

## **Exploring strategic innovation in the success of private health care business: A conceptual model**

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**Abstract.** Private Healthcare business is important to developing economies as they are less populated hence imperative for emergency healthcare assistance since public hospitals are overburdened and short staffed. These objectives are important for Zimbabwe since Covid-19 wreaked havoc on the country's healthcare industry in ways no one expected. In Zimbabwe, state hospitals were overburdened, so those with more disposable income flocked to private hospitals. The private hospital faced challenges of more patients and speed to attend to patients who require emergencies in order to cope with new healthcare trends brought on by the pandemic. Operational costs remained high yet innovation provides an opportunity for cost management and improving chances of success. In view of these possible contributions, this paper sought to establish whether strategic innovation can improve success of private healthcare business. This paper contributes to literature on technology acceptance, strategic innovation, and success of private healthcare business. To achieve that, the researchers reviewed and developed a conceptual model using literature on strategic innovation, technology acceptance, and private healthcare performance. The model and paper at large are original in that it takes a strategic innovation and developing country perspective.

**Keywords:** *Strategy, Innovation, Healthcare, Technology*

### **Introduction**

The healthcare industry has seen significant transformation in the last year, with new business models, unanticipated collaborations, and expedited schedules forcing firms to rethink how they operate. Many of these shifts are expected to continue. The healthcare sector has traditionally been a delinquent throughout digital adoption, according to Dal Mas et al (2020), but the pandemic has thrown a major jolt of pressure to integrate new tools and technologies. Providers quickly scaled their offerings, and within a few months into the epidemic, they were seeing 50 to 175 times the number of patients via telemedicine. Providers have also embraced digital connection with patients and communities in a more widespread way, such as sending out proactive messages about COVID-19-related protocols. Meanwhile, pharmaceutical and medtech firms have increased their spending on digitally connected clinical trials and customer engagement models (Zanman, 2020). The epidemic has highlighted the extent to which healthcare may be offered remotely, including virtual care and remote patient monitoring, as well as virtual collaboration for pharmaceutical and medtech industry specialists. This concept allows for more flexibility and allows enterprises to tap into a larger pool of talent. Leaders in the healthcare industry are also rethinking old working standards and implementing new policies, such as providing aid to overcome videoconferencing fatigue (Berry et al, 2019). Many healthcare companies will have to modify their operations and their mindsets to adapt to these shifts, as well as a slew of others.

Prioritizing innovation during a crisis, according to previous research, can assist unlock development in the recovery if executives approach it with dedication and build crucial competencies and processes (Kodoma, 2018). Covid-19 wreaked havoc on the healthcare industry in ways no one expected, and in Zimbabwe, state hospitals were overburdened, so those with more disposable income flocked to private hospitals. As a result, private healthcare businesses were forced to strategically innovate in order to cope with new healthcare trends brought on by the pandemic. Because this is a developing field with no way of knowing when the pandemic will end, private healthcare institutions must be innovative in order to meet demand and stay in business.

This concept paper will identify the strategic innovation measures used by private hospitals and assess the effectiveness of the strategic innovation measures used by private hospitals. The outcomes of concept paper may aid the private hospitals and other stakeholders in understanding the importance of strategic innovation in achieving success. The concept paper could also help private hospitals improve its strategic innovation efficiency. Furthermore, end users of private hospitals will benefit from the study because they will gain a better knowledge of why it is critical for private hospitals to embrace strategic innovation in their business and how this will improve user experience.

### **1. Significance of Private healthcare business**

Private hospitals have the greatest advantage in that their capacity is limited, allowing them to give individualised care to their patients. Instead of packed hospital beds and shared rooms, as well as a dearth of staff and practitioners, these clinics will provide patients with the immediate attention and care they deserve (Kruse et al, 2018). This makes the patient's experience as pleasant as possible by paying close attention to detail and providing thorough care. The patient's experience is further influenced by the fact that certain hospitals provide 24-hour care while others handle simple procedures and checks. Specialist treatment is often provided by and in private clinics and hospitals. As a result, services may be more limited yet targeted, and patients are more likely to see a highly skilled, specialised healthcare professional. Aesthetic medicine and drug and addiction therapy are also available through private businesses. The private hospitals concentrate on providing a small number of specialised therapies to patients who need them, allowing them to focus on service delivery and excellent care (Creixans-Tenas et al, 2019). The patient-to-doctor and staff-to-patient ratio is what allows private hospitals to provide such individualised treatment while also reducing wait times. The doctor-to-patient ratio is also substantially lower on average, allowing the healthcare professional to devote more time and attention to the patient's concerns and condition. Private clinics invest considerably in the greatest technology and equipment because of their privatised setup and specialised clientele and services (Dewanto and Wardhani, 2018).

