

**DEVOLUTION AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL AUTHOURITIES: A CASE  
STUDY OF HOPLEY DISTRICT OFFICE IN HARARE.**

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**



**DEVOLUTION AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL  
AUTHOURITIES: A CASE STUDY OF HOPLEY DISTRICT OFFICE IN  
HARARE.**

By

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Peace and Governance in partial fulfillment for  
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# **DEVOLUTION AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL AUTHOURITIES: A CASE STUDY OF HOPLEY DISTRICT OFFICE IN HARARE.**

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## **Abstract**

This research focused on devolution and service delivery in local authorities, with the center being on Hopley City Council in Harare. The study employs a case study research designs as it is widely utilized method in social science research that entails conducting a comprehensive examination of a single case or a group of cases. This approach was used because it is commonly employed in various fields such as social sciences research. Findings suggest that devolution has both negative and positive and negative implications for service delivery in local authorities. On the positive side, devolution has empowered local authorities to tailor services according to local needs, resulting in increased responsiveness and efficiency. The study also discover strategies that being used by local authorities in the implementation of the devolution agenda in Zimbabwe, such as the local government strategy and planning district wide development strategy. The study also highlights how politics has affected devolution on issues of service delivery in Zimbabwe, and how partisan politics negatively inflicting harm in the local authorities. The study argues that, there is need for adequate financial resources, capacity building initiatives, and robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure equitable and effective service delivery across local authorities.

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**Declaration**

I, (B202346), declare that this dissertation is the outcome of my personal study and research, excluding those specified in the acknowledgements and references included in the body of the paper, that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

.....

Student's Signature

.....

Date

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Edward Kambarami and my mother, Fiona Joana Bwanya, for believing so much in my dreams and their financial support during the academic journey. I love you so much. Lastly, to my future husband, and children.

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## **Acknowledgement**

Firstly, I would like to thank the Almighty God for giving me the strength to conquer and sail through the research period. The second hand of applause goes to my Parents and my sister, Tafadzwa Kambarami, for their love, and support who has always encouraged me to keep on pressing through hard times.

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## **List of abbreviation and acronyms**

CCC-Citizens Coalition for Change

D.O- District Officer

HCC- Harare City Council

HDO- Hopley District Office

LA- Local Authorities

MLGPW- Ministry of Local Government, Public Works

NGOs- Non-Governmental Organizations

RDA- Rural District Act

UCA- Urban Councils Act

ZANU-PF- Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background of the study**

Devolution is the transfer of powers and duties from central government to lower levels of government like regional, local and municipal authorities. Its aim is to avoid abuse of power and it promotes quick decision-making. According to Lord Acton (2013), he alludes that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely meaning that if power is being centered on one person it is bound to be abused hence the reason why there was decentralization of power as a way to promote decision-making. Devolution can be traced back to the concept of federalism where power was divided into two, the central government and subnational entities. Devolution became more important in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as an answer to various issues such as the desire for greater regional independence, the need for effective governance in different communities and the acknowledgment of ethnic or cultural diversity within the country.

Devolution was applied in different ways around the global world and countries have adopted the federal system where power is being decentralized. Federal system is a system in which public sector decisions can be taken at various levels of government for example the United States, the District of Columbia offers an illustration of devolved government. The District is separated from any state, and has its own elected government. In England, there were echoes of devolution as a project of democratic participation. These echoes were however not uniformly resonant across England (Sandford, 2020). In the United States, the federal government manages most of its domestic programmes through partnerships. In Africa, Kenya,

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South Africa and Uganda are some of the countries that have introduced devolution as a governance tool and it has not been divisive (Kettl, 2000). It is important though to note that the Kenyan and Zimbabwean experiences are quite similar. In Kenya just like in Zimbabwe, the new Constitution which embraced devolution of power was written under a power-sharing government. Both countries transited into independence with constitutions adopted after Lancaster House talks. Kenya's first attempt on devolution in 1963 was short-lived due to lack of support (Nyanjom, 2012). In 2010 there was another heated debate before Australia, Nigeria and Germany have adopted the federal system of government. Other countries have presented the delegated institutions or arrangements within a unitary state for example the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Devolution objectives differ depending on the particular environment, but its aims are the same such as promoting local democracy, increasing efficiency and effectiveness in making decisions, addressing regional inequalities, accommodating different identities and aspiration and foster good governance.

Devolution promotes innovation through the harnessing of local knowledge systems; hence, it facilitates the implementation of community development policies that are specific in context. It promotes effectiveness and efficiency of local authorities on issues of service delivery. For instance, residents in Harare south will have to face their District officer when they have challenges rather than to address all issues to the town clerk. Devolution in Zimbabwe begun as far back as 1984 as a result of the Prime Minister's Directive (Chigwata, 2016). It was introduced to address issues of centralization of responsibilities, such as the provision of social services, decision-making powers to increase efficiency in service delivery at every tier of the government.

