visions at different phases of economic developments. Sound macro-economic policies, backed by the stability provided by a democratic political system; a cohesive society, and sheer ingenuity and tenacity of its people, have contributed to the strong economic performance in Mauritius over the past two decades (Currimjee, 2008).

To that effect, it has made considerable progress¹ in transforming its economy from a low-income country to a middle-income country based primarily on the production and exports of sugar and textiles. This progress was made possible by a combination of sound macroeconomic and structural policies, steady investments in economic and social infrastructure, and preferential access to the European Union (EU) market under the sugar protocol and to world markets under the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA). This has enabled Mauritius to make important progress towards achieving several of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Much of this success can be attributed to the strategic management capabilities of our governments, but sadly, although a few exceptions exist, this institutional capability has not been transferred or translated at enterprise level. Only few of our enterprises like Compagnie Mauricienne de Textiles and some others (like Florea! knitwear) were able to envision and implement strategies that turned them into global successes.

Now, the rules of the game are changing globally and the economic success of Mauritius is challenged yet again. Significant changes in the global competitive environment are stretching the limits of its economic success and capabilities. The country's economic and social progress is affected by three external trade shocks. The first of these shocks was a consequence of the end of the MFA on 1 January 2005. The second was the decision by the EU to cut its guaranteed sugar import price and hence reduce the price of sugar imported from Mauritius by 36% over the four-year period 2006-09. The third shock was the recent rise in world energy prices. These developments have led to a period of low growth, high and persistent fiscal and current-account deficits, rising public debt and high unemployment. Mauritius is once more at a crucial juncture, and it is the same strategic management capability that is proving useful in coming up with the economic vision and agenda for the island. As Percy Mistry asserts: 'This is the time to be bold, daring and make a clean break with the past in order to secure Mauritius' future and safeguard the interests and jobs of a younger generation. It is not that the government does not know what the options are. People like Navin Ramgoolam and Rama Sithanen are much too savvy for that possibility to be contemplated. The real question is whether this government, now that it is no longer in opposition, has the vision, political courage and foresight to take the risks that need to be taken for Mauritius to prosper in the future...' ((L'Express, 2005)

Undertaking various strategic efforts, Mauritius is trying to reinvent itself as a services economy by establishing itself as a regional services hub in IT, tourism and financial services in the Sub Saharan Africa. Whereas other African countries, which engage in the services trade, would be expected to start at the low value end of the market by exploiting their labour cost arbitrage, Mauritius has a considerable stock of built-up capabilities, such as its governance structures (political stability, rule of law and judiciary among others), experience in international trade, and cumulated investments in public infrastructure, including global communications networks. It has also more or less built a brand image, which albeit needs to be thought through and consolidated, to serve this new strategy. It can positively leverage these to its advantage by developing a differentiated approach, which leapfrogs the low value added stage and goes directly to more high value added services.

Our manufacturing base is being diversified as resources are diverted from traditional manufacturing activities, like textile and sugar towards creating new economic bases. The sugar sector has seen a drastic restructuring exercise with a new strategic consensus on the cane industry, development of sugar by-products and co-products as well as agricultural diversification. Our key players in the EPZ and non-EPZ are actively trying to break into new export markets whilst upgrading their own capabilities to improve their international competitiveness. The development of the sea food sector has been one of the most promising avenues of our development strategy. Fisheries and allied products are being promoted through an integrated logistics platform for transshipment, warehousing, handling, processing, and provision of ancillary services and re-exports of seafood products. Some major global players are already present and operating in the seafood hub. 22 operators, employing around 4,000 people, are engaged in various activities such as fish processing and preparation, seafood processing, production of fishing gears, management and warehousing facilities. Various Agreements and protocols have been entered into with the EU, Asian countries and others. New opportunities are still being explored and substantial investments undertaken in projects relating to ICT, health services, waste recycling and renewable energy production.

Whilst it remains to be seen whether these strategies of the government will stand the test of time in the light of the global challenges we face, these are all examples of broader strategic thinking happening at institutional level. There is however less evidence of similar thinking going on at enterprise level. This review found no account of

empirical work carried out to study the strategic management of enterprises based in Mauritius. Some nuances of evidences emerged from a study of the behaviour of Mauritian managers (Pather & Veeraragoo, 2007) which seems to suggest that ninety per cent of managers participated in strategic decision-making in the enterprise of which ninety percent participated in setting short term objectives and seventy seven percent in long term. This supports the exploratory efforts undertaken in this study to unravel the level of knowledge and understanding that exist within our enterprises, and possibly advise on the kinds and levels of education and training that our managers might need in that direction. As Percy Mistry highlights below, more than ever, there is a clear need for strategic thinking at every level of the economy to achieve sustained future growth and success. Percy Mistry argues that:

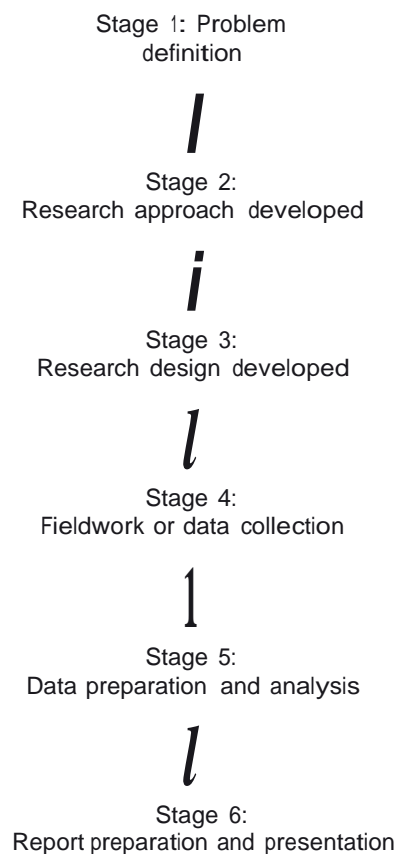
"... It is important to realise that one cannot be too deterministic *ex ante* on the kinds of sectors, industries or firms that one can guaranteed will be successful in any country. That depends on a whole load of internal and external variables and on their interaction. Competitiveness -- in a globalising world where borders have become meaningless in economic terms -- is a constantly moving target. Well-planned apple-carts can be upset by things as unforeseen movements in oil prices, labour costs, capital costs, technology shifts, market price/demand shifts, global cross currency exchange rates, etc.... In the brave new world of tomorrow the kinds of people, firms, industries and sectors that will succeed -- in Mauritius or anywhere else -- are those that have the capacity, adaptability and flexibility to be competitive and at the cutting edge of their business domains at all times. To achieve such flexibility and competitiveness at the firm/industry level, a country like Mauritius has to have the right kind of leadership, politics and foresight, an intelligent and adaptable public administration, unions that understand the realities and complexities of the globalised world we live in, instead of being content to bury their heads in the sand and behave in an antediluvian fashion by extracting what they believe to be the best for the members but instead end up destroying jobs, turning away investment and triggering one crisis after another" (L'Express 2005).

Hence, given the lack of empirical work with regards to strategic management of enterprises based in Mauritius, the next chapter discusses the methodological stance adopted by the researchers to support the conceptual focus and the data collection process of this study

Chapter 3: Methodology: Research Design and Strategy

What is Research? Although there is hardly coherent definition of research amongst scholars, Saunders *et al* (2007) assert that research involves the collection of data, supported by a clear purpose of study and most importantly systematic execution of work. This methodology chapter seeks to clarify the systematic procedures and approaches applied in the course of this research work. First and foremost, the rationale for a post-positivist mixed-method pathway (that is including both quantitative and qualitative approaches) to collect and analyse data for the purpose of this study will be discussed, followed by a discussion of specific issues around research design in the qualitative and quantitative pathways respectively. The role of the researcher and the design specifics will equally be elucidated. The data collection methods will be assessed, so as to clarify the different techniques used to source information. Finally, an account will be given of how the accumulated data will be analysed and interpreted for the purpose of this study. Figure 1.2 illustrates the research process in six broad stages (Malhotra & Birks, 2007); each of these stages is developed in more detail in the chapter.

Figure 2: Research process of the Study



1. Problem definition

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the aim of this research is to develop or extend existing strategy theory by conducting a grounded study of strategy processes, practices and learning within organisations (small and large, local and foreign, private and public) in Mauritius. The main research questions governing this study ask: *What is the nature of strategy processes and practices in Mauritius? And how do Mauritian managers learn these processes and practices?*

To this extent, our literature review notes very little academic or empirical work in the Mauritian context that account for the nature of the strategy process of enterprises based here. Although there are nuances of work carried out, these still lack rigour, are unclear or vague in their approaches. This study, therefore, adopts a primarily exploratory approach to investigate the phenomena of interest. Exploration is useful as we intend to develop- a grounded understanding of the strategy process more relevant to firms in Mauritius. In so doing, there are two aspects that are of specific interests to us: 1) how do Mauritian managers understand, use and learn about strategy concepts and tools, and 2} what has been their organisations' own strategic journey to date and how they have been innovative in dealing with key strategic issues along the way. Such strategic issues can include actions, inactions and decisions around mergers and acquisitions, marketing and sales strategy, new product developments, responding to new competition or intensification of existing competition, responding to changes in industry conditions, planning processes, process efficiency, outsourcing and so on.

2. Research Approach: A mixed method approach

There is a distinct, and increasingly popular, tradition in the social science literature on research methods that advocates the use of multiple methods within a single study (Jick, 1979; Knaffi et al. 1988; Creswell, 2003; Malhotra & Birks, 2007). This form of research strategy is usually described as one of convergent methodology, or more commonly called 'triangulation'. Triangulation is broadly defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p.291) as 'the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon'. The triangulation metaphor comes from a navigation and military strategy tradition that uses multiple reference points to locate an object's exact position. Combining the basic principles of geometry, the logic is that multiple viewpoints allow for greater accuracy in

judgment. Similarly, organisational researchers can improve the accuracy of their judgments by collecting different kinds of data bearing on the same phenomenon. Essentially, the notions behind collecting different kinds of data share the conception that qualitative and quantitative methods should be viewed as complimentary rather than rival positions.

Several approaches are adaptable for exploratory investigations such as this one. Creswell (2003) explains that to understand them we need to consider three essential elements: philosophical assumption about what constitute knowledge claims, general procedures of research called strategies of inquiry, and detailed procedure of data collection, analysis and writing, called- methods. To help further Creswell suggests three questions central to the design of research:

1. What knowledge claims are being made by the researcher (including a theoretical perspective)?
2. What strategies of inquiry will inform the procedures? (We expand on this in Stage 3)
3. What methods of data collection and analysis will be used? (We expand- on this in Stage 4)

Table 2 summaries some of the key assertions of the mixed methods approach

2.1 What are knowledge claims?

Knowledge claims refer to the assertion that researchers make at the start of a research project about how they will learn and what they will learn during the inquiry. These might be called paradigms, philosophical assumptions, epistemologies, ontologies. Philosophically, researchers assert what is knowledge (ontology), how we know it (epistemology), what values go into it (axiology), how we write about it (rhetoric), and the process of studying it (methodology). There are four schools of knowledge claims, summarised in Table 3 and briefly explained below.

Table 3 *Alternative Knowledge Claim Positions*

Postpositivism

- o Determination
- o Reductionism
- o Empirical observation and measurement
- o Theory verification

Advocacy/Participatory

- o Political empowerment issue-oriented
- o Collaborative change-oriented

Constructivism

- o Understanding multiple participant meanings
- o Social and historical construction
- o Theory generation

Pragmatism

- o Consequences of actions
- o Problem-centered
- o Pluralistic
- o Real-world practice oriented

Source Creswell (2003)

Table 2: Summary of Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches

Research approach	Knowledge claims	Strategy of Inquiry	Method	Use these practices of research, as the researcher
Quantitative	Postpositivist assumptions	Quantitative	Predetermined Closed-ended questions Performance, attitude, observation and census data Statistical analysis	Tests or verifies theories or explanations Identifies variables to study Relates variables in questions or hypotheses Uses standards of validity and reliability Observes and measures information numerically Uses unbiased approaches Employ statistical procedures
Qualitative	Constructivist assumptions	Qualitative	Emerging methods Open-ended questions Field observation, document data Text and image analysis	Positions himself of herself collects participant meanings Focuses on a single concept or phenomenon Brings personal values into the study Studies the context or setting of participants
Qualitative	Advocacy/Participatory assumptions	Qualitative	Open-ended interview and audiovisual data Text and image analysis	Validates the accuracy of findings Makes interpretations of the data Creates an agenda for change/reform
	Pragmatic assumptions	Mixed	Both predetermined and emerging methods Both open- and closed-ended questions Multiple forms of data Drawing on all possibilities Statistical and text analysis	Collects both quantitative and qualitative data Develops a rationale for mixing Presents visual picture of the procedure in the study Employs the practices of both qualitative and quantitative research

To summarise from Creswell, *Postpositivism* refers the thinking after positivism; challenging the absolute truth and recognizing that we cannot be "positive" about claims of knowledge when studying the behaviors and action of human. Traditionally, the postpositivist assumptions have cited claims about what evidences knowledge. The problem studied by postpositivist reflects a need to examine causes that influence outcomes, so it is based on careful observation and measurement of the objective reality in the world. Researching is for test or refining the existing laws or theories. This position reflects much the backdrop of this inquiry given its reliance on existing strategy theory. *Constructivist* assumption holds that as individuals we develop subjective meaning of engaged experiences and these meaning are varied and multiple, leading the researchers to look for the complexity of views. The goal of research in so rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied. Therefore the more open-ended the questioning, the better it captures the meaning of engaged experiences.

Researchers adopting *advocacy or participatory* assumptions believe that inquiry needs to be related with politics and a political agenda. Thus, the researcher should contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life. Similarly, for *pragmatic* researchers, knowledge claims arise out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions as in postpositivism. The pragmatists look to the "what" and "how" to research based on its intended consequences-where they want to go with it. Instead of method being important, the problem is most important, and researchers use all approaches to understand the problem. In other words, they are "free" to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures to collecting and analysing data rather than subscribing to only one way.

3. Research Design

When thinking mixed methods, most social scientists think in terms of some combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research, and these kinds of combinations form different strategies of inquiry which we explain below. In theory, quantitative and qualitative approaches are each meant to look at research phenomena in a specific manner.

Accordingly, Bryman and Bell (2007) postulate that quantitative approach suits scenarios in which the problem is to: identifying factors that influence an outcome; the utility of an intervention; understanding the best predictors of outcomes; testing theory or explanation. Similarly, a qualitative approach suits a problem which is about: understanding concept or phenomenon; understanding on little research done on its; understanding on problem that important factor is unknown (being new topic); understanding the particular sample or studied group that existing theories do not apply for; in natural setting

Mixed Methods approach, in which use both quantitative and qualitative approach because of wanting of both generalisation and detailed view of the meaning of phenomenon or concept for individuals. This perspective fits the focus of this study as an attempt is made to provide a generic and detailed view in exploring the understanding of strategy tools and concepts amongst managers in Mauritius. The researchers adopted concurrent procedures, recommended by the mixed methods literature, in implementing the fieldwork (see Table 2). In these procedures the researcher converges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, both forms of data are collected at the same time and then are integrated in the interpretation of the overall results. Next, we explain how this was achieved in explaining the details of the strategies of inquiry.

