

# **BINDURA UNIVESITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**



**THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT ON SERVICE DELIVERY BY LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES IN ZIMBABWE.CASE STUDY OF MAZOWE RURAL DISTRICT  
COUNCIL.**

**BY**

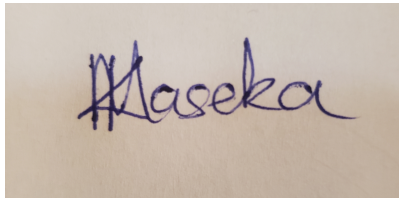
**B200820B**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE BACHELOR OF ACCOUNTANCY HONOURS DEGREE OF BINDURA  
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION. FACULTY OF COMMERCE**

**JUNE 2024**

## APPROVAL FORM

The signatories below verify that student registered B200820B has been supervised dissertation entitled: **The impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities in Zimbabwe**. The project has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Accountancy (Honors) Degree at Bindura University of Science Education.

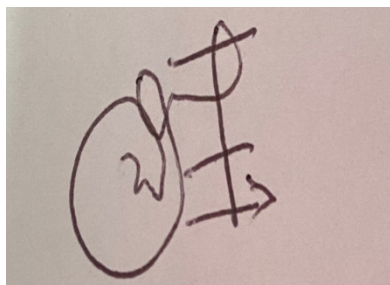


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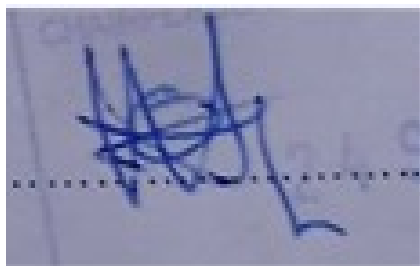


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## RELEASE FORM

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to the Almighty God who gave me strength, wisdom and power to conduct this study, to my supportive family and friends, who were there to give me their love and assistance throughout. I really appreciate the inspiration and hope they gave me when I thought of giving up.

Moreover, I dedicate this research to my parents who continuously gave me moral, emotional and financial support to reach tertiary level education.

## **ABSTRACT**

The main focus of this study was to assess the impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities in Zimbabwe using a case study of Mazowe RDC. In Zimbabwe most of the rural councils struggle to provide quality services to their residents and a lot of reports has been made by residents such as delayed deliveries, corruption and wasteful spending by the authorities. The objectives of the study are to assess the impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities, determine the limitations of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities and establish measures for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities. The research employed the qualitative approach to collect data using a sample size of 10 Mazowe RDC employees from all the 5 departments making use of interviews, questionnaires and observations. The sample population was selected using purposive sampling and convenience sampling. Analysis of data was done using Ms Word, Ms Excel and SPSS. The study found that transparent, timeliness and efficient public processes ensure effective and standard service delivery. The research also found that certain limitations like corruption, fraud, misallocation of resources and inadequate planning and monitoring in the procurement process which can hinder effective service delivery. To address these limitations the study recommends that procurement regulations and quality control be strengthened in local authorities to enhance transparency. The study also recommends procurement training to personnel and adoption of competitive bidding at local authorities to equip procurement staff with necessary skills and knowledge.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem for the research, objectives of the study and their questions, study limits, significance of the study and assumptions. The chapter also covers limitations and delimitations of the study.

### 1.1 Background of study

Emerging concerns from Europe's Public Procurement Reforms included the requirement to attain sustainable procurements, with the intention of working toward mandating it rather than leaving it as a choice in the procurement procedures (Sapir, Schraepen, & Tagliapietra, 2022). The Modern Slavery Act of 2015, which required procurement procedures to include due diligence procedures, was developed in the UK with the help of the notion of sustainable procurements. The UK Bribery Act 2010 was passed in order to stop these irregularities in the UK due to the growing problem of bribery (Yanga, 2014). Another developing concern (Fazekas & Dávid-Barrett, 2015) was the requirement for greater openness in terms of the open data infrastructure. Another growing concern among EU member states was the necessity of participating more in CSR efforts (Ankersmit, 2020).

Most of the public spending goes into public procurement, the government's purchase of goods and services, which is a vital component of both the national and international economy. Governments spend around 13 trillion US dollars annually on public procurement worldwide. In emerging nations, public procurement makes up over 30% of GDP, compared to 12% in OECD nations. The South African government spends almost R1 trillion on purchases every year, or 12% of GDP. In his remarks at

the 15th Annual South African Innovation Summit in September 2022, Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation, , noted the role of public procurement within the innovation compact as part of the Decadal Plan to implement the White Paper on Science, Technology, and Innovation (NRF, 2023). This shows that public procurement has a big potential of becoming an innovation policy tool.

One government function that deals with acquiring commodities, services, and labour to fulfil public requirements is public procurement. A significant amount of the federal money is allocated to the function (Disdier et al., 2021). For example, from 2008 to 2019, public procurement spending in the nations that make up the (OECD) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development rose by over 1% of GDP OECD, (2021). In developing nations like Ethiopia, where yearly budget expenditures account for 64% of the total, and Morocco, where they account for 17% of GDP, the numbers are considerably greater (Dorasamy, 2021). Public procurement is Tanzania's second-highest expenditure after staff emoluments, making up around 70% of the country's yearly budget (Kajimbwa, 2018). The Public Procurement Act of 2011 No. 7 which was set in replacement of the 2001 Public procurement Act, governs public procurement in Tanzania. It is established that the Public Procurement regulating Authority (PPRA) is the country's regulating agency for public procurement under section 5 of the Act. The PPRA is tasked with overseeing all public procurement operations conducted by all public organizations in mainland Tanzania, in addition to its regulatory duties.

The alleged purchase by Zimbabwe's local government ministry of fire fighting vehicles at inflated rates of US\$464,296 per truck from Belarus against fair prices between US\$26,001 and US\$28,001 of foam fire-fighting truck in China, US\$194,000 per unit in Pozhsnab, and US\$26,001 for a 4 000-liter medium six-wheel fire truck in Malaysia demonstrate the lack of thorough market analysis (Kawadza & Kachiko, 2022). In 2012, Univern supplied \$8 million worth of snow graders to local authorities in Zimbabwe instead of motorized graders for road development, demonstrating how inadequate communication and exact specifications can result in poor service

delivery (Langa, 2015).

Later, by an act of parliament and the Zimbabwean constitution, the insignificant district councils were organized into more official government supported bodies known as Rural District Councils, which were in charge of developing projects within their spheres of influence (Nyama & Mukwada, 2023). As a result, rural district councils were given development duties as per the Rural District Councils Act under Section 74, which included providing social and infrastructural services such facilities, recreation, and health amenities in addition to earning revenue (Chapter 29:13). The majority of these facilities and services are made available by the several rural district councils in their respective areas of jurisdiction through public procurement initiatives (Kaondera et al., 2023). Public procurement in state owned authorities is the process of obtaining goods, services, and labour in accordance with relevant laws and regulations (David, 2022). Purchasing products such as physical property, capital equipment, buildings and services are all included under the Act of Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets in Chapter 22:23.

In Zimbabwe, contracts worth more than 10,000 dollars in Zimbabwe were awarded by the Finance's State Procurement Board (SPB) Ministry. Later, however, development partners and other stakeholders came to understand that public procurement was impeding effective service delivery along with growth because the Governor's Procurement Board had no ability to keep up with the wide range of government initiatives that were increasing at a rapid pace, especially those that were distributed and fraught with numerous challenges. As a result of the difficulties, several proposals were made, and public procurement mitigating measures were created. As a result, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (PPDA) Act (Chapter 22:23) was introduced in 2018 and the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) began to oversee public procurement (Dhlakuseni, Kanyepe, Tukuta, M., & Sifile 2022). This legal framework established the guidelines that all public procurement activities in Zimbabwe have to follow in order to achieve national objectives wherever possible and within the law (Panganayi, Msipa & Mazhazhate, 2021). Its main objective was to enhance the proficiency and expertise of public entities in procurement, hence fostering a professional approach to public

procurement.

## **1.2 The statement of the problem**

In Zimbabwe, rural areas frequently struggle to provide basic services to their residents, which make it difficult for them to receive these services. There have been reports of delayed, substandard deliveries, wasteful spending, corruption and other inefficiencies that can hinder the quality of service delivery. The procedures introduced by the Board of Procurement State and the process of procurement by public entities have been held largely responsible for the delays in the projects of the government, such as road construction, clean water delivery, and sewer reticulation (The Herald, January 20, 2018). Most of the rural areas that traditionally referred to as tribal trust lands were devoid of the most basic utilities, including reticulated water systems, clinics, power, decent roads, and schools (Mashapure et al., 2022; Moyo, 2022). Tenders have been awarded for proposed projects; however a significant number of projects are being postponed or never completed. One outcome of the effectiveness of the procurement process for goods, services, and public works is the delivery of public services to citizens in the right quantity, quality, and time at the right cost. This research offers new perspectives and confirms current understanding of the RDCs' procurement objectives and management in underdeveloped nations like Zimbabwe by showing how procurement methods directly affect value for money service delivery. To ensure high quality living standards of the population and continuous increase in development of the economy, the public procurement administration must ensure that resources are employed during procurement in the most efficient, ethical, and transparent manner feasible (Chikazhe et al., 2023), (Lessambo, 2022).

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

- To assess the impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities.



- To determine the limitations of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities.
- To establish measures for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- What is the impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities?
- What are the limitations of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities?
- Which measures can be applied for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities?

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

Public procurement represents a significant portion of the government spending in many countries. Therefore, it is essential to examine how the effectiveness of public procurement influences the provision of services by local authorities in a country.

The research will be important to the following stakeholders:

##### **1.5.1 The researcher**

- i. It will be an important requirement in the fulfillment of Bachelor of Accountancy degree requirements.
- ii. Facilitate the researcher to gain improved knowledge on the importance of public procurement in local authorities.

##### **1.5.2 The University and other researchers**

- i. The accounting department and the university library will gain more information as a field of study in regard to public procurement.
- ii. Information will be used as foundation for future studies by scholars.

### **1.5.3 The organization**

- i. The research will provide the organisation with valuable insights on the effects of public procurement on their services and operations.
- ii. Provide ways of improvement on their operations through public procurement to better serve its customers.