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Devolution was established with notable disadvantages such as the unequal distribution of resources and power to other tiers of the government. Lack of effective devolution process in Zimbabwe has seen essential services still concentrated in the capital city and thus creating a huge load on the central government. This has also lead to the dilapidation of local authorities as they struggle to effectively deliver services like health water and sanitation as well as housing. Political interference in the devolution process has also affected the progress as administrative reforms are done to suit the status quo. This has also promoted the sprouting of illegal settlements as the relevant authorities struggle to demarcate areas of services. For example, politically there are five constituencies in Harare south that fall under one District office when it comes to service delivery.

## **1.2. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to understand devolution and service delivery in local authorities.

## **1.3. Statement of the Problem**

In a fully devolved country, local authorities will enjoy independence of fiscal planning and resource allocation which improves their efficiency in service delivery. Devolution increases citizen participation in development issues and in decision-making. Local authorities system in Zimbabwe is seen as being unable to perform their duties effectively and efficiently by the local government. They are failing to promote efficient and effective service delivery and the proper maintenance of infrastructure within their institutions. Evidence from the Ministry of Local Government (Urban and Rural Development Strategic plan of 2011-2015) shows the disturbing statistics of dilapidating public service and infrastructure development in both urban and rural local authorities and this has caused underdevelopment of councils from all provinces. Hopley District in Harare South is of no exception as there is poor service

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delivery in terms of housing and social services. Therefore this study was able to investigate more on the strategies used by local authorities in the implementation of devolution agenda in Zimbabwe, how capacitated are local governments in the effective decentralization of local development, and lastly, how politics has affected devolution on issues of service delivery in Hopley District office area of jurisdiction.

## **1.4. Research Objectives**

The study will be guided by the following objectives;

- I. To examine the strategies that are being used by local authorities in the implementation of the devolution agenda in Zimbabwe.
- II. To analyze institutional capacities of local governments for effective decentralized local development.
- III. To assess the effects of politics in devolution process on issues of service delivery in Zimbabwe.

## **1.5. Research Questions**

The study will be guided by the following research questions;

- I. What strategies are being used by local authorities in the implementation of the devolution agenda in Zimbabwe?
- II. How capacitated are local governments in the effective decentralization of local development in Zimbabwe?
- III. How politics has affected devolution on issues of service delivery in Zimbabwe?

### **1.6. Assumptions of the Study**

The study assumes that;

- I. Political interference is slowing the devolution process on issues of service delivery.
- II. Devolution has managed to speed up the development of the Zimbabwean local authorities in its socio-political and economic spheres.
- III. Devolution has increased citizen participation on service delivery initiatives.

### **1.7. Significance of the Study**

#### **I. Academics**

The study was very important to academics because they will utilize it as a source for their research. Furthermore, the study will benefit students by providing information that will be useful for researching topics of center-local government relations.

#### **I. Harare residents**

The research is going to be posted on the internet. This shall be main tool to the Harare residents that can be used to facilitate the change with regards to the services that are being offered by Harare city council

#### **II. The Ministry of Local Government, Public Works, and National Housing**

The study was important to the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works Administrators because it will reveal factors that are slowing down the process of devolution on issues of service delivery in local authorities.



The study is very important to the municipality because it aids in the discovery of new strategies of devolution on service delivery in local authorities.

### **1.8. Delimitation of the study**

The study was conducted in Harare, under the jurisdiction of Hopley City Council. The study included the Ministry of Local Government Public works, health service, water, human capital, finance the town clerk department and the Harare city council elected councilors. The municipality was chosen as an ideal study because of the challenges they are facing as a result of the implementation of devolution in Zimbabwe on issues of service delivery in local authorities.

### **1.9. Limitations of the study**

Limitations of the study are those characteristic of design that set parameters on application or interpretation of the results of the study, that is the constraints on generalization and utility of findings that are the result of the devices of designs or method that establish internal and external validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research faced limitations such as lack of key informants as well as the lack of access to key source that was needed in the research. The researcher was able to refer to other relevant sources like newspapers and journals. A number of respondents were unwilling to respond to the research questions due to the nature of their job and political affiliation. Nevertheless the stated constraints, the standard and the reliability of this study was not degraded.

### **1.10 Definition of key terms**

**Devolution:** Devolution is a political variant concerned with the legal transfer of decision-making and implementing powers as well as resource to legally constituted and popularly elected local governments. Devolution refers to the transfer of responsibilities for local services

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provision to the local communities and to enhance citizen participation in development planning and management in Zimbabwe (Chigwata, 2013). Devolution “helps to create conditions for a more accountable and effective system of governance (Morgan, 2000).

**Decentralization:** refer to a strategy used by ruling powers to maintain and retain socio-economic and political legitimacy and further partisan expediency (Goldman, 2012).

**Local Government:** refers to the delegation of socio-economic and political powers to communities and lower tiers of the central government by incorporating the local citizens in the development of their communities (Kyenge, 2013). (Appadorai, 2012), define local government as a citizen-elected government which is in charge of administering and executing function in a defined geographical area.

**Local Authority:** are institutions managed by a council composed of councillors elected by registered voters in urban areas concerned and presided over by the elected mayors or chairpersons, by what name called (Mapuva & Takabika, 2020).

**Service delivery:** Dassah (2020), postulate that service delivery is the distribution of basic resources citizens depends on like water, electricity, sanitation, infrastructure, land, and housing.