Several approaches are adaptable for mixed methods exploratory investigations, but this research employed a post-positivistic mixed-method approach that combined the following quantitative and qualitative elements:

An face-to-face interviewer-administered survey with a specific objective to examine the breadth of the research problem in testing awareness, knowledge and use of strategy or related concepts and tools

Case studies (involving indepth contextual analyses of organisations or specific strategic activities or situations) based on secondary data and semi-structured interviews of 90 minutes to 2 hours long with senior managers

Semi-structured interviews with key industry experts/elite (for information from influential and well-informed people about strategy and management in Mauritian enterprises)

3.1 Implementing the quantitative element –Survey Design & Strategy

3.1.1 Interviewer-administered face-to- face survey

3.1.1.1 Questionnaire design

The aim of the survey is to gain a quick quantifiable idea of how knowledgeable are Mauritian managers about strategic management concepts and tools and how do they use those tools as part of their strategic thinking, strategic decision making and strategy implementation processes. This exercise will shed some preliminary light on the issue. Taking a comprehensive view on the research phenomena, an appropriate questionnaire was designed based on the conceptual framework underpinning this study (see, Appendix 1). Some of the basic principles of questionnaire design, as outlined in Bryman and Bell (2007) were followed in structuring the questionnaire.

On the main, likert type questions were included. The Likert Scale is an ordered, one-dimensional scale from which respondents choose one option that best aligns with their view. There are typically between four and seven options but five is most common. All options usually have labels, although sometimes, only a few are offered and the others are implied. The questions usually point to a common form is an assertion, with which the person may agree or disagree to varying degrees. In this case, the several strategy-related assertions were formulated which pertained to test understanding around every aspect of the strategy process, that is, thinking, choice and implementation. Given the breadth of issues involved, the questionnaire was categorised into four main sections: 'Section A: Making strategy: analysis, choice and implementation', 'Section B: Involvement and responsibility in the strategy process'; 'Section C: Usefulness of Strategy tools' and 'Section D: Learning about strategy'. Each of these sections investigated different aspects of strategy pertinent to the research question of this study. The use of the Likert type questions made is somehow easier to include a maximum number of issues we wanted to analyse, kept its format and structure simple, and encouraged ease of response. It took several iterations to finalise the questionnaire, and when a final version was reached a pretest was carried out to test its validity and reliability.

It is important to note that Likert scaling is a bipolar scaling method measuring either positive or negative response to a statement. The downside of these scales is that they

may be subject to distortion from several causes. Respondents may avoid using extreme response categories (central tendency bias); agree with statements as presented (acquiescence response bias); or try to portray themselves or their group in a more favorable light (social desirability bias). Awareness of these sources of bias were important both in managing the pretest and actual survey phases.

The pilot testing exercise was done amongst two audiences. The first included four senior academic colleagues with academic backgrounds in strategic management. They were all well versed in the subject matter investigated and their feedback helped in polishing the reliability and content validity of the nature of the questions asked. The second group included managers with the respondents' profile we were interested in. Their feedback was useful in clarifying meaning and understandings of the questions asked and ease of response of the questionnaire. The latter pilot test revealed three key issues: questionnaire was perceived to be too long, certain questions needed rephrasing and was time consuming. Thereon, every effort was made to rectify these issues in taking the following steps from Bryman and Bell (2007):

- a- concise one-page brief was produced to explain the purpose and objectives of the study to the respondents
- the research assistant was trained by the principal investigator in administering and conducting the face-to-face interviews with the respondents while implementing the survey
- the questionnaire was prepared in a booklet form and printed in a professional way to encourage willingness to respond.

Next, we outlined the sampling data collection strategies.

3.1.1.2 Sampling and Respondents' profile

The conceptual underpinnings of this study intended to understand the nature of strategy process amongst four groups of firms that make up the population of organisations in Mauritius. These include:

1. Firms from developed/emerging economies entering Mauritius
2. Domestic firms competing within Mauritius (including some public sector organisations and SMEs)
3. Firms from Mauritius entering other developing or emerging economies

4. Firms from Mauritius entering developed economies

A consistent effort was made to compile as much information as possible from secondary data sources on the population of firms in Mauritius. Given the dearth of information about companies in Mauritius and the central hold of the Company house on company data, it was very difficult to construct a robust database of the population of firms on which we could draw. However, three distinct directories published by private sources provided much of the information we needed to organize the survey. These were the: Business Leaders, 2009 edition, published by Business Magazine, The Top One Hundred Companies, 2009 edition, published by Business Magazine, and the Special 100, premieres entreprises to L'Océan Indien, 2009 edition, published by L'Eco Austral. All three directories had their own limitations in the focus within which they were compiled, duplication of information and largely inadequate for the purpose of our study, but they were the most reliable sources we could tap on to select and approach our companies.

For the purposes of this research, given the lack of a complete sampling frame in the population of companies, we opted for a non-probabilistic sampling approach. The gist of non-probability sampling is that they do not use chance selection procedures like random sampling but instead depends on the personal judgment of the researcher (Malhotra and Birks, 2007). The authors suggest that some of the advantages of non-probability methods are that they are:

- cheaper

- used when sampling frame is not available

- useful when population is so widely dispersed that cluster sampling would not be efficient

- often used in exploratory studies, e.g. for hypothesis generation

- some research not interested in working out what proportion of population gives a particular response but rather in obtaining an idea of the range of responses on ideas that people have.

In our case, the non-probabilistic sampling approach fitted both the quantitative and qualitative strategies we chose. For the qualitative part, a convenience sampling strategy was opted where the sample was chosen simply by virtue of the accessibility of the researcher. For the quantitative part, a non-probabilistic quota sampling was used to

implement the face-to-face survey. Quota sampling aims to produce a sample that reflects a population in terms of the relative proportions of the different categories, such as gender, ethnicity, age groups, here we chose the key economic sectors of the country (Bryman and Bell, 2007). We also selected companies with differing characteristics: from 25 to hundreds of staff, business situations varying from innovators in new fields to mature companies in mature industries, and ownership structures that ranged from family ownership to public company subsidiaries to recent management buy-out. The majority were substantially involved with some form of services.

To further define the quota the following broad criteria was used to identify and approach the respondents: respondents would be in the age group of 20-35 years old, with job experience in middle to senior management, companies they worked for would be involved in any nature of business in the key economic sectors of the country, and can be located anywhere within Mauritius. As a result, firms were approached in key economic sectors of manufacturing (sugar and textiles) and services (tourism, financial services and retailing) and Small and medium size enterprises (SMEs).

3.2 Qualitative Element

Qualitative research includes an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world. In essence, the qualitative element of this study will tell us more about the how (process) and why (meaning) behind the nature of strategy in organisations in Mauritius. Our approach is partly ethnographic (Agar, 1980; Van Maanen, 1988) in that we want to examine how strategy is made from multiple angles and through multiple methods. We may rely on observations of everyday activities, using interview and documentary sources of data to examine and amplify the insights generated. Our goal in this research was to get close to the activities of participants (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) in order to understand the nature and practices of strategy-making in those organisations. In-depth interview questions, for instance, probed for tool use within a given strategic activity and covers how and why the manager had selected, interpreted and applied those tools to make decisions.

We used two qualitative techniques in combination to study our research phenomena:

a) Case studies – the case study is a powerful methodology that combines individual and (sometimes) group interviews with record analysis and observation. This methodology is supported by secondary data research along with direct observation (usually done in participants "natural" setting), and combine it with interview data from participants. The objective is to obtain multiple perspectives of a single organisation, situation, event or process at a point in time or over a period of time. This method can be used to understand particular processes. In the case study, interview participants are invited to tell a story of their experience, with those chosen representing different levels within the same organisation or different perspectives of the same situation or process to permit depth of perspective. The flexibility of the case study approach and the emphasis on understanding the context of the subject being studied allow for richness of understanding sometimes labelled as thick description. Note that each of our categories of firms form a context from we should draw our cases irrespective of which industry or sector they operate in. As mentioned earlier, a convenience sampling strategy depending on accessibility was used to base our case studies and interviews.

b) Semi-structured indepth interviews. This was the primary method for gathering data in qualitative methodologies. Interviews vary depending on the number of people involved during the interview, the level of structure, the proximity of the interviewer to the participant, and the number of interviews conducted during the research. We used the semi-structured format where interviewees will be given a broad structure of questions to guide the discussions of the process (see, Appendix 2). Note we were interested in fairly high-calibre respondents and this posed some problems of accessibility and their availability with a given time frame. One of the worries of respondents in this scenario is the confidentiality of their discussions. To remedy this situation, we highlighted a confidentiality clause in our contact letter and before the start of every interview with a view to maintain promised anonymity and that information gathered will be used strictly for the purpose of this research. During- July/August 2010, we confidentially interviewed 10 managers, owner/managers and directors. We worked- from the questionnaire in appendix 2, but encouraged the discussion to flow freely

4. Data collection and limitations

As mentioned earlier, in order to ensure a representative sample size, a face-to-face interview was used to increase the customer response. The advantage of using a face-to-face data collection method is the ability to control the research and to reduce the risk of sampling errors. A sample implementation plan to systematically contact and recruit respondents was executed to facilitate the tasks of recruiting potential respondents. Some sectors like tourism were non-responsive despite several attempts to make possible contacts. Finally respondents were recruited from the sectors highlighted in Table 5, and data collected accordingly. The fieldwork took two months (during July/August 2009) to organise and implement. A week's focus was given to each sector to concentrate on better response and minimize any sampling errors.

Table 5: Sampling and concurrent data collection duration

Sectors	Week1	Week2	Week3	Week4
Banking Sector				
Retail Sector				
SMES				
Manufacturing Sector (textile and sugar)				
Qualitative, semi-structured interviews				

Certain setbacks have limited the extent of this study: lack of time, resources and accessibility to conduct the survey and the interviews. Additionally, there were time and distance constraints between the collaborating team of researchers to coordinate their activities and decisions effectively, despite the continuous use of technologies. The time frame to conduct such an extensive research was relatively compact; and reaching senior managers for in-depth personal interviews is a major problem. On average it took two to three months of continuous chasing up to recruits the few respondents we did for this study. Furthermore, bias and subjectivity on the part of the interviewees as well as the researcher is constraint in obtaining objective information and interpreting it without prejudice is a challenge that demands continuous awareness and alertness when handling the data sets.

5. Data preparation and analysis

5.1 Treatment of quantitative data

Given that the survey was carried out on a face to face basis, several consistency and clarity checks were done while the data were been collected. The interviewer filling up the responses meant that the questionnaire was filled out properly and any misunderstandings about any aspect of the questionnaire were instantly cleared. Interviewer bias was minimised since the same interviewer carried out the survey, and the latter was thoroughly debriefed by the principal investigator prior to the start of the fieldwork. Data preparation started as soon as the first batch of questionnaires started coming in. Questionnaires were checked for completeness, coded and inputted in SPSS. All data from the survey was processed through SPSS.

The use of Likert scaling meant that after the questionnaire is completed; each item may be analyzed separately or item responses may be summed to create a score for a group of items. Hence, Likert scales are often called summative scales (Malhotra and Birks, 2007). Responses to a single Likert item are normally treated as ordinal data, because, especially when using only five levels, one cannot assume that respondents perceive the difference between adjacent levels as equidistant. When treated as ordinal data, Likert responses can be analyzed using non-parametric tests, such as the Mann-Whitney test, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and the Kruskal-Wallis test.

In our analyses we used the Kruskal-Wallis test in several instances to specific hypotheses around certain variables of interests (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This is a non-parametric inferential test which is used to compare three or more groups of the sample data. It is identical to a one-way analysis of variance with the data replaced by their ranks. Kruskal-Wallis test is also an improvement over the Sign test and Wilcoxon's sign rank test, which ignores the actual magnitude of the paired magnitude. Hypotheses in Kruskal-Wallis test is normally developed as follows:

H0: In Kruskal-Wallis Test, null hypothesis assumes that the samples are from identical populations.

H1: In Kruskal-Wallis Test, alternative hypothesis assumes that the sample comes from different populations.

Some key assumptions underpinning this test are:

1. We assume that the samples drawn from the population are random.
2. We also assume that the cases of each group are independent.
3. The measurement scale for Kruskal-Wallis Test is at least ordinal.

5.2 Treatment of qualitative data

The interview data, however, were manually transcribed, organised, analysed and interpreted simultaneously as recommended. Data collection and analyses should occur simultaneously in qualitative research (Creswell 2003, David and Sutton 2004). Cooper and Schindler (2008) suggest that data analysis involves editing and reducing, developing summaries, looking for themes and patterns, and applying statistical data and- matrices where necessary. Data analysis in this work incorporated most of these steps to produce manageable data. An inductive-based analytical procedure was used through *Narrative analysis*. The text and narrative data used came via articles, reports and documents, in-depth interviews and case studies. As observed by Saunders *et al* (2007) the primary method to collect data when using narrative analysis is through in-depth interviews. The major process necessary in data analysis is organising mass data collected into parts or categories (Saunders *et al*, 2007). Data may be organised according to codes or categories. The important sections of taped interviews were transcribed and- others were summarised. Data gathered through summarised and partly transcribed conversations were categorically arranged according to preset as well emergent themes in the processes of data analysis. The preset themes were adopted from the theoretical framework and existing literature, while the emergent themes emanated from relationships and ideas identified in the course of reviewing the respondents' conversations. Chunks of text from the email interview were copied and moved to different themes as required. Texts from secondary sources were also utilised mainly to back up or refute primary data. It was also applied when extracting charts and tables to illustrate certain findings. Analytical information is however not in one diary but in different sheets and electronic files and folders. No matrices or visualisation of themes have been applied here. A simple method of reading and cross checking several times has been used to identify relationships.

Analysis of data in this work occurred in a series of steps (Bryman and Bell, 2007):

Step 1; Assembling and preparation of data for analysis. This involved continually listening to the tape conversations, transcribing the needed conversations and summarising the relevant data.

Step 2; Identifying suitable categories. Data should be classified into meaningful categories based on primary data or from existing theories and literature (Saunders *et al*, 2007). This was the case in this work as data was categorised according to preset themes from existing theories and emergent information from primary data

Step 3; Coding. Having identified themes and patterns required to classify data, the next activity was to attach chunks or units of data to these categories. Coding is the process of classifying data into units before bringing meaning to them (Rossnan and Rallis, 1998). It must not be numerical coding. So basically, the information was segmented into different codes and categories, although this was not used in all cases.

Step 4; Identifying relationships and developing more themes through codes and noticed reoccurring patterns. Here the segmented texts from codes and reoccurring patterns were ascribed to the established themes and categories such as: firm-specific motives, country-specific motives, strategic motives, cultural similarities, cultural differences, and a host of classifications. It should be indicated that the categories were arranged hierarchically in certain cases. These themes were then interconnected into narratives and analysed across different cases for all the case studies.