## **1.6 Assumptions**

The researcher assumes that;

- i. The research instrument will be valid and reliable.
- ii. The respondents will answer truthfully.
- iii. Mazowe RDC has an independent procurement process.
- iv. Public procurement has an important role on service delivery in Mazowe RDC.

## **1.7 Delimitations of study**

- i. Research and data collection of the study was conducted from Jan 2023 to Feb 2024.
- ii. The researcher focused on the suppliers who provide goods and services to local authorities in Zimbabwe.
- iii. The researcher accessed information on public procurement strategies from Mazowe RDC Procurement Officer and from the public procurement regulatory authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) act.

## 1.8 Limitations of the study

- i. Some employees feared to be victimized and thus refused to disclose some information which might have been useful to the researcher but the researcher assured the participants that she understood the concept of confidentiality and their participation was going to remain confidential throughout.
- ii. The researcher had limited given that she is engaged in full time studies but nevertheless, she frequently visited the local authority within the limited time.

## 1.9 Definition of terms

**Public procurement** - This refers to the method through which governments and public entities obtain goods, services and construction from external providers.

**Procurement** - This is a procedure of acquiring various products and services governed by contractual terms and agreements from external sources.

## 1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has been concerned with introducing how the study examines public procurement impacts on the services delivered by local authorities. The chapter determined the background of the study, research problem, objectives and research questions, as well as the limitations of the study. The next chapter provides an analysis of the literature review of the study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

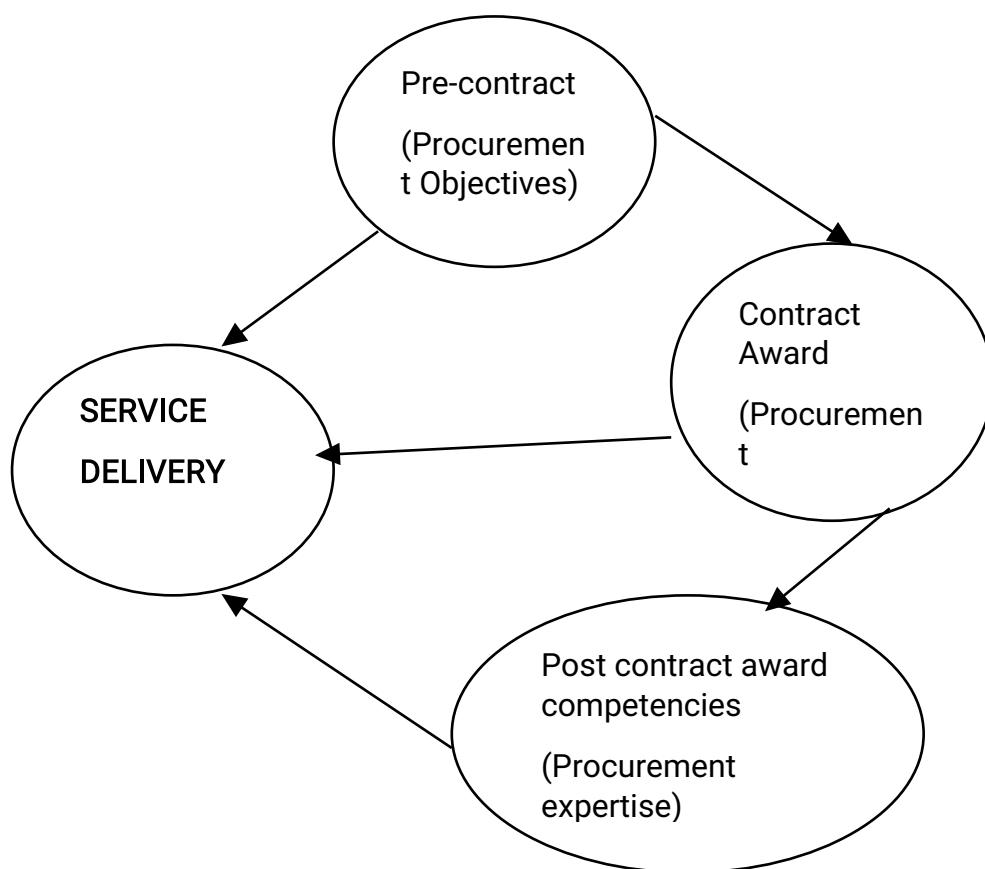
#### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided a background study of the public procurement performance on local authorities. This chapter provides the literature review of the study in question. The chapter provides an articulation of the conceptual framework, theoretical framework and empirical review.

#### **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

The study made use of rural district councils to investigate the relationship between procurement and service delivery in semi-government organizations. The independent elements are pre-contract, contract award, and post-contract award

competencies, whereas service delivery is the dependent element.



**Fig 2.1:** Conceptual Framework

Source: Primary source (2023)

Procurement cycle is a cyclical process of procuring goods or services CIPS (2014). Ohene- Addae (2012) refers procurement cycle as a roadmap of activities inside the

procurement function. The connection between public procurement and service delivery has been the subject of extensive research and discussion. The provision of public services, including healthcare, education, and transportation, is referred to as service delivery. By guaranteeing that the required goods and services are acquired in a timely and economical manner, public procurement can play a substantial impact in the provision of services. According to Sarfo (2011), public procurement refers to the process employed by the government to obtain goods, services and construction from external providers which are the suppliers. This encompasses the expenditure by governmental bodies on essential services that are delivered straight to the populace. The degree to which public procurement can affect service delivery is up for discussion, though. Some contend that the emphasis on efficiency and cost-cutting can cause other crucial elements, including quality and accountability, to be overlooked. The connection between public procurement and the provision of services is pivotal. The provision of public services, including healthcare, education, and transportation, is referred to as service delivery. By guaranteeing that the required goods and services are acquired in a timely and economical manner, public procurement can play a significant role in the

provision of services. The degree to which public procurement can affect service delivery is up for discussion, though. Some contend that the emphasis on efficiency and cost-cutting can cause other crucial elements, including quality and accountability, to be overlooked.

### **2.2.1 Service delivery**

Delivering goods and services to clients in a manner that meets their expectations is referred to as "service delivery" (Ramesh, 2022). When it comes to providing services, material infrastructure including electricity grids, highways, hospitals, schools, water systems, and social protection is prioritized for development (Kim, 2013). The provision of goods and services to intended recipients through a responsible and prudent organization or its appointed agents is known as service delivery, as stressed by Helmsing (2015). It should be noted that a service and its delivery are not the same thing. A service is a system or arrangement that regularly satisfies

public expectations, whereas a delivery is the recurring performance of a service. Therefore, a strategy or approach for regularly attending to the requirements of the broader public is known as service delivery (Oboth, 2001). Because of the widespread use of technology and the need to keep public institutions responsible, the public is more aware of public procurement than it has ever been in the modern age. The realization of the potential savings from well-run procurement operations, which enhances service delivery, has raised the value of procurement strategy.

### **2.2.2 The impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities**

All procedures and methods used by governments and other public bodies to obtain products, services, and labour from outside vendors are collectively referred to as public procurement management (Dotoli et al., 2020). Organizations must have effective procurement management in place so as to minimize risk, ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and acquire goods and services of high quality at the lowest feasible cost (Kakwezi & Nyeko, 2019). Procurement planning, selection of suppliers, contract awarding, and stakeholder involvement are the essential components of public procurement management (Adi & Dutil, 2018). Ultimately, encouraging competition, transparency and accountability in the process of procurement, as well as guaranteeing that governments and public organizations can accomplish their goals and objectives, depend on efficient public procurement administration.

There are several steps in the procurement process: determining the need for a good or service, locating possible vendors or suppliers, assessing what they have to offer, discussing the agreement terms, choosing a vendor, and completing the transaction (Chikwere et al., 2022). The accomplishment of procurement outcomes is impacted by these procedures (Broms et al., 2019). In many organizations, procurement plays a critical role, especially for those that primarily depend on outside funding to run their operations.

The influence of procurement policy, planning, and sustainable practices on the delivery of services in Kenya was examined in Augustine Annane's (2019) study. The study comes to the conclusion that service delivery of VRA is significantly predicted by procurement policies, procurement plans, and sustainable procurement. Cymugisha (2022) Tendering and competitive bidding are two public procurement procedures that aid in guaranteeing that service providers adhere to particular quality criteria. Governments can acquire services from providers that have proven their talents, competence, and track record of providing high-quality services by evaluating bids and choosing qualified suppliers. This ultimately leads to better service delivery results, Snail & Baily, P. (2020). By giving service suppliers an equitable chance to compete for government contracts, public procurement procedures support fairness and equity (Chopra & Meindl, 2020). With favoritism, corruption, and unfair practices avoided, this guarantees that the provision of services is determined only by merit and unaffected by political or personal ties. Public confidence in the provision of public services is increased by equitable and open procurement procedures, according to Gado (2021).

Service providers are frequently bound by particular standards, rules, and contractual duties when it comes to public procurement. This guarantees that services adhere to safety, legal, and quality standards (Basheka, 2021). Through procurement process enforcement, governments can protect the public interest and guarantee the provision of services that adhere to specified criteria. Service delivery through public procurement can take social and environmental factors into account (Sollish and Semanik, 2022). Governments have the potential to incorporate requirements pertaining to diversity, environmental sustainability, and social responsibility into their procurement procedures. This improves the overall effect of service delivery on communities and the environment by motivating service providers to embrace sustainable methods, advance social inclusion, and support larger societal objectives (Gado, 2021).

### **2.2.3 The limitations of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities**

Procurement costs are expensive and take up a large amount of the scarce



resources in many government agencies and local governments (Chikwere et al., 2022). The quality, timeliness, and appropriateness of the inputs acquired impact a public investment's likelihood of success or failure (Munyede & Mapuva, 2020). Effective decision-making, a facet of good governance, is essential to the effectiveness of public investment (Ahmad Almansour et al., 2016). Because procurement is so intricate and varied, it is crucial to remember that employees who function as purchasers have a major role to play in obtaining value for money (Bosio et al., 2022). However, scholars have also observed that governance has a significant impact on value for money in public procurement, Agama et al. (2021).

PPA has a number of drawbacks that may reduce its efficacy. Due to the PPA's length and complexity, firms may find it challenging to comprehend and abide by its provisions. This has been linked to a number of issues and difficulties with procurement. Procurement managers and participants, particularly those in the public sector, frequently deal with a variety of difficulties and intricate legislation, laws, regulations, and policies that add to the process' complexity (Eyaa, 2011). The PPA's benefits are not always achieved since it is frequently not properly implemented. Implementing the PPA can be expensive, which may discourage companies from taking part in public procurement.

