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A PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN A VOLATILE ECONOMY.A CASE STUDY OF MUREWA RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

BY

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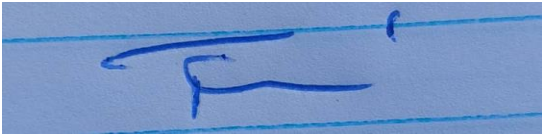
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APPROVAL FORM

I hereby affirm that I have carefully reviewed and endorse the submission of a research project titled "A performance measurement framework of the local government in a volatile economy. A case study of Murewa Rural District Council."This project was presented to the esteemed Bindura University of Science Education as part of the necessary criteria for the completion of a Bachelor of Accountancy Honours Degree.

To be completed by student

I confirm that this dissertation complies with the formatting and preparation guidelines stipulated in the faculty's official guidelines for dissertations, ensuring that it meets the prescribed standards for presentation and submission.

Signature of student……………………………………………….Date……24/09/2024

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I hereby confirm that, to the best of my knowledge and abilities, all necessary procedures have been duly followed, and the required preparation criteria have been satisfactorily met for this dissertation, ensuring its completeness and readiness for submission.

Signature   of   Chairperson……………   …………..Date……24/09/2024

DEDICATIONS

I extend my heartfelt dedication to there markable women in my life, whose influential roles have profoundly shaped who I am today. Firstly, to my mother, whose enduring love and support have consistently inspired me. Next, I express gratitude to my wife, whose steadfast belief in me has been a driving force behind my achievements.Additionally,I want to acknowledge my loving and supportive guardian, whose unwavering presence has been a source of strength throughout my journey. Finally, I am thankful to my brothers, sisters, and friends for their enduring support, encouragement, and willingness to lend a helping hand when needed. This study is dedicated to all of you, for your unwavering support and faith in me.

Abstract

In Zimbabwe, rural local authorities are essential to the country's growth by providing essential servicestotheircommunities.However,theyhavefacedcriticismfornotmeetingservicedemands adequately. To address this, Zimbabwean local authorities have adopted performance measurement systemstoimproveservicedeliveryandensuretransparent useofpublicresources. Despite this, there is limited understanding oftheir effectiveness, especiallyinruralareas. To fill this gap, a qualitative studywas conducted, focusing onthe Murewa RuralDistrict Council. The study involved fifteen participants and aimed the evaluate performance measurement systems revealedthattheabsenceofastrategicplanimpededoperations, includingtheeffectivenessofthe performance measurement system. Additionally, unclear service delivery and performance measurement objectives this difficulty made it challenging to establish meaningful correlations betweenthem.Eventhoughtherewerecontractualobligationsforperformanceinplace,therewas littleindicationofongoingassessmentsortheuseofdataprovided bythesystemfor otherhuman resource procedures. Remarkably, the organization examined the system of measurement of performance separately, failing to integrate it with crucial processes such as reward management, leading to minimal impact on overall performance. To improve implementation, developing a comprehensive strategic plan, conducting regular evaluations, and integrating the system with other human resource processes are crucial. The organization must reconsider its approach to performance measurement, focusing on broader integration with human resource measurement processes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER1

INTRODUCTION

Backgroundofthestudy

In Zimbabwe, district councils, or local rural authorities, are the subordinate branches of state authority that were instituted by law. Formed by the regulations outlined in the Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29), these councils function as comparatively independent bodies subject to nationalgovernment rulesand instructions. Even iftheyhave some autonomy, theyeventually have to abide by the current system of governance. Inside their respective purview, they supplement the main administration's development initiatives. The success of local government development initiatives hinges greatly on the performance of local authorities.

Withthe passage ofthe RuralDistrict Councils Act in1995, rurallocalauthorities assumed their present configuration [Chapter 29:13]. The Act effectively eliminated the racialized rural local governance systems that were left over from colonialism. The former district councils, which servedthewell-beingoftheblackpopulation,weremergedwiththepreviouslocalcouncils,which primarily served the needs ofthe colonial farmers. The localruralauthorities were established as aresultofthismerger(http://www.mlqurd.qov.zw/about-the-ministry).ReachedonDecember23, 2023.

New duties arose from merging; the rural local authorities are no longer only "road development councils," as was formerly the term used to characterize their primary duty. In addition to maintainingroads,ruraldistrictcouncilsareindutyofprovidingsocialamenitieslikerecreational, educational, and medical services. In addition, they play a pivotal role of protecting the environment, management ofcommunitydevelopment, and planning (Olowu 2009).The Former

The RuralDistrict Councils Act outlinesa comprehensive agenda, assigning sixty-four functions to rural local authorities, a selection of which is provided here (Chapter 29:13).

Rural district councils allow rural communities to participate at the local level in decisions that impact them. Participation in council elections allows for democratic representation at the local level. Italsoinvolvesongoingcommunicationwiththecounciltoensurethatthegoalsanddesires ofthecommunityarereflected initsplansandworkschedules.Therefore,localauthoritiescanbe moreresponsibletothesocietiesastheyrepresentthepeoplethanthefederalgovernmentbybeing closer to them (Olowu, 2009).

According to Olowu (2009), local governments are crucial to the "improvement of essential facilities crucial for the economic and political advancement of the nation." retrieved March 23, 2014). They fulfill a crucial function in a nation's attempts to progress politically and socioeconomically. As a result, their performance is crucial. Considering that 61.4% of Zimbabweansresideinruralareas,thisisespeciallytrue(Zimstat NationalCensusReport,2022).

Nonetheless, insignificant deliveryofservices has beenseenas falling shortofpeople's demands andopportunitieshavebeenleveledatlocalauthoritiesgenerally.Localgovernmentsinruralareas have a reputation for being ineffective organizations with scant or no performance history. Ratepayers regularly complain or voice their disapproval of rural local authorities for not delivering the services they are obligated to deliver. The government ministries such as Public Works,LocalGovernment,andNationalHousing,arethebranchofthefundamentalgovernment, which has also voiced its concern with local authorities' general lack ofadequate performance of delivery service mission (The Herald, December 29, 2022).

Overall observation suggests that there is some validity to this criticism. The degree of services thatratepayershaveexpectedfromrurallocaladministrationshasnotalwaysbeenmet.Numerous roads have been in a condition of disrepair for an extended length of time, while schools and council clinics have been left without proper provisions for extended periods. Against the backdrop, the local authorities have kept collecting revenue from the general residents. The number oflocalcouncils have also talked a lot about the tacticalstrategies they have established to enhance the quality of services. Conversely, there hasn't been much unique service delivery functioning in most of the communities.

To boost employee performance and, in turn, improve the delivery of services, rural local authorities have put into operation various forms of performance-controlling systems in recent years.Thelocalauthoritiesthemselvesmayhavestartedthis,oritmayhavebeentheconsequence ofordersfromtheMinistryofNationalHousing,PublicWorks,andLocalGovernment.Onecould consider local government performance measurement to be an extension of central government performancemeasurement.EarlyinNationalHousinginthe1990s,theperformancemeasurement system was implemented at the federal level (Musingafi et al., 2014:94–107). However, poor servicedeliveryhaspersistedandbeenmadeworserecentlybytheworseningstateofthenational economy.

TheOperationalEnvironment

The operational environment of rural local authorities can facilitate the appropriate placement ofthe operations. The councils'attitudes and performance are best understood inthecontextoftheiroperatingenvironment since theyare influenced byit likeanyother institution.

1.1 .1PoliticalFactors

Zimbabwe's local authorities' system plays a substantial role in the political processes of the country.Councilsareestablished bythepoliticalprocessofballot votes,inwhichpoliticalparties support the majority of the candidates. Because political parties use the local authorities' actions toachievetheiragendas,thisexposesthe localauthoritiestopoliticalpressure. Localgovernment boards are frequently used by political parties as chessboards to maneuver for benefit. The local authoritieshavenot beenimmunetothedivisivepoliticalclimatethat haspervadedZimbabwe in recent times. Council members' performance has occasionally been compromised by being torn between conflicting political interests.

The federal government also exercises authority and supervision over local administrations through the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministries have significant authority to oversee andmanagetheoperationsofrurallocalgovernmentundertheprovisionsoftheRuralDistrict

Councils Act [Chapter 29:13]. "The federalgovernment seeks to support the ethics ofdelegation byreassigningresponsibilitiesandobligationstolocalgovernmentwhileholdingdecision-making power and authority," writes Mukoyi (2021).

Theenvironmentthatruralcouncilsmustfunctioninisshapedbythesepoliticalforces,whichcan have both positive and negative effects.

1.1.2 EconomicFactors

The economic climate that prevails in Zimbabwe has an impact onruraldistrict councils as well. In recent years, the country has faced extreme volatility in the formof hyperinflation, which led to the rejection of transitioning from local currency to adopting a foreign currency system in 2009such as the American dollar and Rands. While this provided some economic stability, that was not aremedyfor the economic problems in Zimbabwe, whichwill still exist even more than sixyears lateroneofwhichistheliquescencycriticalsituationthathas mutedtradeandindustrial activities (Mambondiani, 2013).

In the current economic climate, ratepayers expect rural district councils to provide the services thattheirconstituentsdemand.Theseratepayersalsofacefinancialchallengesthathaveanimpact on rural localcouncils and manifest as reduced income inflows for the regional district councils. Despite these challenges, residents (ratepayers) still anticipate the rural local councils to fulfill their obligations. In these situations, measurement of performance may take on even greater significance.Localauthoritiesareexpectedtoutilizewhateverlimitedavailableresources—which are always insufficient everywhere, they can assemble effectively and efficiently.

1.1.5 SocialFactors

Theworkofrurallocalauthorities isgreatlyimpacted bydemographictrends. Incertaindistricts, the land reform program has resulted in a large influx of people moving into former white commercial areas; however, these areas lacked sufficient social amenities to support a larger population. As a result,the localauthorities were left to provide socialamenities like cleanwater sources,schools,andclinics. Additionally,thepopulationisbecoming younger,withthoseunder

the age of fifteen percent now making up forty-two percent of the total (Census 2022 National Report, 14).

Since 93.7 percent of the country's population is literate (Census 2022 National Report, 67), the rural residents (ratepayers) are becoming extra vocal, logical, and knowledgeable about their constitutionalrights.Asaresult,localgovernmentsmustdomoretomaintaintheircredibilitywith the public and meet the ratepayers' growing demands.

1.1.3 TechnologicalFactors

The last twenty years have seen a tremendous advancement in technology, with various types of organizations adopting new technologies, particularly modern technologies for information communication, to improve and expedite both inter and intra-organizational activities. The Zimbabwepublicsectorhasremainedslowtoimplementtheuseofnewtechnologies;somerural localcouncils have foundsuccess inusingtechnologies for informationcommunicationtoimprove their service delivery techniques.

The condition of their equipment is a significant element that affects how well rural local authoritiescanprovideservices.Manystilluseantiquatedroadrepairtools,whichhaveexpensive runningexpenses.Ifthisservicecomponent isto be improved,the issue liesinthe needto secure funding forthe acquisitionofmodernized roadmaintenance equipment. In2013,the government tookits first steptowardsreformby launching the Road Authorities RecapitalizationProgramme (The Chronicle, June 22, 2013). This initiative marked the beginning of efforts to revamp and strengthen the country's road authorities, paving the way for future developments in the sector.

1.1.6 LegalFactors

In rural areas, local authority bodies were established via the regulations outlined in the Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29.13), a legislation passed by Parliament. As statutory bodies, theirpowersandauthorityarederivedfromthisparliamentarylegislation,whichprovidesthelegal frameworkfortheiroperationandgovernance.ItwasanticipatedthattherecentZimbabwe

Constitution would establish rural local councils as constitutional entities. While the recently adopted Constitution has provisions of local authorities, these sections essentially restate the currentmandateZimbabwe'sConstitution(Section275(2)(a))mandatesthat'anActofParliament shall lay down provisions for the formation of local government.' Stated differently, the Constitution does not create new laws or modify the current structure; rather, it leaves the establishment and governance of local bodies to parliamentary action.

Therefore, an authorized guideline that rural local government must follow is established by legislation.ThecouncilshaveagreatdealofautonomybecauseoftheRuralDistrictCouncilsAct [Chapter29:13].Ontheotherhand,asimilarregulationgrantstheRuralLocalGovernmentbroad authority to meddle in council matters. The minister has the authority to reprimand council members,favororcondemncertaincouncildeterminations,favororcondemnhighermanagement activities, and generally provide directions to the council in the course of their oversight and supervisory duty (Madhekeni et al,2012).

1.2   ProblemStatement

In Zimbabwe, rural localauthorities are not providing their rate-paying citizens with the services that they are required to provide. This is demonstrated by the lack of funding for important developmentalprojects that benefit ratepayers, the upkeep ofhigh-quality healthand educational facilities,andtheupkeepofroadsandothervitalinfrastructure(Maketo,2020).Poorlythoughtout and/or executed performance measurement systems might be one of the major causes of subpar performance.ThisstudylooksathowmuchtheZimbabweanruralcouncils'usageofperformance measurement systems is helping themto achieve their goals for providing services.

1.3   ResearchObjectives

This research endeavors to ascertain the extent to which Murewa Rural District Council's performance measurement systems have helped the local authority achieve its goals for service delivery. The research has the following specific goals:

a)TodeterminetheMurewaRuralDistrictCouncil'sservicedeliverygoals.

b. To specifywhat goals Murewa RuralDistrict Council hopes to accomplish with the system(s) it utilises for performance measurement.

c. Todetermineifruraldistrictcouncils'performancemeasurementsystemgoalsandtheirservice delivery goals are related or not.

d. To determine the elements linked to rural local authorities' performance measurement system implementation success or failure

 e. Tosuggestthemosteffectivewayforruraldistrictcouncilstopracticetheirperformance measurement techniques to achieve their service distribution goals.

1.4 ResearchQuestion

Thisstudyseekstotacklethefollowingprimaryresearchquestion:TowhatextentdoZimbabwean rurallocalgovernment performance measurementtechniqueshelpthemsucceed intheirgoalsfor service delivery? More precisely, the study aims to respond to the following queries.

a. WhatservicedeliveryobjectivesdoestheMurewaRuralDistrictCouncilhave?

b. What are the intended outcomes that the performance measurement systems ofMurewa Rural District Council are designed to achieve?

c. How closely are the goals of the rural councils' performance measurement systems and theirservice delivery objectives related?

d. Whatelementsinfluencewhetherruralcouncils'effortstoimplementperformancemeasurement systems are successful or unsuccessful?

e. Howcanruralcouncilsachievetheirgoals forservicedeliverybymakingthe most useoftheir performance measurement systems?

1.5   ResearchProposition

Adeficiencyofadequatelydesignedandexecutedperformancemeasurementsystemsissuggested as one of the reasons why rural local authorities are unable to fulfil their service delivery goals.

1.6   JustificationoftheStudy

There is a sizable research vacuum in Zimbabwe's rural local government performance measurement, despite the crucial role local authorities play in the country's growth. Although performanceassessmenthasbeenthesubjectofmuchresearchinthecorporateworld,surprisingly little of it has been done within the framework of rural local government in Zimbabwe, making this a crucial topic for study and discovery. A scant study on Zimbabwean local authorities, (Zinyama,2015)lookedathowmuchperformancereviewswerebeingusedtoachievetheirgoals. His theory was that the performance appraisal was not being used for the purposes for which it was intended—promotion, annual rise, probation, and performance evaluation. In addition to concentrating on an urban local authority, Zinyama seemed to be uninterested in connecting the performance appraisal's administrative goals to the local authority's larger strategic goals. This work aims to close that gap, at least somewhat. It will take inspiration from performance measurement system concepts published in general measurement files and other international journalsonpublicsectorperformance measurement, and it willevaluate howwellthese concepts have been implemented in Zimbabwe's rural local authorities.

In their article about the US, Nytes et al. (2010:vii) note that "state, local, and provincial governments have never faced more pressure to deliver results that the public cares about, frequently under extremely tight budgetary limits. Societies have little trust in government at all stagespresentsachallengefor managersandofficialsinthepublicsector.PerhapsZimbabwecan also benefit from these remarks. Local authorities are anticipated to play a pivotal role in the implementation of the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Social Transformation (Zim Asset) policyplan, hence the government'semphasisontheir importance. The following are advantages that the study will bring about:

a. Theresearcherworksforthemunicipalgovernment.Thus,thestudywillofferaframeworkfor resolving a real-world issue linked to the workplace.

b. This study could be helpful to all rural local councils that are falling short of their service distributiongoals because it offersrecommendationson how to better connect their performance measurement systems to those goals. In order to help councils, achieve their service distribution goals, the study would enable a pattern shift and create a new section in which they would view formal performance measurement systems as essential tools for improving staff performance.

c. Thestudywillproviderecommendationsonhowthefederalgovernmentmightcollaboratewith and support rurallocalauthoritiesto improve their performance, whichwould benefit the federal government as well.

d. Thisstudywillsignificantlycontributetotheefforttoclosearesearchgapregardingthesystems of rural local authorities.

1.8 Study'sCoverage

With a case study methodology centered on Murewa Rural District Council., this paper primarilyexamines Zimbabwe's rurallocalgovernment. Throughananalysis ofthis specific council,theresearchseekstoprovideathoroughgraspoftheadvantages,disadvantages,and opportunities for improvement of Zimbabwe's rural local governments' performance measuring methods and procedures. It's possible that its conclusions won't apply to other kindsoflocalgovernmentsororganizations.Itisonlypossibletomakegeneralizationsabout other rural local administrations while taking into account their particular conditions.

1.9 OrganizationoftheStudy

Thepresentchaptertargetstoestablishtheoveralltoneforthestudyandisthefirstoffivechapters that make up the study. The literature on performance measurement is reviewed in Chapter 2, whichendswithasystematiccontextregardingtheresearch.Theresearchmethodology'sapproach is examined in Chapter 3, providing insights into the investigation and analysis procedures. The study'sfindingsareshownandChapter4delvesintothediscussion,Chapter4providesa

thorough review and analysis of the study, while Chapter 5 summarizes the conclusions drawn from the data and offers recommendations for additional research or activities.

1.10   Summary

Thesectionhasdemonstratedthevitalrolerurallocalauthoritiesplayinassistingthegovernment's development initiatives. Therefore, their performance is crucial. The dynamic context in which rurallocalauthoritiesoperateisdefined   bycertain,social,   economic,political,technological,and legalaspects.Theseestablishtheframeworkforthelocalgovernmentoperationsandthebackdrop forunderstandingtheirperformancemeasurementtechniques.Theresearchaimstodeterminethe extent to which performance measurement techniques are utilized by rural local governments to help them accomplish their goals for service delivery. It uses the case research method to accomplish this. The performance measurement literature is examined in the following chapter, emphasizing the public sector in the exploration of performance assessment methodologies.

CHAPTER2

LITERATUREREVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The majorityofthe body ofresearch on performance evaluation has predominantly concentrated on the private sector, where concepts and methodologies have been honed and refined for application in profit-driven enterprises. However, these ideas and techniques have just recently beenappliedtothepublicsector,andthereisstilldisagreementoverwhethertheyareappropriate inthissetting(McAdametal.,2005;Radnoretal.,2004).Thereisadebateregardingthesuitability of private-sector approaches for public-sector implementation. Some claim that public organizations' specific objectives, structures, and accountability mechanisms necessitate the adoption of distinct performance-measuring techniques. (Adcroft et al 2005) have observed the transfer of concepts and standards between different public sectors. The rationale behind the implementationofperformancemeasurement systems,alongwiththeirscopeandfocus,hasbeen outlined by (Brown, 2005), as cited in (Fryer et al,2009:480).