Step 5; Using the narrative form of data analysis, there was a detailed discussion of themes and sub-categories across different cases to present the findings. The narrative approach is usually adopted in qualitative analysis (Creswell 2003, Saunders *et al*/2007).

Step 6; This was the final step which involved interpretation of data. Interpretations here came in the form of meanings derived from testing propositions and themes with research findings, comparing and contracting cases, identifying applicable or non-applicable theories and practices within the context under study, and extracting meanings from respondents' views. Ultimately, the interpretations were conducted through a comparison of cases, and the main inferences were cross checked amongst collaborative researchers and two of directors for their consistency and validity.

It is worth indicating that no form of qualitative analysis software was used for data analyse, thus the process was time consuming.

5.3 *Validating the Accuracy of Findings.*

Mixed methods are applied to enrich understanding of an experience or issues through a triangulation of observations, extension of knowledge or by initiating news of thinking about the subject of the research. Validity, reliability, generalisability have different connotations in qualitative and quantitative research (Creswell, 2003)-Buber et al (2004) explain that mixed methods are inherently neither more nor less valid than specific approaches to research. As with any research therefore, validity stems more from the appropriateness, thoroughness and effectiveness with which those methods are applied; and the care given to thoughtful weighing of the evidence than from the application of a particular set of rules or adherence to an established tradition. Buber and- colleagues highlight a few critical issues to pay attention for when using mixed methods (see Table 6 below), and we also highlight how we approached dealing each of these in turn.

Table 6: Critical issues in validity of mixed methods

Validity criteria of Buber et al (2004) - clarity of purpose, basis and substantive focus, giving direction to the study and a logical basis for explanation	<p>Actions taken by researchers to ensure validity</p> <p>As highlighted in Chapter 1, we have taken every care since the design phases of this study to devote explicit attention to defining the focus, research questions and aims of the study, providing a substantive rationale for every logical action adopted by the researchers awareness</p>					
of the limitations of traditional they are modified in a mixed environment	<p>The strengths and weaknesses of each methodology and methods as each data collection tool adopted have been highlighted in methods the methodology chapter. Care has been taken in weighing those and in the rigorous design of the instruments to support the data collection process.</p>					
appropriate use and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data	<p>The data preparation and analysis processes of the two types of data are highlighted in Section 5 of this chapter. Each data set and its analysis is treated differently and so is the interpretation of observations and inferences emerging from them. No attempt is made at generalisation of results or asserting some definitive concluding remarks on the basis of the data.</p>					
varied methods of treatment of "error" or "deviance"	<p>Reliability Statistics</p> <table> <tr> <th><i>Cronbach's Alpha</i></th> <th><i>N of Items</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td>0.668</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </table> <p>A Cronbach's alpha reliability test was done to measure the internal consistency of the data set. The alpha coefficient for the four items is 0.668,</p>		<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>N of Items</i>	0.668	4
<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>N of Items</i>					
0.668	4					

appropriate generalisation, given choice of sample and methods

suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency. (Note that a reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most social science research situations.)

This is primarily an exploratory study, and given the methods, sample and data, all the observations, interpretations and inferences made are not generalisable and non-conclusive. They apply only to the data set derived. This work set out to achieve these criteria by making efforts to implement some of Lincoln and Guba's (1985) eight primary strategies: Triangulating different data sources to develop coherence and justify the themes; the use of adequate descriptions to convey findings; biases of researcher has also been conveyed; information that opposed themes were presented; and the use of peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of the account was equally implemented.

Having discussed the methodological approaches adopted, the next chapter analyses and reports the findings of the study.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

This chapter analyses, presents and discusses the findings of this study. The data sets from the quantitative and qualitative investigations are combined to present a fuller understanding of the nature of strategy processes, practices and learning in organisations in Mauritius.

4.1 Respondents' Profile

4.1.1 Age of Respondents

Table 4.1 below shows over 70 per cent of respondents were in the age range of 26-40, and about 8 per cent were in the more than 51 years old category:

Table 4.1: Age of respondents

<i>Age groups</i>	<i>Percent</i>
21-26	11.9
26-30	36.6
31-40	33.7
41-50	8.9
51-60	5.0
61+	3.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

4.1.2 Job position of respondents

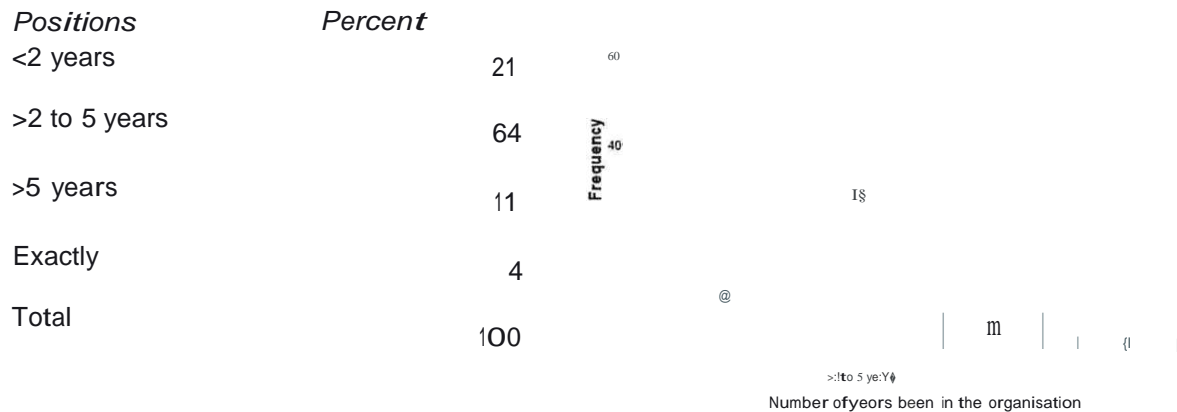
As shown anext, 24.8% and 13.9% are line managers and middle managers, and about 5 percent were in senior positions:

<i>Positions</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1. Technical/Clerical	10.9
2. Supervisor	14.9
3. Line Manager	24.8
4. Middle Manager	13.9
5. Senior Management	2.0
6. Director	3.0
7. CEO	20.8
TOTAL	100

4.3 Job tenure in current organisation

Study shows that that 64% of the employees have been in the present organisation since 2 and 5 years, while only 11 % state they have been in the organisation for more than 5 years as shown below (Table 4.3):

Table 4.3: Job tenure of respondents



A further analysis between age and number of years spent in a given organisation (see Table 4.4) shows that the majority of the respondents who had spent more than 2 to 5 years in a given organisation were in the 26-40 age group.

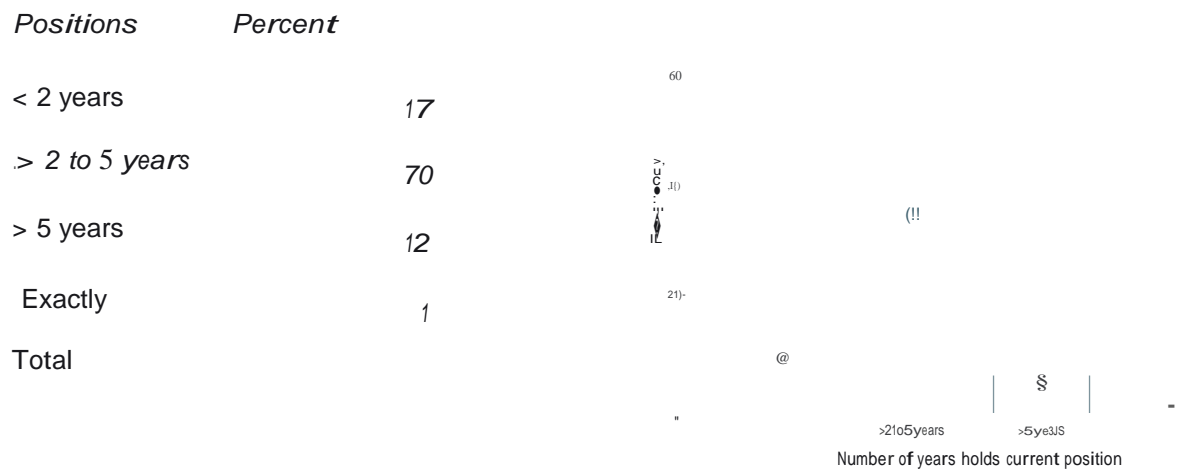
Table 4.4: Age of respondent and Job tenure cross tabulation

Age of respondent	Number of years been in the organisation					Total
	<2 years	>2 to 5 years	5 years	Exactlv		
21-26	2	7	2	1		12
26-30	10	21	4	2		37
31-40	7	26	1	0		34
41-50	2	4	3	0		9
51-60	0	3	1	1		5
61+	0	3	0	0		3
Total	21	64	11	4		100

4.3 Position Tenure in current organisation

On the other hand, as shown below, only 70% of the respondents usually have been in their current position for more than 2 to 5 years:

Table 4.5: Position tenure of respondents



A further cross analysis (Table 4.6) of age and position tenure shows that the majority of the respondents who held their current position for more than 2 to 5 years were in the age category of 26-40

Table 4.6: Age of respondent * Number of years holds current position cross tabulation

Age of respondent	Number of years holds current position				Total
	<2 years	>2 to 5 years	5 years	Exactly	
21-26	2	6	3	1	12
26-30	8	27	2	0	37
31-40	6	26	2	0	34
41-50	1	5	3	0	9
51-60	0	4	1	0	5
61+	0	2	1	0	3
Total	17	70	12	1	100

4.4 Time since formal education leading to a qualification

With regards to time since formal education leading to a qualification shows that 53% of the respondents had spent more than 2 to 5 years since their last qualification and about 26 % less than 2 years (Table 4.7). Very few of them had postgraduate qualifications; most of them about 54.5% were working following their undergraduate degree (Figure 3). A Pearson correlation test between age and qualification further showed a value of 0.94 (Table 4.8), which means that there is a strong relationship between age and the propensity for a respondent to undertake a qualification. The younger they are, the more they are motivated to train and qualify.

Table 4.7 Time since formal education leading to a qualification

Positions	Percent
< 2 years	26
> 2 to 5 years	53
5-10 years	15
> 10-15 years	6
Total	100

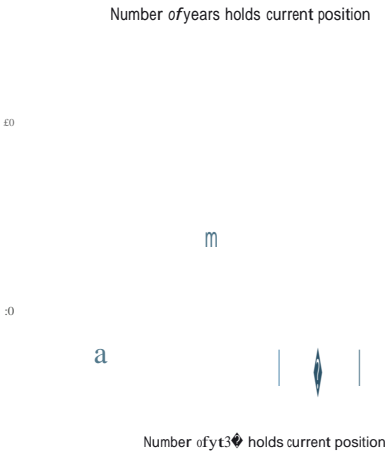


Figure 3: Qualifications of respondents

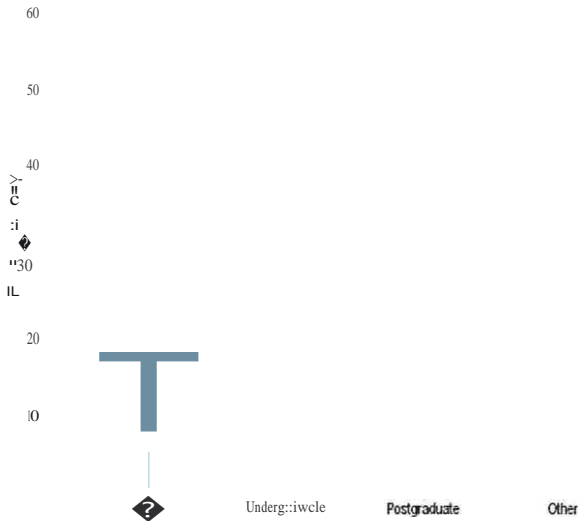


Table 4.8: Correlation test between age and qualification

		Age of respondent	Last education undergone
Age of respondent	Pearson	1	.094
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.354
	N	100	100
Last education undergone		.094	1
	Pearson		
	Correlation	.354	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	100	100
	N		

4.5 Organisation profile: Status, turnover and number of employees

A wide variety of organisations, of diverse businesses and different sizes, were approached and studied. Over 40% were from the private sector and around 60% were made of a mixture of charity, public sector and non-governmental organisations (Table 4.9). Of these organisations some 43% had a turnover between Sm to 100m (Rs); (Figure 4) around 54% employed between 50-3000 employees while 45% had fewer than 50 staffs (Figure 5).

Table 4.9: Sectoral representation of Mauritian organisations

Organisation	Frequency	Percent
Charity/Not for profit	11	10.9
Public Sector	30	29.7
NGOS	16	15.8
Private Sector	36	35.6
Owner/ Manager	5	5.0
Other	2	2.0
Total	100	99.0



Turnover of organisations

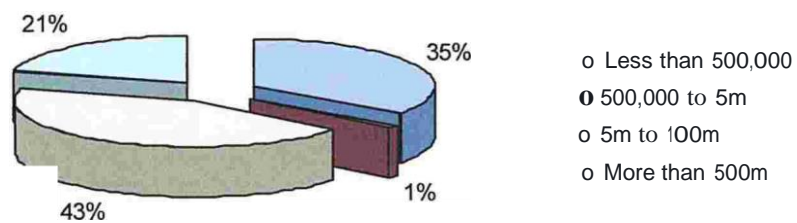
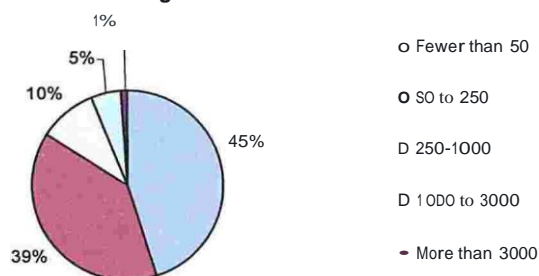


Figure 4: Turnover in participating organisations

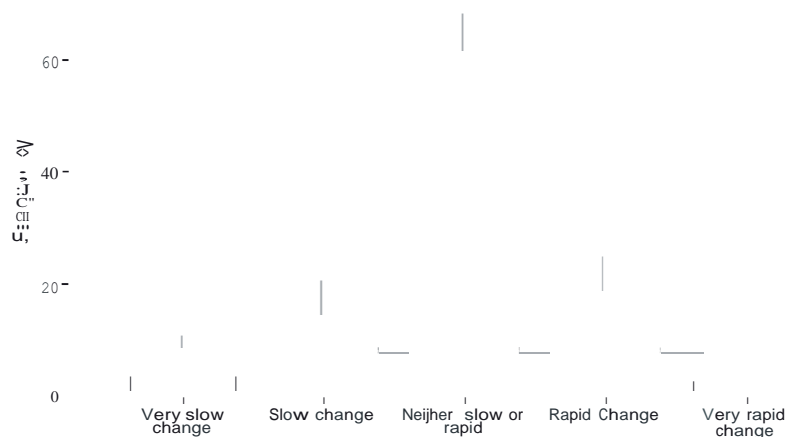
Figure 5: Number of Staff



4.6 Industry sector and rapid change.

Respondents were asked to rate whether they perceived their industry sector was rapidly changing on a scale of 1 (signifying very slow change) to (5, signifying very rapid change). Most of them opted for the middle position as almost 61% agreed that there is neither a slow nor a rapid pace with regard to their sector of economic activity (Figure 6). Whilst it is difficult to evaluate a middle position, it would seem that respondents were presumably unclear about what change was and its likely impact on their industry sector or businesses. In that respect one may question their approach to analyzing and understanding change in their respective sectors. This would become slightly clearer in looking at how they approached analyzing and handling strategic issues later on.