Small and medium-sized businesses' (SMEs) needs are not always taken into consideration by the PPA, which can make it challenging for them to compete for public contracts. Abare and Muturi (2015) looked into the factors influencing Kenyan public procurement and disposal regulations compliance and discovered that corruption, ethical behaviour, and public procurement and disposal regulations training were the main factors influencing Kenyan public procurement law implementation. The PPA's inability to easily balance its obligations with the need for public procurement flexibility is another drawback.

All tenders may be required by the PPA to be advertised in a specific manner, but this

may not always be feasible. In their study, Abere and Muturi (2015) examined the variables influencing Kenya's adherence to the Public Procurement and Disposal Regulations (PPDR). They discovered that the country's low PPDR compliance was caused by vested interests, a lack of knowledge about procurement laws, corruption, external pressure, and a lack of familiarity with the regulations. An additional constraint is that the PPA's procurement methodology may exhibit rigidity.

Because of this, public bodies may find it challenging to adapt to changing conditions and demands. The PPA might not consider the unique requirements of certain companies or sectors. Onyikwa (2013) discovered that ethical behaviour, public procurement awareness, and training had an impact on Kenyan compliance with procurement standards during an examination of the education sector. Hui et al. (2011) pointed out that inadequate compliance in the procurement industry has been primarily caused by poor sanctions, a lack of enforcement capacity, and corruption. According to Jibrin et al. (2014), the primary impediment is the continuation of political control over the procurement process.

#### **2.2.4 Strategies for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities**

Before being granted the tender, vendors are required to provide an explanation of the strategies of their cost effectiveness and performance from the past (Bosio et al., 2022). According to Kgobe and Chauke (2021), efficient contract performance monitoring and management is how the objectives of achieving cost effectiveness are met. Procurement institutions are expected to make sure that the main objectives of contractual agreements for management are fulfilled, such as the timely and cost-effective delivery goods and services of high-quality to get value for money (Somani, 2022). Procuring entities must engage in data collecting, systems for tracking and assessing performance, and goals and objectives must be clearly specified and uniform across policy and project tiers in order for value for money to be measured in terms of performance (Kgobe & Chauke, 2021).

The PPA should have more flexibility built in to allow for the consideration of the unique requirements of various sectors and industries. Everyone ought to receive the same information and be treated equally. Municipal and national acquisitions are thus covered by this (Regjeringen 2017). Public agencies, private companies, and other interested parties should work together more frequently. Improved communication and knowledge exchange are made easier and procurement efficiency is raised with a consolidated public procurement department. It is necessary to employ a cost-effectiveness strategy that takes life cycle costs into account, among other things (Maeland 2017).

Because procurement procedures are sensitive, it takes seasoned workers and procurement managers with the right mindset to complete cycle tasks efficiently (Kakwezi & Nyeko, 2019). Therefore, task management is informed by the procurement procedures used in public procurement. In order to achieve predetermined procurement objectives, Agama et al. (2021) argued that procurement processes should follow comparable management methods.

To make sure that the social and environmental advantages of public procurement are given proper attention, there should be a greater emphasis on these aspects. Municipalities must expand to become independent secondary service providers, such as private operators of kindergartens, medical services, and so forth, if they are to continue to be considered fairly and equally as welfare service providers. Municipalities could achieve this by growing in size, making sure that its workforce is qualified, and exchanging information with one another (Hansen and Tjernshaugen 2021).

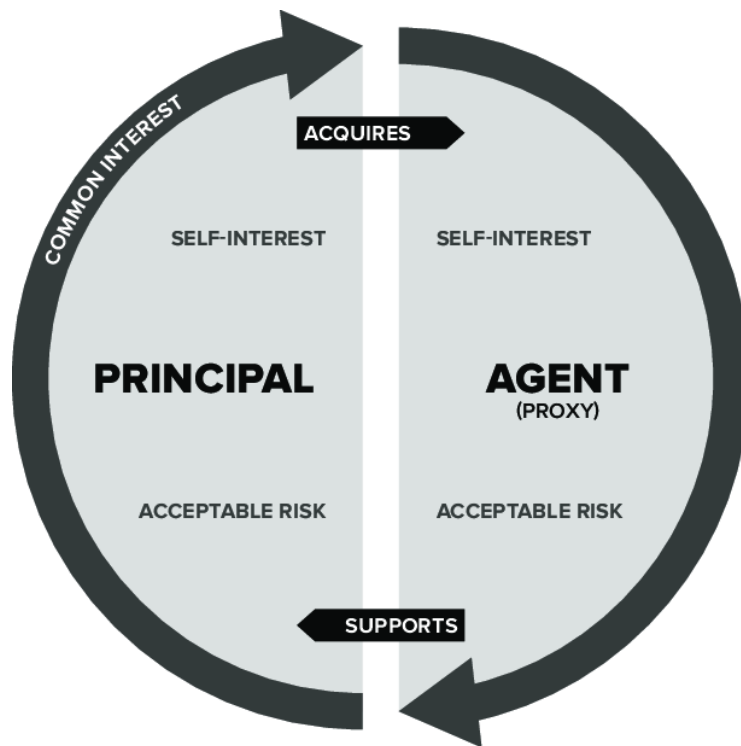
Ensuring adherence to rules created to guarantee adherence to pertinent laws, rules and moral principles (Abul Hassan et al., 2021) Additionally, it is essential that suppliers be incentivized to provide novel and inventive commodities and services through the use of public procurement (Changalima et al., 2021). These cutting-edge

goods and services are essential for achieving social and environmental objectives like lowering carbon emissions, encouraging sustainable growth, and aiding social entrepreneurs.

## 2.3 Theoretical framework

### *The principal agency theory*

Various parts of the process of public procurement, such as contract design, contract management, and dispute resolution, have been explained using the principal-agent theory. For example, the idea can be used to explain why certain terms, like as liquidated damages clauses, may be included in contracts to motivate the agent to behave as intended. Furthermore, the idea can be utilized to explain the significance of clear lines of communication and trust between the principal and the agent. Finally, the theory can be utilized to explain why and how disputes may occur throughout the procurement process. The discussion shifts to "administration" against "politics," with the principal/agent connection involving the rational selection of politicians and bureaucrats. Corruption is caused by weak processes and exploitable vulnerabilities, which are built on low public service pay and/or pure avarice (Bauhr, 2017). Some see it as a contestation over the essence of political systems, such as democratic processes, transparent transactions, and real representation of human rights (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2020). Is it a breach of the principal/agent relationship if there are infractions, or is it something more politically systemic? The principal-agent theory has been used to explain numerous parts of the public procurement process, such as contract design, contract administration, and dispute settlement. The fight against corruption programs aimed at reducing the supply of corruption (or chances for corruption) focus on procedural changes and better management, as well as more transparency, reduced discretion, and tougher penalties for violators (Graycar, 2022).



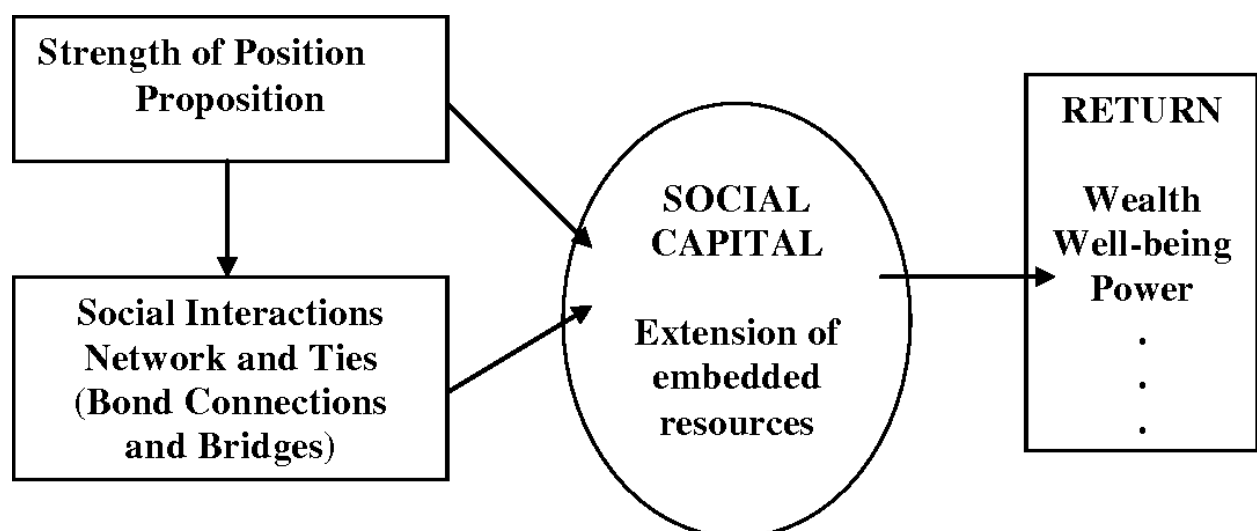
**Fig 2.2: The Principal Agent Theory**

Source: Amos C. Fox (2019)

### *Social capital theory*

According to the social capital hypothesis, the networks and relationships between the principal and the agent have an impact on public procurement. According to this idea, the effectiveness and efficiency of the procurement process can be impacted by the degree of trust and collaboration amongst the participants. For instance, parties may be more willing to work together and share information if they have a

high degree of confidence in one another. The creation of value for society is, thus, the goal of public procurement, and this can be accomplished by effective procurement procedures and cooperation amongst many stakeholders (Malacina et al., 2022). This can result in better decisions and outcomes. Furthermore, according to social capital theory, the degree of corruption in the procurement process may be influenced by the principal-agent relationship. Several theories, including the resource-based approach and the stakeholder theory, have been applied to the study of public procurement in addition to the social capital theory. According to the stakeholder theory, the principal and agent have a number of stakeholders with an interest in the procurement process, and decisions should be made with their interests in mind. According to the resource-based view, the principal and agent's access to resources, including organizational, human, and financial resources, will determine how well the procurement process goes. Relationship gains are hampered by a lack of social capital since it raises operational risks, opportunism, and uncertainty with suppliers (Chowdhury et al., 2019). Public procurement is a budget-constrained mechanism that provides products and services for public use; therefore, it is important to harness its social capital and relational capacities to gain society value (Malacina et al., 2022). This calls for an awareness of the social dynamics at play in the various procurement functions such as tendering, contract formulation, negotiations and management, as well as the ability to recognize the potential causes of contradictory results.