### **2. Private Healthcare drivers in Zimbabwe**

Murewanhema (2022) states that private healthcare drivers in Zimbabwe include the staffing expertise. Most of the public hospitals expert staff end up going abroad to work because of meagre salaries they will be earning in Zimbabwe. Therefore, as stated by Tadokera et al (2021) the private healthcare sector in Zimbabwe manages to attract the expert staff because of attractive salaries and allowances they offer which on the current rate being paid by the government is more than ten times.

The other driver to private healthcare in Zimbabwe is technology that is possessed by private hospitals that is not available in public hospitals. Nhapi (2019) highlights that the Trauma centre Borrowdale was during the onset of Covid-19 the only hospital that had a ventilator and other technology that were recommended for critical patients with progressive Covid-19. Therefore, a lot of people end up choosing private hospitals over public hospital because of the availability of essential technology.

### **3. Major Challenges to Private healthcare business**

The dynamics of both hardware and software are shifting in today's tech ecosystem. According to Maborekwe et al (2019), IoT connects 48 percent of medical equipment, with that number predicted to rise to 68 percent in the next five years. According to Gnanlet et al (2019), the connected medical device industry is predicted to triple in size between 2019 and 2023. Advance technologies such as AI and

machine learning are now being employed in hospital software applications such as Appointment Management System, Patient Administration System, and Laboratory Information Management System. To fully realise the promise of healthcare technology to revolutionise health systems and create a more connected healthcare environment, healthcare leaders and physicians must strengthen their relationships with other stakeholders. This is a challenge for a developing country like Zimbabwe with a disintegrated healthcare system.

The healthcare expense crisis is not new. Many parties, including device makers, medical prescription producers, payers, and insurance policy providers, have a vital role in setting the cost of healthcare services. When there are so many stakeholders engaged, conflict is unavoidable. And reaching an agreement takes time and careful effort. The rising cost of healthcare has a direct impact on private healthcare organisations' revenue, as increased costs discourage people in a variety of ways, from obtaining lab testing to following up with regular follow-ups after a visit, resulting in poor patient outcomes (Kodoma, 2018).

#### **4. Methodology**

Desktop review approach was used in the study. Scanning the literature, assessing secondary data, and compiling a reference list are all part of the desk review process, which ensures that all papers are organised and accessible to all team members. The desk review process was led by the team coordinator in cooperation with the other supervisors of this concept paper. To improve the overall effectiveness of study, existing data was summarised and compiled. Research material released in research reports and other comparable materials is considered secondary research.

#### **5. Assumptions**

It will be assumed that all study participants presented their ideas, insights, and suggestions honestly, autonomously, and as correctly as feasible. During the study's period, the financial, judicial, and geopolitical environments held steady.

#### **6. Conceptual framework**

For this concept paper the key operative word is strategic innovation and is fundamentally the independent variable of the conceptual framework with aspects like technology, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness being modifiers of the independent variable. Thus, PSMI is the dependent variable. Hence the health success of private organisation in the form of PSMI will depend on the strategic innovation that are deployed whether in a positive or negative manner. Equally, the conceptual framework will have what are known as moderators as posited by Smith (2018) which modify the independent variable (strategic innovation) such as perceived ease of use which consequently influencing the outcome on the dependent variable which is dependable.

#### **7. Discussion and conclusion**

According to Zamnan (2020) in the United States, the US Food and Drug Administration deployed a range of measures (such as issuing new guidance, establishing new industry engagement models, and issuing emergency use authorizations) designed to support the COVID-19 response across the range of products it regulates. In several instances, the FDA stipulated or requested that manufacturers gather data derived from the real-world use of products in order to better characterize performance, understand supply-chain vulnerability, and support additional development activity, both throughout and beyond the pandemic (Zaman, 2020).

Berry et al (2020) suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the benefits of nontraditional and creative partnerships and collaborations in quickly finding creative solutions to urgent problems—from the health and auto industries teaming up to build ventilators, to pharmaceutical sector competitors collaborating to hasten the development of a COVID-19 vaccine, to healthcare providers partnering with technology companies to deliver COVID-19 apps and solutions. Experts expect such extensions of the healthcare ecosystem to be the way of the future, with more partnerships

and consortia that pool capital, assets, and capabilities, both to bring operational synergies and drive innovation (Berry et al, 2019).