Musingafi et al. (2013) noted substantial endeavors to establish a performance measurement system within Zimbabwe's public sector during the 1990s. The recognition that performance improvement wasnecessaryandthatthepublicsectorwasunderperformingpromptedthecallfor implementing performance measurement within the sector. There was a public expectation for governmental entities to fulfill their mandates and operate effectively. According to Nytes et al. (2010),thereisincreasingdemandonstate,local,andprovincialgovernmentstoprovideoutcomes that are consistent with public values—often in the face of severe budgetary restrictions. The challenge is compounded by the necessity of catering to a wide range of public wants and preferences,efficientlyallocatingscarceresources,and guaranteeingaccountabilityandopenness ingovernment. Government managersandofficialsalso grapplewiththe challengeofaddressing the public's general distrust in government at all levels.

The motivation behind rolling out performance measurement systems at the local level and nationalgovernment levelsisdrivenbythepossibilitythatthechallengesandpressuresidentified mayalsoberelevanttothecircumstancesinZimbabwe.Thissuggestsarecognitionofthebroader applicabilityoftheneedforimprovedperformanceandpublictrustingovernmentacrossdifferent contexts, including Zimbabwe.

2.2 DefinitionofTermsDefinition

2.2.1 Performance

There has been much discussion in the literature about what performance means, leading to differingopinionsonwhat performance is.However,onethingthat hasbecomeevident fromthis discussionisthatperformanceneedstobeclearlydefined forittobemeasured;inotherwords," If you lack a definition ofperformance, you won't be able to measure oroversee it effectively. " (Sorano, 2023) underscores the essential concept that a clear understanding of performance is fundamental to its effective measurement and management. This highlights the importance of establishing precise definitions and parameters for performance before attempting to gauge or oversee it.

Based on Mwita's perspective (2000), a comprehensive definition of performance encompasses behaviors or processes, outputs, and outcomes. This inclusive view acknowledges the critical components essential to any performance measurement system. Work-related behaviors or procedures arethe methods through which results are produced and often become the focalpoint of performance-enhancing training and development initiatives. Sonnentag et al. (2002) further elaboratethatoutcomes represent the impact ofproductsor services ontheir users, while outputs denote the actual goods or services that the organization aims to produce.

2.2.2 PerformanceMeasurement

Verbeeten (2008) defined performance measurement as follows: defining clear objectives, delegatingtasks, andmonitoringresultsusing metricsandassessment.Thissummaryis basedon the opinions of other writers.

According to Armstrong (2009:9), performance measurement can be viewed as a method for comprehending and overseeing performance within a defined framework of planned objectives, standards, and competency criteria aimed at improving outcomes for individuals, teams, and organizations. Additionally,asper(Briscoeet al,2008),ascitedinArmstrong(2009),it servesas Theprocessbywhichcompaniesestablishtheirgoalsfortheir job, identifytraining needs,assign and assess work, give performance feedback, set performance targets, and award winners.

The passage providesan inclusive understanding ofperformance measurement withinthe public sector. It underscores the significance of continuous, methodical processes emphasizing accountability, organizational learning, and evidence-based decision-making to drive improved outcomes. Performance measurement is depicted as transformative, integrating into all management and policy-making practices to deliver enhanced results for the public.

Additionally, Mackie (2008) presents the concept as encompassing activities such as planning, implementation,review,evaluation,andreportingtogaugetheeffectivenessofpolicies,programs, and projects. Together, these perspectives frame a performance measurement system as one designed to align an organization's personnel with essential goals, communicate performance expectations to employees, and evaluate their performance against predetermined standards.

Furthermore, the system should also seek to enhance employees' knowledge and abilities to facilitate goal achievement and elevate the organization's overall performance.

The guiding principles of performance measurement, as indicated by the aforementioned definitions, include a special emphasis on goal-setting, performance standards-setting, and fostering mStrategiesirstanding betweenmanagers andemployees. Additionally, theyunderscore the importance of staff development and training as integral components of a performance measurement system. These elements collectively contribute to shaping an effective system for performance measurement.

2.3 ObjectivesandImportanceofPerformanceMeasurement

Aperformanceassessmentsystem'sprimarygoalistopromoteexcellenceandprogressthroughout theentirecompany,fromteammemberstotheorganizationasawhole,whichwillincreaseoutput, effectiveness,andsuccess..Itaimstoenablestafftocontinuouslyimproveandexceedtheirgoals, forming the basis for staff development (Armstrong 2009).

Molofo(2012)alsoemphasizesthatthegoalofperformancemeasurement istocultivatea culture of high performance through the establishment of a supportive environment.

Moreover, Lee (2005), as cited in Armstrong (2009), outlines three principal objectives of performancemeasurement:toaddresssubparperformance,sustainhighperformance,andenhance performance. Additionally, Lee highlights the importance of information and data exchange through performance measurement systems, facilitating comprehensive analysis, discussion, comprehension, and consensus on the nature and quality of performance.

Integrating and establishing personal, group, and organizational goals in a meaningful manner presentsasignificantchallenge.RadnorandMcGuire(2004)underscorethatthedataderivedfrom theperformancemeasurementsystemshouldbevaluableandrelevantforenhancingperformance. Radnoretal.(2005)statethatmanagersfrequentlydisregardtheresultsofperformancemeasuring systemsbecauseofinformationoverload,evenwhenthedataispertinentandofhighquality.This problem happens when managers are overloaded with information, which causes them to feel overwhelmed and makes it difficult for them to prioritize and act upon the insights that the performance assessment system has produced. This highlights the critical need for strategies to effectively utilize and prioritize the data generated by implementing performance measurement systems to facilitate significant enhancements in organizational performance.

The significance of performance measurement in the public sector is a subject of great interest and importance. Organizations in the public sector are accountable for accomplishing goals and making effective use of available resources. By giving clear and reliable information on organizational performance, performance measurement is seen as a means of increasing transparencyandaccountabilitytostakeholders,includingthepublicandgovernment(Radnorand McGuire2004;Mackie2008).Thisencouragesresponsiblemanagementandgoodgovernanceby allowingstakeholderstoevaluatehowwellresourcesarebeingusedandwhetherintendedresults

arebeingrealized.Furthermore,it helpstheseorganizationsestablishinternalcontrolsto monitor goalachievementandtakecorrectiveactionwhennecessary.(Ammons,2013)alsoemphasizethat public sectororganizationsutilize performance measurement asatoolto attainbothstrategic and operational objectives.

Byprovidingservicesthatarebotheffectiveandefficient,performanceassessmentsystemsassist enterprisesindemonstratingtheirworthtotheirlocalcommunities.AsperAuditScotland(2012), these methods facilitate the demonstration of an organization's productivity and conscientious resource management. Moreover, performance measurement systems, as mentioned by Barnow and Smith (2004), solve the principal-agent pair dilemma by empowering stakeholders (the "principal") to establish precise goals, guaranteeing that companies (the "agent") are striving for the correct objectives.

A clear definition of objectives within performance measurement is crucial for organizations. It enablesthemtoaligntheireffortsandresourcestowardcommongoals,resultinginenhancedfocus andcoherenceintheirperformancemeasurementstrategies.Thisclarityalso laysthegroundwork for assessing the effectiveness of the performance measurement system and addressing any conflicting objectives that require reconciliation. Furthermore, clearly defined objectives aid in effectivelycommunicating expectations to employees, fostering accountability, and cultivating a shared sense of purpose within the organization (Pulakos, 2004). Ultimately, this alignment can lead to improved overall performance and productivity.

2.4 PrinciplesandCharacteristicsofPerformanceMeasurement

Theexcerpt suggeststhatperformance measurement practicesshouldbetailoredtoalignwiththe evolvingneedsofeachorganization,potentiallyresultinginadiverserangeofpractices.Although performance measurement systems can be customized to meet the needs of individual organizations, researchindicatesthattheyarebasedonasharedsetoffundamentalprinciplesand traits(MohrmanandMohrman,1995,ascitedinArmstrong,2009).Thisimpliesthatalthough

customization is possible, there are fundamental traits that characterize successful performance measurement systems, offering a framework for development and implementation.

The initial phase of performance measurement involves organizational planning, wherein team membersaredirectedbyprecisegoalsandobjectives.Next,evaluationandimprovementaremade possible by comparing actual performance to expected performance using predetermined indicators. Many authors, such as (Armstrong, 2009) and (Mwita, 2000), and (Ammons, et al, 2013), support this strategy by emphasizing the significance of an organized framework for performance monitoring to achieve organizational goals.

Organizationalplanningisthefirst stepintheperformancemeasurement process,teammembers are directed and guided by specific goals and objectives. Next, evaluation and improvement are made possible by comparing actual performance to expected performance using predetermined indicators. Many authors, such as (Armstrong, 2009), (Mwita, 2000), and (Ammons, 2013), supportthisstrategybyemphasizing thesignificanceofanorganized frameworkforperformance monitoring to achieve organizational goals.

Mutualrespect and trust underpina collaborative partnership between managersand employees, which is essential for effective performance monitoring. In contrast to top-down control, Armstrong (2009) emphasizes the value of shared ownership and voluntary engagement. All partiesinvolvedareempoweredtotakeownershipoftheprojectusingthiscollaborativeapproach, whichisessentialforitssuccess. Accordingtoresearch(Radnor,2004),oneofthemaincausesof performance assessment failures is a lack of ownership and participation, underscoring the necessity of inclusive and participatory methods.

Planning,growth,andimprovementaregiventopriorityinperformancemeasurement,whichis a forward-thinking process. Rather than only assessing prior accomplishments, it places an emphasis on continuous development and improvement. According to Armstrong (2009), this strategy places a heavy emphasis on lifelong learning and development, utilizing feedback and reinforcement to improve each person's performance and promote development. Performance measurement fosters a culture of continual growth and excellence by focusing on future development and improvement.

2.5 Additionalaspectsofevaluatingperformancewithinthepublicsector

Evaluation systems utilized in governmental sectors to assess performance need extra elements specifictotheir particular situation. Theliteratureemphasizes howcrucial it isto involveelected officials in planning and priority setting, such as councilors in local authorities. Ammons and Roenigk (2013) highlight performance reporting and data-driven decision making as additional critical components. Since elected officials represent the people, they have an obligation to be involved in decisions that impact their citizens, which makes their involvement in performance evaluationcrucial.Thisguaranteesresponsibility,openness,andefficient useofresources,which eventually helps the communities they serve.

The literature, especially in the public sector, stresses how crucial it is to delegate responsibility withinperformanceassessmentsystems.AmmonsandRoenigk(2013)emphasizethenecessityof giving localdepartments or authorities the authorityto make decisions ontheir own, transferring decision-makingauthorityfromcentralauthoritiestothem.Withthistechnique,choicesaremade nearer to the point ofexecution, resulting in more flexible and effective management.It involves giving local authorities the freedom to choose and run their own systems independently of centralizedoversightintheframeworkofperformancemeasurement.Becauselocalauthoritiesare better suited to handle their own difficulties and goals, this devolution of authority encourages effective and responsive governance.

The intricate nature of managing public organizations involves reconciling conflicting demands fromdiversestakeholders. Accordingto McAdametal. (2005),it iscrucialtoaddressstakeholders' conflicting demands to achieve perceived success in service delivery. Public organizations often utilize multiple performance measurement systems simultaneously in an effort to accommodate thesecompetingdemands,but thiscanleadtoreducingthevalueofperformance measurement to mundanepaperwork,asoutlinedbyRadnorandMcGuire(2004).Additionally,McAdam,Hazlett, and Casey (2005) argue that a singular performance measurement system may be insufficient to covertheentireorganization,advocatingforthedevelopmentofseparateapproachesfordifferent stakeholdergroups,whichcanthenbeintegratedtoaddressissuesofharmonyandcontradictions. Consequently,anyperformancemeasurementsystemutilizedbyapublicorganizationshouldbe

designed to address the interests of multiple stakeholders without becoming overly cumbersome in its design and operation.

2.6 EffectivenessofPerformanceMeasurementSystems

Systems for measuring performance are only as good as their ability to match the stated goals, objectives, and strategy of the organization. Setting goals and conducting regular performance evaluations, backed by procedures for rewards and recognition, are essential components of a successfulperformanceassessmentsystem.AccordingtoPulakos(2019),anefficientperformance measurement system should also include a well-defined procedure for conducting evaluation activities,withrolesanddeadlinesthatarespecifictomanagersandstaff.It'salsocriticaltoattend to the developmental needs of employees, as Pulakos (2004) and (Oberoi et al, 2014), have emphasized. According to (Oberoi et al, 2014), the system should also promote cooperation, collaboration, and communication.

 Understandingthepivotalroleofarobustperformancemeasurementsystemindefiningjobroles and Pulakos (2004) emphasizes the importance of clarifying expectations, as well as improving bothindividualandgroupproductivity.Alongwithassessingworkperformance,thistechniqueof performance evaluation also provides coaching and helpfulcriticismto promotethe professional development of employees. This guarantees that the goals, strategy, and basic values of the company are followed by employees. Pulakos (2004) also emphasizes that the approach encouragesopencommunicationbetweenmanagersandemployeesandinformsimportantchoices about human capital, such as employee awards. Through this approach, the alignment of the organization's overarching goals with a culture of continual improvement and employee development.

2.7 UnderpinningTheory

The goal theory is one of the three theories mentioned by Buchner (2007) and emphasized by (Locke et el2002).It stressesthe four methodsbywhichgoalsare linked to performance results. Goalsaidinplanningfirstofallbydrawingattentiontopriority.Second,theymotivatepeopleby

outliningexpectedresults,whichincentivizeswork.Thirdly,theypushpeopletousetheirabilities andexpertisetoincreasetheirchancesofsuccess.Finally,peoplearemorelikelytousealloftheir knowledge and abilities when the task is more difficult. According to Armstrong (2009), this theory guides performance measurement by supporting the establishment and adoption of goals that serve as benchmarks for managing and evaluating performance. To contribute to the organizations overall success, individual employees must create and agree upon objectives for work that they must work towards, according to various performance assessment models. Therefore, it is only when objectives for performance have been established and accepted that performance assessments, suggestions, and reviews have any significance.

AnothertheorythatBuchner(2007)andArmstrong(2009)highlightedisthecontroltheory,which emphasizes the role the feedback process plays in modifying behavior. People learn about the discrepancybetweentheirpresentbehaviorandthestandardsthatarenecessarywhentheyreceive feedback on their performance. Control measures that try to match actual results to expected requirementsarebasedonthisunderstanding.Allperformancemeasurementsystemsmustinclude feedback as well as oversight so that workers may understand how their work compares to requirements and what needs to be done to make improvements.

According to Bandura (1986) and Armstrong (2009), the social cognitive theory highlights the ideathattheperformanceofindividualsisfundamentallyinfluencedbytheirlevelofself-efficacy. Accordingtothis hypothesis, people'sperformance isdetermined bytheir self-perceptionoftheir abilities and limitations. In the field of oversight of performance, it is imperative to foster and reinforce workers' self-confidence to improve their work performance.

Performance measurement draws upon motivation theory, a concept highlighted in the ideas mentioned earlier. Motivation theorystresses the importance of offering incentives to encourage individualsto enhance their performance and striveto surpassestablished standards. Asnoted by Atkinson and Shaw (2006), motivation theory significantly influences, designing and implementing performance measurement systems.

2.8 PerformanceMeasurementModelsinthePublicSector

Withtheoriesofperformance measurement,the literatureoutlinesdifferent methods intended for bothbroadapplicationandtargetedusageinthepublicsector.Oneimportantfindingisthat,as

noted by Radnor and McGuire (2004), models that prove what works effectively in the private sectormaynotseamlesslytransitiontothepublicsector.Ithasbeenacknowledgedthattoaccount for the distinct qualities of public sector organizations, it is essential to modify current private sector models or develop new ones as well. In the debate that follows, several models utilized in the public domain will be investigated.

2.8.1 BalancedScorecardSystem

The public sectorhasadoptedthe balanced scorecard, whichwas initiallydeveloped and put into use in the commercial sector, in response to mounting calls for transparency and accountability. Government organizations have adopted the idea of a balanced scorecard as a tool to improve transparency and accountability in performance, according to (Northcourt et al 2012), and Chan (2004). Businesses can implement their plans and objectives by using this framework, which provides a comprehensive viewpoint on performance across various objectives and participants (Northcourt et al 2012), As Chan (2004) highlights, in contrast to conventional financial performance indicators, the balanced scorecard incorporates non-financial performance criteria including learning and growth, internal business processes, and customer satisfaction.

The public sector scorecard, illustrated in Figure 1 on the subsequent page, was created by modifying the balanced scorecard framework specifically for application within public sector organizations.
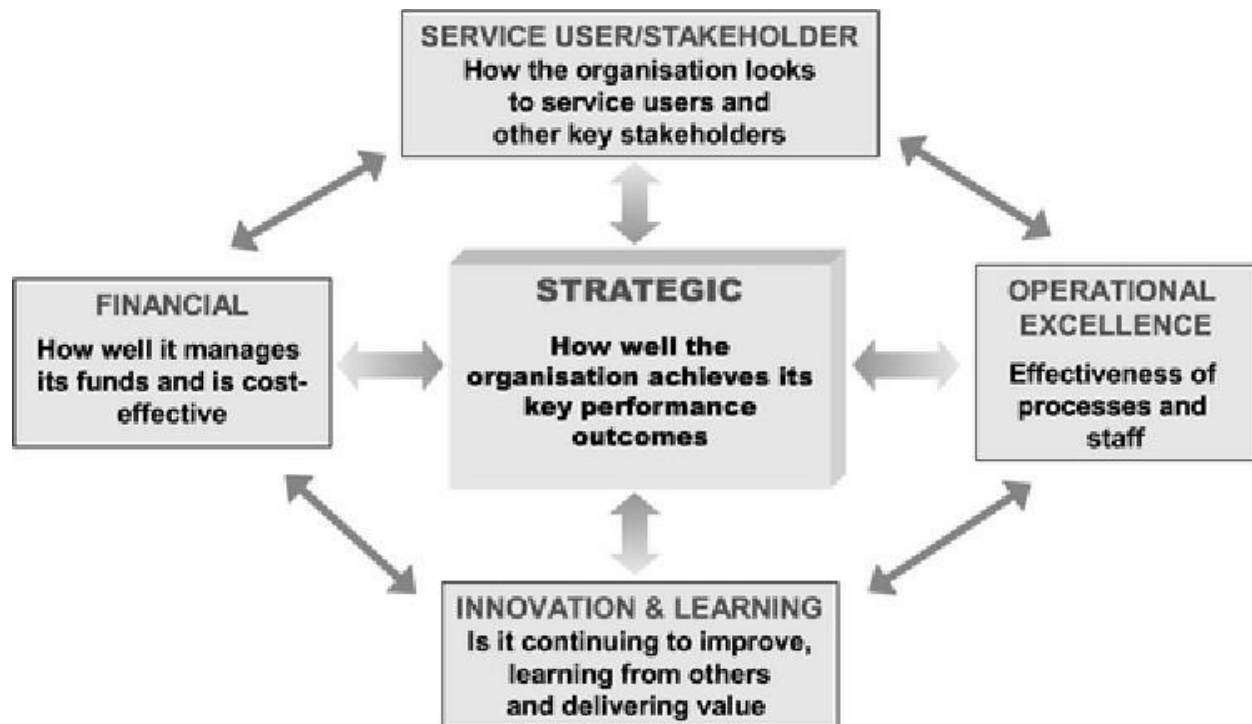
Public Sector Scorecard, Figure 1. Max Moullin and colleagues, 2007..

Thescorecardforthepublicsectorhasfivedifferentdimensions.Theelementofstrategyconsists of the main results of performance that represent the goals and intentions of the service being provided. It helps the business monitor its performance concerning key performance indicators and primary objectives. Moreover, stakeholders and service users are explicitly mentioned (Moullin et al, 2007and McAdam et al,2005).