Figure 6: Perception of change in industry sector.



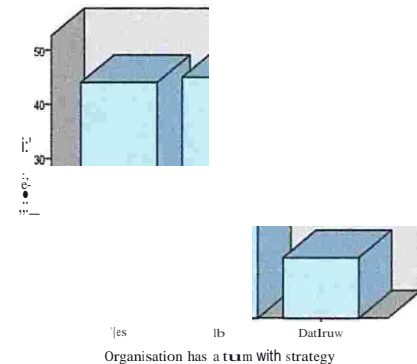
4.7 Team committed to strategy

This question aimed to understand whether organisations in Mauritius had dedicated individuals or teams attached to the 'strategy' function. Strictly speaking, strategic management is not a task, but a rather a set of managerial skills that should be used throughout the organisation, in a wide variety of functions. It depends on the ability to instill a process which will ensure the benefit of the organisation, and from that angle many organisations normally assign specific responsibilities to oversee the strategy

process. This study shows that 44 % of organisations survey have a team with at least the title 'strategy' in their roles and responsibilities and about 45 % states that they do not have a specific strategic management department or dedicated individuals, and 11 % are simply unaware (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Team and strategy

Team with Strategy	Frequency	Percent
Yes	44	44.0
No	45	45.0
Don't know	11	11.0
Total	100	100



It was difficult to understand the relative importance of the 'strategy' function within Mauritian organisations when looking at these figures. A cross analysis between turnover (i.e. size) and dedicated team to strategy (Table 4.11) made it even more difficult to assess this but it lead indicate the bigger the organisation the greater the likelihood of more people dedicated to the strategy function. To ascertain this further we tested the following hypotheses

H0: There is a no significant relationship between turnover (size) and the organisation having a team of strategy.

H1: There is a significant relationship between turnover (size) and the organisation having a team of strategy.

Reject Ho if sig value is less than 0.05

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.380 ^s	6	.153
Likelihood Ratio	10.350	6	.111
Linear-by-Linear	1.492	1	.222

Association	
N of Valid Cases	100

a. 4 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .23.

Since the sig value of 0.153 is greater than 0.05 H_0 is accepted which means that there is no significant relationship between turnover (size) and the likelihood for an organisation in Mauritius to have a dedicated team of strategy.

Table 4.11: Organisation has a team with strategy * The turnover of the organisation Cross tabulation

Organisation has a team with strategy	Less than 500,000	500,000 to 5m	5m to 100m	More than 500m	
Yes	15	0	15	8	38
No	17	1	13	8	39
Don't know	3	0	15	5	23
	35	1	43	21	100

4.8 Assessing strategic orientation

In theory, an organisation's strategic orientation provides the foundation of guidelines upon which to continuously improve on its performance. It reflects its managers' perceptions of the environment and their reactions to environmental conditions, and provides an important steer to the strategy process. A fundamental part of the strategic orientation of an organisation defined by the mission and vision it sets itself. In this study over 63% of respondents agreed that their organisations possessed a valid vision/mission statement. But the extent to which this was actively integrated in the strategy process of the organisation is evaluated in Table 4.12 below.

The table illustrates most respondents seemed to show strong agreement on the following statements, that:

- all management and higher-level staff are aware of the mission/vision & they understand it

- the goals of my organisation are set as longer-term (3-5 years) and short-term (1-year) goals, and reflect our mission
- the goals list quantified, measurable targets (e.g., volume, market share, growth rate, profitability).
- if appropriate, the goals specify targets by location or geographic area

However, it also shows that there is a tendency to disagree on whether 'management and higher-level staff whose responsibilities are affected all participated in setting strategic goals' and whether 'having a clear strategy is critical for an organisation's success'. The latter is a pertinent statement for this research so we subjected it to a Kruskal Wallis analysis of variance test to see if there was any significance in the different perceptions of whether strategy was critical to organisation's success with respect to the size (defined, by number of staffs) of Mauritian organisations.

H0: All organisations, irrespective of size, equally perceived strategy to be critical for an organisation's success.

H1: All organisations, irrespective of size, did not equally perceive strategy to be critical for an organisation's success.

	Ranks			Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
	Number of staff the organisation employees	N	Mean Rank		Having a clear strategy is critical for your organisation success
Having a clear strategy is critical for your organisation success	Fewer than 50	45	56.99		
	50 to 250	39	39.44		
	250-1000	10	57.75		
	...				
	1000 to 3000	5	60.70	Chi-square	10.042
	More than 3000	1	66.50	df	4
	Total	100		Asymp. Sig.	.040

Since $p \text{ value} = 0.04 < 0.05 = \alpha$, we reject the null hypothesis. This means that there are significant differences in the perception towards whether strategy is perceived to be critical to an organisation's success. Here, the

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Number of staff the organisation employees

mean is higher in relatively big organisations (that is, those with 1000 to 3000 and more than 3000 employees) with a mean of 60.7 and 66.5 respectively. Small enterprises with 50 to 250 employees have the lowest mean of 39.44 and do not think strategy is critical

to an organisation's success. This, in fact, illustrates that differences size is a reliable indicator of an organisation's dedication to its strategic orientation and its motivation to develop appropriate strategies to pursue it.

4.9 Identifying strategic issues

In this part of the survey, respondents were presented with some examples of broad internal and external trends, events and developments that might have potential significance to their business performance, and were asked to rate them on a five point scale where 1 indicated lack of significance and 5 was very significant. The aim was to assess whether respondents could identify what strategic issues were and gauge some understanding around whether they could identify any implications of these factors on their organisations. Table 4.13 infers that managers had a poor understanding of what strategic issues were and how they affected their businesses. Most respondents straddle in the middle, where most issues were deemed to be neither less nor very significant. The only very significant issue pertained to demographics and the least pertinent one were issues like: threats from new competition; new approaches to improved internal communication; new approaches to motivating or developing employees which were deemed to be very significant. Please see Table 4.13 below.

4.10 Performing strategic analysis

The quality of strategic thinking is defined by the quality of strategic analysis carried out. This process often requires that the organisation conducts a strategic assessment of the internal and the external environments affecting the prospects of the organisation. Most of the strategy tools and techniques (discussed later) are applied here as much of the outcomes of this analysis dictates the strategy organisation is to follow. The value of a strategic analysis allows for explicit and in-depth analysis of business issues and strategic alternatives. It provides a sense of direction and calls for organisational commitments. In many instances devising a proper strategic process involves the right mix of strategic analysis.

Undertaking strategic analysis is not a linear process; in fact, it is an iterative, evaluative process and it is serious hardwork for the manager, and much is dependent on his/her

analytical and interpretative capabilities. We discussed the theoretical position of this analysis in Chapters 1 and 2, and in the survey we drew on the same literatures to evaluate the perceptions of respondents about how they or their organisations approached strategic analysis.

4.11 Performing external analysis

On a simple yes/no question, over 54.5% of respondents agreed that their organisations gathers and analyses data about market and other external factors which affect their business. The next level of questioning explored this agreement further by exploring how respondents were analyzing and making sense of the process of undertaking an external analysis. Success of a good quality external environment analysis is dependent on the quality of information at hand, and this often costly. Looking at Table 4.14 below, most respondents seemed to agree that external analysis is crucial to determine the key opportunities and threats facing the organisation, the marketing actions and reactions of competitors and the impact of law and regulation on their businesses. We formulated two hypotheses to perform a Kruskal Wallis analysis of variance test too see whether there was any significance in the variation of perceptions for undertaking strategic analysis with respect to the size (defined, by number of staffs) of Mauritian organisations.

Table 4.12 Assessing strategic orientation

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Aggregate Of	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Aggregate Of	Percentile rank
All management and higher-level staff are aware of the mission/vision & they understand it	98		98		2		98	8000
The goals of my organisation are set as longer-term (3-5 years) and short-term (1-year) goals, and reflect our mission	96		96				96	8000
The goals list quantified, measurable targets (e.g., volume, market share, growth rate, profitability).								0
If appropriate, the goals specify targets by location or geographic area			10		10		10	
When appropriate, the goals list quality, time frame, and cost targets. They are observable or measurable.	0		0		20		20	000
My organisation systematically measures actual performance vs. goals							92	8000
Management and higher-level staff whose responsibilities are affected participate in setting goals.			20				20	100
Having a clear strategy is critical for your organisation's success								90

Table 4.14: Performing external analysis

Statement	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagreement %	Weighted score
Such external/market analysis to identify key threats to the business or key opportunities?							1.500
The above analysis include detailed analysis of market or other geographic and/or demographic and/or behavioural aspects							1.7500
My organisation has knowledge of and access to reliable sources of information about the industry, markets, and other external factors?							1.500
My organisation continuously assesses the influence of institutional factors such as cost and availability of capital, government regulations and the economy.							1.500
My organisation continuously assesses the industry as a whole in terms of new competitors and concepts, new technologies, procurement practices, price trends, labour practices, etc.							1.500
My organisation continuously monitors its business performance and operational characteristics to those of its competitors							1.500
My organisation frequently collects marketing data on its competitors to guide its marketing plans and activities							1.500
My organisation responds rapidly to competitors' actions							1.7500

H0: All organisations equally perceived external strategic analysis to be a process of identifying key threats and opportunities facing the organisation

H1: All organisations did not equally external perceive strategic analysis to be a process of identifying key threats and opportunities facing the organisation

	Ranks			Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
	Number of staff the organisation employees	N	Mean Rank		
Such external/market analysis is to identify key threats to business or key opportunities	Fewer than 50	45	53.81		Such external/market analysis is to identify key threats to business or key opportunities
	50 to 250-	39	44.12		
	250-1000	10	69.10		
	1000 to 3000-	5	38.10		
	More than 3000	1	26.50		
	Total	100			
				Chi-square	9.456
				df	4
				Asymp. Sig.	.05
				a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
				b. Grouping Variable: Number of staff the organisation employees	

Since p value = 0.05 $0.05 = \alpha$, we reject the null hypothesis. This means that there are significant differences in the perception towards external strategic analysis between organisations of different sizes. Here, the mean is higher in relatively big organisations (that is, those with 250-1000 employees) with a mean of 69.1 and small, micro type enterprises with fewer than 50 employees with a mean of 53.81. This, in fact, illustrates

that doing an external analysis is a very individual process for the organisation, and everyone has a different take on it.

4.12 Performing Internal analysis

Performing the internal analysis is an equally arduous exercise because if we consider the SWOT framework strategic analysis entails matching and evaluating the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organisation in the light of the external threats and opportunities it faces. Here again, most respondents seem to agree with this view of internal analysis (about 65%). They also agreed that some of the important activities of this process including analyses of various key aspects of the organisation like undertaking a financial analysis of profitability factor trends, e.g., after-tax earnings, return on assets, cash flow; an analysis of marketing, branding/advertising activities and quality of customer service and customer satisfaction/loyalty; an analysis of its value

chain in terms of its procurement and logistics activities; an assessment of its human resource development and management programs; an assessment of its information system infrastructure and so on (see Table 4.15 below).

The views were nonetheless divided on whether the completion of external and internal analyses resulted in a review of the organisation's mission and goals or helped in identifying the key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry, as suggested by Grant (2004). We decided to perform a Kruskal Wallis variance analysis to see how significant was the variation in perceptions of the relationship between performing strategic analysis to identify key success factors and the size (defined, by number of staffs) of Mauritian organisations.

H0: All organisations equally perceived strategic analysis to be a process of identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry

H1: All organisations did not equally perceive strategic analysis to be a process of identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry

	Ranks			Test Statistics ^{a,h}
	Number of staff the organisation employees	N	Mean Rank	
Based upon such a review, the strategic analyses culminate in identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry	Fewer than 50	45	52.97	Based-upon such a review, the strategic analyses culminate in identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry
	50 to 250	39	44.88	
	250-1000	10	58.60	
	1000 to 3000	5	55.00	
	More than 3000	1	55.00	
	Total	100		

Since $p \text{ value} = 0.505 > 0.05 = \alpha$, we accept the null hypothesis. This means at level $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance there is not enough evidence to suggest whether or not all organisations equally perceived strategic analysis to be a process of identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry. According to Grant (2004),

identifying the key success factors is an important step in delineating the appropriate strategic choices for the organisation. These could be the bases of the key differentiators of the competitive advantage of the organisation.

Chi-square	3.326
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.505
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: Number of staff the organisation employees	

4.13 Making Strategic Choices

Following the strategic analysis stages, a series of question sought to explore the Mauritian organisations dealt with the challenge of making the appropriate strategic choices for their businesses. The theory mentions several strategic options available to a firm once it has identified its key success factors. The art and science of strategic decision making, however, is often more complicated in practice.

Looking at Table 4.16, most respondents seem to concur that the processes of strategic analysis and choice are inextricably linked. But the actual strategic choices were something very unique to the individual organisations. As a result, most identified several strategic options that can be adopted by an organisation in Mauritius in given circumstances. These might include but are not limited to the following:

- a consideration of business performance options, like reduction, alternative suppliers, production improvements
- a consideration of market expansion or penetration options, like pricing/ promotion, market expansion, segmentation (most common strategic choices)
- a consideration of organisation and management options, like restructuring; downsizing; mergers and acquisitions of competitive businesses
- a consideration of product/ service enhancement options

We further performed a Kruskal Wallis variance analysis to see how significant was the variation in perceptions of the relationship between strategic analysis and strategic choice with to the size (defined, by number of staffs) of Mauritian organisations.

HO: All organisations, irrespective of size, equally perceived that strategic analysis and choice processes are inextricably linked in identifying the strategic options for the organisations.

H1: All organisations, irrespective of size, did not equally perceive that strategic analysis and choice processes are inextricably linked in identifying the strategic options for the organisations

	Ranks			Test Statistics ^a	
	Number of staff the organisation employees	N	Mean Rank		My organisation uses the strategic analysis above to formulate its strategic options
My organisation uses the strategic analysis above to formulate its strategic options	Fewer than 50	45	53.41		
	50 to 250	39	45.99		
	250-1000	10	49.20		
	1000 to 3000	5	63.30		
	More than 3000	1	44.50		
	Total	100		Chi-square	4.667
				df	4
				Asymp. Sig.	.323

a. Kruskal Wallis Test
b. Grouping Variable: Number of staff the organisation employees

Since $p \text{ value} = 0.323 > 0.05 = \alpha$, we accept the null hypothesis. This means at level $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance there is not enough evidence to suggest whether or not all organisations, irrespective of size, equally perceived that strategic analysis choice processes are inextricably linked in identifying the strategic options for the organisations.