### **Fig 2.3: The social capital theory**

Source: Primary source (2023)

## **2.4 Empirical Review**

Chekwere et al.'s (2023) research examines the connections between cost effectiveness, procurement management, procurement objectives, and procurement process in Zimbabwe's Rural District Councils (RDCs). The Supply Chain Practice Perspective and the Practice Based View served as the study's guiding frameworks. Thirty of the sixty randomly selected RDCs in Zimbabwe provided answers to a structured, self-administered questionnaire in Google form. Value for money was found to be positively influenced by the process of procurement, its objectives, and its management. The findings also show that the procurement process had a beneficial impact on procurement management, and that the objectives of the procurement process had a favourable effect on it.

According to a study by Kakwezi and Nyeko (2019), improper processes and procedures led to poor performance of procurement objectives. Public procurement procedures should embrace the more general procurement goals, such enhancing environmental performance, promoting innovation, or facilitating public contract access for the majority of competitive businesses (Stritch et al., 2020).

Value for money cannot be achieved if the staff and management in public procurement are incompetent or lack adequate procurement skills, as researched by A Mungu (2021). Aimable et al. (2019) discovered that the procurement procedure has a major impact on cost effectiveness in their study conducted in Rwanda. The findings of Somani (2022) validate the connection between cost effectiveness and

objectives of procurement, which showed that the difficulty of failure to adhere to procurement guidelines has a negative impact on an institution's value for money objectives. According to a study by Kgobe and Chauke (2021), as a result, the objectives of cost effectiveness are met through efficient performance on contracts, efficient monitoring and efficient management.

#### **2.4.1 Research gap**

The literature that is currently available demonstrates that rural local authorities have not received much attention; Munyede and Mapuva (2020), Chirisa et al. (2022), and Dewa (2023) are only a few of the publications that discuss their procurement. The objective of this study is to assess how public procurement affects RDC service delivery.

#### **2.5 Chapter Summary**

There is direct link between the good public procurement and the quality of the services rendered to the public by the local authorities. In this chapter, the theoretical framework was constructed by incorporating the social capital theory and the principal agency theory. The next chapter will provide the methodology of the study.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the literature review of the study. This chapter provides an outline of the research methodology that was used by the researcher to conduct this study. In this chapter we will explore several aspects, including research design, the target population, the sampling process, research instruments, data collection methods, data analysis techniques and considerations related to reliability and validity.

### **3.2 Research Methodology**

The study employed the qualitative research approach. This approach provides an in-depth understanding and description of people's thoughts and real life experiences, (Bhandari, 2020). It can be defined as an operation which includes measures, steps, gathering and analyzing data in the researched being investigated (Mishra et al 2022). The reason why the researcher employed the qualitative research approach is that it gives the researcher the room to get well detailed information needed through the utilization of in-depth interviews and can be processed to make assumptions and conclusions. The qualitative researcher was more in the field in order to get first-hand information for the study through asking the participants' point of views. Therefore, using the qualitative approach, the researcher visited the participants to carry out interviews; the physical visits helped the researcher to do observations on non-verbal cues during data collection (Haradhan, 2018).

### **3.3 Research Design**

According to Sileyew, (2019) A Research Design is a framework of research methods and techniques that are chosen by a researcher. The design helps researchers to work on research methods that are suitable for their subject matter and set their studies up for success. A research design can be referred to as the general plan of answering the research questions (Saunders et al., 2009). In this light, the research design provides the researcher with a comprehensive focus through well defined objectives and established sources for gathering data. It further aids in choosing the right methods, sample groups and analyse techniques for the material (Fisher, 2010). The study utilized the case study design. The case study was relatively cheaper and manageable to the researcher. The case study was on the Mazowe Rural District

Council. The design of a case study research involves selecting a specific case or situation that provides in-depth information and insights about a particular phenomenon. The researcher collects data through various methods such as interviews, document analysis and observations to understand the complexities and unique aspects of the case. One of the key advantages of using a case study research design is its ability to provide rich and detailed information about a particular subject. It allows researchers to explore complex issues and phenomena, and to achieve a profound understanding of the underlying factors that influence behaviours and decisions. By examining a single case in-depth, researchers can develop a comprehensive understanding of the case's context, processes, and outcomes.

### 3.4 Target population

A population is a group of individuals with specified characteristics (L. Thacker, 2020). Target population is a group of people targeted to provide the researcher with relevant information concerning the study which will make the research successful. In addition, the target population is where samples will be selected and results will be generalized (Mafigu, 2019). The study targeted a total of 19 people from different departments of Mazowe RDC shown by the table below.

**Table 3.1:** Targeted population

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Department	Number of people
Ceo	1
Engineering	4
Finance	3

Hr and Admin	9
Audit	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>

### 3.5 Sampling

According to Rahi, Alnaser et al. (2019), sampling is a way of choosing people to engage in research. The researcher chose key informants who could provide data that was going to be useful to the study. The sampling process involves clearly defining a population, selecting a sampling frame, selecting a sampling technique, determining sample size, collecting data as well as assessing the response rate (Taderhoost, 2016). The study targeted participants from the finance, admin, engineering and internal audit department as well as the CEO, to make it 10 people. The sample size was determined by the availability of the participants and their knowledge of the phenomenon under study. Thus, purposive sampling and convenience sampling were used to select the 10 participants shown in the table below.

**Table 3.2:** Selected sample

Source: Primary Data 2024

Department	Number of people
Ceo	1
Engineering	2
Finance	3
Hr and Admin	2
Audit	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

### 3.6 Sampling procedure

The researcher used purposive and convenience sampling.

#### 3.6.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is a technique of identifying and choosing instances that make the most efficient use of scarce resources and it involves selecting participants who are expected to provide the most relevant and beneficial data (Palinkas et al., 2015). Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique used in research to select participants based on specific characteristics or attributes that align with the research objectives. Unlike random sampling, purposive sampling involves a deliberate selection process that focuses on selecting participants who can provide the most relevant and insightful information for the research study. One of the primary benefits of purposive sampling is that it enables researchers to target specific populations which possess the knowledge and experiences necessary to address the research questions. This targeted approach enables researchers to gather in-depth and detailed information on the research topic, leading to a richer

and more comprehensive analysis of the data collected. It enables settings and individuals to be selected based on their anticipated contribution to the study (Schensul, 2011) and by virtue of some aspect of the phenomenon they might be of help in understanding data. Purposeful sampling is an acknowledged and frequently used initial sampling strategy in ID methodology (Thorne, 2016).

### **3.6.2 Convenience sampling**

Convenience sampling is a sampling method where individuals are chosen based on their easy availability and readiness to participate rather than at random as Farrokhi, and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, (2012) mentions, it is utilised when certain practical considerations like the participants' location, time availability, or voluntary participation are prioritised for the study. Convenience sampling is a research approach where participants are chosen based on their readiness and willingness to take part in the study. It collects data from whoever is willing to participate in a study, is also the most approachable and in other ways, is conveniently accessible to the researcher (Wienclaw, 2019). This sampling technique is often used in situations where researchers have limited time, resources, or access to a specific population. While convenience sampling may be quick and easy to implement, it is important to consider the limitations and potential biases that can arise from using this method. One of the main advantages of convenience sampling is its convenience and practicality. Researchers can easily obtain data by selecting participants who are readily available and willing to participate in a study. This can save time and resources, especially in situations where access to a specific population is limited. Convenience samples are not always necessarily representatives of the population based on the research (Staetsky, 2019), which significantly impedes broad applicability.

### **3.7 Research instruments**

These are the data collection and generation instruments used by the researcher for example, questionnaires, interviews, observations and documentary analysis.

### **3.7.1 Interviews**

According to Edward and Holland (2013), interviews should be interactive in a way that encourages respondents to be open about their experiences while responding to the interview questions. Monette, Sllivan, and Dejong (2011) state that during an interview, the interviewer reads questions to the respondent and records the response over the phone or in person. Punch (2005) states that one of the primary methods of gathering data in qualitative research is the interview approach, which is a highly effective means of learning about people's perspectives. Face-to-face interviews were used in this study primarily because they eliminate bias, address issues with insufficient sampling, and mitigate the concerns of limited coverage of research candidates. According to Zulu (2014), interviews are done face-to-face and can be "structured, unstructured, and semi-structured," among other formats.

According to Trochim (2010), one benefit of interviews is that they are more intimate because the interviewer works closely with the responder and clarifies any unclear questions.

Powell (2010), however, points out that if the researcher exhibits surprise and emotion throughout the interview, the interviewer may end up with skewed data. The responders' answers may be influenced by the dress code, gestures, voice projection, and facial expressions, leading to erroneous results.

### **3.7.2 Key informant interviews**

According to Sharma (2017) key informant interviews consists of one on one with individuals who possesses specialised knowledge about a particular element of the program under evaluation. The respondents will not be the actual people under study but practitioners

who can help in the research study by providing deeper knowledge, understanding and experience of the topic. Key informants are deemed to be the holders of

information in relation to the study.

### **3.7.3 Interview guide**

According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2014), the interview guide helps to ensure consistency in the interviews and acts as a link between the research problem, research questions, and prior pertinent literature. An interview guide is a crucial tool used in the process of conducting interviews. It is a set of pre-determined questions and prompts that help the interviewer stay organized, focused, and ensure that all relevant topics are covered during the interview. This guide helps to standardize the interview process, making it more efficient and effective in gathering the necessary information from the interviewee. The interview guide typically includes questions that are open-ended and provide the interviewee with the opportunity to share their thoughts, experiences, and perspectives on the topic being discussed. By using open-ended questions, the interviewer can gather detailed and insightful responses, allowing them to gain a deeper understanding of the interviewee's perspective.

## **3.8 Instrumentation Procedure**

### **3.8.1 Data collection procedure**

Data collection is a strategy employed for gathering and evaluating data from various origins which aids researchers in addressing pertinent enquiries and evaluating the findings within the study (Creswell, 2014). The researcher utilized interviews and key informant interviews as the data collection techniques. Data collection tools such as the key-informant interview guide and interview guide for the participants were employed.

### **3.8.2 Data collection tools**

Primary data is data gathered firsthand by researchers tailored specifically to address the issues and aims of their research, employing the most suitable methods



for their investigative questions Ajayi, (2017). Primary data was effective when collecting data as the researcher was able to collect rich data and gain first-hand information which was not difficult to interpret; in as much as it was important the researcher ended up facing some limitations connected to it as it was expensive and time consuming.