**Central government:** refers to the government of the nation (Hague & Harrop, 2019)

## **1.11. Dissertation Outline**

This dissertation consist of five chapters as specified below:

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

This chapter concentrations was on the introduction and the background of the research. It was mainly looking at the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions, and the limitations and delimitations of the study.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

This chapter was looking at the theoretical framework and the literature review that was guiding the study. It contains the literature and text that connected to devolution and service delivery in local authorities with a case study of Hopley District Office. On this chapter, the researcher was giving perception into what has been said and considered by other researchers concerning to issues of devolution and service delivery in local authorities.

## **Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology**

This chapter focused on the research philosophy, research designs, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and other data presentation methods that was used to conduct the study. It then, also explained and describe how data and research information were collected in efforts to know devolution and service delivery in local authorities.

## **Chapter Four: Data presentation, analysis, and discussion of findings**

This chapter centers mainly on data analysis and data presentation of the findings throughout the research period.

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## **Chapter Five: Summary, conclusions and Recommendations, and Areas for further research**

The final chapter consist of the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the whole study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter analysed the literature on devolution and service delivery. It gives detailed understanding on devolution and service delivery in local authorities. In this chapter the, researcher was discussing on what other researchers have said and find out about devolution and service delivery in local authorities.

#### **2.2. Theoretical framework**

The study was based on Actor-Network Theory (ANT). Which is a theoretical framework that examines the complex relationships and interactions between human and non-human actors within a network. It emphasize on providing insights into the various actors involved, their interactions and how they influence the outcomes of service delivery. Actor network theory can provide valuable insights into how various actors including government officials, service providers and citizens interact with each other and influence the outcomes of service delivery in local authorities (Latour, 2005).By looking at the network of relationships between actors, the power and authority are distributed, and how different interest and agendas may conflict or align. The actor network theory can help to understand how the lack of coordination between central government and local government can lead to inefficiency and corruption in service delivery (Mutandwa, 2021). The theory shows how actions of citizens, such as protest or social media campaigns can influence the way service are provided in local authorities (Nkomo, 2020). The actor network theory emphasize on power dynamics that power is not solely held by human actors but distributed across the network. Power can be exercised through various means, including control over resources, knowledge or decision-making

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processes. Powerful actors such as the government officials or influential community leaders may have a greater say in resource allocation or policy decisions, potentially affecting the equitable distribution of services. The actor network theory analyse how different actors such as local government officials, citizens and service providers interact with each other and how their interaction shape service delivery outcome (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). These interactions are shaped by a variety of factors, such as the distribution of power and resources, the interests and goals of different actors and the political context within which service delivery takes place. ANT provides a framework for analysing these interactions and their impact on service delivery outcomes. Therefore by looking at how different actors interact with each other, there will be an insight into how to improve service delivery and address challenges such as poor coordination, corruption and lack of accountability (Wihlborg, 2019). In the context of devolution the actor network theory looks at how different actors, such as politicians, civil servants, local communities and external organization come together and form networks to govern and deliver services at the local level. In the context of devolution the actor network theory looks at how different actors, such as politicians, civil servants, local communities and external organization come together and form networks to govern and deliver services at the local level (Goldsmith, McNeill, & Tate, 2017). It recognize these actors are not just humans but also includes non-human entities like policies, technologies and infrastructure (Skelcher, Claessen, & Wallace, 2018). The actor network theory analyse how diverse actors interact, negotiate and exert influence on decision making processes and delivery outcomes. It emphasizes the agency on non-human elements in shaping governance structures and practices, challenging traditional views that focus solely on human actors. For example the local authorities service delivery. Actor network theory explore how different actors such as politicians, local residents, service providers and information systems (non-human actor) play

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a role in shaping service provision. It considers how these actors interact, influence each other's actions and align their interests to create a networked system of service delivery.

The study is also guided by (Osborne, 2014) New Public Management Theory, which is important in highlighting the relationship between the central government and local authorities. The new public management focuses on good governance how it brought tools for ensuring good governance and smooth operations of local authorities through transparency, accountability, and fairness. The theory emphasizes the efficiency of public service and also emphasizes result-based management (Coleta, 2013). The adoption of the New Public Management Theory in the African context, particularly Tanzania, resulted in the consideration of decentralisation aspects in all public institutions as a way to combat corruption and lack of accountability (Mgonja, 2012). According to Chirisa, et al, (2015), in the Zimbabwean context the theory is applicable, it emphasizes that efficiency and result-based management can only be seen if the central government allow local municipalities to perform their duties without too much interference in their affairs, thus improving effectiveness, accountability and public's attention on service delivery. Public management theory emphasizes the importance of organizational design and capacity building in public organizations. In the case of devolution, it is crucial to assess the capacity of subnational governments to effectively manage and deliver public services. This includes examining issues such as resource allocation, human resource management, financial management, and performance measurement. Public management theory can provide insights into strategies for building the capacity of subnational governments and enhancing their ability to meet the needs of local communities.