Table 4.15: Performing internal analysis

Statements	Strongly agree	Aggregate Of %	Not agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Aggregate Of %	Strongly disagree
This internal analysis identifies key strengths and weaknesses in the organisation	40	22%			0	5000	
The analysis includes financial analysis of profitability factor trends, e.g., after-tax earnings, return on assets, cash flow.		22%	22	21		22%	2600
The analysis includes analysis of marketing, branding/advertising activities and quality of customer service and customer satisfaction/loyalty	22		22	11	0		2600
The analysis includes an analysis of its value chain in terms of its procurement and logistics activities	22						
The analysis includes an assessment of its human resource development and management programs					10	2600	
My organisation's information system infrastructure provides relatively easy access to the internal data discussed above.	20					22%	2600
After completing its external and internal analyses, my organisation reviews its mission and goals in light of the apparent threats/opportunities and strengths/weaknesses identified	20				22	22%	2600
Based upon such a review, the strategic analyses culminate in identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry.		22%	22				

Table 4.16: Making strategic choices

Strategic choice	Aggregating	Aggregate Of	Neither agree nor disagree	Consistency	Benefit	Cost
My organisation uses the strategic analysis above to formulate its strategic options	5	8	10	0	Z 800	Z 800
It considers business performance options, like reduction, alternative suppliers, production	5	3	5	0	Z 000	Z 000
It considers market expansion or penetration options, like pricing/ promotion, market expansion, segmentation		5	3	0	Z 80	Z 80
It considers organisation and management options, like restructuring; downsizing; mergers and acquisitions of competitive businesses			5	Z		
It considers product/ service enhancement options	3			(X)	Z 800	Z 800
It prioritises its options following appropriate feasibility and risks/returns analyses.				0	80	Z 800

4.14 Strategy Implementation

An important part of understanding the strategy process of organisations in Mauritius required that we analyse their approaches to strategy implementation, that is how is strategy deployed or put into action. The literature highlights several issues around the implementation of strategy (Johnson and Scholes, 1993; Grant 2004), and very often admirable strategies fail as a result of poor implementation approaches. This research drew on these literatures and to probe respondents to rate their levels of agreement or disagreement on how they perceived to their organisation's approach to- strategy implementation.

From Table 4.17 below, it can be observed that none of the respondents disagreed with the statements they were asked to rate, most of them perceived that once a strategy was decided, everything was done in terms of. resource allocation to support that strategic choice within their organisation. However there was a higher degree of indecision around- some key issues like: who was going to take the lead responsibility to take the implementation- plans forward; that clearly defined and measurable performance targets were set up to control the process; that the structure and culture of the organisation were adequately geared to support the strategy, and that appropriate rewards systems were in place to motivate people involved in achieving the targets underpinning the strategic choices.

Involvement and responsibility seems to be a key issue that could break or make a strategy. The survey explored this issue further in Table 4.18 and it emerged that most of the respondents felt that making_ strategy happen was primarily the responsibility of the owner/founder or the top management of the organisation. Again, there were low levels of disagreement perceived with respect to the research statements and strong levels of indecisions were noted on a few issues like: whether the organisation provides sufficient resources (managers' time, money, staff support, etc.) earmarked specifically for strategic planning; whether those whose job was significantly affected by strategic planning- actually participated in the planning process, and whether strategic planning was a bottom-up process, and involves the views and responsibilities of everyone in the organisation. It is difficult to understand the reasons for these indecisions on these issues in both scenarios but we could infer that most of the respondents were either

unaware how this happened in their organisations or just felt it was too sensitive to reveal the truth about how strategy happened. But to explore this a bit further we subjected the following hypotheses to the Kruskal Wallis analysis of variance test too see whether there was any variation on the perception of strategy implementation with respect to the size of Mauritian organisations.

H0: Strategy planning and implementation is equally perceived to be the main responsibility for top management by organisations of all sizes

H1: Strategy planning and implementation is not equally perceived to be the main responsibility for top management irrespective by organisations of all sizes

	Ranks		Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
	The turnover of the organisation	N	Mean Rank	Strategic planning is a top down process, mainly the responsibility of people at the top
Strategic planning is a top down process, mainly the responsibility of people at the top	Less than 500,000	35	54.40	
	Sm to 100m	43	46.52	
	More than 500m	21	52.71	
	500,000 to-Sni	1	38.50	
	Total	100		
			Chi-square	2.415
			df	3
			Asymp. Sig.	.491
			a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
			b. Grouping Variable: The turnover of the organisation	

Since p value = 0.491 > 0.05 = α , we accept the null hypothesis. This means at level $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance there is not enough evidence to suggest whether or not all organisations equally perceived strategy planning and implementation to be the main

responsibility for top management by organisations of all-sizes. The strategy literature highlights several issues to warn against the belief that strategy is the sole responsibility of the top management of any organisation. As we have highlighted in the review in Chapter 2, strategy is all embracing process that includes and involves everyone in the organisation, and everybody contributes to the process.

[illegible]

Table 4.17: Approach to strategy implementation

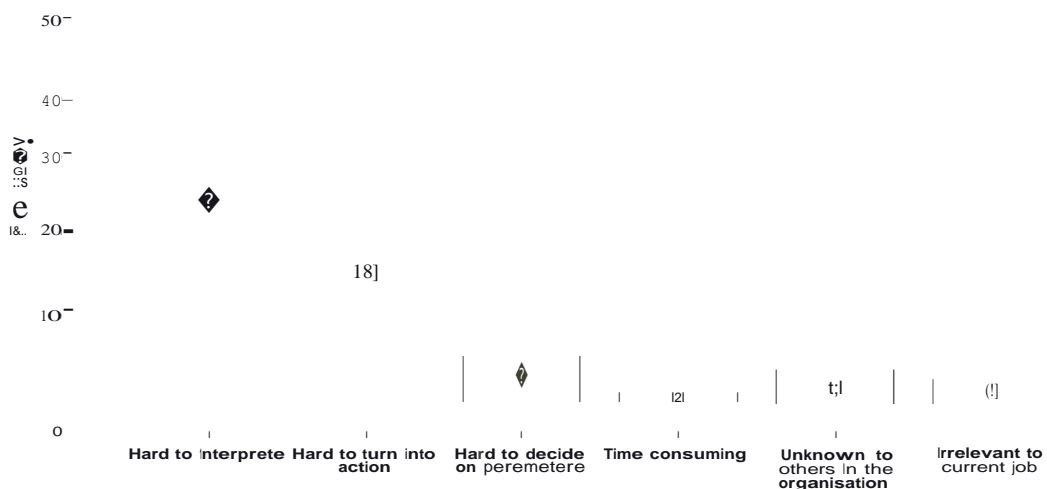
Strategy	Aggregate Of	Neither	Completely	Somewhat	Highly	Very High
The owner(s)/founder(s) of the organisation takes formal responsibility for the organisation's strategic planning	CO	NE	0	0	0	0
Top executives take formal responsibility for the organisation's strategic planning		LO	LO	0	0	0
Strategic planning a top priority activity, performed on a regular basis, e.g., each year		NE	LO	0	0	0
The organisation provides sufficient resources (managers' time, money, staff support, etc.) earmarked specifically for strategic planning		LO	0	0	0	0
The organisation follows a defined set of procedures in its strategic planning process		NE	0	0	0	0
All managers whose work might be affected significantly by strategic planning participate in the planning process	NC	CO				
Strategic planning and implementation is a top-down process, mainly the responsibility of people at the top		NE	0	0	0	0
Strategic planning is a bottom-up process, and involves the views and responsibilities of everyone in the organisation	NC	CO				
Independent or non-executive directors have an important role in the strategic planning of the organisation.	LO	LO	CO	0	0	0

4.15 Usefulness of strategy tools and techniques

A series of questions in the survey examined the extent to which managers were using some very well-known strategy tools and techniques as part of their strategy process (see, Table 4.19). Most of the respondents seemed fairly familiar with the majority of the tools they were asked to choose from. Most popularly used were tools like PESTLE analysis, SWOT, BCG matrix (mainly those in the top half of the table); and others like Porter's Diamond Framework, Corporate parenting matrix (main those in the bottom half) were least popular.

Several reasons were identified for not using any of the strategy tools and techniques. Most of the respondents found these use largely theoretical and did not move their analyses beyond a certain point (Figure 8). As shown below 49% states that it's hard to interpret, 32% opts that it is hard to turn into action, while 8% states that it is hard to interpret, 2% states for time consuming, 5% states that it is unknown to others in organisation while only 4 % finds that strategy tools are irrelevant to current job

Figure 8: Reasons for not using strategy tools and techniques.



Next, respondents were further asked to examine whether they perceived any value out of those strategy tools and techniques they have used as part of their strategy process (Table 4.20 below). Contrary to expectation, although hard to apply, strategy tools and techniques were perceived to be a very valuable part of their strategic thinking. Among these tools the SWOT framework was deemed to be most valuable, and we subjected it

to the Kruskal Wallis analysis of variance test with respect to the size of the organisations.

H0: Strategy tools and techniques (SWOT, in particular) were perceived to be equally useful to all organisations irrespective of their size

H1: Strategy tools and techniques (SWOT, in particular) were not perceived to be equally useful to all organisations irrespective of their size

				Test Statistics ^a		
Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats	Ranks	N	Mean Rank	Chi-square	df	
	The turnover of the organisation					
Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats	Less than 500,000	35	60.41	9.373	3	
	5m to 100m	43	46.52			
	More than 500m	21	40.55			
	500,000 to 5m	1	83.50			
	Total	100		Asymp. Sig. .025		
				a. Kruskal Wallis Test		
				b. Grouping Variable: The turnover of the organisation		

Since $p \text{ value} = 0.025 < 0.05 = \alpha$, we reject the null hypothesis. This means at $\alpha=0.05$ level of significance, there is enough evidence to say that there are significant differences in the perception of value of strategy tools and techniques between organisations of different sizes. In this case, those with a turnover of less than or equal to 5m (Rs) (i.e. mostly SMEs) had the highest mean (83.5) and therefore perceived most value out of strategy tools and techniques. Bigger organisations with turnover more than 5m (Rs) and more than 500m (Rs) also had moderately high means but perceived different degrees of value out of the uses of strategy tools and techniques as part of their strategy process.

Strategy often fails because they are not successfully converted into actions that employees can understand and contribute to. Despite the varied level of perceived usefulness from the organisations' perspective, it is the managers who are the main users of strategy tools and techniques. The next part of this section analysed what impact did strategy tools and techniques have on the manager's job. That is, how did it affect the communication of ideas amongst junior and senior colleagues, and helped

their own level of understanding with regard to the organisation's strategic orientation. In this study, most managers noted that strategy tools and techniques were least useful to inform senior management of strategy but most useful to (see Table 4.21 below):

- discuss ideas with junior colleagues
- convince junior colleagues of ideas
- inform junior colleagues about strategy
- justify actions to junior colleagues
- convince senior managers about my idea
- justify actions to senior managers

Similarly, strategy tools and techniques were felt most helpful in improving the manager's own understanding of the business environment, his/her organisation's next or future course of action; make better sense of the strategic issues affecting the organisations, understand how the organisation worked, be aware and confident about his/her courses of actions (see, Table 4.22 below).

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Figure 1. *Phylogenetic tree of the 12 species of the genus *Phyllanthus* based on the analysis of the *cpDNA* *trnH-psaA* intergenic region. The tree is rooted with *Phyllanthus* *sp.* as the outgroup. The scale bar represents 0.1 substitutions per site. The species names are listed at the tips of the branches. The numbers in parentheses indicate the bootstrap values at the nodes. The species names are color-coded: red for *Phyllanthus* *sp.*, blue for *Phyllanthus* *sp.*, green for *Phyllanthus* *sp.*, and black for *Phyllanthus* *sp.**

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	Very Valuable	Valuable	Neither Valuable nor not Valuable
Ansoff Product/Market Analysis	21	17	36
Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats	24	41	18
Porter Diamond framework	17	18	31
Key Success Factors	18	38	27
Merger and Acquisition Matrix	23	13	34
Core Competences	16	34	28
Dynamic Capabilities	18	15	34
Scenario Planning	17	33	30
Globalisation matrices	20	11	35
	17	34	28
	18	17	30
	18	30	32
	22	20	27
	15	29	34
	19	14	34
	16	29	33
	18	20	29
	15	31	31
	16	30	26
	17		36
			37
			37

Table 4.20: General perception of value of strategy tools and techniques used to the organisation

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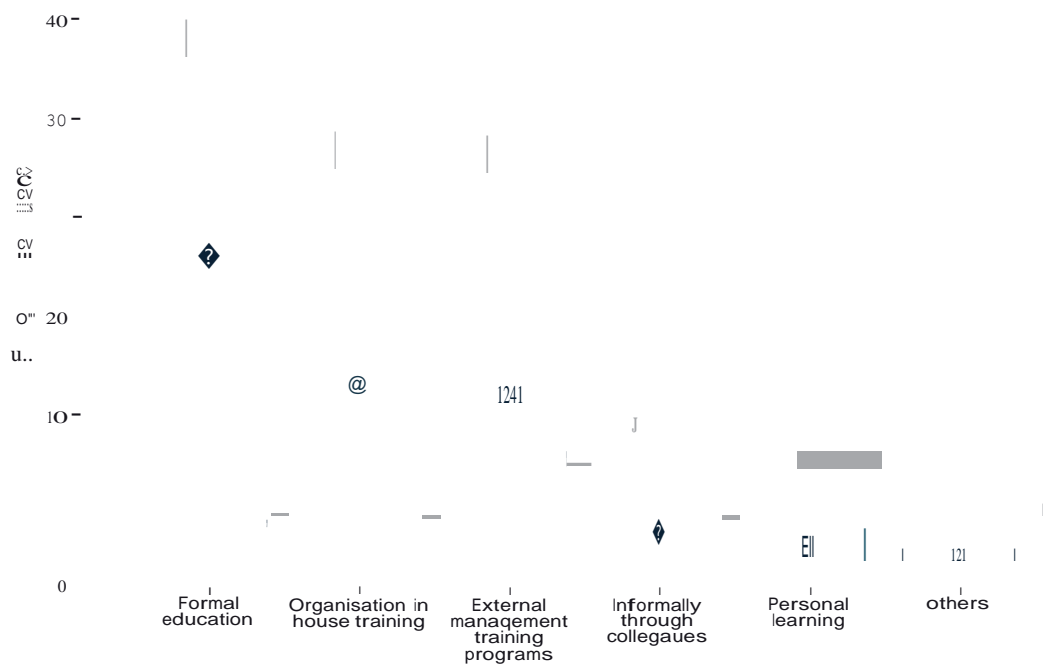
4.16 Learning about strategy

4.16,1 Training in strategic management

Most of the respondents (about 35.6%) had gained some knowledge of strategic management through their formal education, but about 50 percent had learnt about strategy tools and concepts either via in-house training provided by the company they worked for or by following external management training programs.

