

THESIS STRUCTURE FOR
ESAMI MBA

COVER PAGE

**THE CHALLENGE OF INDIGENIZATION OF THE
PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE STATE OF LOWINCA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **Rosemary Khumalo**, declare that I am the sole author of this thesis, that during the period of registered study I have not been registered for other academic award or qualification, nor has any of the material been submitted wholly or partly for any other award. This thesis is a result of my own research work, and where other people's research was used, they have been duly acknowledged.

Date..... Signature

CANDIDATE

SUPERVISOR ENDORSEMENT

Date..... Name

SUPERVISOR

Signature

SUPERVISOR

THE STRUCTURE

The following is a guideline for the Thesis contents in terms of its structure. There is a brief explanation of each of the major parts of the thesis, supplied only as a guide. Obviously, not all explanations will fit all types of topics, so students will have to adapt and adjust in accordance with their own topic.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The introductory chapter must detail the impetus for the investigation and must provide the rationale for undertaking the research. The chapter introduces the reader to your subject and is meant to give an overall idea of your project, including your objectives, what you did, and how you did it. This must be very briefly written, as the details will come later. The importance of this chapter lies in the fact that it should summarize your whole project. Any reader who picks up your work in the library should be able to decide whether or not he or she is interested in it after reading your Introduction. So, chapter one is a brief description of your work and the strategy you have used to conduct your research. The chapter must also present the structure and organization of the thesis, i.e. a brief outline of each chapter.

Suggested Contents for Quantitative Research:

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Problem Statement
- 1.3 Research Objectives
- 1.4 Research Questions
- 1.5 Research Hypotheses
- 1.6 Significance of the Study
- 1.7 Scope of the Study
- 1.8 Limitations of the study
- 1.9 Thesis Structure

Suggested Contents for Qualitative Research:

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Problem Statement
- 1.3 Research Objectives
- 1.4 Research Questions and Propositions
- 1.6 Significance of the Study
- 1.7 Scope of the Study
- 1.8 Limitations of the Study
- 1.9 Thesis Structure

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of critical literature must of necessity entail a review of relevant academic literature in any of the disciplines/ courses taught in the MBA programme. At the least, the literature must be cogently described using positions already available in the literature.

This chapter should include a mention (but not a detailed explanation) to the relevant theories and models that have been used for similar cases or studies. The chapter should talk about the variables in connection with the models or theories stated in the literatures. It should also include a mention to the authors who worked in similar studies and their findings. (only if relevant to the student's topic).

Suggested Contents:

You might structure this chapter around one or more of the following parts:

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Each chapter should begin with an introduction that links with the preceding chapter and introduces the reader to the contents of the chapter.

2.2 BACKGROUND/ OVERVIEW OF THE ABC BUSINESS/ INDUSTRY/ SECTOR

This section will include general information about the business (e.g. if you are talking about an airline, you should talk about this business world wide, some statistics will be very beneficial. Using statistical data will help you to talk about the trends (e.g. the booming or the decline of the business). Also, you should state your time span, i.e. you should explain what time span is covered by your study.

The objective of this section is to shed the light on the important events that the ABC business has faced in the past and those it might face in the future. Opinions of different studies and authors are very helpful for understanding the current status of the ABC particular.

2.3 OVERVIEW ABOUT THE XYZ MODEL / FRAMEWORK (Theoretical Framework)

XYZ can be a theory/model (Competency Model, Customer Loyalty, Job Satisfaction, Motivation, etc.), can also be a process (like training design/evaluation, Knowledge Management, R&D) or a tool/ methodology (e.g. Balanced Scorecard) that you are intending to use in your thesis. Do not forget that when you say that XYZ is the solution (or part of the solution) of the problem faced by the business you will have to explain why. Here is the place to talk about the evolution/ objective/ usage of the models/ theory /technique etc. Some definitions (only the most important) can help the reader understand the model/ theory /techniques/ process. Here you can talk about different candidates of models/theories etc and explain why you have selected that one you are using in your theoretical framework.

Note that the theoretical framework is based upon theories that have already been tested. These are theories that are the result of painstaking research conducted earlier by other investigators. The

theoretical framework is broader in scope and dimension than the conceptual framework. It however involves broad generalizations that reflect relationship between things in a phenomenon.

2.4 CASES (Practical Part/Best Practices)

This section will discuss any cases (world-wide) in the same/similar sector/field that have used the XYZ approach in the past. This is the place to pinpoint the failed and the successful cases. Comparison between different cases is very helpful to show the factors that may have been involved in the failure or the success of a particular case. Those factors may become your base in the building up of the methodological framework in chapter 3. Any variable (or factor) that will appear in your theoretical or conceptual framework in chapter 3 should be mentioned in this section (directly or indirectly).