### **2.3. Concept of Decentralisation**

Decentralization is a concept that refers to the distribution of power, authority, and decision-making across multiple individuals, organizations, or systems, rather than being concentrated in a central authority (Vibert, 2019). It is commonly associated with various domains such as governance, finance, technology, and information systems. The idea behind decentralization is to empower individuals and promote a more inclusive and transparent system. In governance, decentralization is often seen as a way to distribute political power, enhance local autonomy, and facilitate participation in decision-making processes (Michael, 2019). It can involve devolving certain powers and responsibilities from a central government to regional or local authorities, allowing them to make decisions that are more responsive to local needs and preferences (Anwar, 2018). In finance, decentralization is exemplified by the concept of decentralized finance, which utilizes block-chain technology to provide financial services without the need for intermediaries such as banks (Jaffar, 2021). (Catalini & Gans, 2021) postulate that, by eliminating intermediaries, (DeFi) aims to reduce transaction costs, increase financial inclusion, and promote financial sovereignty. Decentralisation in technology refers to the distribution of control over digital infrastructure, platforms, and data. For example, block-chain technology enables decentralization by creating a transparent and immutable ledger that is controlled by a network of participants rather than a central authority (Sirer, 2019). This decentralization aspect enhances security, trust, and resilience in various applications such as crypto-currencies (Panagiotakos, & Kate, 2021).

The concept of decentralisation face criticism such as lack of accountability and coordination that can arise due to the absence of a central authority. Decentralised systems rely on consensus mechanisms and peer-to-peer interactions, which can be slower and more complex compared to centralized decision-making processes (Mawere, 2021). Gogwana,



(2021) argues that, decentralization can lead to fragmentation and inconsistency in decision-making. In governance, conflicting policies and regulations may arise across different regions or localities, making it challenging to achieve uniformity and coherence in public policy. In technology, the proliferation of decentralized platforms and protocols may result in fragmentation, making it harder for users to navigate and access services (Chisango, 2022). The concept of decentralization is not necessarily a panacea for all problems. In some cases, centralized systems may be more efficient and effective, especially for tasks requiring coordination, standardization, and economies of scale. Decentralized systems also face scalability challenges, as they may struggle to handle large-scale operations or accommodate growing user bases (Vingirai & Shava, 2017).

## **2.4. Devolution As Enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe**

Devolution is a concept enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, specifically in Chapter 14 of the constitution, which outlines the principles of devolution and spells out the framework for its implementation. Chamboko, (2022) postulates that, the main aim of devolution in Zimbabwe is to ensure the equitable sharing of power and resources between the central government and local communities, thereby promoting local development and governance. One of the key provisions related to devolution in Zimbabwe's constitution is section 264, which establishes the principles of devolution. It states that devolution is a system of government where power, authority, and responsibility are shared between the national government and provincial and metropolitan councils (Magaisa, 2015). Section 265 further elaborates on the objectives of devolution, which include promoting democratic governance, enhancing participation of local communities in decision-making processes, fostering socio-economic development, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources (Mubako, 2014).

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Devolution as enshrined in the constitution section 267 of Zimbabwe face critiques due the slow and inadequate implementation of the constitutional provisions. Some argue that the central government has not fully devolved power and resources to the local level, leading to limited autonomy and insufficient capacity for local authorities to effectively govern and deliver services (Zvenyika & Mhlanga, 2021). Section 290 of the constitution states that the government must provide adequate financial resources to provincial and metropolitan council to enable them to perform their functions. However the government has not lived up to this obligation, as evidenced by low levels of funding allocated to devolved institutions (Kunaka & Mukwiza, 2022).

Devolution as enshrined in the constitution section 263 states that, there are concerns about political interference in the devolution process, where the central government still maintains significant control over key decision-making processes. It argue that, the local authority must act in a manner that is consistence with the principles of a democratic system of government. It also states that a local authority must not act under the direction or interference of any person or authority. However, in practice local authorities have faced interference from the central government, which has limited their ability to act independently (Madhuku & Dzinotiwei, 2022).

Section 267 as stated in the 2013 constitution argues that lack of clarity and coordination is addressed. It states that, the powers and functions of local authorities shall be clearly defined in law. Chatiza (2019), postulate that, the failure to clearly define the powers and functions of local authorities has caused problems in the implementation of devolution and hindering the objectives of local development and democratic governance. According to section 298 of the constitution in Zimbabwe states, the issues of unequal distribution of resources. It states that, the states must take practical measures to ensure that all parts of

Zimbabwe and all communities have reasonable access to resources, service and facilities. Musekiwa (2021), highlighted that, there is still a wide gap in resource allocation between urban and rural areas, as well as between different regions.

## **2.5. Strategies used by the Local authorities in the implementation of the Devolution agenda in Zimbabwe.**

Local authorities in Zimbabwe have been implementing the devolution agenda through several strategies. The government has established a legal framework through the enactment of the provincial and Metropolitan Councils Act, as well as amendments to the constitution, to provide a legal basis for the devolution of power and resources to local authorities (Madzingira, 2023). The new constitution provides a new devolved governance system and outlines strategies for successful implementation across the country's 10 provinces (Chirisa, 2022).