Strategic creation is the application of reimagining or redesigning an institution's company's strategy in effort to enhance company growth, add value to the firm and its customers, and obtain a competitive advantage (Grillitsch et al, 2019). Businesses must use this type of innovation to keep up with the rapid speed of development progress. Companies that embrace strategic innovation are not need to modify the products and services they sell to their clients, nor even the technology enables these services, in order to thrive. The term "strategic innovation" refers to initiatives that take place at the executive level (Mohamed et al, 2020).

According to AlQershi et al (2021) corporate strategies could include the following considerations: what services or products need to be reinvented or developed; what markets to compete in; what business models to develop; how to optimize business processes; how to expand the customer base; how to position the company's brand in relation to target customers; how to make the supply chain and value chain more efficient; and go-to-market strategy. Although strategic innovation initiatives are led by senior leaders, they need to foster a culture of innovation that encourages collaboration across business teams and functions.

In his study of a strategic innovation in an Asian organization, Kodoma (2018) uncovered a phenomenon called as disruptive innovation. According to his research, the company provided a novel business strategy which challenges or disrupts the business models of opponents. As a result of the Asia industry's choice to give free delivery, other e-commerce businesses have been compelled to offer free or reduced shipping in that area. Berry (2020) discusses radical innovation, which he claims necessitates technological innovation while remaining compatible with the present economic paradigm. Companies like Infarm, which employs remotely managed farming technology to grow vegetables within stores, rely on the traditional retail model to serve customers with fresh local produce. Architectural innovation is the other type of strategic innovation, which is essentially a combination of new technology and a change in business model. Architectural innovation can be the most difficult to implement (Berry et al, 2019).

The need of carefully planning the implementation of health information technology by businesses is highlighted in the study by Mukono and Tokosi (2019). The major users of the health information implementation at PSMI must be engaged and involved in order for them to embrace and own the system. This will increase the likelihood of future health information technology project implementations dramatically.

Gwayagwaya (2020) assessed the surveillance of antibiotic prescribing practices and resistance trends at an accredited private hospital in Zimbabwe. The researcher of the aforementioned study discovered that PSMI's surveillance system for monitoring prescribing practices and reporting resistance patterns in low-income countries' healthcare facilities will help to reduce antibiotic resistance by adding data to national health systems and assisting in the development of national antibiotic policy and antibiotic stewardship programs. However, adoption levels at PSMI were quite low.

Chisveto (2017) looked at how a centralized treasury management system affected business operations, with a focus on PSMI. The study looked into the reasons for the company's use of a centralized treasury management system, the costs associated with the current treasury management system, how the centralized treasury management system affects the flow of goods and services across the company's business units, and drew strategic conclusions about centralised treasury management for the company. The findings revealed that finance managers from strategic business units are only involved in financial data consolidation. The findings point to the necessity for an effective hybrid treasury structure that combines the advantages of both centralization and decentralization. A supportive information technology system is also recommended by the organization to facilitate effective decision making and resource allocation among the strategic business units.

The findings from the review of local literature highlight that strategic innovation has low impact on performance of private hospitals. The findings are accurate for strategic innovation developing countries as the study by Palesa (2018) of a company in Zambia demonstrated that because of limited technology

advancement and complex organisation structure made it difficult for strategic innovation to be implemented and ultimately be successful.

The study via literature review also found that some private hospitals in the form of PSMI for instance as stated by Berth et al (2020) have started using big data analytics to provide faster and more accurate diagnoses for its patients. The new system can comb through thousands of data points about each patient to diagnose the condition and find treatment options nearly instantly.

Mpedu et al (2021) indicates that strategic innovation in healthcare can drive drive economic growth by improving efficiency and increasing productivity, as well as optimizing patient outcomes.

The study also noted the key barriers to the effectiveness of strategic innovation. Lee et al (2021) states that inadequate effort devoted to effectiveness made strategic innovation to fail. Lee et al (2021) observed that cost-effectiveness is generally not rigorously assessed during the course of development. Drug and device development are an expensive and lengthy process. It is hard for companies to justify further dollars and time in cost-effectiveness studies, particularly as there are no agreed-upon set of measures by the industry and payers. As result, there is an opportunity to develop a stronger and commonly agreed upon scientific foundation for cost-effectiveness measures and studies.