This viewpoint focuses on the approach taken by an organization to provide services to its stakeholders and customers. It emphasizes the need to include customers and other stakeholders in service provision activities and obtain their feedback on the services rendered, according to (Moullin et al,2007and McAdam et al,2005).

Thepursuitofoperationalexcellenceentailsenhancingtheefficiencyofpersonnelandprocedures within the organization. The assessment of employee satisfaction is part of it. To make sense of

organizational procedures, make necessary adjustments, and eliminate any that are deemed unnecessary, it is imperative to evaluate them(Moullin et aland McAdamet al, 2005).

Theprimaryemphasisofthefinancialperspectiveisontheeffectiveandefficientutilizationofan organization's financial resources. It has to do with how successfully the company controls expenses and handles its finances (Moullin et al and McAdam et al2005).

McAdam and colleagues (2005) assert that learning and innovation form the fifth dimension , evaluates an organization's capacity to learn new things and improve its performance.

An empirical study on the implementation of the balanced scorecard in the public sector has revealed a modest level ofacceptance despite the tool's abilityto boost performance. Inadequate managerial assistance and a lack of connections to the system of compensation are two documented problems with implementation. To adapt the balanced scorecard for use in public sector organizations, it is necessaryto take into account the distinctions between both industries, includingplacing moreemphasisonthecustomerorclient thanonthe financialaspect, similarto what is seen in the private sector (Northcourt et al2012, Chan 2004, Murbyet al2005).

2.8.2 FiveFactorModel

Themissionstatementisoneoffiveaspectsincludedintheperformancemeasurementfive-factor framework. In the public sector, the mission statement should articulate the organization's fundamentalprinciplesandcapturethecommunity's needs fortheservicesoffered(Mwita2000). Similar to the balanced scorecard, this approach places a strong emphasis on an organization's goals and objectives, which forms the basis for all other performance measurement system components.

Themodel'ssecondcomponent,whichdealswithtacticsandplans, highlightshowcrucialit isto create plans that clearly state the organization's strategy. This entails defining the goals of the companyandputting inplaceenabling measures liketrainingandemployeeretentionplans(Mwita 2000).

Thenextstepisstrategydevelopment,whichentailscreatingquantifiabletargetsandperformance agreements as well as goals for operations, significant duties and obligations (Mwita 2000).

Performing-based incentive systems are then built on top of performance acknowledgment, that constitutesanappraisalofperformance based onpredefined metricswiththe goalofencouraging continuedperformanceefforts.Thisphasealso entailsdeterminingtheneed fordevelopment and training, which results in the formulation of performance improvement strategies (Mwita 2000).

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Thenextstepisstrategydevelopment,whichentailscreatingquantifiabletargetsandperformance agreements as well as business objectives, important tasks, and obligations (Mwita 2000).

Performing-based reward systems are then built on top of performance recognition, which is an appraisalofperformancedeterminedbypredefinedmetricswiththegoalofencouragingcontinued

performanceattempts.Thisphasealsoentailsdeterminingtheneedfordevelopmentandtraining, which results in the formulation of methods for enhancing performance (Mwita 2000).

One important component that supports the first four phases of the performance measurement modelisthemeasurementaccountinginformationsystem,responsibleforcollectingandanalyzing data. It reinforces the performance measurement system and provides information for any necessary remedial measures. It functions as a form of feedback and feedback process. Furthermore, it iscrucialin guiding enhancementstothe systemifthe businessengages in future planning, as suggested by Mwita (2000).

2.8.3 ResultsBasedMeasurement

Anexampleofstrategicmanagement istheresults-basedmeasurement(RBM)method.astrategy that has gained traction in the public sector. It centers all activities on achieving specific goals (UNDP2011).ThefirstphaseinRBMispreparation,whichentailssettingtheorganization'sgoals and outcomes framework, among other things. The implementationstarts whena set ofresults is agreedupontobepursued.Theprocesstobeimplementedisthencontinuouslymonitoredtomake sure the desired outcomes are attained. In addition to offering invaluable lessons for the future, monitoring and assessment provides essential data for making decisions (UNGP 2010).
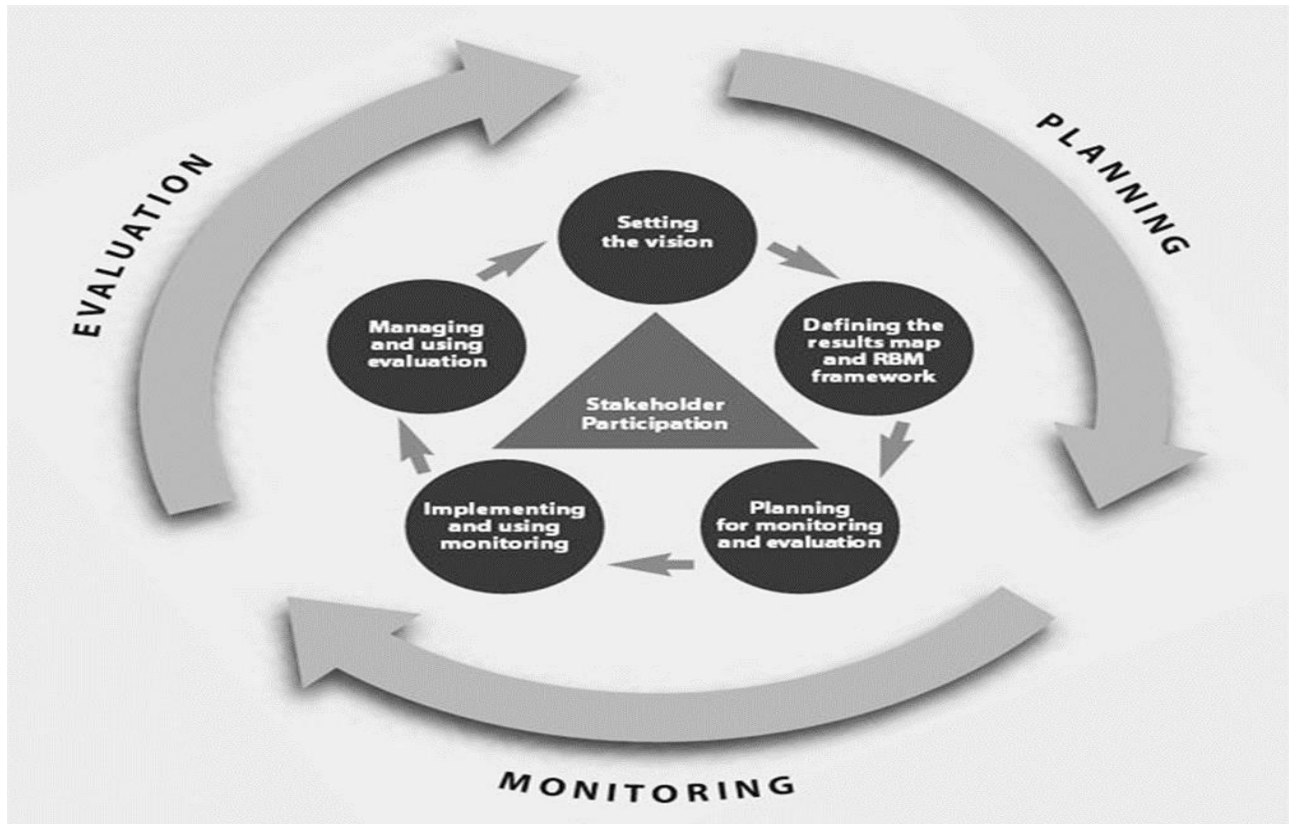
Figure3:Life-CycleApproachfor RBM.UNDP2010asasource

2.9 ConceptualFramework/TheoreticalFramework

2.9.1 FormulatingStrategywithStakeholderInvolvement

Aframeworkofconceptsforapublicsectorperformancemeasurementframeworkcanbecreated   using the findings ofthe review ofthe literature.It is predicatedonthe idea that it is essentialfor citizens to be involved in the creation and modification of local government initiatives. The foundation of all   later   systems   for   performance   measurement   is   strategic   planning.   Thus,   it's criticaltorecordtheexpectationsandhopesofthepopulaceatthispoint.Thepublic'sexpectations andthecouncil'sobjectivescanjustbecoincidencewithoutcitizeninvolvement.Eveniftheremay be a wide range of competing public requirements and objectives, it is still beneficial to include thepublicinissuesthatimpactthembecausethiscanaffecthowtheyseethecouncil'swork.Inthe

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event that performance measurement is understood to be "the method used for controlling the implementationofthestrategyofanorganizationandthewayplanstransformtoresults,"thenthe planningprocessmustinvolveinputfromthoseforwhomtheplansarecreatedandcarriedoutfor the procedure to be successful.

There are various reasons why staff participation in developing strategies and performance measurement is crucial. Initially, it enables staff members to express responsibility for the plan and connect with the execution process. The commitment of employees to the objectives of the company may rise as a result of this. On the other hand, employee hostility and even system sabotage can occur when measurement enforces policies and procedures without consulting the workforce. As a result, employee buy-in, motivation, and the success of the organization's performance measurement frameworkasawholedependontheir involvement intheseactivities.

2.9.2 DepartmentalStrategicandOperationalPlans

 The creation of departmental approaches and work strategies, which act as the initial step in putting the organizational plan into practice, is the next component in the model. Departmental plansandoperationalobjectivesmustbederivedfromtheoverallstrategy.Employeeinvolvement at this level is still crucial because it can inspire employees, give them a sense of pride in the department'splansandstrategies,andfosteranenvironmentthatwillallowtheplansandstrategies to be implemented successfully. This highlights how crucial employee participation is to the performance measurement framework at all levels.

2.9.3 IndividualStaffWorkPlan

The first stepintheprocedureforperformance measurement isto createcustomizedschedulesof work for each employee. Departmental work plans are divided into particular duties and responsibilities that each employee is expected to do within this period. To do this, metrics, requirements for employment, performance goals, and timelines must be discussed and agreed upon.Italsomeansfiguringoutwhattheemployeeexpectsfromtheirworkandmakinganeffort

to match that with what is needed for the job. Resources are also allotted in order to facilitate efficient operation.

2.9.4 Monitoring

Performance needs to be closely monitored during the process of implementation. This entails obtainingandevaluatingperformancedatainorderto make judgmentsregarding howtoenhance it. It is the duty of measurement to mentor staff members and offer the assistance they require. Where deficiencies are found, additional development and training are offered. Throughout the cycle of performance measurement, monitoring is a constant operation.

2.9.5 PerformanceEvaluation

Frequent assessmentsofperformancearenecessarytodetermine howsuccessfullystaffmembers arefulfillingestablishedgoalsandexpectations. Itisthe foundationuponwhichmanyjudgments are made. While subpar work need to be penalized, good work should be praised. Motivating employeescanbeachievedbytyingperformancetotherewardsystem.It isimperativeto convey thatsubparworkisunacceptableandwillhaverepercussions.Enhancingtheperformanceofstaff members,educationalrequirementsarealsodetermined,andprogrammesarecreatedandput into place accordingly.

Taking into account how the provision of services initiatives affects the citizens was a crucial component of the assessment approach. Delivering services requires more than just personnel hittingtargetsforperformance;italsoneedsforittohavethedesiredeffectonthepeoplereceiving the services. Public organizations fulfill their responsibilities by being accountable to their stakeholders (UNDG, 2010:26).

2.9.6 AssessmentofthePerformanceMeasurementSystem

Periodic assessments of the system used to gauge performance as a whole are necessary. To guarantee smooth integration across all ofthe components ofthe system, these assessments must

to cover every facet of the overall structure. Frequent reviews support the maintenance of the performance measuring system's efficacy and help to pinpoint areas for improvements.
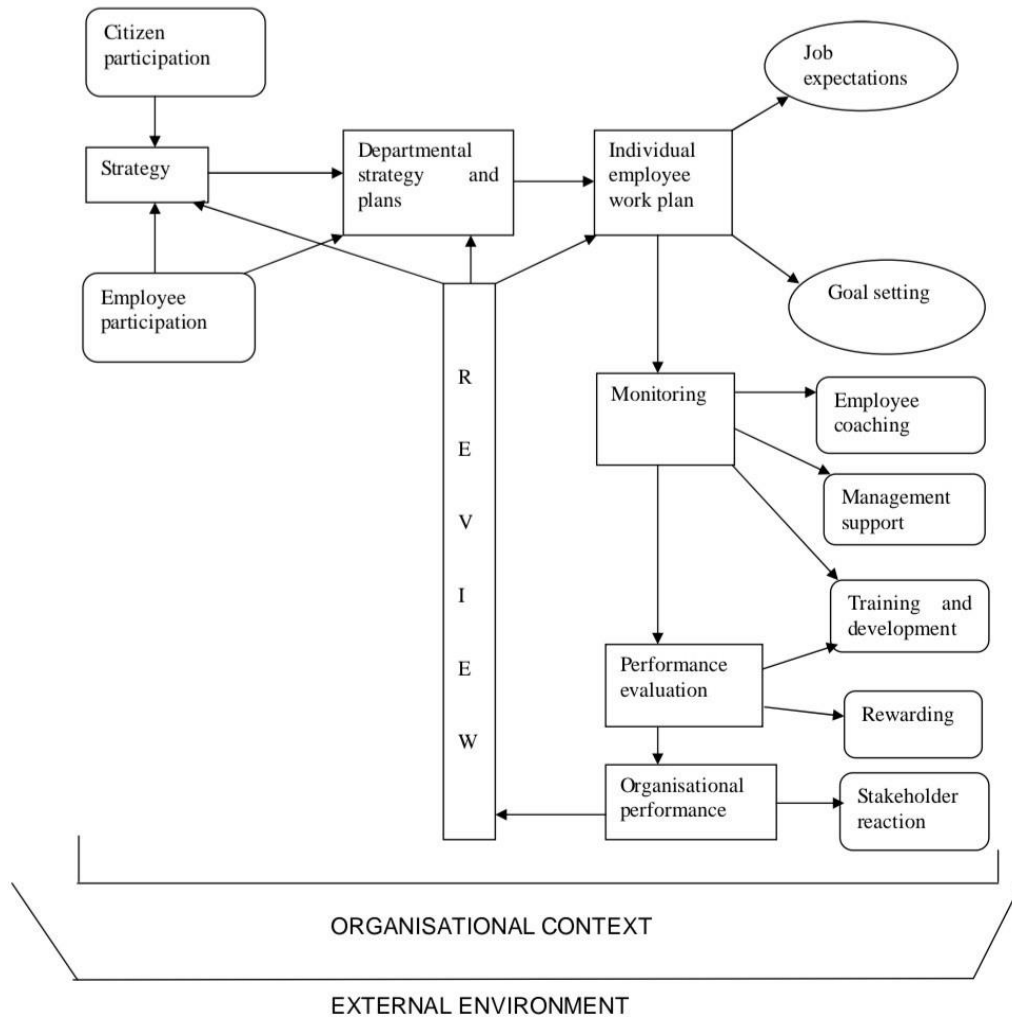
PerformanceMeasurementFramework(Figure4).ReproducedfromArmstrong(2009)and theGovernmentofMauritius(http:///civilservice.gov.mu).2.9.7OrganisationalPerformance

Enhancing organizational performance must be the primary goal of performance measurement. Since performance as an individual has a major impact on the performance of an organization, synergistic consequencesare anticipated.To make surethatorganizationalperformance is in line with standards, frequent evaluations of performance are crucial. Given the strong correlation betweenstakeholderperceptionoftheserviceandservicedeliverysuccess,itisparticularlycritical

to gauge responses from stakeholders or comments concerning organizational performance. To make continuous improvements and matchtheir services to the requirements and expectations of the public, local governments need a way to find out how the public feels about the range of services they provide.

2.9.8 OrganizationalEnvironment

A key component of any system for performance measurement is indeed the context of the organization.It includeselementssuchasworking habits,technologicaladvances,organizational scale,employeerelationsatmosphere,thecultureoftheorganization,andtheindividualsthatmake up the business. Every organization has a different setting for introducing and implementing performance measurement systems because ofthis combination of factors. In the wordsofNytes et al. (2010:2) "Because each governing body has its distinctive features and historical events, strategies that have worked effectively because implementing a performance measurement strategyin a traditionallymanaged companymay seemadvantageous, but its realimpact is often limited inpractice. Moreover, what proveseffective for one organization maynot be suitable for another." Resolving organizational culture is necessary to make significant progress in performance assessment.

2.9.9 ExternalEnvironment

If organizations want to remain relevant, they must adapt their IT infrastructure to the ever-changing and dynamic relationships they have with their external environments (Armstrong, 2009). The previously mentioned conceptual structure was applied to the research project and changed to make it more comprehensive and to incorporate features specific to public organizations, particularly this research centers on rural local councils. Every component of the model was used to evaluate the case organization's performance measurement system and the degree to which the local authority's performance measurement procedures matched with the model's requirements evaluated whether the system was successful or unsuccessful.

2.10 Summary

An in-depth examination of research literature regarding the implementation of performance assessment in the public sector has revealed several key themes. Initially, the concept of performance measurement originated in the private sector before being adapted for use in the public sector. The primary objective was to improve the transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of public sector entities. The fundamental elements of the idea have not changed; despitebeingmodifiedtobetterfittherealitiesofthepublicsectorcontext.Withdifferingdegrees of success, several models have been put into practice. It has been decided to evaluate the performance measurement implementation within the public sector, especially in local governments, using a conceptual framework. The study's approach to methodology is explained and supported in the following chapter.

CHAPTER3

RESEARCHMETHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section offers an overview of the study's methodology. It begins byrestating the problem, studyobjectives,questions,andrecommendations. Afterthat,theresearchphilosophyiscovered, and then the approach, strategy, design, and techniques are covered. Boththe ethical issues and their handling are discussed. Finally, it discusses data gathering, analysis, and measures to guarantee the trustworthiness and validity of the study.

To evaluate the success of Zimbabwean rural local authorities' performance measurement systems inachievingtheobjectivesrelatedtotheirservicedelivery, thestudyusedacasestudy methodology. This method was selected because it can comprehensively investigate problems from several angles, resulting in a more profound comprehension of the research context.

3.2 MethodologicalApproach

3.2.1 Recapitulation

The study was motivated by the documented challenges faced by Zimbabwe's rural local authoritiesinmeetingtheexpectationsofratepayersandotherstakeholders.Despiteimplementing various performance measurement models, their performance remains subpar. Poorlyplanned or implemented performance measurement systems** could be a significant contributing factor. Therefore,thisstudyaimstoassesshoweffectivelyZimbabwe'sruralcouncilsutilizeperformance measurement systemstoachievetheir servicedeliveryobjectives. It'sworthnotingthattheexisting literature lacks comprehensive coverage about the state of rural local government in Zimbabwe. Infact,notmanystudieshaveexplicitlyexaminedhowperformance measurementfitsinwiththe

operationalor strategicobjectivesoflocalgovernments, despitetheabundanceofresearchonthe topic's relevance in the public sector. This gap in the literature warrants further investigation to betterunderstand how performance measurement systemscaneffectivelycontribute to achieving desired outcomes at the local level.

This study's main objective was to assess how performance assessment techniques affected the accomplishmentsoftheMurewaRuralDistrictCouncil,thegoverningbodyinchargeofmanaging rural areas. The main goal was to determine how much the council's ability to accomplish its service delivery goals has been aided by the use of these platforms.

The primary inquiry of this study was: How could performance evaluation instruments help Zimbabwean rural local authorities meet their service delivery goals? The paper makes the case that the primary issue is the absence of well-conceived and efficiently executed performance monitoring systems cause of rural local authorities' incapacity to fulfill their service delivery obligations. The principal contention of the text is that the use of well-structured performance measurement systems can enable rural local authorities to efficiently accomplish their service delivery goals.