Note: All above parts/sections *MUST* be supported by secondary sources (literature). That is why this chapter called literature review.

2.5 YOUR OWN BUSINESS CASE

(This section can be introduced instead of or in addition to the previous section - 2.4 CASES - Practical Part/Best Practices). You can structure this section along the lines of your research questions or research objectives, or the issues or themes captured therein.

In this section you will be talking about the signs/symptoms/motivations that have led you to choose your particular management problem. You need to show evidence that those signs/symptoms exist and are valid (i.e. not just the result of your own perception). To do so, secondary data/information, like reports, documents as well as previous studies will be needed. However, if you find it difficult to get this kind of information from secondary sources, primary data must be collected from experts in the field. The information needed at this point may be collected through informal/unstructured interviews with the people that you think will give you the information you are looking for. Your personal experience (or observation) will also be an important source of information.

For example, in a study on the role of information technology in the hospitality industry, the literature review might include the following:

- (i) a brief account of the developments in the hospitality industry.
- (ii) a brief discussion of the main information technology developments in the industry.
- (iii) the trends and developments relating to the IT industry.
- (iv) the views of the experts in the field of IT and Hospitality as reflected in textbooks and journals.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH DESIGN/METHODOLOGY

The conceptual framework differs from the theoretical framework in that it provides the direction that is missing in theoretical framework. Also called research paradigm, the conceptual framework makes things easier by delineating the input as well as output of the research project. One gets to know the variables that need to be tested in a conceptual framework. The conceptual framework specifies the variables that will have to be explored in the investigation. It is specific to the research problem at hand, while the theoretical framework has a broader scope.

There is a need to select an appropriate research design that corresponds with the research problem. The research design is the structure of research that links the empirical data to be collected to the study's initial research questions and ultimately to its conclusions. It involves an empirical investigation of phenomena within their real life context using multiple sources of evidence.

Suggested Contents (if you are using a quantitative method):

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Provide a brief overview of what the reader will read in the chapter.

3.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

3.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

(The proposed Conceptual Model must be justified and described in all its details and must be adjusted according to the type of research you have carried out).

3.4.1 Major Research Question

(In some detail, explain how you reached this question and in what sense it is linked to your purpose and problem)

3.4.2 Minor Research Questions

3.4.3 Hypotheses (Testable propositions about the relationship between two or more variables)

3.4.4 Dependent variables (including definitions)

3.4.5 Independent Variables (including definitions)

3.4.6 Moderating Variables (if any, including definitions)

3.4.7 Intervening Variables (if any, including definitions)

In defining the variables, the possible effects on the dependent variables must be referred to with expressions such as "*it might be*", "*it is hypothesized*" or "*it is assumed*".

3.4.8 Assumptions (List of the assumed conditions, and why, you assumed them).

All assumption must to be supported by secondary data (literatures), or by primary data (interviews).

3.4.9 Limitations (List of limited variables, with a justification)

The limitations have to be realistic and must deal with all types of factors that you think will limit your research.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

Choose an appropriate Research Design for your study. The research design is the strategy, the plan, and the structure of conducting a research project. Give reasons/justification for the chosen research design.

The research design takes into account the following considerations.

- the size of the random sample in relation to the target population.
- the number and the nature of the variables which are researched.
- the time available and the methods of data collection to be used.

Examples of common Quantitative research designs include the following:

- a. Experimental research design
- b. Non-experimental research designs
 - i. Descriptive research design
 - ii. Relationship research designs
 1. Correlation research design
 2. Comparative research design
 3. Causal research design
 - iii. Survey research designs
 1. Cross-sectional research design
 2. Longitudinal research design
- c. Quasi experimental design

3.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.6.1 Target Population, Sampling Frame, Sample Size and Sampling Methods (Justification should be detailed)

3.6.2 Data Collection Instrument and Source (Data series or Scales/Questionnaire/Interviews Questions)

3.6.3 Data Analysis Methods (Data/Information Requirement Table)

This is the operationalization of all model variables that need to be measured. Also the type and scale of the data has to be mentioned (quantitative, qualitative, ordinal, nominal, ratio, ...) as well as the tests that will be used for each and every formulated and developed hypothesis. All the methods for data analysis must be mentioned and justified. Do not also forget to state at which significance level you are going to test. This is also the part where you justify the survey questions you have chosen.

Suggested Contents (if you are using a qualitative method):

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

3.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

(The proposed framework must be justified and described in all its details and must be adjusted according to the type of research you have carried out)

3.4.1 Major Research Question

(In some detail, explain how you reached this question and in what sense it is linked to your objective and problem)

3.4.2 Minor Research Questions

3.4.3 Propositions

3.4.4 Conceptual Framework/Model

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

This takes into account the following considerations.