Not enough patients entering RCTs (randomized controlled trials). The study by Goldberg et al (2020) identified several reasons for this. Patients are reluctant to accept the default arm of trials, often not considered an equivalent therapy. For many patients with cancer, treatment is a “one-shot chance” and they want to take the option recommended by their physicians. Further there is less reliance on evidence-based medicine in cancer treatment and too great a tendency for premature adoption of therapies based on presentations at major conferences. Finally, managed care plans generally refuse to encourage participation in trials.

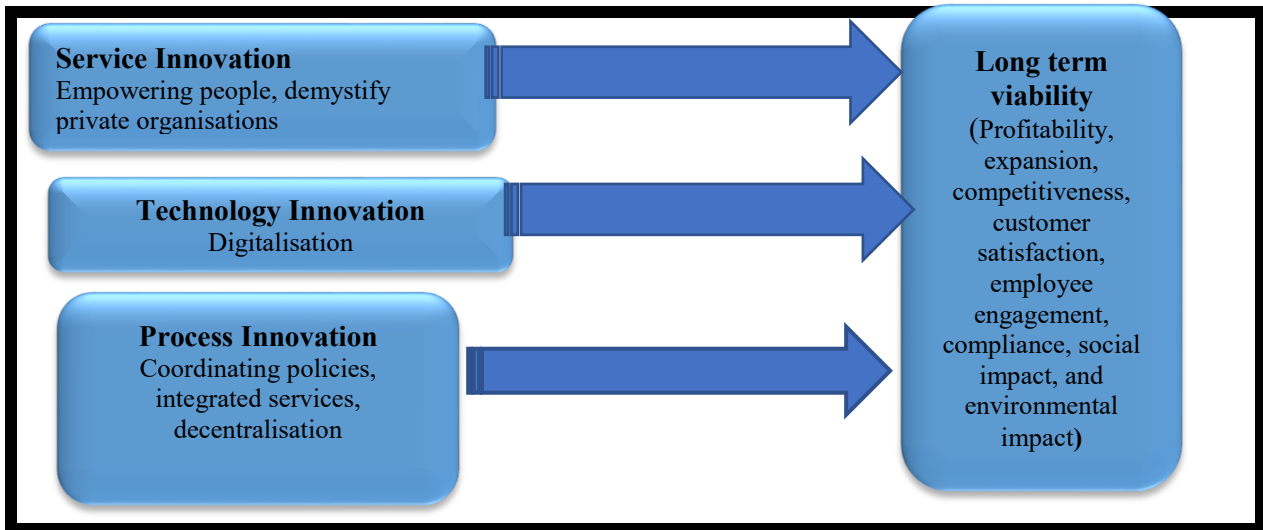
Mpilo et al (2021) stated that reimbursement policies not friendly to innovation. The underuse and overuse of medical technologies suggest that the right incentives may not be in place. Jen et al (2019) suggest that fee-for-service payment systems reward individual acts by individual people. They do not support very well integrated delivery capabilities increasingly necessary to treat a wide range of chronic conditions, such as congestive heart failure and diabetes. Public policy changes a major uncertainty for venture capitalists. With regard to investing in medical innovation, venture capitalists understand how to evaluate technology and development risks, it is difficult for them to assess the degree to which the public policy rules will change. Mee (2019) said that to foster innovation public policies must be consistent in order to have a salutary effect on prices, the investments required, and the timeframe from idea to marketplace. He asserted that price controls are disincentives to investment and speculated that a mandatory pharmacy benefit under medical insurance would likely be accompanied by price controls and therefore could be a disincentive to investment and innovation. Shortening the life of patents is also a disincentive to investment. In addition, a consistent approach to coverage and reimbursement decisions is desirable.

In recent years investment costs have been increasing. It has been 10 years since the discovery of the cystic fibrosis gene and there is still no therapy derived from this discovery (Gin and Bee et al (2019). The timeframes and the amounts of money needed to develop genomic therapies are still unknown. The requirements for clinical trials and regulatory review are important determinants of overall development timescales—up to 8 years out of a typical 15-year development cycle for a new drug. Bloom et al (2019) said that recent public policy changes have helped with carrying out clinical trials, and over the past few years the time for regulatory review has also improved.