3.2.2 PhilosophyofResearch

The study embraced an interpretivist philosophy, aligning with qualitative methodology. Within this paradigm, it's acknowledged that social processes are intricate and cannot be fully grasped through predetermined principles alone. Instead, individuals attribute meanings to commonplace social roles, shaping their understanding. Moreover, they interpret others' social roles based on thesemeanings(Saundersetal.,2019).Theresearcherfacesasignificantchallengeinendeavoring toperceivetheworldasseenthroughtheuniqueperspectiveofthestudyparticipants,necessitating an understanding of their viewpoint and experiencing the world through their eyes. Business situations, inadditionto beingcomplex,areinfluenced byspecificeventsandtheconvergenceof people at certain times (Saunders et al., 2019). Qualitative research entails evaluating attitudes, opinions, and other subjective data. The subjective assessment ofattitudes, beliefs, and behavior isintegraltoqualitativeresearch,withtheresearcher'sperceptionsandinsightsplayingacrucial

role.Consequently,qualitativeresearchresultsareoftenpresentedinamannerthatisn'tconducive   to quantitative analysis or a non-quantitative format (Kothari, 2019).The positivist philosophy holds that only objectively verifiable and observable facts, often known as the observable social reality,shouldbethesubjectofresearch,inoppositiontotheinterpretivistorqualitativeapproach. Creating generalizations that resemble laws and can be used inanalogous situations is the aimof this kind of research. The importance of conducting research without bias and about values is underlined (Saunders et al., 2019).

Quantitative and qualitative research methodologies diverge in several aspects, including their analyticalobjectivesandthespecifictopicstheystrivetoinvestigate.Thesemethodologiesexhibit contrasting approaches in their pursuit of knowledge. Moreover, there are differences between them in the tools used to gather the nature of data, the generated data type, and the extent of flexibility incorporated into the research plan (Mack et al., 2017).

Asstatedby(Snapeetal2003)theobjectiveofqualitativeresearchistounderstandthesignificance   that individuals attribute. To occurrences in their social context by taking a naturalistic and interpretive approach. By employing a small-scale sample and employing participatory data-gathering techniques such as interviews, qualitative research methodology offers a deeper comprehension of the intricate dynamics within the social world. It allows for a more nuanced understanding of the complexities and nuances that shape human experiences and interactions. This research methodology facilitates the investigation ofnovelproblems and ideas, leading to a more sophisticated comprehension.

Sincetheapplicationofperformancemeasuremententailsindividualinterpretationsthatareprone   to subjectivity, qualitative research makes a good fit for this notion. Individuals' responses and subjective perceptions of their social environments ultimately influence how performance measurementfunctions.Itiscrucialtoremember,nevertheless,thataquantitativeapproachmight   be beneficial in some situations.It's crucial to remember that in this investigation, a quantitative technique may still be beneficial. Where appropriate, positivist ideas have been included to strengthen and supplement the research's predominant qualitative analysis.

3.2.3 MethodofResearch

The main approach of the study relied on the inductive method, which involves the systematic collection and analysis of data to identify emerging themes and patterns. This approach allowed fortheexplorationanddiscoveryofnewinsightsandthemesthatwereorganicallyemergingfrom the data. This method moves from detailed observations to more generalizations, enabling the analysis and explanation ofthe events being studied. It is crucialto remember, nevertheless, that the study was constructed using a theoretical framework that was described in Chapter 2 and provided direction for the investigation. Fromthis theoretical framework, the study moved on to investigateproblemsthat cameupduringthedata-gatheringphase,whichresulted inadjustments and improvements to the theoretical framework. A deeper comprehension of the research topic was made possible by this iterative approach, which was maintained.

3.2.4 ResearchStrategies

This study is structured as a thorough case study, with a particular emphasis on Zimbabwe's MurewaRuralDistrictCouncilasamodelrurallocalgovernment.Acasestudyreferstoaresearch methodinvolvingtheempiricalexaminationofaparticularcontemporaryeventwithinitsgenuine real-world setting. This approach relies on multiple sources of information to attain a thorough comprehension of the case being investigated (Robson, 2002), as cited in Saunders et al 2009). When employed as a research strategy, the case study approach offers several advantages and benefits. It enables a thorough comprehension of the methods involved and the context of the research. Issuescanbe investigated morethoroughlybyconcentrating onaspecific organization, offering answers to the "what," "why," and "how" questions (Saunders et al 2009). The study's conclusions may nevertheless apply to some rural local authorities even though they cannot be applied to allofthem. It is worthmentioning that the aforementioned rurallocalauthorities were institutedaftertheenactmentoftheRuralDistrictCouncilsAct[Chapter29:13].Theseauthorities are vested with similar powers and responsibilities in terms ofservice provision. Moreover, they share comparable organizational structures, further highlighting their commonalities.

Theresearcher'semployment withtheorganizationservedastheprimaryfactorinchoosing it for thiscasestudy.Theresearcherconsequentlytookonthepositionofpractitioner-researcher.This

strategy provides several benefits, but it also has drawbacks of its own. One benefit is that the researcher was previously familiar with the topics under investigation and might improve work proceduresinlightofthestudy'sconclusions.Therewasnoneedtospendtimegettingacquainted withtheorganizationalcontext,unlikeanoutsider. Furthermore,therewasno need forprotracted talks becauseaccessto datasourceswaseasilyobtained(Saunderset al2009). This strategydoes, however, bring up ethical considerations, especially regarding the researcher's objectivity when addressing topics and people that theyare closely associated with in their work. Recognizing the preconceived notionsand assumptionsthat have grownwithtime intheir organizationalfunction maypreventthemfromexploringsometopics   that   couldhaveaddedvaluetotheresearch(ibid.). Ensuringtheintegrityandvalidityofresearchfindingsrequiresresearcherstobecognizantoftheir potentialbiasesandtoactivelypursueneutralitythroughouttheinvestigation.Overcomingreticent communication, especiallywith less experienced staff members, was a major obstacle (Saunders et al, 2009). The participants received a detailed explanation of the research's goal to lessen the impactofthesedifficulties.Theyweretoldthattheresearchservedacademicobjectivesinaddition totryingtoenhancework-relatedpractices. Participantswere invitedtoactivelyinteract andgive their views by highlighting the study's dual value. This strategy made it possible to foster an atmosphereofcooperationandtransparencythat   allowed   foramorethoroughinvestigationofthe research topic.

3.2.5 ResearchChoice

In-depth interviews were the primary research method employed in this study aligns with the qualitative nature of the research.. This approach was thought to be the most appropriate for obtainingpertinent   informationthat   wouldenableanin-depthexaminationofthecurrentproblems, resulting   ina   fullcomprehensionofthestudyquestion.   Archivalresearchwasalso   employedasa supplementary strategy to reinforce the understanding obtained from the interviews. The topics brought   upinthe   interviewswereclarifiedbyinformationgleaned   fromarchivesources,andvice versa.AccordingtoSaundersetal2009),utilizinganarchivetechniquefacilitatestheinvestigation   of research inquiries that center on historical events and their temporal variations. It offered insightful information, particularly in situations where the issues raised. It offered insightful information,particularlywhentheissuesbroughtupduringtheinterviewsseemedatoddswith

what wasdocumentedinthefiles.Therefore,thebest waytodescribetheresearchtechniqueisas a qualitative approach employing multiple methods.

3.2.6 TemporalPerspectives

Thisstudyutilizedalongitudinalresearchdesign,encompassingthetimeframefrom2020to2024. A mixed-methods approach was utilized, combining historical research with semi-structured interviews conducted with long-serving staff members who have been employed by the organizationsince 2010or earlier. The adoptionofa longitudinalapproachwas motivated bythe research aim to document and analyze the trends and patterns in the operation of performance measurement systems and their subsequent influence on service deliveryoutcomes over a period of time. This method made it easier to do a more thorough examination and made it possible to spot trends and changes over time. It gave more insight into the topic than a cross-sectional perspective, which concentrates on one particular moment in time, could have given. Through a multi-year examination of these components' changes, a more sophisticated and knowledgeable analysis.

3.2.7 ResearchApproachesandStrategies

3.2.7.1 Subjectsinvolvedintheresearch

MurewaRuralDistrictCouncilemployedfortypeopleduringthestudyperiod,dividedintoeleven grade levels, with grade eleven representing the highest level. A purposive sampling method without probability sampling approach, also known as judgmental sampling, was employed to select study participants. This approach permits the researcher to intentionally choose cases that offersubstantialinformationandhavethehighestpotentialtoilluminatetheresearchquestionand achieve the study's objectives. By leveraging expert judgment and knowledge of the research context, this approach enables the selection of participants who can provide the most insightful and relevant data, thereby improving the validity and reliability of the findings. Purposive sampling is a strategic approach that enables researchers to select participants who possess in-depthknowledgeoftheresearchtopic,arewillingtosharetheirexperiences,andrepresentdiverse

perspectives. This method is particularly useful when dealing with limited samples, as in case studies, as it allows researchers to deliberately select cases that offer rich and meaningful information. Bydoing so, researchers can attain a thorough comprehension ofthe research topic. However,itiscrucialtonotethatsamplesobtainedthroughpurposivesamplingarenotstatistically representativeoftheentirepopulation(Saundersetal.,2009).Thissamplingtechniqueprioritizes depth and insight over breadth and generalizability, providing a detailed understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. However, it makes it possible to collect comprehensive and insightfuldata fromthose who are most qualified to provide value to the study: participants.

Fifty council employees were chosen with great care to be included in the study. The CEO, four departmentheads,twosectionleaders,threesecretarialstaffmembers,twotractordrivers,andtwo general hands were among this heterogeneous bunch. These people's inclusion from a range of positionsandlevelsinsidethecompanymadeitpossibletothoroughlyexamineseveralviewpoints and experiences.

The CEO was purposefully selected for contribution in this study due to their strategic position and pivotal role within the organization. As the highest-ranking executive, the CEO possesses a unique perspective and insight into the company's overall vision, goals, and operations, making themaninformation-richcasefor in-depthanalysis.Thistargetedselectionenablestheresearcher totapintotheCEO'sexpertiseandgaina moreprofoundcomprehensionofthephenomenabeing studied. As the council's head, theymight offer athoroughoverview oftheorganization's overall performance measurement system as well as valuable insights into the strategic direction of the company. Their participation guaranteed that the research would fully grasp the organization's strategic goals and acquire a more profound comprehension of the performance measurement system from an upper measurement standpoint.

The inclusion of heads of department in the study was deliberate, as it enabled the researcher to garner valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of senior managers responsible for implementing the performance measurement system at the departmental level. By incorporating their perspectives, the study aimed to elucidate how the organization's overall strategy was disseminated and translated into departmentalstrategies and operationalplans, thereby shedding lightontheintricaciesofstrategicalignmentandperformancemeasurementwithinthe

organization.Thisstrategicsamplingallowedforanuancedunderstandingofthemechanismsand processes that facilitate the cascading of organizational goals into actionable plans at the departmental level. It was crucial to examine how these plans aligned with the expectations of stakeholders and ratepayers, as theyplay a vital role in delivering the desired services.

Additionally, the selection of sectional heads was intended to track the refinement of the organizational strategy as it trickled down to actual activities. By including sectional heads, the studyaimedtoevaluatetheunderstandingoftheperformancemeasurementsystemacrossvarious levels within the organization, right down to the lowest level. This evaluation was crucial in ascertaining whether a robust line of sight could be established, connecting the organization's overall strategic objectives to the operational-level goals and actions. In other words, it aimed to determine if a clear and unbroken chain of cause-and-effect relationships existed between the highest-level strategic intentions and the lowest-level performance metrics, thereby ensuring a coherent and aligned performance measurement system. By examining this link, the assessment sought to verify whether the organization's strategy was effectively cascaded down to the operational level, enabling a cohesive and focused effort toward achieving its goals.

Furthermore,the involvement ofindividuals fromvariouslevelsallowed fortheexaminationand explanation of any differences in perspectives between these levels. By understanding these differences, thestudycouldshed lightonpotentialchallengesanddiscrepanciesthat mayexist in the implementation and understanding of the performance measurement system.

3.2.7.2 ProceduresforCollectingData

For this study, the data collection process involved document analysis or archival research, a method advocated by Corbetta (2003) as a means of extracting valuable insights into the phenomenonunder investigation.Thisapproachinvolvesanalyzingexistingdocumentsthat were created for purposes unrelated to the research, thereby providing an objective and non-reactive sourceofdata. As these documents exist independentlyofthe researcher, theyremainunaffected

by any potential biases or influences that may arise from researcher-respondent interactions. By leveraging document study, this research was able to tap into a rich source of pre-existing data, which offered a unique perspective on the research question and enhanced the overall validity of the findings.

One notable advantage of document study is its capacity to explore the past. By examining historicaldocuments,thestudygainsaccessto valuable insightsthat maynot bereadilyavailable throughother research methods. This capabilityto delve into the past facilitates athoroughgrasp ofthesubjectmatter,enablingresearcherstocontextualizethepresentandidentifyanypatternsor changes over time. Overall, document study serves as a reliable and objective means of data collection,ensuringthattheinformationobtainedremainsunadulteratedandprovidingavaluable avenue for investigating the research objectives.

To obtain a thorough comprehension of the organization's strategic goals and the execution of performance measurement, archival research was conducted as the study's initial phase. This involvedacomprehensivescrutinyofvariousorganizationaldocuments,includingdocumentation ofperformancemonitoring, yearlybudgets,operationalandstrategicplans,andsimilar materials. These documents provided a wealth of information on the organization's goals, objectives, strategies, and performance measurement practices, offering a detailed understanding of the organization's internal dynamics and operational processes. By analyzing these documents, the researcher was able to acquire a nuanced understanding of the organization's practices related to planning,budgeting,andperformancemeasurement,andhowtheseelementsintersectandimpact one another. Bydelving into these secondary sources, valuable insights were obtained regarding the organization's past endeavors in performance measurement.

During the archival research, several tentative relationships and patterns began to emerge, providing valuable preliminary findings. These findings were then utilized to enhance the interview guide, ensuring that the subsequent interviews would delve deeper into the issues that surfaced from the archival research. By incorporating the perspectives of the study participants, theresearchaimedto gather their views and insightsregardingtheoutcomesofpast performance measurement processes.The archival research served as a crucial foundation for the study, allowingforacomprehensiveexplorationoftheorganization'sperformancemeasurement

practices and their alignment with the strategic objectives. It provided valuable insights and informed the subsequent stages of the research, facilitating a more holistic and in-depth understanding of the topic at hand.

3.2.7.2.2 Detailedandsemi-structuredinterviews

Engaging inqualitative interviews constitute a robust methodologicalapproach for exploring the complexities of social phenomena, as they enable researchers to delve into the subjective experiences,perceptions,andinterpretationsofindividuals(Macketal.,2005).Byengaginginin- depth, open-ended conversations, researchers can uncover rich, contextualized insights into how participants navigate, make sense of, and construct meaning within their social worlds. This qualitativeapproachallowsforanuancedunderstandingoftheintricatedynamics,processes,and meanings that underlie social phenomena, providing a depth and richness of data that is difficult to obtain through other research methods.By developing a carefully curated set of questions, the researchercanguidetheinquiryintospecificissuesrelatedtotheresearchquestion.However,the beauty ofqualitative interviews lies in their flexibility, as the interviewer has the freedom to explore new issues that may arise during the interview process.

Unlikestructuredinterviews,theorderandinclusionofquestionsinaqualitativeinterviewcanbe adjustedbasedontheflowofeachindividualinterview.Thisflexibilityenablestheinterviewerto customizethediscussionaccordingtothespecificcircumstancesandresponsesofeachparticipant (Saunders et al, 2009).

Byemployingsemi-structured,in-depthinterviews,researcherscanemployaflexibleandadaptive approachtodatacollection,allowing foramoreprofoundexplorationofparticipants'experiences, beliefs,and values. Bydeviating fromrigid, structuredquestionnairesand insteademployingopen-ended, conversational prompts, researchers can foster a more dynamic and responsive interview environment, enabling participants to share rich, contextualized insights into their subjective interpretations and meanings associated with specific phenomena. This approach enables researchers to access a more nuanced and multifaceted understanding of the complex, contextualizedrealitiesunderinvestigation.Theprimaryaimofqualitativeinterviewsistoreveal

nuanced and elaborate insights from participants, ensuring that their unique insights and interpretations are captured. Byencouraging open and candid discussions, qualitative interviews provide a platform for interviewees to share their personal experiences, thoughts, and emotions, offering valuable insights that cannot be obtained through other research methods.

To collect data from designated internal sources, a qualitative research approach was employed, comprising a blend of thorough and semi-structured interviews. This methodological approach enabledthecollectionofrich,detailedinsightsfromparticipants,whilealsoallowingforflexibility and adaptability in the interview process. The in-depth interviews provided an opportunity for extensive exploration of participants' experiences, perspectives, and beliefs, while the semi-structured format allowed for a balance between openness and guidance, ensuring that relevant topics were addressed while also permitting participants to share their thoughts and insights in a natural and unrestricted manner. This approach proved to be highly effective as it allowed the researcher to provide clarification on any unclear questions and seek further elaboration on the responses provided by the interviewees. Additionally, any emerging issues that required deeper exploration could be pursued to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

During the interviews, an interview guide was utilized as a flexible yet structured tool. This ensuredthatthe interviewprocessmaintained a levelofconsistencywhileallowing for adaptability basedontheuniquedynamicsofeachinterview.Employinganinterviewguideaidedingathering data that could be compared effectively and aided in the identification of emerging themes.

Toensureaccuracyandminimizetheriskofmissinganyvaluabledata,theinterviewswereaudio-recorded.Thisrecordingmethodallowedforacomprehensivecaptureofalltheinformationshared during the interviews, enabling thorough analysis at a later stage. Written notes were also taken simultaneouslyto supplement the audio recordings, providing additionaldetails and context. The combination of audio recordings and written notes served as a comprehensive data collection strategy,ensuringthatnovaluableinsightsornuanceswereoverlooked.Thismeticulousapproach

allowed for a comprehensive examination of the gathered data facilitated the discovery of significant findings and recurring patterns.

3.2.8 AnalysisoftheData

Each interview was meticulously recorded using audio technology to ensure precise documentation, and comprehensive notes weretaken during the interview process to supplement the recordings. Following the interviews, verbatim transcriptions were generated, capturing the exact responses of the participants. These transcriptions constituted the primary data source for analysis. To organize and analyze the data, a systematic approach was employed, involving the summarizationandcategorizationofresponsesusingtheinterviewguideasaframework.Aguide was pre-established, aligned with the research questions and objectives, to ensure a targeted and purposeful analysis. The categorization process enabled a thorough and methodical examination ofthedata,ensuringthatallpertinentinformationwascapturedandincorporatedintotheanalysis. This meticulous approach to data measurement and analysis facilitated a rich and nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Moreover, the archival research data were combined with interview data under pertinent categories. This amalgamation facilitated a thorough analysis, allowing for the recognition of trends and patterns. Subsequently, the categorized data were compared with the conceptual frameworkoutlined inChapter 2,facilitatingacomparativeexplorationofempiricalfindingsvis- à-vis theoretical constructs. This iterative process facilitated the identification of meaningful relationships and patterns between various components of performance measurement practices within the case organization, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of how these elements intersect and influence one another. By integrating the empirical data with the conceptual framework, a more comprehensive and contextualized understanding of performance measurement practices was achieved, revealing insights into the complex dynamics and mechanisms that underpin these practices within the organization. Through this comparative analysis,insightsbegantoemerge,allowing fordeductionsregardingtheefficacyorinefficacyof theperformanceevaluationsystem.Byconducting a meticulousanalysisthat combineddatafrom interviewsandarchivalresearch,thisresearchaimedtounravelthecomplexitiesofthecase

organization's performance measurement practices. The systematic examination of the data shed light on the interconnections and potential explanations for the observed outcomes, contributing to a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

3.3 EthicalConsiderations

(Saunders et al, 2009) highlight the pervasive nature of ethical concerns throughout the research process, emphasizing the researcher's moraldutyto uphold the rights and dignityofall involved. Similarly, Nachmias and Nachmias (2008) stress the importance of addressing ethical considerations to ensure data integrity and protect participants from harm.