Local authorities are being supported in capacity building initiatives to enhance their ability to effectively govern and manage local resources. Capacity building which are efforts aimed at enhancing the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of local authorities such as government officials and councillors to effectively govern and manage local resources (Mapuva, 2022). This includes training programs for local government officials and councillors on the principles and practices of devolution. Capacity building programs focus more on improving the capacity of local government bodies to carry out their functions efficiently and also these initiatives equip officials and councillors with the necessary tools to understand and apply the principles and practices of devolution. Capacity building enhances local authority ability to make informed decisions, allocate resources, and address community needs.

The Zimbabwe devolution and decentralisation policy serves as a guide for implementing provisions related to devolution in the constitution. It outlines actions and interventions by the state to realize a devolved political system. This policy was approved by

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Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 focuses on promoting inclusive socio-economic development and national unity. It also states that the objectives as one of promoting sustainable, representative, accountable, participatory, inclusive governance, and socio-economic development. The citing of the constitutional objectives of giving political and fiscal powers of local government to the people is important for purposes of focusing implementation on this principal reason for devolution. Which states that, “launch of the devolution and decentralisation policy is a sign of a deep commitment by my government to implement devolution. the objective for devolving power to subnational structures of a reconfigured Zimbabwe states is to enable a faster, efficient and effective response to challenges of the delivery of public services, development, democracy” (Chatiza & Zivhave, 2020). Despite these efforts, progress has been slow, and challenges persist. President Emmerson Mnangagwa promise of a ‘Second Republic’ aimed at a more open, accountable, and devolved system, but meaningful progress remains elusive.

### **2.6. The capacity of Local Governments in the effective decentralization of local Development in Zimbabwe**

There have been efforts to strengthen the capacities of local governments in Zimbabwe to effectively decentralise local development. Zimbabwe has made efforts to decentralise governance and empower local authorities since the late 1990s. The main policy driving this include the rural District councils Act (1988) and the Urban Councils Act (1995), which aimed to devolve more powers and responsibilities to local governments. Therefore the decentralization of local development in Zimbabwe has been an ongoing process with varying degrees of success. Local governments have also faced several challenges in effectively decentralizing development at the local level.

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Limited financial and administrative capacity is one of the key challenge, local authorities are facing. Many local councils lack the resources, expertise, and autonomy to properly plan, implement, and manage development projects in their jurisdiction. This is exacerbated by issues like limited revenue collection, heavy dependence on central government transfers, and political interference in local decision-making (Mafirakureva, 2018). The legal and policy framework for decentralization in Zimbabwe has been somewhat fragmented and inconsistent over time. The distribution of roles and responsibilities between national, provincial, and local governments has not always been clear, leading to coordination challenges and overlap.

The have been efforts to strengthen local government capacity in recent years. Reforms like the Urban Councils Act (1995) and Rural District Councils Act (1988) have aim to devolve more powers and resources to local authorities, including in areas like development planning, service delivery, and revenue collection. Training programs and technical support from central government and development partners have also sought to build the skills of local officials (Chatiza, 2019). The capacity of local governments in Zimbabwe to drive effective decentralisation of development remains uneven. While progress has been made, significant challenges around funding, administrative capacity, and clear policy frameworks continue to hamper the ability of many local authorities to fully realize the potential of decentralised development planning and implementation (Musekiwa, 2013). More efforts are needed to address these challenges and to empower local governments to effectively implement the decentralization agenda for local development.

## **2.7. How politics has affected devolution on service delivery in local authorities in Zimbabwe**

Politics can have significant impact on the implementation of devolution in Zimbabwe, particularly in relation to service delivery. In 2013, Zimbabwe adopted a new constitution that established a system of devolved governance, dividing power between the national government and provincial/local authorities. The goal was to improve public service delivery by bringing decision-making and resources closer to citizens. Political interference, partisan interests, and power struggles among different political actors can sometimes hinder the effective functioning of devolved systems. This can lead to challenges in ensuring equitable service delivery, transparency, and accountability at the local level.

The implementation of devolution has been hampered by ongoing political tensions and power struggles between the ruling party ZANU-PF and opposition parties that control some local councils. ZANU-PF has been reluctant to fully devolve authority and resources, fearing a loss of its national dominance. Mutandwa et al (2019), notes that, funding for provincial and local governments has often been inadequate or delayed, limiting their ability to provide basic services like water, sanitation, healthcare, and education. There have been allegations of politically-motivated resources allocation, with ZANU-PF controlled areas receiving priority. Local elections have also been marred by violence, intimidation, and allegations of manipulation, reducing the ability of opposition-led councils to function effectively (Moyo, 2022). The central government has at times interfered in the affairs of opposition-led councils, hampering their autonomy.

The politicization of devolution has undermined its potential to improve service delivery in Zimbabwe. Lack of political will, uneven resource distribution, and conflicts between national and subnational authorities have constrained the impact of the constitutional

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reforms. Addressing these challenges will require a greater commitment to truly devolving power and resources in a nonpartisan manner.