### **3.8.3 Data presentation and analysis**

To assess the information gathered throughout the study procedure, the researcher used qualitative data analysis methodologies. The researcher was interested in qualitative thematic analysis, where the topics were derived from the study's objectives and the data was arranged subjectively. To examine the research's findings, the researcher employed both the goals of the study and the interview questions. According to Nowell (2017), thematic analysis is the process through which the researcher carefully evaluates the data gathered to find common themes. Thematic analysis entails arranging, explaining, and comprehending the informants' replies. The interview questions serve as a guide for thematic analysis, and as the conversation progresses, more questions could be raised. Thematic analysis, according to Braun & Clarke (2006), may be used to summarize characteristics of a larger set of ideas into a compiled final report. Lester (2020) notes that thematic analysis is a method for identifying and reporting patterns or themes within raw data. Data analysis condenses gathered information. Thematic analysis involves examining acquired data methodically with logical and analytical thought to spot trends, relationships and patterns.

### **3.9 Ethical considerations**

Research Ethics refers to moral principles of what is right or wrong (Chazuka, 2017). Research ethics involves treating everyone involved in the research directly or indirectly, fairly and with honesty, therefore, the researcher took into consideration the best interests of the participants. The following ethical considerations guided the researcher during the study.

The researcher informed the research participants that they are being researched and explained the aims of the study. Every participant was informed by describing the study's basic purpose and design. The researcher also made sure that participants were told about their rights to withdraw from the study when they feel like withdrawing without facing consequences. Participants were also informed that their participation had no financial gains or any material rewards.

The entire research was optional, and anyone who wished to participate was offered the opportunity to do so. According to Sharma (2017), voluntary participation refers to research in which participants exercise free will to choose whether or not to participate in a study. By engaging this ethic, the researcher was able to give participants the comfort and confidence to take part in the study. Utilizing the ethic of voluntary participation also served as a means for the researcher to establish credibility and honesty with the participants.

Protecting the participants' shared information is the main key. Confidentiality protects participants from harm for example stigmatization from the community. Therefore, the confidentiality of research participants will be maintained and their privacy will be safeguard after the information is collected. Confidentiality is very important and this means that although the researcher knew who the participants were, their identities are not going to be revealed in any way in throughout the report as supported by Engel and Schutt, (2013) who concurs that it is important to keep participants' names and identities private to avoid disclosing sensitive information.

In order to prevent identification, anonymity ensures that the participant's identities are kept concealed or hidden (Hollway and Jefferson, 2013). Respondents' identities are concealed using anonymity so that their personal information cannot be linked to the data they supply. This researcher implemented this ethical measure to protect the privacy of the study's participants. Male spousal abuse survivors will be advised not to mention their real names. Pseudonyms will be used to ensure that

participants' information cannot be linked to them after the research by community members or anyone else who comes across the study.

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the study's organizational structure and discussed the use and significance of the qualitative design. The review of the data-gathering techniques was accompanied by an explanation of the sampling approach. The processes for the qualitative data analysis that was used in the study were also addressed in this chapter. The upcoming chapter is going to illustrate on the analysis and presentation of the data collected.

## **CHAPTER IV**

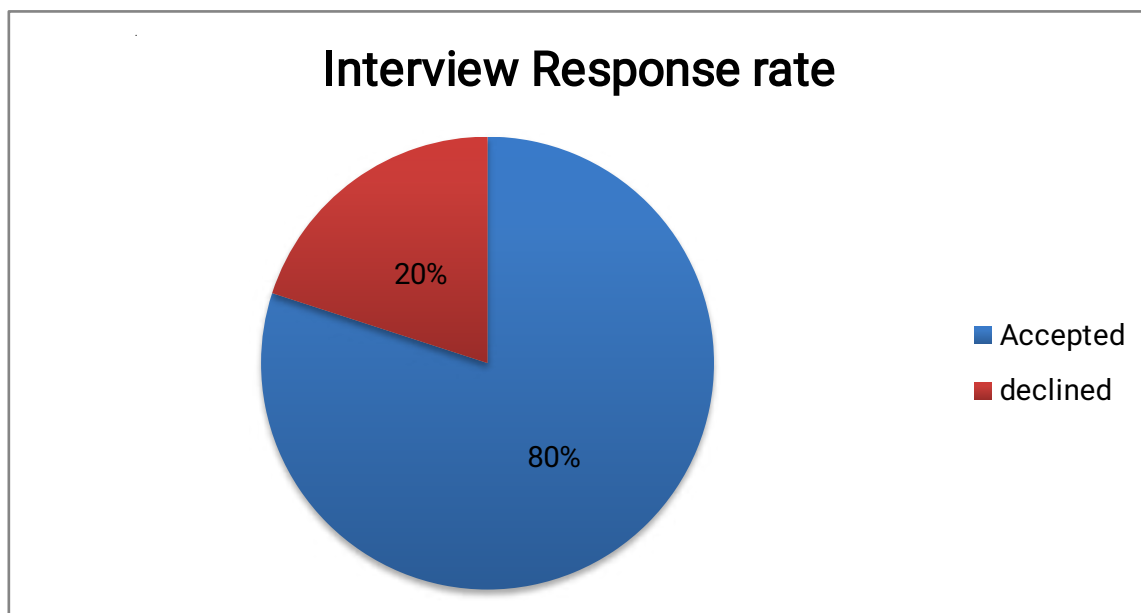
### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The preceding chapter outlined the research methodology employed by the researcher for conducting the study. This chapter explores the procurement processes and practices within local authorities and evaluates their influence on the efficiency, transparency, accountability, and overall quality of service delivery in local authorities in Zimbabwe. The study also identifies challenges faced by local authorities in procurement and provides recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of public procurement in improving service delivery.

#### **4.1 Response rate analysis**

Out of the 19 employees from Mazowe RDC, the researcher handpicked 10 participants through purposive sampling ensuring that they were all sufficient to reach data saturation and could provide rich information for the research. The researcher made use of questionnaires, interview and observations to collect data.

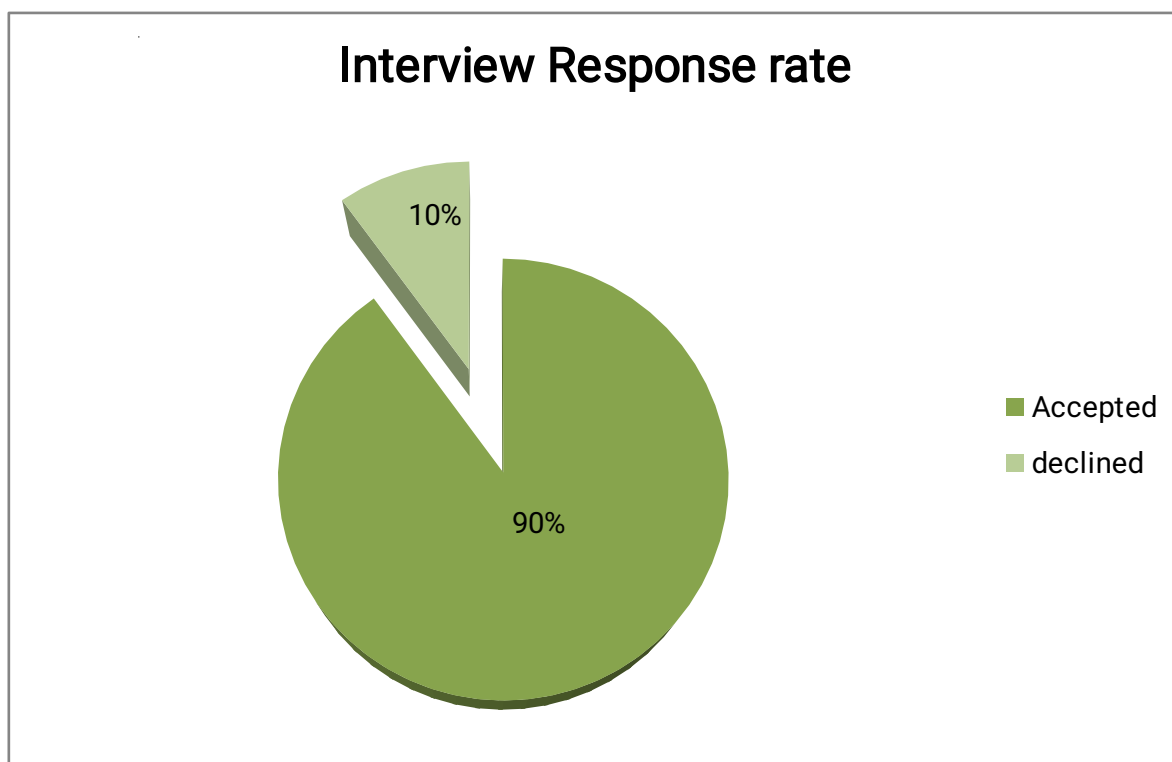


**Fig 4.1:** Interview response rate

Source: Primary Data (2024)

According to the fig above it shows that the study had an 80% success rate from the interviews meaning that out of the 10 intended participants, only 8 people successfully participated. The remaining 2 could not show up due to prior arrangements and sudden emergencies.

The researcher later sent out 2 questionnaires to those participants who did not partake in the interviews and only 1 respondent sent back their answers. Thus overall out of the 10 participants 9 employees successfully responded to the researcher and the study ended up having a 90% success rate. This validates the quality of the information in light of the view of Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) who noted that any response rate above 50% is sufficient enough to give good results.



**Fig 4.2:** Overall response rate

Source: Primary Data (2024)

## 4.2 Demographic information

The table above shows the demographic information of the participants. It shows that all the participants were aged between 40 and 63, implying that the participants were old enough to have been exposed to the concept under study. All the participants had at least a degree and the researcher was reassured that they were knowledgeable about the aspect of public procurement.