For this study, explicit approval was acquired from the chief executive officer, accompanied by clear communication regarding the research objectives and methodologies. Efforts were made to minimize disruptions to participants' schedules, and their right to decline participation was respected. Participants were informed of their autonomy and provided explicit consent for data collection, with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. These ethical measures aimed to buildtrust,mitigaterisks,andupholdparticipantwell-beingandconfidentiality.Followingethical guidelines ensured a respectful environment and the collection of reliable data.

3.4 ReliabilityandValidity

Reliability and validity make up foundational principles in research, as they significantly impact the credibility and trustworthiness ofthe data. Their importance is particularlypronounced when consideringthegeneralizabilityoffindings,astheabilitytoextrapolateresearchoutcomestoother contextsorbroadertheoreticalframeworkshingesontherigorandqualityoftheevidence(Ritchie et al, 2003). Specifically, reliability concerns the consistency and reliability of data collection, while validityrelatesto the accuracyand truthfulnessoffindings. Together,theyare essential for maintaining research quality, enabling researchers to draw meaningful conclusions and make informed decisions. the applicability of their results to other settings and populations'.By giving precedencetoreliabilityandvalidity,researcherscanbolsterthestrengthandapplicabilityoftheir results,therebyaidingintheprogressionofknowledgeandtheorieswithintheirdiscipline.

Reliability pertains to the consistency and steadiness of data, illustrating how reliably identical outcomescanbeachievedwhenthestudyis replicatedunder comparablecircumstances. A study that is deemed reliable yields consistent results, thereby bolstering trust in the precision and reliability of the data collected.

Validity, ontheotherhand, pertainstothedegreetowhicharesearchstudypreciselymeasuresor represents the phenomenon under investigation. It addresses the question of whether the study measures what it claims to measure. A valid study ensures that the data collected are relevant, meaningful, and truly representative of the variables being studied.

Bothreliabilityandvalidityarecrucialconsiderationsinresearch,astheycontributetotheoverall quality and credibility of the findings. Ensuring the reliability of the data enables researchers to have confidence in the consistency and reliability of their results. Similarly, establishing the validityofthe research ensures that the studyaccuratelycapturesthe essence ofthe phenomenon being examined, facilitating meaningful generalizations and theoretical implications. In essence, reliabilityand validityare fundamentalaspectsofresearch methodologythat allowresearchersto assess the strength of their data. By addressing these concepts, researchers can improve the trustworthiness, transferability, and applicability of their findings, strengthening the value and impact of their research in broader contexts.

3.4.1 Reliability

Reliability is a crucialaspect ofresearch, encompassing the consistencyand dependability ofthe researcheremployeddatacollectiontechniquesandanalyticalmethodologies.Itentailsevaluating the degree to which the measures used would yield congruent results on multiple occasions, the extent to which other researchers would arrive at the same conclusions, and transparency in interpreting the raw data (Saunders et al., 2009).The primary emphasis is on the reliability of researchfindings,determiningwhether identicalorsimilarresultscouldpotentiallybeobtainedif another study utilizing the same methods were conducted (Ritchie et al., 2003). In essence, reliability assessment seeks to establish whether the research findings are a reliable reflection of the phenomenon under investigation or merely a product of chance or methodological flaws. By

ensuring reliability, researcherscanaugment thetrustworthinessand credibilityof their findings, facilitating the advancement of knowledge and theory in their field.

The issue of reliability in qualitative research has sparked considerable debate among scholars. Some experts (Hughes et al., 1997; Lincoln et al., 1985; Holstein et al., 1997, as cited in(Ritchie et al., 2003) argue that replicating findings in qualitative research is challenging due to the inherently dynamic and context-dependent nature of the research setting. They posit that qualitative studies capture a snapshot of reality at a specific point in time, rendering exact replicationoffindingsdifficult, ifnot impossible (Ritchie et al., 2003).Thisperspective suggests that qualitative research is particularly sensitive to the complexities and nuances of the research context, whichcan limit the generalizabilityand replicabilityoffindings. As a result, researchers must carefully consider the implications of context and time on their research design, methodology, and interpretation of results.

3.4.2 Validation

Validity is a fundamental concept in research, denoting the degree to which research findings genuinelyreflect the phenomena theyclaimto represent. It encompasses the accuracy, precision, and truthfulness of the research (Saunders et al., 2009). Validity is a multifaceted construct, comprising two primary dimensions: internal validity and external validity. Internal validity concerns the extent to which the researcher is investigating the intended research question or phenomenon, free fromsystematic error or bias. External validity, on the other hand, pertains to the generalizability of the research findings, specifically the extent to which they can be applied toothergroupswithinthepopulation,different   contexts,orvarioussettings(Ritchieet   al.,2003). Byensuringvalidity,researcherscanestablishthecredibilityandtrustworthinessoftheirfindings, enhancing the overall quality and impact of their research.

In the present study, validity was strengthened through the employment of a multi-method approach, which enabled a comprehensive examination of the research problem from diverse angles.Semi-structuredinterviewswereundertakentogathercomprehensivequalitativedatafrom participants,enrichingthedataset,whichwassubsequentlytriangulatedwithsecondaryrecordsto

enhancetheaccuracyandreliabilityofthefindings.Thismethodologicaltriangulationallowedfor cross-validationofthedata,increasingconfidenceintheresultsand mitigatingpotentialbiasesor limitations inherent in a single-method approach. By integrating multiple perspectives and data sources,thestudyachievedamorenuancedandrobustunderstandingoftheresearchphenomenon, therebyenhancingthevalidityandtrustworthinessofthefindings.Theinterviewguidewascrafted to align closely with the research inquiries and objectives, ensuring coherence and relevance. Participants' responses were meticulously recorded, transcribed, and subjected to thorough analysis.

While acknowledging the uniqueness of the research context, which may limit the possibility of exactreplication,thestudyaimedtoincreasevaliditybytransparentlydocumentingandjustifying the decisions, methods, and procedures utilized throughout the research process. By providing a clear rationale forthe chosen approaches, the studyaimed to enhance the credibilityand validity of its findings.

3.5.1 Limitations

Thisresearchutilizedacasestudyapproach,facilitatingathoroughandnuancedinvestigationinto the research subject. While this approach provides rich, contextualized insights, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. The findings generated from this study are specific to the case organization, Murewa Rural District Council, and are not directly generalizable to other organizations, regardlessoftheir similarityor dissimilarity. Implementing these findings inother rural local authorities or organizations without thoughtful adaptation could be premature and potentially misleading. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the contextual specificity of the findings and exercise caution when seeking to transfer or adapt them to other organizational settings.Bydoingso,researchersandpractitionerscanensurethattheinsightsgeneratedfromthis study are adapted and contextualized in a way that respects the unique characteristics and contextual factors of other entities.

3.5.2 Summary

The chapter has comprehensively examined and provided a rationale for the philosophical approach employed in this study. It has also justified the various decisions and processes undertakenthroughouttheresearch.Inlinetocaptureandunderstandindividuals'perspectivesand attitudes related to the research topic, a predominantly interpretive approach was chosen as it offered a more suitable framework. The chapter further elucidated the different data collection methods that were employed, providing sound justifications for their selection. Additionally, the process of data analysis was thoroughly explained.

Ethical considerations were given due attention within the context of the current study, ensuring that ethical guidelines and principles were upheld throughout the research process .This chapter hasdelvedintotheessentialaspectsofvalidityandreliability,elucidatingthemethodologicalsteps undertaken to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study's findings. Having establishedtheresearchmethodologyandmeasurestoensurevalidityandreliability,theupcoming section will introduce and extensively examine the findings obtained from the detailed case analysis. Thiswillinvolveadetailedanalysis ofthe findings, illuminatingthesignificant insights and implicationsthat emerge fromthe research. Bypresenting and interpreting the resultsclearly and systematically, the next chapter will contribute to the overall coherence and logical flow of the study, ultimately enhancing the understanding of the research phenomenon and its practical applications.

CHAPTER4

FINDINGSANDDISCUSSIONOFTHERESEARCH

4.1 Introduction

This study aimed to assess how well Zimbabwe's rural local authorities employed performance assessment systems to meet their goals for providing services. A case study methodology and a qualitative approach with an interpretive viewpoint were utilized for an in-depth investigation of thissubject.Thischapterpresentsanddiscussestheresultsoftheresearch,providinginsightsinto theeffectivenessofthesebusinesses'performanceassessmentsystemsandtheirimpactonservice delivery.

The research was carried out through a blend of in-depth interviews and archival research, also referredto asdocumentaryresearch. The datawasanalyzed using descriptive analysis, reliability and validity tests, and Pearson's correlation analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences(SPSS)wasutilizedtoperformthereliabilitytestsandcorrelationanalysis.Theinterview questions were deliberately formulated and structured around four key thematic areas, closely aligned with the inquiry's aims and objectives.

Bystructuringtheinterviewquestionsaroundthesefourkeyareas,thestudyaimedtogatherrich, qualitative data that would provide nuanced insights into the research phenomenon and address the research questions and objectives comprehensively and systematically.

The results are explained indetailand examined tothe four major categories. Aclear connection is also made between the findings and the conceptual framework shown in Figure 4. A greater comprehensionofthe research findings and their theoreticalfoundations is made possible bythis combination. The study's conclusions are also methodically contrasted and compared with the body of literature already written about performance assessment in the public sector, which provides insightfulinformationandsignificantlyaddstothebodyofknowledgealreadyavailable inthisarea.Thisstudyaimstoenhanceourunderstandingofperformanceassessmentinthepublic

sector, identify areas for further exploration, and offer guidance for evidence-based practice and policy decisions through a critical and reflective analysis of existing literature.

4.2 SampleDescription

Aspartofthisstudy'sdatacollection, in-depthinterviewswereconductedwithfiftyemployeesof the Murewa Rural District Council, selected purposefully for the sample. The sample was meticulously chosen to encompass members of the performance assessment team and representativesfromalllevenemployeegradeswithinthecompany.Thisvariedsampleincluded individuals holding various positions such as the Chief Executive Officer, Department Heads, Section Heads, Clerks, Senior Clerks, Tractor Drivers, Security Guards, and General Hands. strategic sampling approach enabled the capture of a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences, fromsenior leadership to frontline staff, therebyenhancing the richnessand validity of the data. By intentionally selecting participants from various hierarchical levels and job categories,thestudyaimedtodevelopathoroughcomprehensionoftheresearchphenomenonand mitigate potential biases.

The sample comprised fifty employees from Murewa Rural District Council, selected to ensure representation from all eleven levels of employee classification within the organization, with particular attention to members of the performance measurement team. This diverse sample encompassed a range of positions, including the Chief Executive Officer, Department Heads, SectionHeads, Clerks, and Senior Clerks, and housing department which include tractor drivers, securityguards,and generalhands. Thisstrategicsampling approachenabled thecaptureofabroad spectrum of perspectives and experiences, from senior leadership to frontline staff, thereby enhancing the richness and validity of the data. The age range of the participants varied from 27 to 60years old. Their tenure withthe organization spanned fromone year to 25years, indicating a wide range of experience and perspectives. Additionally, the educational backgrounds of the participants varied, ranging from primary-level education to post-graduate degrees. It is noteworthy that all participants were married. By including employees from various grades and positions,as well as ensuringa balancedrepresentation of genderanddiverse backgrounds, the

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study aimed to capture a comprehensive range of insights and perspectives related to the effectiveness of the performance measurement systems in the organization.

4.3 FindingsoftheResearch

To ensure a structured and focused approach during the interviews, an interview guide was developed. This guide was carefully crafted to align with the predefined themes that directly correlated withthe research inquiries and aims ofthe investigation. Within eachtheme, a variety of questions were posed to elicit valuable insights and perspectives from the participants.

Furthermore,incaseswheretheseemedto bediscrepanciesbetweentheoralevidenceprovided duringtheinterviewsandthearchivalresearchevidence,additionalclarificationsandexplanations were sought. This approach aimed to ensure consistency and accuracy in the data collected, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the research findings. By integrating both oral and archival evidence, the studyemployed a triangulation methodologyto corroborateand enrich the data, thus providing a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of the effectiveness of performance measurement systemsutilized byrurallocaladministrations. Thisapproachenabled the cross-validation of information from diverse sources, fostering a more nuanced and reliable analysis of the research phenomenon. The combination of oral testimonies from key informants and archivalrecords facilitated a detailed examinationofthe performance measurement systems, revealing both the strengths and weaknesses of these systems and informing strategies for improvement.

4.3.1 Questionnaireresponserate

Atotalof fiftyquestionnaire were issued out to respective departments ofMurewa RuralDistrict Council.Theresearcherhadfurthergroupedtheemployeesintotheirrespectivedepartmentssoas to come up with collated and summaries major findings.

4.3.1.1 :ResponseRate

Description	Noofrespondents	Percentageofdistribution
Questionnaireissued	50	100%
Questionnairereturned	45	90%
Questionnairenotreturned	5	10%

Source:authorcalculations

From the fifty questionnaires distributed to respective departments of Murewa Rural District Council, forty-five were returned to giving a return rate of 90%. From the five questionnaires deemed notrespondedandthehighresponseratewasachievedthroughfollowupstoresponders.

4.3.1.2 Demographicdetailsofresponders

Figure4.1:Age

51
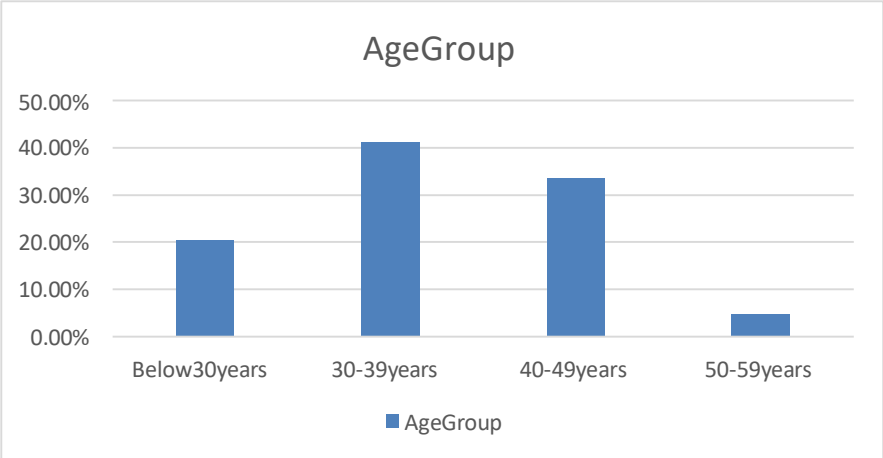
Figure4.2:LevelofEducation
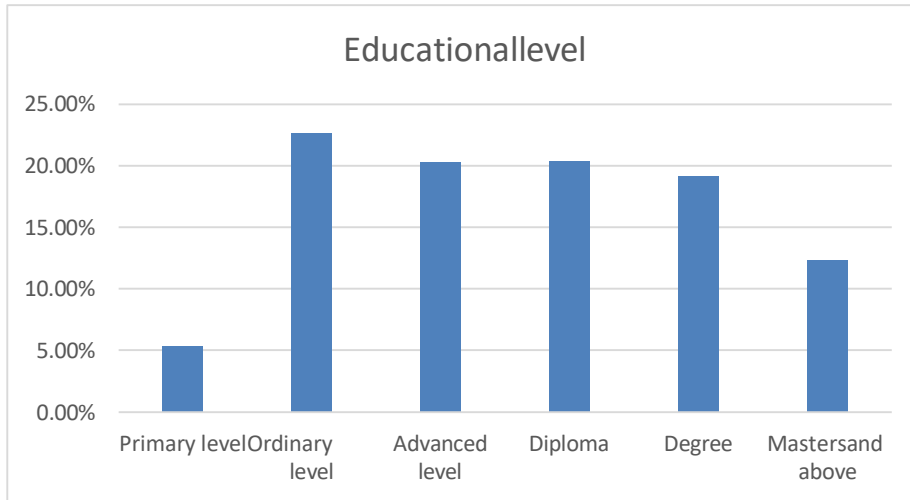
Figure4.3Race

Table4.3.1Demographicinformationonrespondent'srace
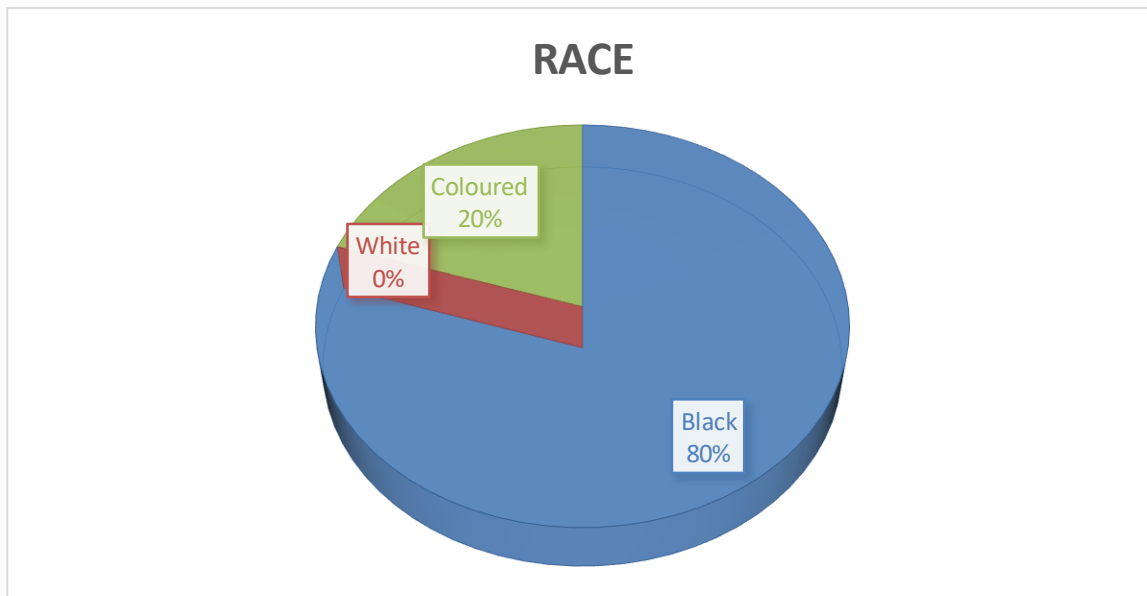
Figure4.3above illustratethatthemajorityofthepopulationin MurewaRuralDistrict Councilis black80%,whilecolouredpopulationmakesup20%.Thereisnowhitepopulationrepresentedin the chart.

4.1 EmploymentExperience

Table4.2.3Demographicinformationonrespondent'semploymentexperience.

Employmentexperience

4.5 Reliabilitytestofdemographicdatacollected

Table 4.5.0 Reliability Statistics 1

ReliabilityStatistics

Cronbach'sAlpha	NofItems
.949	13

AuthorsSPSScalculations2024

A Cronbach's alpha of .949 implies a high level of internal consistency among the items in the assessment or questionnaire. This coefficient signifies the degree to which all the items in the measure are assessing the same underlying construct or concept. Essentially, it suggests that the items are consistently measuring what they aim to measure. With a value nearing 1, it indicates strong correlation among the items, which is typically favorable for a reliable measure.