Table 23: Training in strategic management

Formal education	35.6
Organisation in house training	25.7
External management training programs	23.8
Informally through colleagues	7.9
Personal learning	4.0
Others	2.0
Total	100

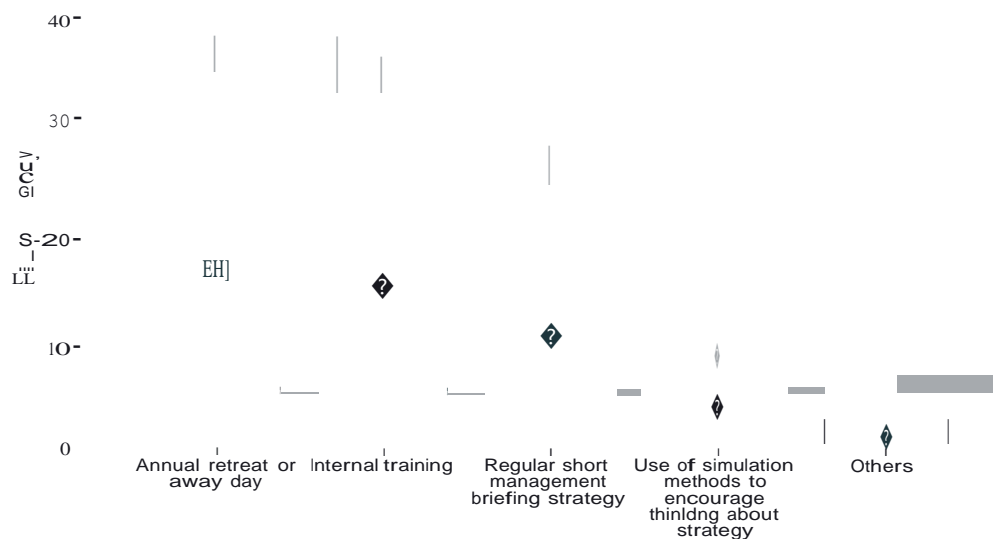


The employer seemed to have a bigger role in stimulating the learning about strategy amongst its employees. Employers' interest in the strategy process is an effective way of

motivating continuous learning at all levels and enhance strategy practices within the organisation. In this study, those organisations active in strategic management commonly organised annual retreats and away days, and internal training to support discussions about strategy amongst all level employees (Table 4.24).

Table 2.4:- ways of stimulating strategic thinking

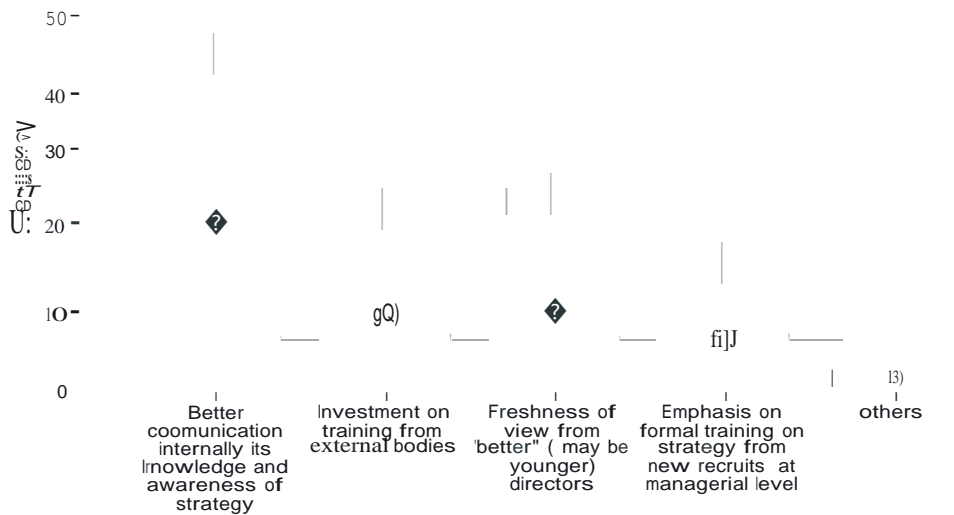
Annual retreat or away day	34
Internal training	32
Regular short management briefing strategy	23
Use of simulation methods to encourage thinking about strategy	8
Others	3
Total	100



Further, those organisations with an interest in strategic management adopted the following measures to improve the knowledge and awareness of strategy among their managers and employees:

Table 25: Ways of getting involved with strategy

Better communication internally of its knowledge and awareness of strategy	41.6
Investment on training from external bodies	19.8
Freshness of view from 'better' (may be younger) directors	21.8
Emphasis on formal training on strategy from new recruits at managerial level	12.9
Others	3.0
Total	99.0



6. Summary of key insights from in-depth interviews:

The in-depth interviews carried out for the purpose of this study meant to explore the nature of strategic management unfolding in some of the successful enterprises of the island. Some specific cases were approached and selected, and their CEOs, Senior managers or founders were interviewed. Languages used in these interviews were a mixture of English, French, Creole and Bhojpuri, which means that there is an element of interviewee/interviewer bias involved in analysing and coding the raw data that emerged. Some ten interviews of this nature were carried but insights from only three are reported below to illustrate clear cut cases of strategic management practice in successful organisations in Mauritius:

Insights from an interview with the CEO of a new and fast growing bank in Mauritius:

- "Thinking about strategy is an ongoing thing for us. If we stop thinking about strategy we stop moving and we fall out of focus very quickly"
- Organisation structure and other supporting mechanisms like IT to realise strategy are as important as conceiving new strategies.
- "You need to identify sources of differentiators from within your company and reinforce them continuously in realising your strategy. We started moving very quickly when we rebranded ourselves but we soon realised we had to do other things to support that image. So we invested in world class service quality programs, started investing in shaping a target oriented culture"
- Once we established our image we were quick to search for new areas of growth. We started developing new products based on market and consumer trends but also started looking for new markets, i.e., new growth areas (acquisitions and partnerships) in East Africa"
- "We continuously measure ourselves up against competition. We need to be wary of the gaps in the market, and be ready to strike on an opportunity. We need to identify what our competitors are doing and do it better than them. This is a cottage industry and differentiators do not last long so you have to make your incremental differences count".
- "We also do our own market analysis before doing any new venture, be it in new products or new markets. We study the market, analyse the segments and develop budgets and actions plans on how we are going to reach those segments. My idea when I see a client is how do I get the business out of him, once I get it out of him how do I get it from hundreds others"

- Strategy implementation – "As a leader, with a vision, sharing that vision with others becomes a real challenge. Formulating bright strategies is easy. It is getting people inspired and buying into your vision that make or break a strategy. Delivery is always very poor in many Mauritian organisations"
- We keep a tight hand to keep a strategy on track. Everything is action-driven and controlled by set milestones and targets. Our senior executives are very hands-on on every aspect of getting the business done
- Strategy is about how you want to achieve your objectives. It is roadmap that leads from where you are to when you want to be. Like we want to achieve 10% market share in five years and we have already achieved 2.5% in one year
- Strategy is also discussed repeatedly at board level. Inputs from non-executive directors is often useful as you often get caught in your blindspots about some aspect of this business.
- "I have mixed feelings about outside consultants' feeding into the strategy. I believe the best drivers of strategy comes from inside, and very often your people are the best carriers of strategy. Consultants can be useful to set the frame, but then again they are too much about 'cut and past". However there is argument that ideas coming from outside are often perceived to be more credible and easily accepted.
- Strategy tools are good in books because they become too theoretical when start thinking about strategy. To me, strategy has to be instinctive and natural, emerging from the ground and becoming action driven. I need to know the details of how you are going to make strategy happen, think on your feet and generate fresh thinking. Strategy = actions + results"

Insights from an interview with the CEO of a market leader in civil & construction engineering consultancy:

- We are the market leader in what we do and therefore our image and brand is everything to us. It is important for us how our strategy is perceived, by our

clients and other stakeholders and that is central to our strategy. To me, strategy = vision + image + quality services

- Over the past five years, we have moved from a position of 'wait and see if the business comes' to 'becoming the merchant of dreams'. We go for active prospecting of new businesses. If we know potential clients with plots of lands, we sell them the dream of what they can do with it, and then we become the developers of the dream in making it happen.
- We do a strategic planning exercise every year, it keeps on track and this is what keeps us in the business
- We envision becoming a one-stop shop in engineering services for our clients. This means opening up like an octopus to absorb as much of the needs of the clients as possible. We have to be very clever in our marketing
- To be strategic means to be able to foresee the trends and gaps before your competitors do. SWOT type exercises are very useful to us in that respect.
- But the most important part of us realising our strategy is our talent base. We are nothing without our resourceful engineers. To support them in giving the best of themselves, we create the environment and culture within the company. We invest in their training (almost Rs2m) annually so that they broaden and sharpen their skills.
- Good marketing and quality of services (people) go hand in hand for effective strategy implementation. We also believe in empowering our staff so that develop a sense of ownership and accountability in the projects they work on. Of course, this is not just handed in, but they have to assure us (through experience and training) that they can deliver projects up to the standard of service we believe in.
- Our decisions once taken are reviewed on a regularly basis. We have an open office environment and an intranet systems that facilitates good internal communication; we have a 'roll down' every Friday where openly discuss our

status on different projects and any matters arising. My approach is this openness is that even the teaboy should be able to tell you about our strategy and how we are getting on with it. Strategy is everyone's business in here.

Insights from an interview with a very successful SME:

- I learnt about market segmentation at a very early age (14 years old). I was able to buy cheaply and sell it to the rich at three times the price. That experience never left me and I still do it today
- Mauritius is a small place in every sense of the word. We do not dare enough to think international as small businesses. My first breakthrough right when I started was to export fresh chillies to Reunion Island. That gave me the confidence to start targeting European markets.
- I attended a few trade fairs but I was not getting a real sense of the market. I started finding out a bit of the eating habits of European consumers and started thinking about the design and packaging of my products accordingly
- Key to strategic growth is the quality of your products. My vision is to create and sell products which are original, natural, healthy and based on a legacy of good Mauritian tradition. Current market trends seem to indicate a health conscious consumer with a penchant to protect the environment, we have just created two products which appeal to that trend.
- I also think broadly about where I can source my raw materials from. Mauritian can be too clever for their own detriment. My suppliers started doubling prices very quickly once they knew I was exporting my products. I have moved on; I now have suppliers from Rodrigues, Swaziland, and other regions of East coast of Africa.

These insights help infer that good strategic management practices are existent and the basis for success in successful enterprises in Mauritius. Every organisation seems to have their own interpretation of how they realise the strategy process but they all somehow keep in with its key principles. In the next chapter, we summarise some of the key findings discussed and deliberate on some recommendations for practice and further research.

Chapter 5: Conclusions & Recommendations

Drawing on sparse academic and empirical work about strategic management in Mauritius, this study set out to explore the nature of strategy processes, practices and learning in organisations based in Mauritius. In so doing, it attempted to assess the level of knowledge and understanding that managers in Mauritius have about strategy concepts and tools and how they applied these in their strategy development and deployment activities. In general, the results have demonstrated both a lack of understanding and application of strategic thinking, and strategy tools and concepts. In this chapter we outlined some of the key findings that have emerged from this study and highlight some of the recommendations and actions that could individual managers and enterprises adopt a more strategic focus on their businesses. One of the main intentions behind this work was to make strategic management more effective for organisations in Mauritius. Our suggestions therefore focus on directions for practical actions by individual managers, enterprises, the wider business community and government to promote the practical benefits of strategic thinking at every level of our economy.

5.1 Summary of findings of the Study

As expected, studying a diverse group of organisations of different sizes and different industry backgrounds provided varying responses. However, both some common themes and noteworthy differences emerged:

- 44 % of organisations surveyed have a team with at least the title 'strategy' in their roles and responsibilities and about 45 % states that they do not have a specific strategic management department or dedicated individuals, and 11 % are simply unaware. A significant relationship was noted between the size of the organisation and its likelihood to have a dedicated team of 'strategy'
- We first asked companies about their strategic orientation and their attitudes towards the mission/vision of their organisations. 63% of respondents agreed that their organisations have a valid vision/mission statement. They disagree on whether having a clear strategy is critical for an organisation's success', and there are significant differences in the perception towards whether strategy is perceived to be critical to an organisation's success
- With regard to analysing and identifying strategic issues of relevance to their businesses, we found that respondents were not clear about the specific issues that confronted them or their industry. Notably, most respondents understood the global nature of the external issues and they dealt with specific issues on a reactive basis. They felt that global competition was a reality to be reckoned with but took it more like something that was out there and did not understand it would strategically affect them or their businesses.
- Over 54.5% of respondents agreed that their organisations gather and analyse data about market and other external factors which affect their business. Most respondents seemed to agree that external analysis is crucial to determine the key opportunities and threats facing the organisation but doing an external analysis is a very individual process for the organisation, and everyone has a different take on it.
- Most respondents seemed to agree with this view of internal analysis (about 65%) matching and evaluating the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organisation.

There is not enough evidence to suggest whether or not all organisations equally perceived internal strategic analysis to be a process of identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry

- Most respondents seem to concur that the processes of strategic analysis and choice are inextricably linked but at level $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance there is not enough evidence to suggest whether or not all organisations, irrespective of size, equally perceived that strategic analysis and choice processes linked inextricably linked in identifying the strategic options for the organisations
- Most respondents perceived that once a strategy was decided, everything was done in terms of resource allocation to support that strategic choice within their organisation. Most of the respondents felt that making strategy happen was primarily the responsibility of the owner/founder or the top management of the organisation. Staff input to strategic management (if any) was minor and centred on implementation. Companies that had involved a cross-section of staff in strategy found this useful. Most companies said communicating strategy through simple themes and actions was important to align activities and to achieve staff support.
- At level $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance there is not enough evidence to suggest whether or not all organisations equally perceived strategy planning and implementation to be the main responsibility for top management by organisations of all sizes
- Most of the respondents seemed fairly familiar with the majority of the tools they were asked to choose from. Many key principles of strategic management were understood and applied. Most popularly used were tools like PESTLE analysis, SWOT, BCG matrix (mainly those in the top half of the table); and others like Porter's Diamond Framework, Corporate parenting matrix (main those in the bottom half) were least popular.
- Most of the respondents found these use largely theoretical and did not move their analyses beyond a certain point. Strategic management was a practical problem that

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needed practical solutions. Maintaining a strategic perspective was not easy for owner/managers and directors. Clear, practical concepts and processes could help.