**Table 4.1:** Demographic information of the participants

Source: Primary data (2023)

Name	Age	Gender	Level of education	Experience
M1	63	Male	degree	25 years
M2	45	Male	masters	12 years
M3	43	Female	degree	7 years
M4	61	Male	degree	22 years
M5	46	Male	masters	17 years
M6	40	Male	degree	11 years

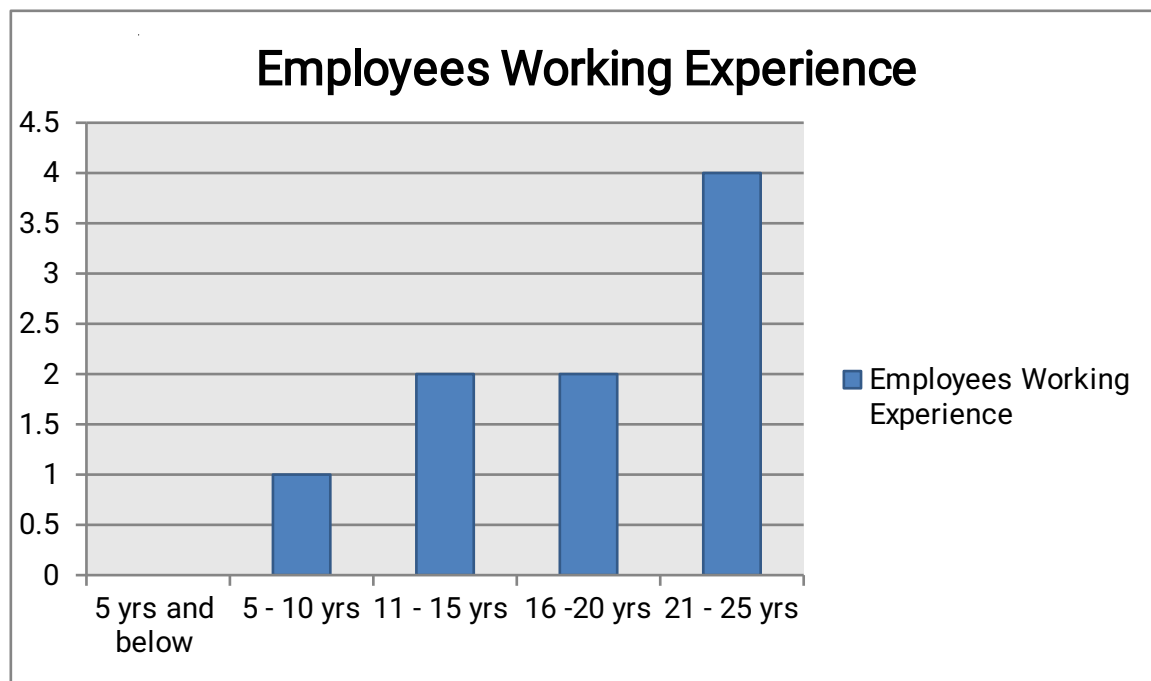
M7	57	Female	degree	22 years
M8	58	Male	degree	27 years
M9	55	Male	masters	19 years

The table above shows the demographic information of the participants. It shows that all the participants were aged between 43 and 63 implying that the participants were old enough to have been exposed to the concept under study. All the participants had at least a degree and had more than 5 years of experience implying that they were knowledgeable about the aspect of public procurement.

#### **4.3 Respondents of working experience**

The selected participants all had over 5 years working experience in local authorities and the researcher collected adequate information about public procurement. It is also known that senior staff of the organisation is most probably to give much more reliable information as they have gained a lot of knowledge throughout their working years Kumar (2019). Below is a fig illustrating the working experience of the participants selected by the researcher;





**Fig 4.3:** Working experience of the participants

Source: Primary source (2023)

The above fig shows that all the participants had more than 5 years of experience thus more reliable information was obtained by the researcher. The researcher used counter bias techniques such as structuring interviews around skills based questions and confirming similarities Williams J (2021) to avoid the staff from providing her with biased information with the intention of trying to give a positive image for the organisation.

#### **4.4 Public procurement impact on service delivery by local authorities**

#### **4.4.1 Quality of Goods and Services**

The process of acquiring goods and services by public entities is of utmost importance in determining the quality of commodities and services delivered by local authorities. The quality of the products and services offered is one important way that public procurement affects the delivery of services. In the end, local government agencies jeopardize the services they provide to the public by partnering with low-quality product vendors. Establishing open and equitable procurement procedures is one method local governments can raise the calibre of goods and services they provide to their constituents. The respondents noted that Mazowe RDC makes use of open tender offerings for its procurement and this helps them to give the greatest services to their communities when they place a high priority on quality in their procurement process and collaborate with vendors who deliver premium goods and services. Mazowe RDC collaborates with the best suppliers and provides the finest services to their communities by guaranteeing that all suppliers are given an equal chance to bid on contracts and decisions are made on the basis of merit and quality rather than favouritism. The quality of goods and services provided by Mazowe RDC is directly impacted by its public procurement process. According to Kakwezi & Nyeko, (2019) organizations must have effective procurement management in place in order to minimize risk, ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and acquire premium goods and services of high quality at the lowest feasible cost. The researcher observed one of the tender opening meetings where Mazowe RDC was aiming to choose the best suppliers of building materials for Lazy 7 Clinic, a public clinic in one of its Centres. 23 companies were given a chance to present their proposals for the attendees and after all presentations everyone was given a chance to decide the best company giving reasons as to why they think it is the best. At the end of this process the communities ended up receiving quality services for the building of their clinic. It is essential that local authorities recognize the importance of public procurement in service delivery and take the necessary steps to ensure that they are making well-informed decisions that prioritize quality and efficiency.

#### **4.4.2 Transparency and Accountability**

When public procurement is done transparently and accountably, it not only ensures that taxpayers' money is spent wisely but also contributes to improving service delivery to the public. Transparency in public procurement refers to the openness of the process, making information accessible to all stakeholders, while accountability refers to the responsibility of those involved in the procurement process. The respondents made remarks that transparency in public procurement at Mazowe RDC has been essential as it allows for fair competition among suppliers and contractors, leading to better value for money. When the procurement process was done open and transparent, it minimized the risk of corruption and favouritism, ensuring that contracts were awarded to the most qualified and cost-effective bidders. This, in turn, led to the delivery of high-quality services to the public, enhancing overall satisfaction with local authorities. They also responded that the issue of accountability in public procurement at Mazowe has been equally important as it ensured that those responsible for the procurement process were held answerable for their decisions and actions. When public officials are held accountable for their procurement decisions, it promotes integrity and ethical conduct, deterring fraudulent practices and ensuring that resources are used efficiently. This accountability fosters public trust in the procurement process and the delivery of services, ultimately benefiting the community as a whole. Transparency and accountability are essential components of public procurement that have a direct impact on the delivery of services by local authorities. By ensuring that the procurement process is open, fair, and accountable, local authorities can enhance service delivery, promote integrity, and build trust with the public. It is essential for local authorities to prioritize transparency and accountability in their procurement processes to achieve better outcomes for their communities. This resonates the study by Gado, (2021) that public confidence in the providing public services is increased by equitable and open procurement procedures.

#### **4.4.3 Value for Money**

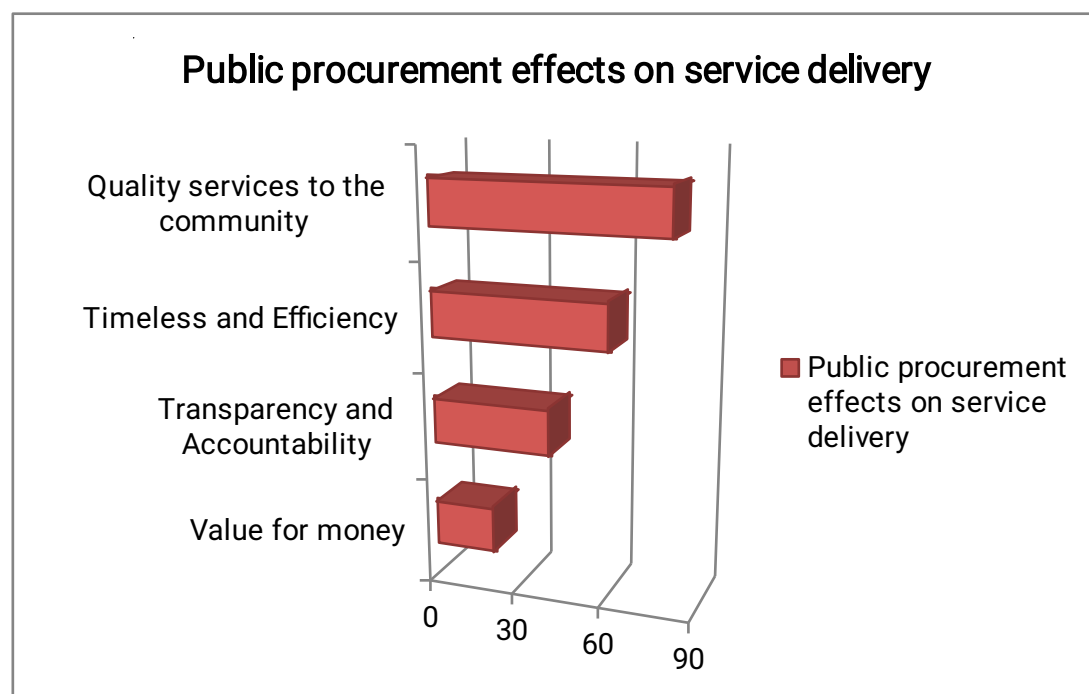
Public procurement plays a substantial role in ensuring that local authorities are able to provide efficient and effective services to their communities. It is essential for local authorities to obtain value for money when procuring goods and services, as

this allows them to make sure taxpayers' money is efficiently used and services of high quality are delivered to their constituents. Value for money in public procurement goes beyond simply obtaining the lowest price possible. It is about striking the right balance between cost, quality, and outcomes. The researcher observed that Mazowe RDC prioritized value for money in their procurement processes; they were able to ensure that they are getting the best possible deal for the services they provide. Value for money in public procurement can also result in more accountability and openness. Aimable et al. (2019) discovered that the procurement procedure has a major impact on value for money in their study conducted in Rwanda. Local governments are frequently bound by stringent rules and regulations when they give value for money first priority during the procurement process. This can ensure that taxpayer funds are being used sensibly and morally and help prevent corruption. Cost effectiveness in public procurement is essential for local authorities to deliver high-quality services to their communities. By prioritizing cost effectiveness in their procurement processes, Mazowe RDC improved the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of its operations with the community. This ultimately led to better outcomes for residents and ensured that taxpayers' money was being well spent. This result actually leads to better service delivery for the community as supported by the study of Snail & Baily, (2020).