- the size of the sample in relation to the target population.
- the number and the nature of the concepts (variables) which are researched.
- the time available and the methods of data collection to be used.

Examples of common Qualitative research designs include the following:

- a. Case study research design
- b. Exploratory research design
- c. Ethnographic research design
- d. Descriptive research design
- e. Historical research design
- f. Evaluation research design

3.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.6.1 Target Population and Sampling Methods (Justification should be detailed)

A sample is the group unit that is investigated by the researcher. Thus there is a need to clearly define the group of empirical units amongst which data are to be sought. The Sample needs to be representative, i.e. the sample must reflect, in all relevant details, the population about which the researcher wishes to make a statement.

3.6.2 Data Collection Instrument and Source

You need to state how the actual data was collected and any special influences that may have affected the results. Data sources could be direct and/or indirect:

a) Direct data sources/primary data

Refers to data derived from the researcher's own perceptions. Sources:

- Recorded material
- Verbal and non-verbal behavior
- In-depth interviews

The interviews involve face-to-face interaction and this enables probing, repetition and elucidation. A key consideration is that the respondent is free to respond at length in his/her own words. Informants can be interviewed on an individual basis or in focus groups.

- Focus groups
- Archive material
- Observation (participant or non-participant)

Involves observing phenomenon in order to gain insight into how and why they happen. It is based on real events you observe actual behavior, not verbal responses as in a questionnaire

b) Indirect data sources/secondary data

Refers to information that has been collected by other institutions and researchers. It is available and accessible and the sources of such information/data include:

- Official statistical material e.g. Central Statistical Office, Annual Reports
- Scientific publications
- Data files from past research

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD(S)

State your data analysis methods, indicating why you chose each method. Justification of a method can be based on past research.

Data needs to be analyzed with the aim of uncovering emergent themes and to see if these patterns support or refute the hypotheses or propositions. The use of contemporary computer spreadsheets (e.g. MS-Excel) and statistical packages (e.g. SPSS) can be considered more appropriate for large-scale studies or for structured interviews. A detailed account of what analyses or computations were done by a computer spreadsheet or statistical package must be given.

There are other methods which do not necessarily require the use of software. These can be:

- Categorization

This involves classifying data into meaningful categories which may be derived from the data or from your conceptual framework. There are three main sources from which the category's names can be derived:

- Terms or expressions that emerge from the data analysis
- Terms or expressions used by the participants or interviewees
- Terms or expressions used in the literature

- “Unitizing of Data”

This means that your textual data (e.g. your interviews) must be organized around “units”, which represent key ideas, concepts or categories. A unit of data may be a number of words, a number of sentences, a complete paragraph or some other chunk of textual data.

- Recognizing relationships and developing categories

This is usually carried out with the help of matrices, where you look for the most appropriate relationships between your key categories. This analysis will continue as you search for new categories and patterns or relationships between them.

- Testing hypotheses

The relationships between categories or units of data contain the answers to the hypotheses with which you have started your research. If the relationships are deemed to be valid at stated statistical significance levels, then your hypotheses can be accepted.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter should provide the empirical evidence, findings and analysis based on the questionnaire/interviews/case studies etc. The propositions/hypothesis ought to be tested and findings discussed. Although this chapter can be split, it is usually best to incorporate findings and analysis together. The research must interpret findings sensitively as a basis for making recommendations that are practicable and sound. Ideally the research must reflect serious effort or contribution to knowledge in any of the disciplines taught in the MBA programme. There should be minimum literature references in this chapter as these are the researcher's findings.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Remind the reader of what they will read in the chapter.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS (for quantitative research)

It includes description of the collected data. Here, you may want to start with the reliability test for the data collection instrument (questionnaire) by reporting Cronbach alpha. Then show the relevant Histograms, Frequency tables (e.g. Pie Chart), etc and you should also comment on the results (but be careful, you are describing here the sample and not yet the population).

Note: *At the beginning of each section (in which you will be describing the variables/factors), you may start by referring to the research question (minor) or the Hypothesis explaining to the reader that you are going to test this hypothesis and/or answer that question.*

4.3 INFERENCE DATA ANALYSIS (for quantitative research)

This section is about testing the Hypotheses you have mentioned in chapter 3. All significance levels (or p-values) and degrees of freedom have to be mentioned and reported for each test. You should comment and justify why you rejected or fail-to-rejected a particular hypothesis.

Sometime, you may not have any option but to use the descriptive analysis to answer the research questions. It can happen, but you have to mention that the results still can only be valid for the sample and can only be generalized for the population with the proof that the sample size/selection has little effect on the results.