- Contrary to expectation, although hard to apply, strategy tools and techniques were perceived to be a very valuable part of their strategic thinking. At level $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there is enough evidence to say that there are significant differences in the perception of value of strategy tools and techniques between organisations of different sizes.
- Majority of employees depended on their companies to learn and train about strategic thinking. Companies with interests in strategic management in annual retreats, workshops and short management briefing despite their costs. Most of the respondents also agreed that good internal communication, staff skills and motivation were vital to success, at all levels of the business.
- We found most companies do not value theory or complexity. They want strategic management advice and support to apply practicality and simplicity.

5.2 Recommendations for practice:

In general, our study has observed found that although strategy tools and concepts were understood and applied poorly in enterprises in Mauritius, the significance of strategic management to the success of the enterprise was widely acknowledged. Therefore, we believe that with consistent efforts to integrate strategic thinking into the management activities of Mauritian enterprises can be highly beneficial. Accordingly, we suggest some courses for practical actions by managers, enterprises, the wider business community and the government in an attempt to weave the philosophy of 'strategic thinking' into the cultural fabric of organisations in Mauritius.

5.2.1 At managerial level

It should be noted that strategic management is different for every organisation. Support around the strategy process therefore needs to be customised around the actual needs and wants that companies and managers have and not on what they should be doing. The results revealed that, Mauritian managers are mostly hands-on and operationally

focused with a continuous need to achieve results. As a result they discard processes that are unduly intellectual, require elaborate methodologies or generate immense documentation. Sadly, many of the approaches to strategic management do all these things, so how can we encourage their effective use with Mauritian managers?

Getting over the language and jargon of strategy is the first hurdle. Too often the term strategic is used as a synonym for important. Or it becomes a platitude - an empty phrase used to cover up a lack of thought. An alternative to the academic definitions we discussed in Chapter 2, a useful working definition of strategy might be "long-term objectives and the general means of achieving them, as distinct from shorter-term tactics and day-to-day operations". In business, strategy is about understanding, shaping and managing the enterprise and its marketplace over the longer term. Successful strategic management combines strategic thinking - to develop a strategy - and deployment - using the strategy to make a difference to business outcomes.

On the use of strategy tools, it should be noted that the techniques of strategy analysis have long been available on the open market. Academics are constantly testing these theories and models, developing new ideas as well as discarding some that no longer seem so valuable. Mere knowledge of these models, techniques, frameworks and theories - however up-to-date and well-informed - cannot confer any advantage upon any manager who has not chosen to educate oneself on how to use them. What is important is the way he/she uses these techniques, his/her rigour and realism in using them, the innovation and insight he/she can bring to the process, and the quality of the arguments and conclusions he/she develops from the results of their use. The prime purpose of strategic management, therefore, is the improvement of the quality of the manager's strategic thinking.

5.2.2 At enterprise level

How can enterprises help apply strategy related concepts and ideas to their businesses? One of the observations that emerged from this study was that most of the companies were focused IN making their businesses work and perform. This inside-out perspective is most operational thinking and can be very confining. It does not help to see how the business might be seen by other stakeholders like customers, competitors and suppliers. In this perspective, it is even harder for companies to distinguish what they are doing

strategically right and wrong, or what they could even do better. Operational thinking involves a lot of firefighting for the manager: the urgent always surpasses the important.

Strategic management encourages working ON the business from an outside-in perspective. This turns the business into a proactive one but demands commitment to managing for the long term outcomes across the business as a whole. It is mainly what the business needs to do to grow and develop by enabling the efforts of every one involved in its success; it shifts focus on means and ends.

Strategic thinking can be a simple and practical process but it is still hardwork. In order to improve their grasp of strategic management, individual managers, with the support of their organisations, need:

- to take proactive steps to educate and train themselves and co-workers about the philosophy and process of strategic thinking.

- practical and jargon-free ways to apply strategic thinking at every level of the enterprise;

- be involved in the process of co-constructing the strategy of their organisation with senior management. Middle management and staffs should be given opportunities to contribute ideas and 'own' strategy; fresher and more effective to encourage strategy dialogue than the 'annual retreat'

- to identify specific competitive differentiators to make strategy more meaningful to all staff. Specify exactly where the business must beat the rest, where it must match competition and where just staying in touch is enough. Distinguish carefully between investments and costs.

- implementation plans need to clearly link strategy to operational effectiveness

- to find practical and creative ways to think outside the box and encourage the emergence of new ideas and innovations.

- to recognise that management skill and capacity is likely to be the tightest constraint the business faces. Shape strategy accordingly.

Many companies develop visionary and robust strategies - and then fail to implement them. Effective implementation is needed to make strategy happen, first in the strategic

plan and then in operations. Although details will be different in every business, a few key principles will be part of most implementation plans:

Strategic alignment - identify how each area of the business will apply the strategic focus and contribute to differentiation;

People-centredness - develop skilled individuals and teams.

Communicate and motivate in effective ways;

Embedded within project management techniques - apply project management techniques that pay attention to scope, integration and linkages as well as time/quality/cost.

Focused measurement - apply high-value, low-overhead measures that are meaningful and that pay emphasis to strategic differentiators

Delivering leadership - ensure managers "walk the walk", not just "talk the talk".

Non-replicable innovation - assume today's differentiators will be copied.

Develop new ones and apply continuous improvement to critical processes.

Manage risks - identify, monitor and counter risks. Focus on the potential showstoppers.

5.2.3 At the wider business community level

Managerial and enterprise levels efforts to adopt a strategic view of their businesses can be enhanced through support from the wider Mauritian business communities, particularly from bodies like the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Enterprise Mauritius and Institute of Directors and so on. Adopting and promoting the strategic management approach might require a change in mindset to start with; and one possible way forward would be to begin defining our national competitive advantage in terms of 'competing smartly globally' by all Mauritian enterprises.

This mindset will need further support in terms of well-design strategy workshops and training programs that will educate managers about the strategy process, the skills of strategic thinking, how to analyse and distil information from wider business environment and understand their implications for their own industries and businesses. Similar key topics can be design to provide specialised training and workshop on strategic management.

Besides education and training, organisations like the MCCI can add value by becoming a resource base for managers and enterprises in Mauritius for strategic management. It can establish information –based resources but also around regular events around the theme inviting national or international scholars and consultants on specific issues that matters to the strategic evolution of the enterprise and enhance their international competitiveness.

5.2.4 At national level

In Chapter 2, we argued that although Mauritius has been shrewd strategically much of its decisions still have to stand the test of the global economic crisis ongoing at the moment. Charles Darwin affirms that "it is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change". In economic terms, this might mean that it is not the countries with the greatest natural resources that will thrive, nor those with the greatest wealth to draw on, but those that adapt best to their changing strategic environment.

Mauritius has traditionally thrived to reinvent itself in times of crisis. Added value will result not only if our policy makers undertake brilliant strategic analysis but undertake the commitment to deploy our resources to realise those strategies will equal brilliance. As a smaller and more strategically agile economy with a tradition for practical innovation based on a tenacious human capacity, we can excel at capturing the bubbles of value that emerge in a dynamic and open world economy. As a nation, we need to perk our self confidence in doing that, as Percy Mistry states:

"Extant entrenched domestic business interests in Mauritius need to be subjected to the fires of intense competition in their own market and in external markets by competitors from elsewhere. They need to have their protected space invaded in order to be forced to wake up and smell the burning toast".

Our study's observations suggest broad concepts Mauritius could apply at national level to compete more effectively. Collectively, these reject both excessively theoretical management and government-led business development. The prescription is practical and evolutionary:

maintain and extend things we are already good at but taking calculated efforts and risks to think outside the box

position Mauritius as a smart brand – e.g 'Agile Mauritius', good at practical innovation, strategic flexibility and setting up enabling facilities to attract foreign investments. This would mean using resources to concentrate on improving the infrastructure (both physical and social), amenability, user-friendliness, efficiency and productivity of the basic Mauritian business platform.

encourage local capital formation and sustain entrepreneurship

remove obstacles that disproportionately impede business growth

keep life simple - avoid complex policies and overly theoretical "solutions"

share our existing skills and experiences more effectively between ourselves at every_ level

seek out and listen to real-world global business experiences

favour technical and- management skills that can generate new wealth

document and apply management practices tuned to the needs and relevance of Mauritius

5.4 Avenues for further research

The findings of this study suggest several interesting avenues for future academic research. This study highlights a range of issues which demand further investigation as organisations in Mauritius are challenged to further enhance their international competitiveness. Clearly there is still much to learn about the nature of their strategic management, and this study could serve as a springboard for such researches to proceed. Hence, the following recommendations/questions are provided to assist those interested in pursuing research in this area.

First, referring to the key findings of this study, these can be accordingly taken forward as propositions for further qualitative or quantitative examination. Though justified for this research, the use of mixed methods has resulted in certain limitations on the use and generalisability of the results. A general recommendation for further research into the strategic management of Mauritian firms would be to test the concepts and propositions identified here on a wider scale across the population of Mauritius firms, and perhaps using more rigorous quantitative methods where appropriate. Generally speaking, there is an acknowledged need to test any theoretical hypotheses for statistical generalisability

with an exploratory research study. As this is a theory building research, the findings of this study need to be analysed on a much wider scale to gain further support and generalisable validity.

Second, and linked to the conceptual framework, the following suggestions can be made as further explore areas of qualitative and/or quantitative investigation:

How do Mauritian managers undertake and manage their strategic analysis process? What are the key characteristics of and influences on this process? What are the challenges involved in using strategy tools and concepts by individual managers in different industry sectors?

What is the nature of involvement of the leader (top down) vs. the staff (bottom up) in crafting the strategy of the Mauritian enterprise?

Does the Mauritian culture or its business culture influence the strategy process?

How are strategic decisions made in Mauritian organisations, and what is the nature of the processes and challenges involved?

What do Mauritian managers 'do' when they are thinking about strategy? How the practices of strategy in Mauritian firms compete with the demands for operational effectiveness?

Within ongoing globalisation, what is the nature of the relationship between strategy and international competitiveness of Mauritian firms?

What is the nature of relationship between strategy and performance?

What is role of strategy in enhancing the competitiveness and performance of small and medium enterprises?

In conclusion, this study sets the stage for a realm of interesting avenues of research and theory development relating to the strategic management of organisations in Mauritius.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Strategy Process, Practice and Learning in Organisations in Mauritius

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

We are assisting a colleague from the Open University Business School in UK, Dr Dev K. Boojihawon- (d.k.boojihawon@open.ac.uk) with his research into Strategic Management in Mauritius. Your assistance in this venture is much appreciated.

We would like to begin by providing you with some definitions, to clarify the terms we are using.

Strategy (or strategic management) = refers to the vision or long-term objectives of the organisation and the general means of achieving them, as distinct from short-term tactics and routine operations. Strategy is about understanding, shaping and managing your business for competitive success.

Strategy process = refers to a sequential set of analyses and choices that can increase the likelihood that an organisation will choose a strategy that helps to compete successfully.

Strategy practice = refers to the actual everyday activities and actions of managers when making strategy. This survey specifically examines the knowledge and use of strategy tools and ideas when making strategy.

Instructions for completing the questionnaire

This survey is going to take between 20-30 mins of your time. In most cases, the questionnaire at times asks you to rate a series of statements on the scale of 1 to 5. Please follow the scale definitions in each question to express your views.

If you do not know the answer to a question, please leave that particular question blank.

ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED ARE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Feel free to email any queries or comments to ...

Your profile

Q1a. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Q1b. Age:

☐ 21-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 61+ or ☐ exactly

Q2a.What is your job position/title?

☐ Technical/Clerical ☐ Supervisor ☐ Line Manager ☐ Middle Management ☐ Senior Management ☐ Director ☐ CEO ☐ Other (please specify)

Q2b. Job tenure: How long have you been in your present organisation?

☐ < 2 years ☐ >2 to 5 years ☐ > 5 years or ☐ exactly

Q2c. Position tenure: How long have you been in your current position?

☐ < 2 years ☐ >2 to 5 years ☐ > 5 years or ☐ exactly

Q3a Time since formal education- leading to a qualification:

☐ < 2 years ☐ >2 to 5 years ☐ > 5 - 10years. ☐ >10-15 years ☐ > 15 years

Q3b. What was the last education/training you had?

☐ Diploma ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Postgraduate ☐ Other

Your Organisation

Q4a. What is the name of your organisation?

Q4b. What is the location (country) of the Head Office of your organisation?

Q5. Organisation status:

☐ Charity/Not-for-profit ☐ Public sector ☐ NGOs ☐ Private sector ☐ Owner/Manager ☐ Other (please specify)

Q6. What is the turnover of your organisation? (Rs)

D Less than 500, 000 D 5m to 100m O More than 500m

D 500,000 to 5m D 100m to 500m

Q7 How many staff does your organisation employ?

D Fewer than 50 D 250-1000 D More than 3000

D 50 to 250 D 1000- to 3000

QB. In which sector/industry does your organisation operate? (e.g., textile & clothing)

Q9. To what extent is this sector rapidly changing? 1 2 3 4 5

(1 for very slow change, 5 for very rapid change)

Q10a. Does your organisation have a team or function with the title 'Strategy'?

D Yes D No O Don't Know

Q10b. If yes, how many staffs (approximately) are in the strategy team itself?

Section A: Making Strategy: Analysis, Choice & Implementation

Q11 - Your organisation's strategic orientation

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11.1	All management and higher-level staff are aware of the mission/vision & they understand it	1	2	3	4	5
11.2	The goals of my organisation are set as longer-term (3-5 years) and short-term (1-year) goals, and reflect our mission	1	2	3	4	5
11.3	The goals list quantified, measurable targets (e.g., volume, market share,	1	2	3	4	5

	growth rate, profitability).					
11.4	If appropriate, the goals specify targets by location or geographic area When appropriate, the goals list quality,	1	2	3	4	5
11.5	time frame, and cost targets. They are observable or measurable.	1	2	3	4	5
11.6	My organisation systematically measures actual performance vs. goals Management and higher-level staff whose	1	2	3	4	5
11.7	responsibilities are affected participate in setting goals.	1	2	3	4	5
11.8	Having a clear strategy is critical for your organisation's success	1	2	3	4	5

Q11a. My organisation has a written vision/mission statement: D Yes D No

Q11b. If yes, using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as being part of your company's strategic orientation. Please rate on a 1-5 scale, where 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree.