#### **4.4.4 Timeliness and Efficiency**

Timeliness and efficiency in procurement processes are essential for ensuring that the needs of the community are met in a timely manner. When local authorities prioritize timeliness and efficiency in their procurement processes, they can better serve the public and improve the overall quality of services provided. Ensuring timeliness in public procurement facilitated prompt responses from Mazowe RDC to the community requirements, which was one of its main advantages. Mazowe RDC acquired products and services more effectively and promptly supply citizens with needed services by cutting down on needless delays and streamlining the procurement process. This improved the quality of their service delivery and using efficient procurement processes they managed to save time and resources, which

they allocated to other important areas of service delivery. Efficient procurement processes can also help to ensure that scarce resources are used effectively, maximizing the impact of public funds on the community. By streamlining the procurement process, Mazowe RDC reduced costs, eliminated waste, and improved the overall quality of services provided to the public. Improving the promptness and effectiveness of public procurement is crucial for local governments to provide better services. Local governments can better allocate resources, respond to community needs more rapidly, and offer people high-quality services if they prioritize speed and efficiency in their procurement procedures. To make sure that the demands of the public are satisfied on time, local governments must keep concentrating on enhancing the promptness and effectiveness of their procurement procedures, as supported by the study results of Somani, (2022).



#### **Fig 4.4: The effects of public procurement on service delivery in local authorities**

Source: Primary source (2024)

Fig 4.4 above shows that following the best steps in determining public procurement leads to a greater quality of service provided by local authorities. There is need for local authorities to make take note of the above procurement process so as to provide quality services to the community.

### **4.5 The limitations of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities**

#### **4.5.1 Limited Capacity**

Public procurement allows for the acquisition of goods and services needed to meet the needs of the community. However, limited capacity within the public procurement system can hinder the effectiveness of service delivery by local authorities. This limitation not only affects the quality of services provided but also impacts the overall efficiency and transparency of the procurement process. In public procurement, "limited capacity" denotes the absence of infrastructure, knowledge, and resources necessary to execute the process successfully. This can include inadequate budgetary allocations for procurement activities, outmoded or poor procurement processes, and inadequate staff training. Consequently, local government agencies can find it difficult to find and choose suppliers, negotiate contracts, and keep an eye on the calibre and promptness of services provided. Procurement delays and inefficiencies are the two major ways that restricted capacity in public procurement effects on service delivery of Mazowe RDC. In the absence of requisite resources and experience, the local council encountered difficulties in carrying out comprehensive market research, formulating precise

specifications for products and services, and promptly assessing vendor proposals. This caused some delays in the procurement procedure, which then caused delays in the community's service delivery. Limited capacity in public procurement is a significant limitation that can hinder the ability of local authorities to deliver high-quality services to the community. Local authorities can overcome these limitations and improve the overall effectiveness of the procurement process by investing in procurement capacity-building initiatives. According to Chikwere et al., (2022) local authorities lack the capacity to fully perform their tasks and by prioritizing transparency, efficiency, and accountability in procurement activities, local authorities can ensure that they are delivering the best possible services to the community.

#### **4.5.2 Corruption and Fraud**

Corruption and fraud in public procurement have long been identified as major limitations that hinder effective service delivery by local authorities to their constituents. Public procurement is the process of acquiring commodities services, and construction from external providers. It plays a critical role in the delivery of public services as it ensures that government institutions have the necessary resources to fulfil their mandate. When corruption and fraud taint the procurement process, the consequences can be detrimental to both the public sector and the citizens it serves. Corruption in public procurement occurs when individuals within the procurement process abuse their power for personal gain. This can include accepting bribes, kickbacks, or engaging in other forms of unethical behavior to secure contracts or favour certain suppliers. The respondents brought this out as a major limitation that impacts the effects of service delivery on Mazowe RDC. By engaging in these corrupt practices, public officials have compromised the integrity of the procurement process, leading to inefficiencies, inflated costs, and substandard quality of goods and services. Ultimately, this results in poor service delivery to the public. Fraud in public procurement, on the other hand, involves the deliberate deception of the procurement process for personal or organizational gain. This can include submitting false documentation, misrepresenting information, or colluding with suppliers to manipulate the bidding process. When fraud occurs, local

authorities risk wasting resources on substandard or unnecessary goods and services, diverting funds from essential public services, and eroding public trust in the government. The impact of corruption and fraud on service delivery by local authorities cannot be understated. When public procurement processes are tainted by these unethical practices, the ability of local authorities to deliver essential services such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, and social welfare is severely compromised. Citizens are left to bear the brunt of inefficiencies, delays, and poor quality services, while public resources are squandered on inflated costs and fraudulent activities. This conforms to the study by Abare and Muturi (2015) who discovered that corruption, ethical behavior, and public procurement and disposal regulations training were the main factors influencing Kenyan public procurement law implementation.

#### **4.5.3 Inadequate Planning**

Inadequate planning can pose a significant limitation to the success of public procurement and ultimately impact service delivery by local authorities. The respondents also pointed out that delays and cost overruns in public procurement is a significant obstacle to sufficient planning. Local governments risk speeding the procurement process or making snap judgments that drive up prices and cause delays in the delivery of goods and services when they don't plan ahead enough for their procurement needs. This not only wastes tax dollars but also makes it more difficult for the community to receive critical services on time. Furthermore, inadequate planning can also compromise the quality and effectiveness of the goods and services acquired through public procurement. The researcher has observed that when Mazowe RDC failed to plan adequately for their procurement needs, they were forced to settle for subpar products or services that did not meet the requirements or expectations of the community. This led to dissatisfaction among residents and undermined the credibility of the local authority. Inadequate planning in public procurement can also increase the risk of corruption and malpractice. When procurement processes are rushed or poorly planned, there is a greater likelihood of loopholes and vulnerabilities that can be exploited by unscrupulous individuals for personal gain. The integrity of the procurement process



is not only compromised by this but, also public trust in the local authority is eroded. Inadequate planning is a significant limitation of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities. By recognizing the importance of strategic procurement planning and implementing measures to improve planning processes, local authorities can enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of their procurement practices and ultimately improve service delivery to their communities.

#### **4.5.4 Inadequate Monitoring and Evaluation**

A significant obstacle that frequently impedes the efficacy of public procurement is insufficient oversight and assessment by local government bodies. This supervision gap has a negative impact on the provision of services, which could ultimately result in corruption, inefficiency, and the waste of important resources. There are chances for poor management, fraud, and power abuse when local government oversight and assessment of the procurement process is inadequate. The researcher also observed that in the absence of adequate supervision, some contracts were mistakenly given to unfit or dishonest suppliers, resulting in the public receiving inferior products or services resulting in poor service delivery at Mazowe RDC. Cost overruns can also result from inadequate monitoring, since officials may find it difficult to keep track of expenses and make sure that budgets are being followed. Furthermore, without effective evaluation mechanisms in place, local authorities may not be able to assess the impact of their procurement decisions on service delivery. This lack of feedback and evaluation can prevent them from identifying areas for improvement and making necessary adjustments to streamline the procurement process. Ultimately, this can result in wasted resources, missed opportunities for innovation, and a failure to meet the needs of the community. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation are significant limitations that can hinder the effectiveness of public procurement and impact service delivery by local authorities. It is essential that local governments prioritize the establishment of robust oversight mechanisms and evaluation systems to ensure transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the procurement process. By addressing these limitations, local authorities can enhance the quality of public services delivered to citizens and promote good governance practices in their communities.

## **4.6 Measures which can be applied for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities.**

### **4.6.1 Strengthening Procurement Laws and Regulations**

There is need to establish clear, comprehensive and up-to-date procurement laws and regulations. The legal framework should emphasize principles of transparency, fair competition, and accountability at all stages of the procurement cycle from planning to contract management. Regular reviews involving stakeholder consultations allow identifying areas for improvement to ensure the regulations remain relevant with evolving needs and address any legislative gaps or inconsistencies. The framework should also provide flexibility to accommodate emergencies and natural disasters.

### **4.6.2 Promoting Transparency and Accountability**

The way in which procurement laws and regulations are structured has a direct impact on the success of public procurement practices. Therefore, it is imperative that these laws and regulations be strengthened to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability in the procurement process. One of the main ways in which strengthening procurement laws and regulations can benefit service delivery by local authorities is by promoting fair competition. When procurement processes are fair and transparent, it allows for a level playing field for all potential suppliers, which ultimately results in better quality goods and services being delivered to the public. Additionally, strengthening procurement laws and regulations can help to combat corruption and fraud in the procurement process. By implementing strict guidelines and oversight mechanisms, local authorities can minimize the risk of mismanagement and ensure that public funds are being used effectively. This not only protects taxpayers' money but also helps to build trust and credibility in the government's ability to deliver services efficiently. Strengthening procurement laws and regulations is crucial for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities. It is imperative that governments prioritize the strengthening of

procurement laws and regulations to create a more transparent, accountable and efficient procurement process.

#### **4.6.3 Leveraging Technology**

Leveraging technology, local authorities can streamline their procurement processes, increase transparency, and ultimately improve service delivery to the community. One of the key benefits of technology in public procurement is increased efficiency. Automation of procurement processes can significantly reduce the time and resources required to complete transactions. This not only speeds up the procurement process but also reduces the chances of errors and delays, ultimately leading to faster service delivery to the community. Additionally, technology enables local authorities to easily track and monitor their procurement activities, ensuring compliance with regulations and policies. Furthermore, technology can help local authorities improve their decision-making processes in procurement. Data analytics and artificial intelligence can provide valuable insights into supplier performance, market trends, and cost savings opportunities. By leveraging these technology tools, local authorities can make more informed decisions that drive efficiency and value for money in their procurement processes. Leveraging technology for the success of public procurement is essential for local authorities to enhance service delivery to the community. By improving efficiency, transparency, and decision-making processes, technology can help local authorities deliver services more effectively and efficiently. It is crucial for local authorities to embrace technology and invest in modernizing their procurement processes to achieve better outcomes for the community.

#### **4.6.4 Promoting Collaboration and Partnerships**

In the realm of public procurement, the success of service delivery by local authorities is dependent on the coordinated efforts of various stakeholders.