Do not be disappointed if some or many of the hypotheses have been fail-to-rejected. This may be due to:

- The survey questions not well designed, formulated or understood by the respondents
- Respondents being careless or not serious in answering the questions
- The sample size (collected questionnaires) was not large enough

Whatever the case maybe, the researcher must report the truth whatever the results are.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS (for qualitative research)

In case of *qualitative* research paradigm in which hypothesis testing is rarely found, rather it is about propositions testing. The researcher has to rely mainly on his/her explanations and

interpretation. The analysis may be centred on propositions informed by the extant literature and the approach seeks to confirm or refute these propositions through empirical evidence.

The beginning of qualitative analysis is the description of the event, the activity and perceptions of participants, and the context in which the event occurs. This may involve detailed case study write-ups for each site and may include company histories and backgrounds. The overall idea is to become intimately familiar with each case as a stand-alone entity. This process allows the unique patterns of each case to emerge.

To avoid the danger of hastily drawing conclusions, there is a need to look at the data in many divergent ways. This approach allows the researcher to look for subtle similarities and differences between cases. Another approach is to divide the data by its source, observational data and reviewing interview data separately, guided by propositions.

From the within-site analysis, cross-site tactics and overall impressions, tentative themes, patterns and concepts begin to emerge. The approaches employed for cross-case pattern searching involve selecting categories, and then looking for within-group similarities coupled with inter-group differences.

In order to compare and contrast the patterns in different organizations, the cases are integrated together. Responses to the same questions are compared to establish similarities and differences between both employees and management. It is important to establish whether people are emphasizing different themes or not, in what respect the responses are complementary, whether there was agreement between what both management and employees were saying and whether synthesis was possible.

Analysis comprises an iterative process whereby emergent themes are formulated, examined against existing theories, and re-formulated. Detailed analysis is conducted to discover additional themes and concepts and build toward an overall explanation. The goal is to integrate the themes and concepts into a theory that offers an accurate, detailed and yet subtle interpretation of the research.

4.5 DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Here you have to compile and link your research results with your research objectives, in order to answer your research questions. You must also refer to the literature in chapter 2, in order to support your findings. Do not forget that this chapter is your own ground, i.e. you should use your own language and opinion in the interpretation of the results, of course with the support of the literature. It is also about benchmarking your results with respect to the results and the finding from the other literatures. There is a need to ascertain whether your findings are in conformity or contradiction with the extant literature and give further explanation why this is so.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The chapter presents a summary of key conclusions, conclusions of the study, including their theoretical and managerial implications. Recommendations for practical implementation to solve the problem are also made, including recommendations for further research.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Remind the reader of your problem statement, research objectives, research questions, and propositions or hypotheses.

5.2 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

You should summarize the most important findings (from chapter 4) here.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

Give your answers to the major research question(s) in the light of your key findings.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This is where you make your recommendations (based on the findings) for the organization, the business, the industry, the customers, etc. Make sure that all recommendations have come from the research that you have done. Do not surprise the readers with recommendations that are coming from somewhere else, i.e. not related to your research- this can be understood that your research has not added any new knowledge and that you could have reached the same conclusions without conducting your research - (very dangerous!). Also try to be objective, pragmatic and realistic in your recommendations. You can also classify your recommendations based on the groups that they are addressed to (Government, Management, Company's Shareholders, Employees,etc).

5.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

This section is intended for you to suggest improvement or new ideas, but it must come from current research. Do not forget that the source for such ideas and improvement may be the assumptions and limitations that you have mentioned in chapter 3.

6. REFERENCES

Please follow the guide on Turabian System for referencing.

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE OR/AND INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

APPENDIX B: MAY BE A GLOSSARY FOR ALL IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

APPENDIX C:

NOTES ON HOW TO WRITE THE ABSTRACT

The ABSTRACT should be written last and placed in the preliminary pages as shown in the structure at the beginning of this document. The abstract should give a synopsis of your thesis. It is the equivalent of the executive summary in non-academic reports.

A good abstract explains in one line why the research paper is important. It then goes on to give a summary of your major results, preferably couched in numbers with error limits. The final sentences explain the major implications of your work. A good abstract is concise, readable, and quantitative.

- Length of abstract should be not more than one page, approx. 300 words.
- Abstracts generally do not have citations.
- Information in title should not be repeated.
- Be explicit.
- Use numbers where appropriate.
- Answers to these questions should be found in the abstract:
 1. What did you do? What was the research problem?
 2. Why did you do it? What question were you trying to answer?
 3. How did you do it? State methods.
 4. What did you learn? State major results and conclusions.
 5. Why does it matter? Point out at least one significant implication.