With 13 items in your assessment, the Cronbach's alpha of .949 indicates a robust internal consistencyamong these items. It suggeststhat the assessment is likelyreliable and consistent in measuring whatever construct or concept it is designed to assess. The high level of internal consistencyenhancesconfidence intheaccuracyandvalidityoftheassessment results(DeVellis, 2017).

4.6 DescriptiveStatistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic	Skewness Statistic	Skewness Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	Kurtosis Std.Error
Is_performance_measurement_system_formal	45	1	2	1.11	.318	2.561	.354	4.769	.695
Techniques_used_for_assessing_performance	45	1	2	1.71	.458	-.964	.354	-1.123	.695
Methods_of_performance_appraisal_form_a_part_of_your_system	45	1	6	2.33	1.907	1.040	.354	-.566	.695
How_clear_and_well_defined_are_the_service_delivery_goals	45	1	3	1.93	.720	.100	.354	-1.003	.695
Is_delievry_service_objectives_align_with_the_community_needs	45	1	3	1.67	.826	.704	.354	-1.161	.695
Is_training_progress_towards_its_service_delivery_objectives	45	1	5	2.49	1.100	.726	.354	.014	.695

Is_feedback_and_ use_data_improve _service_delivery	45	1	5	2.33	1.279	.901	.354	-.116	.695
Is_performance_m easurement_syste ms_transparent_a nd_accountable	45	1	5	2.67	1.168	.518	.354	-.881	.695
Is_service_deliver y_quality_reflected _by_performance_ measurement	45	1	4	2.11	.832	.529	.354	-.003	.695
ValidN(listwise)	45								

The provided data presents descriptive statistics for various aspects related to performance measurement systems and service delivery. Each statistic pertains to a specific variable, such as whether the performance measurement system is formal, the techniques used for assessing performance, and whether performance appraisal methods are integrated into the system..

For instance, the "Is performance measurement systemformal" variable has a sample size (N) of 45, with responses ranging from 1 to 2. The mean value is 1.11, indicating that, on average, the systemisslightlymore inclinedtowardsbeing formal(as1typicallydenotes"yes"or"formal" in binaryresponsescales).Thestandarddeviationof0.318suggestsamoderatedegreeofvariability in responses around this mean (Field, 2013).

Similarly,thevariable"Techniquesusedforassessingperformance"exhibitsastandarddeviation of 0.458 and a mean of 1.71. The distribution of responses seems to have a slight left skew, as evidenced by the skewness score of -0.964, indicating a tendency for more responses to cluster towardslowervalues. Thevariable "Performance evaluationtechniquesare incorporatedintoour system. " ranges from 1 to 6, indicating a wider range of responses. The mean value of 2.33 suggests that,onaverage, there are some methods ofperformance appraisal incorporatedinto the

system.However,therelativelyhighstandarddeviationof1.907indicatesconsiderablevariability   in the extent to which methods are integrated.

Descriptivestatisticssuchasskewnessandkurtosisprovideinsightsintothedistributionandshape of the data. Positive skewness values suggest a right-skewed distribution, while negative values indicatealeft-skeweddistribution.Kurtosismeasuresthepeakednessorflatnessofadistribution; positive values denote peaked distributions, while negative values signify flatter distributions.

Insummary,thesedescriptivestatisticsprovideathoroughoutlineoftheattributesanddistribution ofresponsesacrossdiverse performance-related variables, illuminating the essence ofperformance measurement systems and service delivery within the specified context.

4.7 Pearson's Correlation: Service Delivery Objectives of Murewa Rural District Council

Correlations

		Is_performance_measurement_system_formal	Is_training_progress_towards_its_service_delivery_objectives	Is_feedback_and_use_data_improve_service_delivery	Is_performance_measurement_systems_transparent_and_accountable	Is_service_delivery_quality_reflected_by_performance_measurement
Is_performance_measurement_system_formal	Pearson Correlation	1	.686**	.745**	.592**	.640**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Is_training_progress_towards_its_service_delivery_objectives	Pearson Correlation	.686**	1	.931**	.944**	.908**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Is_feedback_and_use_data_improve_service_delivery	Pearson Correlation	.745**	.931**	1	.898**	.904**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Is_performance_measurement_systems_transparent_and_accountable	Pearson Correlation	.592**	.944**	.898**	1	.881**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	45	45	45	45	45

Is_service_deliver y_quality_reflected _by_performance_ measurement	Pearson Correlation	.640**	.908**	.904**	.881**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	45	45	45	45	45

**.Correlationissignificantatthe0.01level(2-tailed).

The correlation table provided examines the relationships between different aspects of performancemeasurementsystemsandservicedelivery.Eachcorrelationcoefficientindicatesthe strength and direction of the relationship between two variables, spanning from -1 to 1.

For instance, the correlation between "Is performance measurement system formal" and "Is training progress towards its service delivery objectives" is strong (r = 0.686, p < 0.001). This suggests a favorable correlation between the formality of the performance measurement system and the progress made toward service delivery objectives.

Similarly,thereisahighcorrelationbetween"Isfeedbackandusedataimproveservicedelivery" and "Is training progress towards its service delivery objectives" (r = 0.931, p < 0.001). This indicatesastrongpositiverelationshipbetweenutilizingfeedbackdatatoenhanceservicedelivery and the progress made toward service delivery objectives (Field, (2013).

Furthermore, all associations presented in the table are statistically significant at the 0.01 level, suggesting that these relationships are not merely coincidental.

Overall, the correlation table highlights the interconnectedness of various aspects within performance measurement systems and service delivery, providing valuable insights into their mutual influences and associations.

4.7.1 Pearson'sCorrelations:Thegoalsoftheperformancemeasurementsystemor systems that Murewa Rural District Council has put in place

		Approximate_of_total_staff_employed	Techniques_used_for_assessing_performance	Methods_of_performance_appraisal_form_a_part_of_your_system	How_clear_and_well_defined_are_the_service_delivery_goals	Is_delievry_service_objectives_align_with_the_community_needs
Approximate_of_total_staff_employed	Pearson Correlation	.a	.a	.a	.a	.a
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.	.	.	.
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Techniques_used_for_assessing_performance	Pearson Correlation	.a	1	.451**	.836**	.520**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.		.002	<.001	<.001
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Methods_of_performance_appraisal_form_a_part_of_your_system	Pearson Correlation	.a	.451**	1	.745**	.938**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.	.002		<.001	<.001
	N	45	45	45	45	45
How_clear_and_well_defined_are_the_service_delivery_goals	Pearson Correlation	.a	.836**	.745**	1	.765**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	45	45	45	45	45

Is_delievry_servic e_objectives_align _with_the_commu nity_needs	Pearson Correlation	.a	.520**	.938**	.765**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	45	45	45	45	45

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

a. Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.

In a statistical study, the presented data shows correlations between different variables. A statistical technique for determining the direction and intensity of a relationship between two or more

Each variable in the analysis signifies a unique facet of organizational performance and service delivery. The correlation coefficients demonstrate the extent of the relationships between these variables. A correlation coefficient nearing +1 signifies a significant positive relationship, while a coefficient nearing -1 indicates a substantial negative relationship. A coefficient nearing 0 suggests minimal to no linear relationship between the variables.

For instance, the correlation between "Techniques Used for Assessing Performance" and "How Clear and Well-Defined Are the Service Delivery Goals" is 0.836, suggesting a robust positive correlation between the two variables. This suggests that as the techniques for performance assessment become more diverse or sophisticated, the clarity of service delivery goals tends to increase.

The significance levels (p-values) are also presented to ascertain the statistical significance of the observed correlations. In this instance, all correlations reported are significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that the observed relationships are unlikely to have occurred by random chance.

Interpreting these statistical findings can help organizations understand the underlying dynamics between different aspects of their operations. By identifying strong correlations, organizations can focus their efforts on areas that are most likely to impact overall performance and service delivery

effectiveness(Wallnau,etel,2014)..Additionally,statisticalanalysisenablesorganizationstomake data-driven decisions and implement targeted interventions to improve performance outcomes.

4.2 TheobjectivesoftheMurewaRuralDistrictCouncilforservicedelivery

The primaryconclusion ofthe studywas that a majorityofthe council employees under scrutiny demonstrated awareness of the organization's service delivery goals. This result implies that the council has been successful in informing staff members about its service deliverygoals, and that staff members from different departments and seniority levels are aware of the council's main priorities and goals. For performance assessment methods to be effectively implemented, it's imperative that staff are informed about them, as it allows them to coordinate their efforts and activities with the council's overall goals. Interestingly, this knowledge seemed to have been derived from their everyday observations and experiences rather than through any formal or deliberate communication from management.

Oneparticipant(P8TD)revealedatellinginsight,stating,"AlthoughIhaveneverreceivedexplicit informationaboutthe council'sservice deliveryobjectives, Ihave developed anunderstanding of them through my observations of our daily operations." This comment suggests that while the participantmaynothavereceivedformalcommunicationaboutthecouncil'sobjectives,theyhave nonetheless acquired a tacit understanding of the council's priorities through their experiential knowledgeandexposuretotheorganization'spractices.Thisfindinghighlightstheimportanceof bothformalandinformalknowledge-sharingmechanismsinshapingemployees'understandingof organizational objectives.

A significant consensus emerged among both managerial and non-managerial participants regarding what they perceived to be key components of service delivery by the council. The convergence of staff responses (P1SM, P2JM, P3SM, P4SM, P5SM, P8TD, P6GH) concerning the council's service delivery objectives was a noteworthy discovery. Common themes revolved around the maintenance of roads, the establishment of healthcare facilities, and the development ofeducationalinfrastructure.Thisalignmentindicatesasharedawarenessoftheorganization's

priorities among staff members and reflects a clear consensus regarding the areas on which the council concentrates its service delivery efforts. This conclusion emphasizes the significance of these particular areas in the council's overall service delivery strategy and offers insightful information about the council's service delivery ambitions.

Whenaskedabouttheobjectivesthecouncilaimstoachievethroughitsservicedeliveryactivities, a range of responses were obtained. Participants in management (such as P3SM) expressed themselvesinawaythathighlightedtheeffectsandresultstheyhopedtohaveonthelivesoftheir constituents."Ourgoalistomakeapositivedifferenceinthelivesofthepeopleweserve,andour service delivery objectives are centered on this overarching aim," said participant P3SM, exemplifying this viewpoint. Byframing the participant's responses inthis way, it becomes clear thattheyarenotjustlistingjobsoractivitiesbutalsoconsideringtheultimategoaland anticipated outcomesoftheirlabor.Thisoutcome-orientedapproachshowsadedicationtoprovidingservices that enhance community well-being and enhance the qualityof life for residents. "Our goal is to bring about positive change and improve the well-being of the community through our service delivery initiatives."

> Our overarching objective is centered on enhancing the quality of life for the residents within our district. Every endeavor we undertake is geared towards achieving this goal. As a local government, we have been bestowed with the authority to make substantial contributions to the overall development of our country across various domains, including the social, political, and economic realms.Werecognizetheimportanceofcontributingto nationaldevelopment in its entirety, ensuring that our actions have a positive and lasting impact onthe well-being of our community.

Othermanagerialparticipants,suchasP1SM,P2JM,P5SM,andP7JM,echoedsimilarsentiments. On the other hand, non-management participants often conveyed their viewpoints in relation to specific activity objectives or the outcomes of the council's endeavors. For instance, P10TD mentioned that the council aims to ensure the maintenance of roads, as well as the provision of adequate resources for clinics and schools are easily accessible, but P14CL said that the council offers health and educational services to the public.

The varyingfunctionsandpositionsofthemembersinsidethecompanycanbethereasonforthese diverse opinions. Given their roles, managerial staff members are mostly interested in how the council's efforts will affect the community they work in. In contrast, non-managerial employees tend to focus on the activities they carry out and the resulting outcomes, since they are actively engaged in the service deliveryprocess, their performance is assessed according to these results.

Itis importanttonote,though,thatthecouncil'sgoals forservicedeliveryare notcurrentlyoutlined ina formalwrittenstatement. Oraltestimony, especiallyfrommanagerialparticipants, reinforced this, as did the absence of any written declaration discovered during archival inquiry.

The case organization does engage in public consultation on an annual basis, particularly during the budget preparationprocess.Managersand councilmembersparticipate inpublic consultation meetings(P1SM,P3SM,P5SM,P6GH).Lower-levelstaffmembers,however,arenotinvolvedin this procedure. Participant P3SM emphasized the importance of the consultation process for involving the public in the council's service delivery plans, highlighting that it allows the community to have a voice in the council's activities. However, participant P5SM viewed the consultation process more as a formality needed to legitimize the budgeting process.

> Due to our strong conviction that it is crucial to provide the public with a say in decisions that directly affect their lives, we as a council have wholeheartedly adoptedthe participatorybudgeting principles. As partofthe process ofpreparing our budget, we arrange consultation sessions with our ratepayers annually. These meetingsserveasaplatformforthepublictoactivelyparticipateinshapingcouncil plans, expressing their expectations, and sharing their valuable perspectives on councilactivities. This inclusive approachhas beenat thecoreofour practices for the past five years, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration between the council and the community we serve.

Themajorityofmanagementemployeesexpressedagreementwiththisviewpoint,recognizingthe crucial role played by the consultation process in giving the public a platform to voice their opinions and influence council activities. However, it is important to note that there were some who perceived the processasamere ritual, fulfilling the requirementsset bycentralgovernment. Participant P5SM shared their perspective, stating:

> I get the impression that the council's plans are not really impacted by the consultation process. We tend to carry out the same routines year after year with little variation. Whilethereare manythingsthat individualswouldwant to seethe councilundertake,there are restrictions and limitations that keep usfromgranting their wishes. Sometimes, people expect the counciltotakeactionsthat are beyond our authority or mandate. From my perspective, the entire consultation process seemstobemoreaboutfulfillingministerialrequirements,astheMinistryofLocal Government expects us to submit the consultation minutes. Rather than truly interacting with the public, it appears that the main goal of this procedure is to expedite the adoption of our budget.

4.3.2 The aims of the Murewa Rural District Council's performance measurement systems

The survey participants demonstrated a high level of familiarity with the council's performance management system, correctly identifying it as the Results-Based Measurement (RBM) system. Moreover,theyexhibitedknowledgeofthepreviousperformancemeasurementsystememployed bythe council, referring to it byvarious names suchas keyresult areas (KRAs), management by goals,andperformanceappraisal.Thesedifferentlabelshighlightkeycomponentsofthecouncil's pre-RBM performance appraisal system. By acknowledging and comprehending these constituents, we can attain understanding into the fundamental aspects of the performance measurement systemand its functioning. Thiscomprehensioniscrucialfor assessingtheefficiency of the system and pinpointing areas necessitating enhancement.

Thedecision-makingprocessforthechoiceandimplementationoftheperformancemeasurement system in the example organization was, according to all participants, either very limited or nonexistent. This was the sentiment expressed succinctly by participant P3SM:

> Indeed, when examining the situation, it becomes evident that councils have limitedinfluenceindeterminingtheperformancemeasurementsystemtheyutilize. Currently, the Ministry of Local Government mandates councils to adopt the Results-Based Measurement (RBM) system. Consequently, our management team's principal duty is to oversee the effective implementation of this system, considering our unique circumstances. Our focus lies in ensuring that the RBM system is effectively established and operational within our organization.

The available literature emphasizes the importance of considering the organizational context, particularly the organizational culture when introducing and implementing performance measurement systems (Armstrong, 2009). Contrary to the expected best practice, the local government sector in Zimbabwe appears to deviate from providing comprehensive training on performance measurement systems. Among the management participants (n=6), responses regarding training and confidence in implementing the system were mixed. While there was agreement that some training had been provided, opinions diverged on its quality and effectiveness. Participant P1SM expressed dissatisfaction with the training, citing that it was conducted by individuals without sufficient expertise in the performance measurement system, resultinginalackofconfidenceinitsuse.Participant   P5SMconcurred,emphasizingtheneedfor enhanced training. These findings suggest that the training provided may not have adequately equipped employees with the necessary competencies and expertise required for the successful implementation of the performance measurement system, potentially hindering its successful adoption and utilization.

> I received training on the performance appraisal system when I first joined the council, whichhelpedmeprogressivelygaingreaterconfidenceandskillinusingit. But whenthe

Results-Based -Measurement (RBM) approach was implemented, problems emerged. With promises that training will be given later, we were tasked with implementing RBM without receiving any prior training. Regretfully, no guidance has taken placein over six months, therefore we are on our own when navigating RBM without the right direction. Thechallenges weconfront as managersaremade worsebythe dejectionthat thislackof training has caused in individuals charged with using the system.

Incontrast,someother management participantsexpressedconfidence intheir abilityto effectively use the performance measurement system. Participant P4SM shared their experience, stating,

ParticipantP1SMconfirmed,"Indeed,internaltrainingwasconducted.Throughthistraining,I've acquired a comprehensive grasp ofthe council's performance measurement system, boosting my confidence in its effective operation." Similarly, participant P2JM mentioned attending a managerial training session on the Results-Based Measurement (RBM) system, which provided them with the necessary knowledge and confidence to utilize the system effectively. These statements suggest that the council's internal training has effectively enhanced employees' comprehension and confidence in using the performance measurement system.

On the flip side, non-management participants (n=9) stated that they relied on their supervisors' informal guidance instead of formal training. The experience was represented by participant P6GH, who said, "I haven't had any official instruction. My department head merely gave me instructions on how to create my work schedules. I'm not sure if that qualifies as instruction." Despitethis,theseparticipantsindicatedthattheywereconfidentintheirabilitytoutilizethePMS, which they attributed to the compliments they had gotten on their job performance. This implies that even in the absence of formal training, their perception of their proficiency with the system may have been influenced by the unofficial advice and criticism they got from supervisors.

Regarding the previous performance appraisal system, all respondents indicated their comfort in using it, as they had been accustomed to its use for several years before its replacement by the Results-BasedMeasurement(RBM)system.However,itbecameevidentthateffective

implementationof anyperformance measurement systemnecessitates comprehensive and timely training. It is best understood asa change management procedurethat helpsstaffmembers move from the outdated to the updated system. It appeared that some workers were still using the performancereviewsystem,whichtheywereaccustomedtousingbeforeRBMwasimplemented.

Althoughmostparticipantsthoughttheperformancemeasurementsystemwasworkingwell,they did identify certain areas that needed improvement. The necessity of ensuring frequent performance reviews and connecting the system to a rewards program were two noteworthy concerns raised. Although all participants acknowledged the functionality of the system, eight emphasized the necessityofcomplementing it witha reward structurethat distinguishes between high and low performers. Participant P3SM encapsulates the feeling:

> Since RBM deployment is a relatively new development, allow me to move the attentiontotheperformanceappraisalsystemthatweuseduptotheprevious year. Despiteafewhiccups,theperformanceappraisalsystemgenerallyfunctionedwell for us. By successfully focusing employees' attention on their tasks, it ensured a sense of focus and accountability. But there was one area in which it failed: identifying and rewarding exceptional performers. The idea that performance matters and that subpar performance may have appropriate consequences was not effectively conveyed to the audience. This omission could have discouraged top achievers while offering no support to those who were having difficulty. You can be confident that we are actively addressing and trying to resolve this issue.

An examination of the performance measurement files reveals a glaring absence of regular performance monitoring and evaluation. This finding is corroborated bythe sentiments ofmany, five participants identified this as a significant weakness in the council's performance measurementprocedures.AsacknowledgedbyparticipantP5SM,"Wemaynothaveconsistently the implementation or management of the system was not optimal, highlighting an area for improvement." This indicatesthat,to enhance the effectivenessofthe performance measurement system, employees generally acknowledge the necessity for stricter and more consistent performance monitoring and evaluation.