## 8. Recommendations – A Conceptual Model

### Independent variables

### Dependant variable



## 9. Tenants of Conceptual Model

### 9.1. Investing in Digitalisation

PSMI needs to invest in digitalisation in order to foster strategic innovation timely. Advances in digital health can also benefit healthcare professionals. By greatly boosting access to health data and allowing individuals greater influence over their health, digital tools provide healthcare providers with a comprehensive perspective of their patients' health. As a result, efficiency has increased and medical results have improved. Digital health technology aid clinicians in reducing inefficiencies, increasing access, lowering costs, improving quality, and personalising treatment for patients. At the same time, digital health technologies make it easier for patients and consumers to monitor and track their health and wellness activities.

### 9.2. Setting up of Coordinating policies

Moreover, the review laid out that there is no union as far as guaranteeing accessibility of key framework at strategy level where the vast majority of key suppliers, for example, network access suppliers focus on arrangement of such administrations in currently evolved regions disregarding the not so worthwhile vacation destination zones consequently these regions remain minimized. Created nations running against the norm have strategies that advance issues, for example, foundation sharing which guarantee that such key framework is very much accommodated according to a planned perspective with the different players seeking administration conveyance not responsibility for. The specialists that is both the Ministries of ICT and Tourism inside the Zimbabwean setting ought to return to the drive on framework sharing where arms, for example, the POTRAZ become the foundation controllers where all the different specialist organizations contend on arrangement of genuine administrations and not on foundation abilities. These discoveries highlight the endeavours that different nations that have kept triumphs in reception and execution of IOT in medical care business have carried out consequently introducing a hole inside the setting of the Zimbabwe supporting the reasoning of the review.

### 9.3. Rewarding the employees through empowerment

Employee engagement rises when they are rewarded and recognised, which boosts retention and contributes to a more favourable workplace environment. Incorporating a rewards and recognition programme can assist boost employee engagement, which can lead to a variety of business benefits such

as greater productivity and retention. Employees at PSMI should be encouraged to express their thoughts. Others may be hesitant to break from the norms because they are fearful of introducing new thought processes to their staff. PSMI should recognise and promote innovative thinking because it provides a strong incentive for idea sharing and can help to stimulate the creative process.

#### *9.4. Decentralisation*

Lower levels gain more autonomy or independence as a result of decentralisation. This allows subordinates to do tasks in the most efficient manner possible for their department. When each department strives to be the best it can be, production rises and more revenue is generated, which can be used to expand the company. The delegation of authority at the intermediate and lower levels demonstrates the top level's trust and faith in their subordinates, and this trust and faith motivates employees at all levels because they are free to make decisions without seeking approval from superiors. Decentralization managers at the lower and middle levels are also taught how to make choices.

### **10. Feasibility and Justification of recommended strategy**

The research and development center recommended as part of capacity building and training. This idea is justified because establishing a research development and training center will also help ensure that a preceding center of development for other industries will be set paving way for an inclusive adoption of the recommended conceptual model across the various facets of the economy of the country and thus will prove to be a springboard for adoption of strategic innovation developments. This argument has further been postulated by Tice J (2019) where she stipulated that an effective contemporary strategic innovation roadmap has to address issues of capacity development where emphasis was also placed on ensuring that necessary structures for enhancing strategic model is a key issue through training, research and development. Therefore, the establishment of a research and development center contribution to the initial conceptual model is a futuristic development thus the conceptual model becomes scalable.

In establishing the founding conceptual model, the researcher was of the idea that the concept be open for willing players but input from the findings of the study has pointed out this could be a potential area for an unsuccessful conceptual model. The basis of the argument was on the fact that voluntary infrastructure sharing option was previously attempted but could not yield any meaningful impact to the private hospital industry however, the contribution rationale was also to ensure that the various stakeholders within the industry have access to any infrastructure requirements without ownership costs associated and this could foster such players to adopt strategic initiatives by private hospitals. This argument was incorporated due to the fact that contribution from the key informants of the study was in sync with the assertions done by Kotonya et al (2017) who clearly pointed out that infrastructure complexities are a major drawback in terms of strategic innovation setups especially in developing countries, therefore inclusion of this perspective as proposed by key informants of this study would help plug a gap that had been already alluded to. This implies that by resolving this concern the conceptual model would have mitigated on the rising concerns of the strategic innovations by private industries.

The researcher's recommendations emphasize the need to note that the engagement of service providers was essential but also highlighted that such an effort would best achieve intended results if various ministries such as the Ministry of ICT were to be roped in for ease of incorporation of such conceptual model considerations as well as for ease of incorporation of other government bodies such as POTRAZ for the regularization part of any policies within the conceptual model. This input was adopted as presented given the need to stir a sound buy in which calls for more inclusion of all key stakeholders. Exclusion of key stakeholders would enhance delays in implementation of any conceptual model to be designed from the research. Stakeholder engagement would be vital as thus initiative is at industry level hence the bearing of such a conceptual model would then be used as a stencil for cascading enabling conceptual models for other industries alike hence it is imperative to revisit the initial conceptual model to capture the input of some of the key informants of the study.