### **2.8. Summary**

This chapter focused on several issues to explain devolution and service delivery in local authorities. The chapter started by explaining the theories that support the study. The chapter explained the concept of decentralisation and its critiques. It also revealed devolution as enshrined in the constitution of Zimbabwe and all three objectives as mentioned in chapter one using the case study Hopley City Council in Harare.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This section concentrated on research designs, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and other data presentation methods that is going to be used in the study. It also clarified how data and research information will be collected in effort to know devolution and service delivery in local authorities. Research design, research methodology, research philosophy, research instrument, target population, data collection techniques, sample and data analysis and presentation, and ethical issues were defined on this chapter.

#### **3.2. Research philosophy**

According to Mauthner, (2020) he define research philosophy as the foundation of the research process, which helps researchers in gathering and analysing data to arrive at conclusions. It mainly centred with the epistemological, ontological and methodological assumptions that are essential for the research procedure. Interpretivism is one of the research philosophy that was used by the researcher, which comprise of considering and understanding social reality through subjective accepting of individuals. Interpretivism depend on qualitative research methods to describe attitude, behaviour and experience in the social and cultural realm. These methods are better suited to capture experience and meaning because of their sensitivity to the social and cultural context (Pham, 2018).

The researcher used interpretivism as a research philosophy because there are several benefits of qualitative research methods as it presentation to interpretivism. Firstly qualitative research methods deliver reliable and valid data as they have flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances and situations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Secondly, qualitative research



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methods enables researchers to generate hypotheses and test them in an exploratory manner (Creswell, 2014). Thirdly, qualitative research methods allows researchers to collect rich and detailed data that can capture the richness of social life and culture (Maxwell, 2013). Qualitative research methods have disadvantages, therefore it has been suggested it have the potential for researcher bias and the generalizability of its finding is questionable. The validity and reliability of the findings may be in question, and hence, the researcher needs to take care to reduce researcher bias by using objective data collection measures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

## **3.3. Research methodology**

Research methodology is the overall process or strategy that researchers use to conduct their research. It includes the decisions they make about what kind of research design to use, what data to collect, and how to analyse that data. Creswell & Poth (2018), cited that, it is typically concerned with the principles, methods and approaches employed in scientific investigation, particularly in social and behavioural sciences, aiming at creating evidence that informs the development of theories, policies, and interventions. The research focused on qualitative research as a methodology that was used to know human behaviour through the observation of natural settings, experiences, and interactions. Qualitative research is subjective and often more flexible than quantitative research, it enables researchers to collect richer, deeper data on the experiences of individuals, groups and cultures (Leedy, 2019). In disparity to quantitative research, which use numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative research depend on the collection of verbal, visual or written data that can be analysed through a more subjective or interpretive lens.

### **3.4. Research design**

A case study research design is a qualitative approach used in social sciences to conduct a detailed and in-depth investigation on a specific phenomenon, individual, or group of people Bordens & Abbott, (2014). The researcher is going to use qualitative research design. The qualitative research was used because it is often fast, focused, scientific and reliable and the speed and efficiency of the qualitative method are attractive to the researcher and the data equipment also makes it possible to process and analyse data quickly even with the large sample size. Denzin & Lincoln (2017), argues that, the use of qualitative research methods can open a window into audience by highlighting overall trends in attitudes towards a research and the research shall be able to ask the reasons behind devolution and service delivery in local authorities. Qualitative research methodology enables the research to get deeper understanding of the underlying phenomena behind devolution and service delivery in local authorities. The inquiry involves entering into the real world (local authorities such as city council) to observe, interact and understand in depth information of question under study.

Case study can be used to test a hypothesis, generate new hypotheses, describe a phenomenon, or examine a particular issue in detail (Creswell, 2014). The researcher collected data using various sources like, questionnaires, and interviews to recreate the case and give the insights into behaviour and experience of the topic. Yin, (2012) argues, that case studies are particularly useful when addressing questions such as ‘how’ and ‘why’, where the aim is to understand the process and mechanisms that underlie the phenomenon of interest.

### **3.5. Population & sampling**

Population in research refers to the entire group of individuals or instances that share a common set of characteristics and are the focus of a study (Creswell, & Guetterman, 2019).

Understanding the population is fundamental as it defines the scope and generalizability of research findings. The population is not always synonymous with a vast number of people; it can also refer to a specific group, such as employees of a particular company, students in a specific school, or patients with a specific medical condition. The selection of an appropriate and well-defined population is crucial for the validity and reliability of research outcomes. Researchers must clearly delineate the characteristics that define the population under investigation to ensure precision and relevance in their study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The study gathered information from the district officer, administrative staffs, and councillors of Hopley District Office, who are in charge of the District. The researcher also included, some district staff, and residents who were considered as key informants on issues devolution service delivery in local authorities.

### **3.6. Sampling**

Etikan et al (2016), define sampling as the act of selecting certain data sources from which to gather data in order to progress the study's aims. Purposive sampling will be employed to select participants for qualitative interviews. David, (2013) cited that, in social sciences, it is possible to obtain data from every respondent relevant to our study but only from a subset of the respondents; this process is known as sampling.