The research framework effectively underscores the significance of monitoring and evaluation, crucial elements within any performance management system. Organizations can evaluate the efficiency of their performance measurement system in accomplishing both performance and strategic goals by means of methodical monitoring and assessment. These activities also make it easiertoidentifyareasthatrequiretraininganddevelopment.Whentheseneedsaremet,employee performanceimproves,whichinturnimprovesorganizationalperformance.Byfosteringaculture ofcontinuousmonitoringandevaluation,organizationscancultivateaccountability,learning,and improvement.Thiswillhelp themoptimize their performance management systemsand increase success.Without a robust monitoring and evaluation process, it becomes challenging to devise meaningfultraininganddevelopmentinterventions.Moreover,theabsenceofanintegratedreward systeminthecaseorganizationcanbeattributedtothedeficiencyofacomprehensive monitoring and evaluation system within the performance measurement cycle.

The majority of participants (12 individuals) exhibited comprehension of how their roles were incorporated into the performance management system, acknowledging its function as a tool for directing and overseeing their work tasks. However, a minorityofparticipants (n=3) expressed a divergent view, suggesting a disconnect between their daily tasks and the performance managementsystem.Theseindividualsnotedthattheirworkplansandthecomponentsdeveloped within the system seemed to have limited relevance to their day-to-day operations, suggesting a disconnect between the system's objectives and their real-world work experiences. This discrepancy highlights potential issues with the system's implementation or effectiveness in engagingemployees'workactivities.Theyfurthernotedthatoncetheworkplanswerefiledaway, they were rarely revisited, and many of their work activities were not reflected in these plans. Participant P6GH's response encapsulates this viewpoint.

> I fail to see how the two arerelated. I do my work; the performance management system doesn't seem to produce anything. The creation of work plans marks the conclusion of certainsituations.Allyearlong,nobodyasksyouaboutthem.   Yougettheimpressionthat theyarecompletelyunimportant.Iamawareofmyresponsibilities,andafterIhavewritten   my work plans, I don't even go back and review them.

The additional information from an archival research study. It appears that the lack of regular performanceevaluationandrevisionofworkplansissupportedbyempiricalevidence.Thisstudy exposes a critical flaw in the performance management process: while work plans are typically established at the start of the year, they frequently lack evaluation and updating. An important conclusion is that the performance management system's goals were neither explicitly stated nor communicatedto the workforce.This omissionsuggeststhat staffmembers are unclear aboutthe purposeandobjectivesofthesystem, whichcouldcauseconfusion, misalignment,and inefficiency in reaching the intended results. The system's capacity to boost employee performance and organizational success is compromised by the lack of explicit goals and frequent evaluation. Participants in the study had to rely on their observations and interpretations to determine the objectives, which may lead to discrepancies in understanding.

Participant P2JM identified enhancing service delivery, enhancing accountability, and reducing public complaints as potential objectives of the performance management system. Participant P5SMlikelyprovidedtheir interpretationoftheobjectives,buttheinformationyouprovidedcuts offbeforetheirstatement.Basedonthese findings, it isclearthatthereisagapincommunication and understanding between the organization and its employees regarding the objectives of the performance measurement system. This lack of clarity and communication can contribute to the perceived disconnect and insignificance that you expressed in the initial statement.

By addressing these issues, organizations can create a performance management system that is more meaningful, transparent, and supportive ofemployee growthand organizationalobjectives.

> The performance management system serves as a tool to enhance our ability to manage employee performance effectively. It enables us to identify any performance issues and take appropriate action to mitigate or eliminate them, ultimately aiming to enhance workers' productivity. Additionally, it seeks to support employee development by allowing them to pick up new abilities that enhance their output.

AsstatedbyP6GHParticipant:

> I get the impression that the council is attempting to force people to work harder and more diligently. I learn this by watching what transpires. I've never been informed of what the council hopes to accomplish the means of the system for managing performance.

In summary, the key finding of the study underscores a critical inadequacy within the organization'sperformancemanagementsystem:theabsenceofclearlydefinedandcommunicated goals for staff members. As such, there was a lack ofuniformityand clarity because participants hadtorelyontheirownunderstandingofandexperienceswithperformancemanagementsystems to deduce the objectives. This omission has important ramifications, chief among them being an increased probability that workers may understand the objectives in different and possibly contradictory ways. Thus, the efficacy of the performance management system may be compromised by confusion, misalignment, and inefficiencies in reaching intended results. This divergenceinunderstandingcanleadtoconfusionandhinderthesystem'seffectiveness.Secondly, the absence ofclearlydefined objectives makes it challenging to conduct a meaningfulreview of thesystem.Athoroughevaluationcanonlybeconductedwhenthereareclearlydefinedobjectives against which the system's performance can be measured.

4.3.3 Exploringtherelationshipbetweenperformancemeasurementobjectives and service delivery objectives.

The absence ofclearlyoutlined goals for bothservice deliveryand the performance management system created challenges in establishing a direct correlation between them. Participants tried to explainthisrelationshipfromtheirpointsofview,butbecausetherewasno formalorganizational backingfortheiropinions,therewasnodocumentaryevidencetobackthemup.P5SMandP13SC, inparticular,providedinsightsthatweredeemedmorecrediblethanthoseoftheotherparticipants. Unfortunately, participant P5SM'sprecise statement—whichwould have shed important light on theinterrelationbetweentheperformancemeasurementsystemandservicedeliveryremains

undisclosed. However, the study's conclusions emphasize how crucial it is to clearly define goals to help people comprehend how performance measurement and service delivery interact.

It is important to note that without the complete statement made by Participant P5SM, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive response. However, the viewpoints of P5SM and P13SC members are given more weight when it comes to clarifying the connection between service delivery and the performance management system. Because of their knowledge, experience, or closeness to the service delivery procedures and performance management system, their opinions are considered more reliable and authoritative. This realization emphasizes how crucial it is to get feedback from knowledgeable stakeholders to comprehend intricate organizational dynamics on a deeper level. Organizations can achieve progress and success by gaining a more nuanced understanding of their service delivery mechanisms and performance management systems by utilizing the knowledge and experiences of persons such as P5SM and P13SC.

> The organization should clearly convey these goals to staff members and formally outline the goals of both service delivery and the performance measurement system in order to better comprehend the relationship between the two. This will facilitate better-informed talks on the subject and give as a foundation for assessing how well the performance measurement system has improved service delivery.
>
> Because of the ambiguity and incompleteness explanation of the aims, that is quite challenging to accomplish. As I previously mentioned, I have had to make assumptions or guesswork regarding a few things, including The objectives of the performance measurement system. It's reasonable to assume that our perspectives align on this matter.

P13SC, a participant, said:

> The performance measurement system's goals are unknown to me. I was never told how these worked. I have also not been given an explanation of the service delivery

goals. I simply extrapolate from the actions we take what I believe the council is attempting to accomplish.

The correlation between service delivery and the performance measurement system, participants inthestudyprovidedarangeofresponses. Participant P4SMpositedadirect connectionbetween the two, asserting that the service deliverysysteminforms the goals ofthe council's performance measurement system. However, they also suggested that improving service delivery and performance are mutually exclusive pursuits. In contrast, Participant P2JM perceived a shared objective betweenthe performance measurement systemand the council's service deliverygoals, namelyenhancingcommunitywell-being.Thisdivergenceinviewshighlightsthecomplexityand nuanceoftherelationshipbetweenperformance measurement andservicedelivery, underscoring the need for further exploration and clarityto achieve effective alignment and outcomes.

While these responses reflect individual attempts to make sense of the situation, they do not necessarily represent an officially defined position. The employees' independent attempts to understandtheconnectionbetweentheperformancemeasurementsystemandservicedeliveryare highlighted by the participants' answers, which also show their unique understandings and interpretations.Employeesclearlyhave importantinsightsand ideasthatthecompanymayuseto improve its service delivery methods and performance measurement system, even though their opinions may differ. The company may promote a more inclusive and successful approach to performance measurement and service delivery by utilizing the knowledge and experience of its employees, which could result in better results and success.

Fromthestandpoint ofperformance measurement, it isessentialthat allstakeholders haveaclear and formal definition of the system's components. By creating a common understanding of expectations, aims, and objectives through formal communication, everyone is able to work together toward the same ends. Organizations can enhance overall performance and achieve desiredoutcomesbyconcentratingresourcesontasksthat areconsideredcrucialandstrategically important by clearly expressing the requirements and components of the performance measurement system. To prevent misunderstandings, misalignment, and inefficiencies as wellas to foster an environment of openness, responsibility, and ongoing development, effective communication is crucial.

Regarding the benefits of the performance measurement system, there were mixed views among participants. Due to the system's ability to provide an efficient measurement tool, some management participants(n=3)thoughtit wasbeneficialtothebusiness.Ontheotherhand,those who said they had not profited from the system took a subjective stance while answering the question. Because no individual employee had benefited from the performance measurement system,thegeneralconsensusamongtheseparticipantswasthattherewerenobenefits.Participant P5SMusedthefollowingwordstoconveythisfeeling:[Unfortunately,thematerialprovideddoes not include the particular statement made by Participant P5SM.]

Overall,thestudyhighlightstheimportanceofofficiallydefiningandcommunicatingtheelements of the performance measurement system to establish clarity and shared understanding. It also emphasizes the need to address employees' perceptions regarding the benefits of the system and ensure that rewards and recognition align with performance outcomes. Participant P5SM claims that the performance measurement system has helped the council in a number of ways. It has specifically improved performance measurement procedures and made it easier to clearly define duties and responsibilities. Beyond these benefits, the council doesn't seem to be getting much moreoutofthesystem, whichsuggeststhat it has littlebearingontheperformanceandoutcomes of the organization. This viewpoint emphasizes that in order to optimize the performance measurement system's efficacy and organizational value, additional assessment and possible improvement are required.

Thelackofobservablebenefitsformanagersandstaffisoneofthemainissuesraised.Employees will find the performance measurement system tedious and motivating if there is no associated rewardsprogramme. Theparticipant suggeststhatresourceconstraintshave limitedthesystemto being merely a measurement tool, with employees not experiencing any direct benefits.

Participant P5SM also underlined the constraint of not being able to provide opportunities for training and development to addressperformance weaknesses inside the organisation. Due tothe inability to access resources and targeted interventions for addressing specific skill gaps or performanceissues,thisconstraintunderminestheperformancemeasurementsystem'sefficacyin

facilitating employees' performance enhancement. In order to offer a more comprehensive thorough and encouraging approach to improving employee performance and overall organisational success, this emphasises the necessity for organisations to integrate performance management with employee development activities.

Moreover, there's insufficient proof to demonstrate that the system is effectively improving employee performance as intended.

Overall,ParticipantP5SM'sperspectiveindicatesthatwhiletheperformancemeasurementsystem may have some benefits in defining work and managing performance, there are limitations and concerns regarding its effectiveness, lack of rewards, resource constraints, and the absence of demonstrable impact on employee performance improvement.

Participant P12GH shares a similar perspective, emphasizing that there are no benefits for employees within the performance measurement system. They mention that neither they nor anyone else has received any performance bonuses for their work. A major deficiency in the executionofthe performancemeasurement systemwithinthe case organization is the absence of arewardsystem.Duetothisomission,peoplearenotencouragedtoaimforexcellenceorenhance their performance, which weakens the system's ability to inspire workers and reinforce desired behaviors.Asignificantdrawbackistheabsenceofarewardsystem,diminishingtheeffectiveness of the performance management system in enhancing productivity, employee engagement, and overall organizational achievement.

A reward system is thought to be essential to a performance measurement system's success, according the conceptual framework employed in this study. For employees to be motivated to achievethepredeterminedgoals,theyneedtoperceivethebenefitsofthesystem.Onemajorissue with the performance management system's implementation is that it does not have a reward mechanism.

Participants pinpointed two main strategies to amplify the advantages of the performance measurement system. The recommendation to introduce a reward system alongside the performance assessment framework was the most commonly mentioned advice, noted by 12 respondents.Thisrecommendationemphasizedtheimportanceofdifferentiatingbetweenhighand

low performers, as this distinction is crucial for the system's effective functioning. Participant P9CLunderscoredthesignificanceofincentives,notingthatofferingperformancebonusestostaff would motivate themto improve their performance. Similarly, Participant P4SM highlighted the absence of incentives tied to the performance measurement

Two management participants (P3SM, P5SM) highlighted the significance of utilizing data generated by the performance measurement system. These participants expressed concern about theorganization'slackofuseofthedatatoinformdevelopmentandtrainingprogrammers, among other measurement activities. Participant P3SMexpressed: [Unfortunately, the materialprovided does not include the particular statement made by Participant P3SM.]

Participantsrecommended incorporatingarewardsystemto motivatestaffmembersandenhance performance,therebyboostingtheeffectivenessoftheperformanceassessmentsystem.Moreover, theyidentifiedtheneedtoharnessthewealthofdatageneratedbythesystem,utilizingittoinform strategic decision-making and optimize other measurement processes. By implementing these suggestions,theorganizationcanunlockthefullpotentialofitsperformancemeasurementsystem, leading to increased efficiency, productivity, and success.

> I acknowledge that we haven't effectively managed our performance management system to date. There are several areas for improvement in ouradministrationofthesystem.However,withpropermeasurement,the systemcan generate a wealth ofdata that can be leveraged to informand enhance our training and development initiatives, ultimately leading to improved performance and growth. We haven't used the performance measurement system much to manage our reward programs because of resource limitations. We believe that the performance measurement system may be more beneficial in these and other important areas.

ParticipantP5SMexpressedsimilar opinions:

The successofa performance measurement systemhingesonits implementation. Regrettably, our performance in this area has been subpar. As mentioned earlier, it's imperative that we acknowledge and incentivize exceptional performance to ensure ongoing enhancements. Additionally, leveraging the data produced by the performancemeasurementsystemenablesustoextractvaluableinsights,fostering productivity improvements and bolstering organizational performance. This data serves as a foundation for strategic decision-making, pinpointing areas ripe for enhancement and guiding effortsto bolster efficiencyand efficacy. Consequently, we can foster a more high-performing organization. The study examined the correlation between performance measurement goals and service delivery objectives within the organization under investigation. It revealed a key finding: both sets of objectives lacked clear definition and effective communication to employees.Consequently,therewasanabsenceofformalalignmentbetweenthem. Any connections observed were predominantlydriven by individualefforts rather than a structured approach. This finding carries substantial implications for performance measurement, as it complicates the task of ensuring that the organization'sservicedeliverygoalsareadequatelysupportedandalignedwiththe performancemeasurementsystem.Suchshortcomingshavethepotentialtoimpede overall performance and the attainment of objectives.

To enhance the performance measurement system'salignment withthe council's service delivery objectives,itiscrucialtodevelopandeffectivelycommunicateaformalstatement.Thisstatement should explicitly delineate and align the service delivery objectives with the performance measurement objectives. Acting as a guiding framework, this formal statement ensures a direct and transparent connection between the two sets of objectives. It empowers the council to efficiently fulfill its service delivery mandate.

This formal statement would serve to clarify the relationship and expectations between the performancemeasurementsystemandthebroaderorganizationalgoalsrelatedtoservicedelivery.

By communicating these objectives to all employees, it ensures a shared understanding and can help in aligning individual efforts with the organizational objectives.

In summary, the study underscores the importance of explicitly defining and effectively communicating both service delivery objectives and performance measurement t objectives, ensuringaclearandsharedunderstandingamongallstakeholders.Establishingaformaldefinition and effective communication channels are vital for aligning two sets of objectives, facilitating MurewaRuralDistrictCouncilsineffectivelymeetingtheirservicedeliverygoalsandoptimizing the impact of their performance measurement system. This alignment is essential to establish a transparent connection between the two and to accurately gauge the performance measurement system's role in fulfilling the organization's service delivery objectives.

4.3.4 Assessing the success or failure of the Murewa Rural District Council's implementation of the performance measurement system

Participants' responses regarding the factors supporting the performance measurement system were aligned with their previous comments, which highlighted the system's ineffectiveness and lack of benefits. This consistency suggests a clear disconnect between the system's intended purpose and itsactualimpact, further emphasizing the need for improvement and alignment with organizationalobjectives.Participantswhoexpresseddissatisfactionwiththesystemalsohadlittle positive feedback to provide.

Participant P5SM mentioned that although the necessary documentation was completed at the beginning of the year to initiate the performance assessment process, she couldn't identify any additionalbenefits. This impliesa shortageofsupportive elements. Likewise, Participant P12GH conveyed a feeling ofstagnation, mentioning that little advancement had occurredoverthe years toimprovetheperformancemeasurementsystem,withactionsseemingrepetitiveandresultingin minimal enhancement. These responses suggest a deficiency in meaningful support for the system's effectiveness.

These responses indicate that participants haven't encountered significant factors that actively enhance the effectiveness or benefits of the performance measurement system. Their comments reflect a sense of dissatisfaction and a perception that the system has not evolved or provided meaningful support over time.

The responses from participants reveal a pervasive sentiment of disappointment and frustration, with a clear consensus that the performance measurement system has failed to deliver any meaningfulbenefits.Thiswidespreaddissatisfactionsuggestsasignificantdisconnectbetweenthe system's intended purpose and its actual impact, highlighting the need for a comprehensive overhaultoaddressthesystemic issuesandensurethesystemmeetsitsintendedgoals.Their lack ofpositive feedbackandperceptionsofstagnant processessuggest aneed for improvement and a reevaluation of the factors that can support the system effectively.

The prompt creation of performance agreements was cited by those who thought that the performance measurement system had good practices. Only those involved in measurement had such beliefs. They expressed feelings like:

> Everyyear at the start ofthe year, we have made aneffort to make sure that the performance agreements are created when they are required. To ensure that the servicedeliveryactionsarerecorded,theyprimarilyusefundsfromthebudget.We try to make sure that each position's primary outcome areas support the accomplishment of our service delivery initiatives (P3SM).

Theparticipantsbelievedthattheperformancemeasurementsystem'seffectivenesswashampered byavarietyofelementsandprocedures.Acoupleofparticipants(P2JM,P5SM)proposedthatthe performancemeasurementsystem'sineffectivenesscouldbeattributedtoitsabsenceofastrategic plan.

Fourparticipants(P1SM,P2JM,P4SM,andP10SM)believedthattheperformancemeasurement system's potential was constrained by a lack of resources. In particular, it was believed that financialresourceswereessentialtotheeffectivenessoftheperformancemeasurementsystem. If

theworkprogramsweretobecompletedsuccessfully,fundingwasrequired.

 Most participants (9 in total) attribute the failure ofthe performance measurement systemto the absence ofa reward mechanism. Employeeswere believed to be more motivatedto workat their highest levelifthere wasa reward systemthat separatedout good frompoor performance;onthe other hand, its absence was thought to negatively impact the exceptional performers.

Five participants pointed out that the performance measurement system's implementation was hindered by several unresolved issues, with the lack of regular performance evaluations being a major obstacleto itssuccess. This impliesthat performanceassessmentswereeither neglectedor not conducted in a rigorous and consistent manner, undermining the system's effectiveness and potentially leading to unchecked performance issues and missed opportunities for growth and development.

Furthermore,amanagementparticipantraisedconcernsabouttheinsufficientbaselinedata,which hinderedthecreationofmeaningfulperformanceindicators.Thislackofrobustbaselinedatamade   it challenging to establish effective metrics, ultimately limiting the system's ability to accurately measureperformanceand informdata-drivendecisions. Thisparticipant emphasizedtheneedfor the council to enhance its capacity to collect the necessary baseline data, indicating that without reliable data, the performance measurement system cannot effectively measure and track performance.