## **11. Implementation guide/model**

The implement the conceptual model it is imperative to have perpetual study mechanism that entails continual service improvement of the conceptual model. The fact that this conceptual model is still a novel, there is a notable requirement for a study mechanism to ensure the model continues to improve and this is further buttressing the assertion of a control mechanism where the output from the control efforts should trigger a study of the conceptual model and this process is an iterative process that is applied to every stage of the conceptual model. This implies that every conceptual model stage is systematically studied for any possible improvement as well as an evaluation of the control environment also for improvement and mitigation of risks identified.

The idea of a self-regulating conceptual model that addresses issues of monitoring and control is proposed for implementation of the suggested conceptual model. The existence of a control conceptual model would aide in the improvement of risk mitigation strategies to alleviate the upcoming security challenges and the fact that these processes are iterative covering every stage or phase of the conceptual model, this implies that monitoring and controls are vigorously applied to the entire conceptual model to ensure that risks are identified and resolved timeously within the conceptual model.

## **12. Contributions**

### *12.1. Theoretical Contributions*

The study's findings will help future studies to build up for their respective studies in relation to the role of strategic innovation in private healthcare. Equally, the study findings assist with the understanding of the strategic innovation implementation challenges that are faced by private healthcare business. Equally, the study exposes some of the potential of the study that can be utilized by adopting the suggested conceptual model. The study also demonstrates the manner in which the recommended conceptual model has to be implemented to achieve optimal results.

### *12.2. Innovative Practical Innovations*

The study also established the non-existence of a guiding conceptual model to regularize and promote adoption of the strategic innovation strategies as well as to help private healthcare industry players navigate through the noted concerns which these organizations or entities could not independently address due to incapacitation. As alluded to in the second chapter of this research, countries such as Malaysia which have started to realize improved adoption of IOTs within the private healthcare industry as well as China, guiding strategies and conceptual models have been designed to help improve these industries come up with strategic innovation initiatives but these conceptual models and strategies have been missing in the context of the Zimbabwean private healthcare industry and resultantly there has been a lagging behind in terms of the levels of adoption. Establishment of such strategies and conceptual model helps industries realize coordinated benefits across the entire industry thus helping all stakeholders within the industry come up with complementing efforts to realize the goal of enhancing adoption of strategic innovation strategies within the industry. As a result, the research through engagement of various identified key contributors drawn from various industries with a basis of strategic innovation experience and academic knowledge have helped come up with the recommended conceptual model that could be adopted to enhance the adoption of a guiding strategic innovation adoption within the private healthcare industry.

## **13. Limitations of proposed solutions**

The research calls for coordinated efforts of private healthcare industry for infrastructure sharing to reduce potential costs of some of the strategic innovation initiatives but this depends on how the private health industry are willing to participate and self-organize. This is difficult for the researcher at this stage to predict how successful that will be hence the suggested solutions remain speculative and depended on how the respective private industry mobilize and crucially significant players with significant capacity to carry on financially worker private hospitals.

The researcher also calls for the government to support by assisting with co-coordinated policies which will create consistency and ultimately the ease of implementing the conceptual model at a higher level. Again, it is unclear whether the government is willing to invest itself into regulating private



healthcare business when the hospitals under its own guidance is failing indicating that the policy making efforts already may not be motivating.

The suggested conceptual framework has perpetual study mechanism which will require set aside budget for it to be feasible and robust. Considering how economic situation in Zimbabwe, this may be a limiting factor for most of the private health businesses in Zimbabwe.

#### **14. Limitations of concept paper**

The main alternative sources recommended were books and the internet. Recorded sources are restricted because explicit access is required, which the analyst lacks. Due to budget constraints, the analyst was unable to go on more extensive trips that would have been beneficial to the investigation. By completing the majority of the necessary obligations on the outings that were taken, the specialist had the choice of reducing the number of excursions taken while maintaining their productivity. There are a few local resources on important development in secret medical care offices. digitalization. This study looked at sources from unfortunate countries to better understand possible social consequences.

#### **15. Further Research**

Future studies can look at the role of strategic innovation in private healthcare business beyond just one country for instance a regional examination.

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