Collaboration and partnerships play a crucial role in ensuring efficient and effective procurement processes, which ultimately benefit the local community. Working together enables local authorities to leverage their resources and expertise to achieve better outcomes for the delivery of public services. Collaboration among local authorities, government agencies, and private sector partners can help streamline the procurement process, reduce costs, and improve the goods' and services' quality provided to the public. By pooling their resources and sharing best practices, these stakeholders can enhance their procurement processes and achieve greater efficiency and cost savings. Additionally, partnerships with suppliers and vendors can help local authorities access a wider range of goods and services, improving the quality and diversity of service delivery. One of the key benefits of promoting collaboration and partnerships in public procurement is the ability to tap into the expertise and experience of various stakeholders. Working together also allows local authorities to benefit from the knowledge and skills of their partners, leading to better decision-making and improved outcomes for service delivery. Additionally, collaboration can contribute to building trust and nurturing enduring partnerships among stakeholders, creating a more sustainable and effective procurement ecosystem. Promoting collaboration and partnerships is essential for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities. By working together, stakeholders can achieve greater efficiency, cost savings, and improved outcomes for the delivery of public services. Collaboration and partnerships enable local authorities to leverage their resources, access new opportunities, and enhance their expertise, ultimately benefiting the local community. It is imperative for local authorities to prioritize collaboration and partnerships in their procurement processes to ensure the successful delivery of public services. This confirms to the study by Raja opal, (2020) that discovered that collaboration in public procurement can lead to improved outcomes for both the government and the vendors involved

## **4.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided a comprehensive examination of the various themes that the study aimed to elucidate in relation to its objectives, offering explanations grounded in the findings and the feedback from employees. Supported by modern academic research, the discussion surrounding the results of the analysis was rich with insights pertinent to the study's goals. The next chapter will present a summary of the research findings, along with the conclusions drawn and suggestions related to the research.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the research findings on the impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities. Conclusions were also drawn from the findings and possible recommendations were offered. The recommendations aim to address the topic that was investigated in the research.

#### **5.2 Summary of the study**

This thematic study focused on examining the impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities in Zimbabwe. It discussed the processes and practices involved in procurement within local authorities and evaluated their influence on efficiency, transparency, accountability, and overall service quality. The study also identified limitations faced by local authorities in procurement and provided relative measures to enhance the effectiveness of public procurement in improving service delivery.

The study found that successful public procurement processes ensure that acquired goods and services meet required standards and specifications, ultimately affecting the quality of services provided. Prioritizing transparency and accountability in procurement processes promotes trust and confidence in local authorities, leading to better service delivery. Value for money in public procurement ensures that local authorities obtain goods and services at the best prices and terms, maximizing benefits for taxpayers. Timeliness and efficiency are crucial in ensuring uninterrupted service delivery by local authorities, as effective procurement practices help reduce delays and improve overall efficiency. However, the study also identified

limitations of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities. These include limited capacity due to resource constraints, corruption and fraud that compromise integrity, inadequate planning leading to delays and resource misallocation, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation hindering effective service delivery.

To address these limitations and ensure the success of public procurement in service delivery, the study recommended several measures. These include strengthening procurement laws and regulations to promote transparency and fair competition, leveraging technology to streamline processes and increase transparency, promoting collaboration and partnerships with other agencies and stakeholders to enhance procurement functions, and enhancing monitoring and evaluation to improve oversight and accountability.

In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of effective public procurement in improving service delivery by local authorities. By addressing limitations and implementing measures to strengthen procurement processes, local authorities can ensure efficient, transparent, and accountable procurement practices that ultimately benefit the community.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Public procurement plays a crucial role in determining the quality and efficiency of service delivery by local authorities. It refers to the process by which public authorities acquire goods, services, and construction from external vendors. The way in which local authorities conduct their procurement activities can have a significant impact on their ability to effectively deliver services to citizens. It is important for local authorities to understand the implications of their procurement decisions and to strive for transparency, efficiency, and accountability in their procurement processes. Public procurement has a significant impact on service delivery by local

authorities. It is crucial for local authorities to conduct their procurement activities in a transparent, efficient, and accountable manner in order to ensure that the services they deliver to their citizens are of high quality. By paying attention to the quality, cost, and selection of goods and services procured, local authorities can maximize the value of taxpayer dollars and ensure that they are meeting the needs of their community. Local authorities should prioritize good governance and best practices in public procurement in order to achieve positive outcomes for service delivery.

Public procurement is vulnerable to corruption and fraud. The competitive nature of the procurement process can lead to unethical behavior, such as bid-rigging and bribery. This can undermine the integrity of the procurement process and result in substandard services being delivered to the public. While there are limitations to public procurement that can impact service delivery by local authorities, there are steps that can be taken to mitigate these challenges. By improving transparency, promoting competition, and combating corruption, authorities can provide services of exceptional quality to their constituents in a cost-effective and efficient manner. Public procurement by local authorities plays a crucial role in ensuring the efficient delivery of services to citizens. However, this process can often be hindered by inefficiencies, corruption, and lack of transparency. In order to achieve success in public procurement and improve service delivery, various measures can be implemented. The success of public procurement is essential for the effective delivery of services by local authorities.

Lastly, by implementing measures such as enhancing transparency, building capacity within procurement departments, establishing oversight mechanisms, and promoting competition among suppliers, local authorities can ensure that the procurement process is conducted in a fair and efficient manner. Ultimately, these measures will not only improve service delivery but also build trust and confidence in the public procurement system.

## **5.4 Recommendations**



It is essential for local authorities to have successful public procurement processes in place in order to improve service delivery to citizens. As one of the primary functions of local authorities, procurement plays a crucial role in ensuring that public resources are utilized efficiently and effectively to deliver high-quality public services.

The research recommended local authorities to establish clear and transparent procurement policies and procedures to achieve successful procurement outcomes. The researcher recommends local authorities to involve developing comprehensive procurement manuals that provide step-by-step guidelines outlining the entire procurement cycle from planning to contract closeout. The manuals should specify requirements for each stage of the process, such as procedures for soliciting bids, evaluation criteria, contractual terms, and resolution of disputes. Thereby, having well-documented and easily accessible procurement guidelines can help ensure fairness, accountability and compliance with relevant regulations.

The research also recommends local authorities to prioritize the adoption of electronic procurement systems to streamline procurement processes. E-procurement platforms can allow digitization of tasks such as publishing bid notices and tender documents, facilitating online bid submission by suppliers, electronic evaluation of bids, and automated award and management of contracts. This can reduce paperwork and administrative burdens. E-procurement can also enhance transparency by enabling online public access to procurement information. Leveraging technology in this way can improve efficiency, save costs and expedite procurement cycles.

Promoting competition is another important recommendation by the researcher. Local authorities can encourage competitive bidding by maintaining an updated vendor database, conducting outreach to potential new suppliers, and unbundling large contracts when feasible. This can help attract a wider range of capable suppliers to submit competitive bids. Comparing multiple offers can drive down prices and allow for selection of the best value proposals in terms of both cost and quality. Competition can ensure that taxpayer funds are utilized prudently to deliver

maximum benefits.

Finally, the researcher recommends ongoing training and skills development for procurement personnel. Regular workshops covering topics such as procurement procedures, contract management, negotiation, market research, and using e-procurement systems can help staff stay up to date with global best practices. This can equip them with the expertise needed to carry out complex procurement activities professionally and in compliance with evolving regulations. Investing in human capital in this way can lead to continual improvements in procurement systems over the long run.

### **5.5 Recommendations for further studies**

The study recommends that there be a future research on the impact of technology on public procurement process.

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43.

## Appendix A: QUESTIONNAIRE

### Participants Letter



Bindura University of Science education  
Faculty of Commerce  
Department of Accountancy  
174 Chimurenga Road off Trojan road  
Bindura

My name is B200820B a Bindura University of Science Education student registered B200820B. I am a Bachelor of Accountancy Honours Degree student conducting a research on the **Impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities in Zimbabwe**. I would greatly value your assistance in completing the attached questionnaire. Your participation will contribute to the collection of important data. Please be assured that all information will be strictly used for academic purposes and confidentiality will be maintained. To ensure anonymity, please do not include your name on the questionnaire.

Your cooperation and responses are deeply appreciated.

Yours faithfully

**B200820B**

**Phone number 0789617378**

**Email: b200820b@gmail.com**

#### **Instructions**

- Name should not be written on the questionnaire.
- A tick should only be used to indicate the preferred response.
- Choose only 1 response on Section A and Section B.
- Choose a maximum of 3 responses on Section C.

#### **Section A: Demographic information**

1)

Gender	Response
Male	
Female	

2)

Age Group	Response



18 to 30 years	
31 to 40 years	
41 to 50 years	
51 to 65 years	

3)

Academic Qualifications	Response
Diploma	
Post graduate	
Degree	
Masters	

4)

Department	Response
FINACE	
Audit	
Engineering	
Hr and Admin	

5)

For how long have you worked for local authorities?	Response
5 yrs and below	
5 to 10 yrs	

11 to 15 yrs	
16 to 20 yrs	
21 yrs and above	

## Section B

Public Procurement Process at MRDC	Yes	No
Is there a department for procurement?		
Is there a manual public procurement process for goods and works?		
Is your answer is yes above, is it up to date?		
Is there any system to recognise procurement requirements?		
Is the preparation period for bids announced to the public?		

Is the bidding opening and date stated in the bidding document?		
Does the bid get opened in public?		
Are late bids accepted?		
Are any bids rejected at the opening of the bid?		

## Section C

In your experience, what impact does public procurement have on the delivery of services?	Response
Significantly positive impact	
Moderate positive impact	
Neutral impact	
Negative impact	

<b>In your opinion, which of the limitations of public procurement affect service delivery at MRDC?</b>	<b>Response</b>
Bureaucratic delays	
Lack of flexibility	
Limited supplier competition	
Complex regulations	
Inadequate risk management	
<b>Which of the following measures do you believe are most effective for ensuring the success of public procurement in enhancing service delivery?</b>	<b>Response</b>
Enhancing transparency	
Implementing stringent quality control	
Streamlining procurement procedures	
Providing adequate training	
Encouraging competitive bidding	
Regular performance evaluations	
Adopting technological advancements	

Thank you for your feedback and participation

## Appendix B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

### SECTION A

- How old are you?
- What is your highest level of education?
- How long have you been working in a local authority?
- What department are you in?

### SECTION B

1. How does the public procurement process currently operate at Mazowe RDC?

2. Can you describe the key steps involved in the procurement cycle?
3. What is the impact of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities?
4. What are the limitations of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities?
5. Which measures can be applied for the success of public procurement on service delivery by local authorities?