Q12 - Identifying strategic issues

Listed below are some examples of on-road internal and external trends, events and developments that might have potential significance to your business performance. Please rate on a five-point scale where 1 indicates lack of significance and 5 as very significant.

	significance	1	2	3	4	5
12.1	Demographic (like age, race, socio-economic) trends affecting demand for any of your products.	1	2	3	4	5
12.2	Advances in product development	1	2	3	4	5
12.3	New approaches to motivating or developing employees.	1	2	3	4	5
12.4	Shifts in societal values, cultural beliefs, or attitudes affecting demand (up or down) for any of your products	1	2	3	4	5
12.5	New ways of managing the company's finances	1	2	3	4	5
12.6	Threats from new competition	1	2	3	4	5
12.7	Changing customer preferences	1	2	3	4	5
12.8	Threats from new technology	1	2	3	4	5
12.9	Global changes or trends specific to your industry (can you please provide an example:)	1	2	3	4	5
12.10	New approaches to improved internal communication.	1	2	3	4	5
12.11	Changes in government regulations, taxes, sanctions, accreditations, litigations, etc. (example: court cases involving the industry).)	1	2	3	4	5
12.12	Changes in the politics of the country	1	2	3	4	5
12.13	Changes in the green environment in	1	2	3	4	5

	your industry					
12.14	Any others (please specify & rate)	1	2	3	4	5
					

Q13- Performing strategic analysis

13a. Performing External Analysis

My organisation gathers and analyses data about market and other external factors which affect its business:

☐ Yes ☐ No

13b. If yes, using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as being part of your organisation's external strategic analysis. Please rate on a 1-5 scale, where 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
13b.1	Such external/market analysis to identify key threats to the business or key opportunities?	1	2	3	4	5
13b.2	The above analysis include detailed analysis of market or other geographic and/or demographic and/or behavioural aspects	1	2	3	4	5
13b.3	My organisation has knowledge of and access to reliable sources of information about the industry, markets, and other external factors?	1	2	3	4	5
13b.4	My organisation continuously assesses the influence of institutional factors such as cost and availability of capital, government regulations and the economy.	1	2	3	4	5
13b.5	My organisation continuously assesses the industry as a whole in terms of new competitors and concepts, new technologies, procurement practices, price trends, labour practices, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
13b.6	My organisation continuously monitors its business performance and operational characteristics to those of its competitors	1	2	3	4	5
13b.7	My organisation frequently collects marketing data on its competitors to guide its marketing plans and activities	1	2	3	4	5
13b.8	My organisation responds rapidly to competitors' actions	1	2	3	4	5
13b.9	My organisation understands who its key stakeholders (e.g. shareholder, customers, unions) are and they influence its operations	1	2	3	4	5

13c. Performing Internal Analysis

My organisation undertakes an objective internal (resource-based) analysis of its business.

☐ Yes ☐ No

13d. If yes, using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as being part of your organisation's internal strategic analysis. Please rate on a 1-5 scale, where 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
13d.1	This internal analysis identifies key strengths and weaknesses in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
13d.2	The analysis includes financial analysis of profitability factor trends, e.g., after-tax earnings, return on assets, cash flow.	1	2	3	4	5
13d.3	The analysis includes analysis of marketing, branding/advertising activities and quality of customer service and customer satisfaction/loyalty	1	2	3	4	5
13d.4	The analysis includes an analysis of its value chain in terms of its procurement and logistics activities	1	2	3	4	5
13d.5	The analysis includes an assessment of its human resource development and management programs	1	2	3	4	5
13d.6	My organisation's information system infrastructure provides relatively easy access to the internal data discussed above.	1	2	3	4	5
13d.7	After completing its external and internal analyses, my organisation reviews its mission and goals in light of the apparent threats/opportunities and strengths/weaknesses identified	1	2	3	4	5
13d.8	Based upon such a review, the strategic analyses culminate in identifying key success factors relevant to succeed in the industry.	1	2	3	4	5

Q14- Making strategic choices

Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as being part of your company's process of making strategic choices. Please rate on a 1-5 scale, where 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
14.1	My organisation uses the strategic analysis above to formulate its strategic options	1	2	3	4	5
14.2	It considers business performance options, like reduction, alternative suppliers, production improvements	1	2	3	4	5
14.3	It considers market expansion or penetration options, like pricing/ promotion, market expansion, segmentation	1	2	3	4	5
14.4	It considers organisation and management options, like restructuring; downsizing; mergers and acquisitions of competitive businesses	1	2	3	4	5
14.5	It considers product/ service enhancement options	1	2	3	4	5
14.6	It prioritises its options following appropriate feasibility and risks/returns analyses.	1	2	3	4	5

Q15- Strategic Implementation

Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as being part of your organisation's approach to strategy implementation. Please rate on a 1-5 scale, where 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
15.1	My organisation makes strategic decisions (implementation action plans) based upon the strategic choices identified	1	2	3	4	5
15.2	My organisation clearly assigns lead responsibility for action plan implementation to a person or, alternately, to a team?	1	2	3	4	5
15.3	My organisation makes sure that sufficient resources are allocated or committed for implementation actions to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
15.4	My organisation sets clearly defined and measurable performance standards for each choices prioritised	1	2	3	4	5
15.5	My organisation develops an organised system for monitoring how well those performance standards were met, and revise strategic decisions as appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
15.6	My organisation considers its structure when deciding on implementation action plans.	1	2	3	4	5
15.7	My organisation considers its culture (e.g. its values) when deciding on implementation action plans.	1	2	3	4	5
15.8	Individuals or teams responsible for the implementation of chosen courses of actions are rewarded for successful performance	1	2	3	4	5

Section B: Involvement and Responsibility in the Strategy Process

Q16- Involvement and Responsibility for Strategy

Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to involvement and responsibility of strategy within your organisation. Please rate on a 1-5 scale, where 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
16.1	The owner(s)/founder(s) of the organisation takes formal responsibility for the organisation's strategic planning	1	2	3	4	5
16.2	Top executives take formal responsibility for the organisation's strategic planning	1	2	3	4	5
16.3	Strategic planning a top priority activity, performed on a regular basis, e.g., each year	1	2	3	4	5
16.4	The organisation provides sufficient resources (managers' time, money, staff support, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5

	earmarked specifically for strategic planning					
16.5	The organisation follows a defined set of procedures in its strategic planning process	1	2	3	4	5
16.6	All managers whose work might be affected significantly by strategic planning participate in the planning process	1	2	3	4	5
16.7	Strategic planning is a top-down process, mainly the responsibility of people at the top	1	2	3	4	5
16.8	Strategic planning is a bottom-up process, and involves the views and responsibilities of everyone in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
16.9	Independent or non-executive directors have an important role in the strategic planning of the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
16.10	If your organisation uses external consultants to help with its strategy, please indicate on how it values the role of external consultants in that process	1	2	3	4	5

Section C: Usefulness of Strategy Tools

Q17a—Use of Strategy Tools and Techniques

Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you use the following strategy tools and techniques as part of your strategy decision-making process. Please rate on a 1-5 scale, where 1= Use all the time, 2=Use, 3= Have used, Not Now, 4=Heard, Don't use, 5 = Unknown

	Strategy Tools & Techniques	Use all the time	Use	Have used, Not Now	Heard, Don't use	Unknown
17a.1	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT)	1	2	3	4	5
17a.2	Key Success Factors (KSF)	1	2	3	4	5
17a.3	Core Competences	1	2	3	4	5
17a.4	Scenario Planning	1	2	3	4	5
17a.5	Value Chain	1	2	3	4	5
17a.6	Boston Consulting Group (BCG) matrix	1	2	3	4	5
17a.7	Porter's Five Forces	1	2	3	4	5
17a.8	Resource Based Analysis	1	2	3	4	5
17a.9	Industry Lifecycle	1	2	3	4	5
17a.10	PESTLE – Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, technological, legal and ecological environment analysis	1	2	3	4	5
17a.11	Portfolio Matrices	1	2	3	4	5
17a.12	Porter's Generic Strategy matrix	1	2	3	4	5
17a.13	Strategic Group Analysis	1	2	3	4	5
17a.14	Ansoff's Product/Market matrix	1	2	3	4	5
17a.15	Porter's Diamond Framework	1	2	3	4	5
17a.16	Mergers & Acquisitions matrices	1	2	3	4	5
17a.17	Dynamic Capabilities	1	2	3	4	5
17a.18	Globalisation matrices	1	2	3	4	5
17a.19	Methods of Expansion matrix	1	2	3	4	5
17a.20	Corporate Parenting matrix	1	2	3	4	5
17a.21	Bowman's Strategy Clock	1	2	3	4	5

17a.22 | Others (Please specify)

2

3

4

5

Q7b - Reasons for not using Strategy Tools and Techniques

Can you identify any general reason(s) for not using any of the strategy tools and techniques?

Please, tick as appropriate

☐ Hard to interpret

☐ Irrelevant to current job

☐ Hard to turn into action

☐ Others (please specify)

☐ Hard to decide parameters

☐ Time consuming

☐ Unknown to others in the organisation

Q17c - Perceived value of use of Strategy Tools and Techniques

Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you perceive any value out of those strategy tools and techniques that you have used as part of your strategy process. Please rate on a 1-5 likert scale, where 1= Very valuable and 5 = Not valuable at all.

		Perceived value of Tool					
		Tick as appropriate					
Strategy Tools & Techniques		Do not Know/Do not Use	Not valuable at all			Very valuable	
7c.1	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT)		1	2	3	4	5
7c.2	Key Success Factors (KSF)		1	2	3	4	5
7c.3	Core Competences		1	2	3	4	5
7c.4	Scenario Planning		1	2	3	4	5
7c.5	Value Chain		1	2	3	4	5
7c.6	Boston Consulting Group (BCG) matrix		1	2	3	4	5
7c.7	Porter's Five Forces		1	2	3	4	5
7c.8	Resource Based Analysis		1	2	3	4	5
7c.9	Industry Lifecycle		1	2	3	4	5
7c.10	PESTLE – Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, technological, legal and ecological environment analysis		1	2	3	4	5
7c.11	Portfolio Matrices		1	2	3	4	5
7c.12	Porter's Generic Strategy matrix		1	2	3	4	5
7c.13	Strategic Group Analysis		1	2	3	4	5
7c.14	Ansoff's Product/Market matrix		1	2	3	4	5
7c.15	Porter's Diamond Framework		1	2	3	4	5
7c.16	Mergers & Acquisitions matrices		1	2	3	4	5
7c.17	Dynamic Capabilities		1	2	3	4	5
7c.18	Globalisation matrices		1	2	3	4	5
7c.19	Methods of Expansion matrix		1	2	3	4	5
7c.20	Corporate Parenting matrix		1	2	3	4	5
7c.21	Bowman's Strategy Clock		1	2	3	4	5
7c.22	Others (Please specify)		1	2	3	4	5

Q17d – Usefulness of Strategy Tools and Techniques in doing your job

Using these strategy tools and techniques might affect your own job performance in several ways. This question attempts to understand how it affects the communication of your ideas to your junior and senior colleagues, and helping your own level of understanding with regard to the actions you decide to pursue. Please rate on a scale of 1-5, on how might feel about the following options:

Communicating across levels	Very Useful	1	2	3	4	5	Not Useful at all
Discuss ideas with junior colleagues	1	2	3	4	5		
Convince junior colleagues of my ideas	1	2	3	4	5		
Inform junior colleagues about strategy	1	2	3	4	5		
Justify actions to junior colleagues	1	2	3	4	5		
Convince senior managers about my ideas	1	2	3	4	5		
Inform senior managers about strategy	1	2	3	4	5		
Justify actions to senior managers	1	2	3	4	5		
Discuss ideas with senior managers	1	2	3	4	5		
Helping your own level of understanding	Feel it helps a lot	1	2	3	4	5	Do not feel it helps at all
Help me make sense of the business environment	1	1	3	4	5		
Help me make sense of the organisation's next or future course of action	1	2	3	4	5		
Help me understand strategic issues better	1	2	3	4	5		
Help me make sense of how the organisation works	1	2	3	4	5		
Be certain about a particular course of action	1	2	3	4	5		
Feel confident about the quality of my actions	1	1	3	4	5		
Be aware of courses of action	1	2	3	4	5		

Section D: Learning about 'Strategy'

Q18a – Acquiring your knowledge and training of Strategy

How have you acquired your knowledge of strategy? Please tick all that apply.

- ☐ Formal education (please indicate an example, _____)
- ☐ Organisational in-house training
- ☐ External management training programs (usually consultant-led)
- ☐ Informally through colleagues

Appendix 2: In-depth Interview Questionnaire

The study in brief ...

Strategy matters to all organisations everywhere irrespective of their size! In these times of global economic crisis the need for smart strategic thinking is heightened more than ever as companies, the world over, are struggling their way out of troubled waters. Success now demands strategic management of high quality.

To us, as academics, strategy (or strategic management) concerns the vision or long-term objectives of the organisation and the general means for achieving them, as distinct from short-term tactics and routine operations. Strategy is about understanding, shaping and managing your business for competitive success. This study has three objectives in mind:

7. To investigate the level or extent of knowledge, understanding and use of strategic management tools and practices in enterprises in Mauritius;
8. To study the best or innovative practices of strategic management in organisations in Mauritius
9. To develop a strand of strategy knowledge or literature more at tune with the managerial context of Mauritius

Note this is not an exercise to scrutinise your strategies or unravel your strategies to the world, but a systematic study of your different ways of strategic thinking and planning that underpin your strategy process. We are interested in your view of the strategy process both, as an individual executive and an organisation.

Your views are sought because of the remarkable achievements of your organisation in the Mauritian context. Your contribution will be extremely valuable to us as endeavour to develop a strand of management more in tune and grounded in the Mauritian culture of management. The eventual aim to use whatever lessons learnt in this study and use to inspire thinking, teaching and training of our future managers, who might end up working for you.

For further information, an interview with Dr Roshan Boojihawon (strategy consultant & lead researcher) has recently been published in the 15-21 July issue of the prominent Business Magazine.

This study is conducted in collaboration with the Open University, UK (by **Dr Roshan Boojihawon**) and the University of Mauritius, and funded by the Mauritius Research Council. This is a first effort of this kind undertaken in Mauritius and we hope to get your support to collect the necessary data important to us.

All data collected will be STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL and utilised strictly for the purpose of this study.

The Interview Guide

Background

1. The history or key strategic developments/decisions that have been undertaken by your organisation to date or in the last five years.
2. How do you think changes in the global/local in your external business environment affecting your business?
3. What problems/issues/challenges you have experienced in your strategic planning/strategic management in the last five years?

Strategy according to you

4. What, in your view, does it mean to be strategic? Or what do you understand by strategy?
5. Is thinking about strategy crucial for your business? What is the role of independent directors, consultants in that process? How do they influence the process?

Strategy process & practice within your organisation

6. How does your company think about and develops its strategy? Are you directly/indirectly involved in the strategic thinking and planning of your company? Why/how?
7. Do you or your organisation have a vision/mission statement? Of what use is that statement when you are trying to define your strategy?
8. How does your company gather and analyse data about market, competitor and other external factors which affect your business? Do you use a systematic vs. non-systematic approach?
9. How do you undertake an internal (resource base) analysis of your company?
10. How do you make your strategic choices?
11. How do you decide about implementing the chosen strategy (ies)?
12. Who takes the formal responsibility for strategic planning? Why? Do you have a defined set of procedures or is it ad-hoc, top-down or bottom-up process?
13. Use of strategy tools and techniques? Tools used or familiar with? Reasons for using them? Effectiveness of those used? In-house/adapted tools and techniques of strategy?

Promoting a culture of strategic thinking within your organisation

14. How easy or difficult is it to maintain a strategic perspective on your business? What do you think will help you maintain that perspective?
15. How could you improve your strategic management? What do you do to promote or stimulate strategic thinking among your executives or managers?