### **3.7. Simple random sampling**

Simple random sampling refers to a statistical technique used in research to select participants for a study. It involves selecting a sample of individuals from a population in a way that each member has an equal chance of being selected (David and Sutton, 2012). In the research of devolution and service delivery in local authorities, simple random sampling is going to be used to select those who are participating on my research. The participants will be

interviewed through using simple random sampling which include, councillors, residents and officials from the Municipality. The information that was needed from the participants revolved around how devolution has affected provision of service delivery in local authorities.

### **3.8. Purposive sampling**

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants for qualitative interviews, ensuring representation. Purposive sampling is known as selective, subjective, or judgemental sampling. It involved selecting participants based on specific criteria that are relevant to the research question (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

### **3.9. Data collection methods**

Data collection is defined as, the systematic gathering of observation or measurements (Creswell, & Creswell, 2018). The phases in the data collection procedure, according to Kahn, (2014), involve scheduling phone, fax, or letter appointments with study participants; delivering and administering instruments to the sample through hand mail, or research assistance; and finally retrieving the equipment. The researcher collected data using qualitative research methods such as face to face interviews with key informants and the questionnaire. Brinkmann (2018), defined face to face interview as structured interviews conducted by trained interviewers who use a standardized interview protocol and a standardized set of responses for recording participant's response. The researcher will use face to face interview as a way to capture additional, emotional and behavioural clues such as discomfort or enthusiasm with his questions that he would not be able to pick with any other interview methods. Deakin & Wakefield (2014), cited that, face to face interviews are important because they are in depth than telephone interview. The researcher used interviews, which were conducted at Hopley District Office regarding to devolution and service delivery.

### **3.10. Survey**

Surveys are structured research methodologies used to collect data and information from a specific sample of a population through the use of questionnaires or interviews. Surveys were important in the research, to gather information and data as to examine opinions, behaviour, trends, and other applicable variables that helped to answer research questions and objectives. Surveys were conducted in-person to remotely, depending on the preferences of the available resources.

### **3.11. Key informants interviews**

Key informant interviews is a type of qualitative research methodology used to gather information from people who have first-hand knowledge or experience regarding a particular subject (Palinkas, 2015). Key informant interviews were used to guide questionnaires for survey respondents. The questionnaires were designed with yes or no answers, multiple choice select answers, and open ended questions that respondents answers using their own wording.

### **3.12. Documentary Search**

Document search is a research techniques that involves searching for and reviewing relevant documents to gather information on a particular topic (Brown, 2018). The aim of documentary search is to find and identify primary and secondary sources of information, comprising of academic journals, books, newspapers articles and other written materials.

Secondary data was collected through academic articles and books on local authorities and devolution in Zimbabwe. Governments reports on the performance of local authorities in Zimbabwe and on issues devolution and service delivery in local authorities. Newspaper article and other media coverage of local authorities' performance and government, legal documents,

such as the Zimbabwean Constitution and other relevant legislation, that outline devolution and service delivery in local authorities.

### **3.13. Validity & reliability**

Validity and reliability are concepts in research that simply means quality and accuracy of the data that will be collected. Creswell, (2014), define validity as the “degree to which a research study accurately measures the concept it is supposed to measure”. Reliability on the other hand refers to “degree to which the results of a research study can be replicated or repeated”. To ensure the validity, the researcher was able to compare the response from the key informant and participants if they match represents the bigger population. On the other hand to ensure reliability, the researcher avoided leading problems and questions so that participants may bring out good details expected.

### **3.14. Data presentation & analysis**

Data presentation refers to the process of organizing and displaying data in a meaningful and understandable way (Mackiewicz & Thompson, 2018). Data presentation will commence with the administration of the pre-test, followed by qualitative interviews. The intervention will then be implemented, and the post-test was conducted. Interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent.

Data analysis, on the other hand refers to the process of examining and interpreting data using statistical and analytical methods (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative data was thematically analysed.

### **3.15. Pilot testing**

Pilot studies are techniques used to evaluate the feasibility, applicability, issues, and barriers of research instruments (Dikko, 2016). The research carried out pre-testing to

prediction of future results. The researcher was able carry out a pilot survey in Hopley District Office. Rodzi, (2012), cited that, pilot test are used to evaluate the relevance, applicability, precision of the questionnaires and interviews. The Pilot study assist in improving the efficacy and quality of the primary study (Roland, 2014). The researcher conducted pilot testing to duplicate the process of original study and its feasibility by analysing the participants' inclusion and exclusion criteria.

### **3.16. Ethical considerations**

Ethical consideration include obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality, and guaranteeing the voluntary nature of participation. Research conduct guidelines are governed by ethics (Yun, 2019). Berger (2015), cited that, it is important to review ethical considerations since they promote the aims of research, such as expanding knowledge, they support that values required for collaborative work, such as mutual respect and fairness. Ethics help researchers resolve moral conundrums that develop during the study. Informed consent is one the research ethics which was used in the research. It means that, the employees of Harare City Council, who participated in this research freely enter the research voluntarily with full information about what will be meant for them to take part in the research. The research was guided by the principles of informed consent including decision capacity, documentation of a consent, disclosure and competences. This was necessary in this research since the research was determined by collaboration of researcher and participants.