Insummary, the key implementation issues plaguing the performance measurement systemwere two-fold: firstly,thefailuretoconductregularperformanceevaluations,andsecondly,thelackof adequate baseline data hinders the creation of meaningful performance indicators. These deficiencies severely undermined the system's effectiveness, hindering its ability to drive performance improvement and informed decision-making. These factors hinder the system's abilityto accuratelyassessand improveperformancewithintheorganization. Participant P3SM's statement likely encompasses the various factors discussed, emphasizing the importance of tacklingtheseissuesisessentialforensuringthesuccessoftheperformancemeasurementsystem.

We have acknowledged that our performance management system has been compromised by our failures and shortcomings in certain areas. Specifically, we have fallen short in completing our workplans, particularly when it comes to conducting evaluations. As evident from the records, we have not fulfilled our evaluation obligations, which has significantly impaired the effectiveness of our performance measurement system. This implies that we might not have been taking any lessons from the system, or we might not have learned anything at all from the process as a whole. Additionally, it's possible that we're promoting the idea that creating documentation that nobody will ever read is the main goal of the performance measurement system. Moreover, a definitive connection between the results of the performance measurement system and the reward system has not been established. At present, there is no correlation between the two, and employees do not receive performance bonuses or other forms of recognition tied to their performance outcomes. As I mentioned earlier, we lack reliable baseline data to inform our performance measurement system, and as a result, our metrics and indicators are often based on educated guesses rather than accurate data. This limitation hinders our ability to make informed decisions and effectively evaluate performance.

To enhance the performance measurement system, it was recommended that all aspects of the system be given attention. Participants emphasized the criticality of conducting performance evaluations for the system's success. Participant P3SM stated that completing the performance evaluation process was crucial, ensuring ongoing evaluation and the generation of formal performance reports at the end of each cycle. This viewpoint was supported by participant P4SM, who emphasized the importance of timely and continuous performance reviews, along with resource provision.

An overwhelming majority of participants (9 out of the total) emphasized the crucial need for implement a system for incentivizing complement and reinforce the performance measurement system. They strongly believed that introducing a reward system would have a positive impact by acknowledging and incentivizing high-performing individuals, while also motivating underperformers to improve their performance. This sentiment highlights the importance of recognition and rewards in driving performance excellence and fostering a culture of accountability. Participant P9CL expressed the view that improving the performance measurement

system could be achieved simply by rewarding good performers, which would encourage their continued hard work and motivate poor performers to improve.

Three participants also suggested implementing training and development programs to improve performance. They recognized that the current approach lacked a systematic analysis of performance issues for the purpose of developing effective training interventions.

In summary, suggestions for enhancing the performance measurement system. included comprehensiveattentiontoallsystemaspects,conductingperformanceevaluations,implementing arewardsystemtorecognizeandmotivateemployees,andestablishingtraininganddevelopment programstoaddressperformanceissues.Byimplementingthesesuggestions,theorganizationcan enhance the effectiveness of its performance measurement system and drive performance improvement.

Mostoftheserecommendationswere summed up byparticipantP3SMasfollows.

> Improving the performance measurement system involves several key steps applicabletoanyexistingsystem.Onecrucialaspectisensuringthecompletionof the entire performance measurement cycle, with a focus on concluding performance evaluations. Establishing evaluation as an ongoing process, leading to a comprehensive performance report, facilitates thorough progress assessment for informed decision-making and growth.

> Recognizingandrewardinggoodperformancewhileaddressingpoorperformance is essential. Linking training and development initiatives to the performance measurement systemenhances performanceby identifyingtrainingneeds through the process and designing programs accordingly.

> It's also vital to view organizational systems as interconnected and integrated. Takingaholisticapproachtoperformancemeasurementcanyieldmoreeffective outcomes.

Implementing these enhancements can elevate the performance measurement systemandfosteroverallperformanceimprovement. Thecentralfindingofthis sectionindicatesthatwhilecertainperformancemeasurementpracticesare currentlyimplemented,theyonlyoffer partialsupporttothesystem. There is a prevailing sentiment that the system is not operating to its fullest potential. This underscores considerable room for improvement, and by addressing these areas, the overall effectiveness of the performance measurement system can be significantly bolstered, resulting in greater success and the realization of organizational objectives.

4.4 Conclusion

Chapter 4 summarizes the study's findings, emphasizing the absence of clearly defined service delivery and performance measurement objectives within the case organization. Although a functional performance measurement system is in place, opportunities for improvement in its implementationareidentified.Chapter5willprovideactionablerecommendationstoaddressthese gaps and improve the system's effectiveness.

CHAPTER5

CONCLUSIONSANDRECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main goal ofthe research was to evaluate how effective performance measurement systems are in Zimbabwean rural local authorities, focusing on their impact on service delivery goals. Usingacasestudyapproach,thestudyaimedtoexploreimportantissues.Despitefacingcriticism for not meeting ratepayers' expectations, rural local authorities in Zimbabwe have embraced performance measurement to enhance service delivery. While existing literature discussesglobal adoptionanduseofperformance measurement systems, thisstudyspecificallylookedatthe local context. It aimed to answer key questions such as the service delivery objectives of the Murewa Rural District Council, the objectives of their performance management systems, and the alignmentbetweentheseobjectives.Thestudyalso investigatedfactorsinfluencingthesuccessor failure of performance measurement system implementation in rural councils. The final chapter provides recommendations based on the research findings, aiming to support the Murewa Rural District Council and other rural local authorities in Zimbabwe in developing and implementing effective performance measurement systems to improve their ability to achieve service delivery objectives. Furthermore, this chapter identifies areas for further research arising from the study.

5.2 Conclusions

TheconclusionspresentedinthischapterareadirectresponsetotheobjectivesoutlinedinChapter 1, with each conclusion addressing a specific research question aligned with its corresponding objective. The study's findings are distilled into clear and concise conclusions, addressing the research questions and meeting the study objectives.

5.2.1 ObjectivesforDeliveringServices

Theprimaryobjectiveofthisstudywastoidentifyandhighlighttheservicedeliveryobjectivesof   the Murewa Rural District Council. However, it was found that the organization does not have formally outlined service delivery objectives, instead relying on implicit assumptions about the responsibilitiesofruralcouncils. Thisabsenceofclearobjectiveshas ledemployeesto formtheir own assumptions, potentially resulting in divergent understandings of the organization's goals. This lack of clarity may lead to difficulties in aligning efforts towards a shared purpose, particularlyinrurallocalauthoritieswherediverse   andsometimesconflicting   interestsneedto   be balanced.Intheabsenceofclearlydefinedservicedeliveryobjectives,effectivelymanagingthese interests becomes challenging, which could result in a public perception of failure in service delivery.

5.2.2 Theobjectivesoftheperformancemeasurementsystemsimplementedby the Murewa Rural District Council.

Performance measurement systems are intentionally crafted and deployed to accomplish distinct goals. According to Verbeeten (2008:428), successful performance measurement entails establishingexplicitobjectives,assigningdecision-makingauthority,andevaluatingperformance. However, the case organization faced a deficiency in clearly defining objectives for its performance measurement system, resulting in difficulties in communicating the system's intent to employees responsible for its execution. Moreover, the absence of clear objectives renders it difficult to assess the system's success or identify areas for improvement. Without defined objectives,theperformancemeasurementsystemlacksdirectionandfocus,creatingtheperception that it is inconsequential. This oversight undermines the system's effective implementation and hinders its potential to drive performance improvement.

5.2.3 Thecorrelationbetweentheservicedeliveryobjectivesandtheobjectives of performance measurement systems.

Inthe localauthoritycontext, ensuring a clear alignment betweenservice deliveryobjectives and the performance measurement systemisparamount.Thisseamless integration is fundamentalfor effective service provision. Performance measurement practices were introduced in the public sector to enhance service delivery, with performance measurement systems serving as tools to achieve strategic and operational goals (Ammons and Roenigk, 2013). These systems enable public sector organizations to demonstratetheir commitment to delivering efficient and effective services while optimizing resource utilization (Audit Scotland, 2012). However, achieving this requires the harmonious integration of the performance measurement system with other organizational systems. Unfortunately, the case organization lacked formally defined objectives forbothservicedeliveryandperformancemeasurement,makingitchallengingtoidentifylinkages between the two subsystems. This oversight undermines the performance measurement system's successinsupportingtheorganization'sservicedeliveryobjectives.Additionally,employeesmust share a common understanding of the connection between these subsystems to work toward a shared purpose.

5.2.4 FactorsInfluencingtheSuccessor FailureofPerformanceMeasurement Systems Implementation in Rural Local Authorities

The performance measurement system in the case organization is operational but requires enhancements. While employees recognize its potential to improve organizational performance, theyfeelthattheydo notderivesignificant benefits fromit. Anotableweakness istheabsenceof a strategic plan, which undermines the system's effectiveness. A strategic plan is essential for guiding departmental and individual work plans, providing clear direction and purpose. Without it, employees may struggle to understand how their daily tasks contribute to the organization's overarching goals.

Furthermore, the performance measurement system is not fully implemented, with critical componentssuchasmonitoringandevaluationbeingoverlooked.Consequently,theorganization lacks insightsintoitsperformance, making it challengingto assesssuccessesor failuresandtheir underlyingcauses.Effectiveperformance measurement should beanongoingprocessthroughout the year (Armstrong, 2009). Regular monitoring and evaluation enable the organization to draw valuablelessons,identifyareasforimprovement,andgeneratedatatorefinethesystemandinform related processes such as training and development.

Moreover, the performance measurement system operates in isolation, lacking integration with other HR systems. A significant finding from this study is that the performance measurement system is not linked to the reward system, leading to the perception that performance does not influence rewards or recognition. This disconnect fosters a belief that performance is inconsequential, which can detrimentally impact employee motivation and engagement.

5.3 PropositionoftheStudy

This study investigated why Rural local authorities encounter challenges in achieving service deliveryobjectives, focusing on performance measurement systems. The findings confirmthat a lackofeffectiveperformancemeasurementsystemsisasignificantcontributortothisissue.While Thecaseorganizationhas implementedtwoperformance measurement systems, but encountered significant challenges in their implementation. The current system was mandated by the central government without taking into account the unique circumstances and readiness of local authorities. The study's conceptual model highlights the importance of considering both internal andexternalenvironmentswhenintroducingaperformance measurement system.Organizational culture and adequate training are crucial for successful implementation. However, the case organization failed to fully implement the performance measurement system, which was not integrated withother HR processes like the lack ofeffective reward management and inadequate training and development opportunities have impeded the organization's ability to manage performance efficiently.

5.4 Contribution

The study delves into the adoption of performance measurement systems within rural local authoritiesinZimbabwe,sheddinglightonthecrucialimportanceofeffectiveimplementationfor success.Byinvestigatingthispreviouslyunderstudiedarea,thestudycontributesvaluableinsights into the challenges and opportunities in performance measurement in Zimbabwe's rural local governmentsector.ThefindingshighlightKeymattersthatrequireresolutionencompass,enhance performance measurement practices in these authorities, ultimately aiming to improve service delivery to local communities. The study's contributions can inform and enhance the practice of performancemeasurement,leadingtobetteroutcomesandmoreeffectivegovernanceinrurallocal authorities.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, recommendations for improving the performance measurement system within the case organization and other entities that could benefit from its insights are proposed. These suggestions aim to address identified gaps and areas for improvement by implementingamorecomprehensiveandeffectiveperformancemeasurementsystem.Thissystem should prioritize fostering a culture of continuous improvement, transparency, and employee development. By adopting these recommendations, organizations can enhance employee performance and engagement, ultimatelyleading to the achievement oftheir strategic objectives.

5.5.1 RecommendationsforPolicies

Thestudyproposesthatimposingastandardizedperformancemeasurementsystemacrossalllocal authorities, particularly those adopted from foreign contexts, may have adverse effects by disregarding diverse local conditions. Instead, a more effective approach entails enabling each localauthorityto select a systemtailoredto itsspecific requirementsand adapting it accordingly. Moreover, the efficacy of these systems is intricately tied to productivity-based wage structures. Byacknowledgingandaccommodatingthedistinctcircumstancesofeachauthority,performance measurement systems can be optimized to fulfill their objectives.

5.5.2 RecommendationsforMeasurement

5.5.2.1 TheSignificanceofPublicConsultation

In rural areas, local authorities are tasked with serving the community. The main goal of performancemeasurementsystemsinthissettingistoimprovepublicservicedeliveryandaddress communityneedsmoreefficiently.Toachievethis,performancemeasurementsystemsshouldbe rooted in the needs and expectations of the public. The organization would greatly benefit from integrating public consultation and feedback mechanisms directly into its performance measurementsystem.Thisintegrationwillensurethatpublicexpectationsarecapturedandinform councilplansandservicedeliveryactivities,ultimatelyresulting inmoreeffectiveandresponsive public service delivery.

5.5.3 TheSignificanceofStrategicPlanning

Rurallocalauthorities must prioritizestrategicplanningasanessentialaspect oftheir operations. Awell-developedstrategicplanactsasaguidingframework,offeringcleardirectionandaunified visionfortheorganization.Theplanningprocessalsoallowsforvaluablestakeholderengagement and helps manage public expectations. Once in place, the strategic plan is crucial in guiding and aligning different organizational processes, such as the performance measurement system. This ensures a cohesive and effective approach to meeting the organization's goals and objectives, leading to enhanced service delivery and better community outcomes.

5.5.4 DirectConnectionbetweenPerformance MeasurementandServiceDelivery

The system for measuring performance should be explicitlytied to service delivery, with a clear focus on the organization's intended impact on the community it serves. The desired outcomes should be specifically defined and, where possible, quantifiable. This clarity enables the assignmentofaccountabilitiesforthetasksnecessarytoachievetheseoutcomes.Theorganization must formally define and communicate its objectives for service delivery and performance measurement,ensuringemployeescomprehendthedirectlinkbetweenthem.Thistransparency

helpsemployeesunderstandhowtheir effortscontributetotheorganization'soverallmissionand goals, fostering a sense of purpose and direction.

5.5.5 IntentionalEngagementofEmployees

Employees are a vital resource in driving organizational success, and their engagement and empowerment are crucial in shaping the organization's service delivery plans and performance measurement systems.Thisinclusiveapproachensuresthattheirvaluable insights,expertise,and perspectives are incorporated, leading to more effective and practical plans and processes. By involving employees in meaningful ways, the organization fosters a sense of ownership, motivation, and accountability, ultimately driving success and improvement in service delivery and performance measurement.

5.5.6 TheSignificanceofEmployeeTrainingandDevelopment

Aprimarygoalofperformance measurement is to boost employee performance, which is largely achievedthroughtargetedtraininganddevelopmentinitiatives.Identifyingandaddressingspecific training needs is crucial, and this should be accomplished through comprehensive training programs that are fully integrated into the performance measurement system. By doing so, employeesreceivethesupportandresourcesnecessarytoexcelintheirroles, leadingtoenhanced performance, growth, and success, which in turn benefits the organization as a whole.

5.5.7 Aligning Performance Measurement with broader Human Resources functions

Performance measurement should be an integral part of a unified HR framework rather than a standalone system to maximize its impact and effectiveness. This holistic approach ensures that various HR functions, such as motivation and reward management, are deliberately aligned and harmonized with performance measurement goals. By doing so, these interconnected systems reinforceoneanother,fosteringacohesiveandsupportiveenvironmentthatdrivesemployee

performance, motivation,andgrowth.Thisintegratedapproachenablesorganizationsto leverage the full potential of their human resources, leading to enhanced productivity, efficiency, and success.

5.6 LimitationsoftheResearch

The study adopted a detailed case study approach to closely investigate and shed light on the research topic, providing rich and contextualized insights. While this method offers valuable in-depth understanding, its limitations include a lack ofgeneralizability to other organizations. The study's findings are uniquely applicable to the case organization, and anyattempts to extrapolate the results to other contexts should be done with caution and careful consideration. Other organizations may find the findings informative, but they should adapt and apply them thoughtfully, acknowledging the distinct characteristics and circumstances of their own organization.

5.7 Issuesforfurtherresearch

The research commenced as a response to the MinistryofLocalGovernment, Public Works, and NationalHousing'smandateforalllocalauthoritiestoimplementtheResults-BasedMeasurement System(RBMS) withthe aimofenhancing their performance. Despite RBMS being inoperation for a decade in the public sector, previous research has highlighted various challenges it faces. This study sought to evaluate the effectiveness of RBMS in the local government sector, specifically within rural councils. It emphasizes the importance of management approach in determining the success of performance measurement systems, raising the question of how a manager'sleadershipstyle influencesthesesystems'outcomes.Futureresearchcouldexplorethis question using qualitative methods like multiple case studies, or quantitative approaches to yield broader insights applicable to diverse rural local authorities in Zimbabwe and beyond.

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APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions

1. Nonameonthequestionnaireisrequired,
2. Putatickinthespaceprovided.

    <u>SECTIONA:Generalinformation</u>

1 IndicateAcademicLevel:

Nationalcertificate	Diploma	Degree	Mastersandabove
1	2	3	4

2 IndicateJobOccupation:

Administration	1
InternalAudit	2
FinanceManager	3
FinanceClerk	4
Procurement	5
Environment	6
Housing	7
Expenditure	8

3 IndicateJobExperience

Lessthan1year	
2-4years	
5-7years	
Morethan7years	

4 Approximatelyhowmanypeopleareemployedinyourorganisation?

Lessthan100	
101-500	
501-1000	
Morethan1000	

SECTIONB:Natureofcurrentperformancemeasurementsystems

1. Doesyourorganisationoperateaformalperformancemeasurementsystem?

YES	NO

2. Whatarethetechniquesthatareused inyourorganisationforassessingperformance?

Observation	
AssessmentandDevelopmentCenters	
Checklists	
Otherpls.specify	

3. Pleaseindicatewhichofthe followingmethodsofperformanceappraisalforma partof your system?

BalanceScoreCard	
CriticalIncident assessment	
PairedComparison Method	
Graphicratingscales	
Self-appraisal	

SECTIONC:ServicedeliveryobjectivesofMurewaRuralDistrictCouncil

1. Councilsaregenerallymandatedtodeliverservicestoresidentswithintheirareasof jurisdiction. Explain your understanding of this mandate of council.

2. Whatarethegoalsthatthecouncilaimstoaccomplishthroughitsservicedelivery efforts?

3. Describe your experience, if any of public involvement in setting council's service delivery objectives.

	StronglyAgree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
How clear and well-defined are the service delivery goals of Murewa Rural District Council?					
To what extent do the council service delivery objectives align with the community's needs?					
How effective is the council in trading progress towards its service delivery objectives?					

SECTION D: Objectives of the performance measurement system(s) implemented by Murewa Rural District Council

1. Which performance measurement system is currently being used by council? Which other performance measurement systems have been used by council in the past?

2. Describe your involvement, if any, in the introduction and implementation of the performance management systems is use in council?

3. Describe the objectives of council's performance measurement system.

	StronglyAgree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
Howaccuratelydothe council's performance measurement systems reflectthequalityof service delivery					
Towhatextentdoesthe council use data and feedback to inform decisions about service deliveryimprovements?					
How transparent and accountable are the council'sperformance measurementsystems?					

Thankyou!!

APPENDIX2:keytoIntervieweeCoding

P1SMParticipant1,SeniorRevenueOfficer

P2JM Participant 2, Procurement Manager

P3SM Participant 3, Senior Accountant

P4SM Participant 4, ICT Officer

P5SMParticipant5,ExpenditureClerk

P6GH Participant 6, General Hand

P7JM Participant 7, Junior Manager

P8TD Participant 8, Tractor Driver

P9CL Participant 9, Revenue Clerk

P10TD Participant 10, Tractor Driver

P11SM Participant 11, Credit control

P12GHParticipant12,GeneralHand

P13SCParticipant13,HumanResourceOfficer

P14CL Participant 14, Housing ManagerP15SG

Participant 15, Security Guard