### **3.17. Chapter Summary**

The research managed to discuss about various methodologies that, the researcher used in the research. The study's research design was a case study based on a qualitative paradigm. Selective sampling and simple random processes was used to produce a sample from Hopley

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District Office population. Textbooks, journals and the Urban Council Act served as a secondary data sources. Data collecting method was also used and all other procedures were engaged to guarantee that the information will be consistent.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

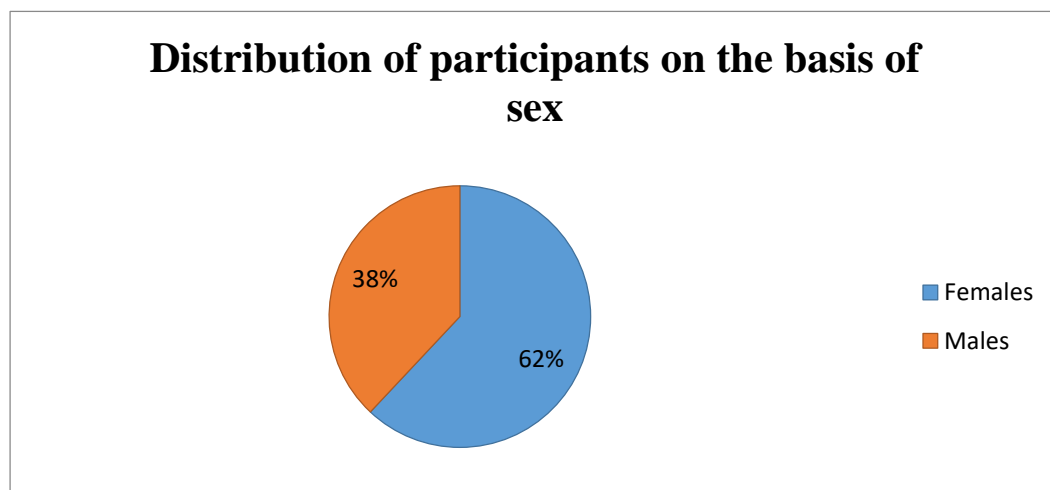
### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the key findings of the research conducted in relation to the research goals and the primary data obtained. It draws implications from the data collected and also relates these results to wider community development concerns highlighted in chapters two and three. In relation to the objectives, the chapter seeks to provide the answers pertaining to the research questions outlined in the first chapter.

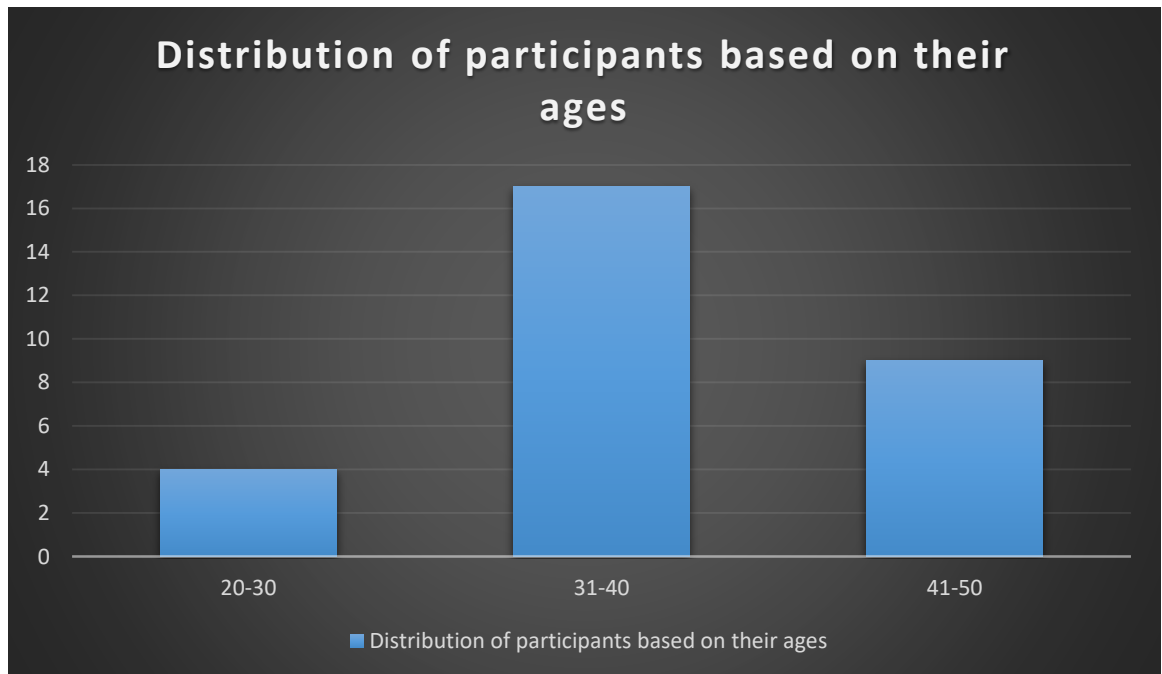
#### **4.2. Section A: Biographical data of participants**

**Figure.4.1 Sex**



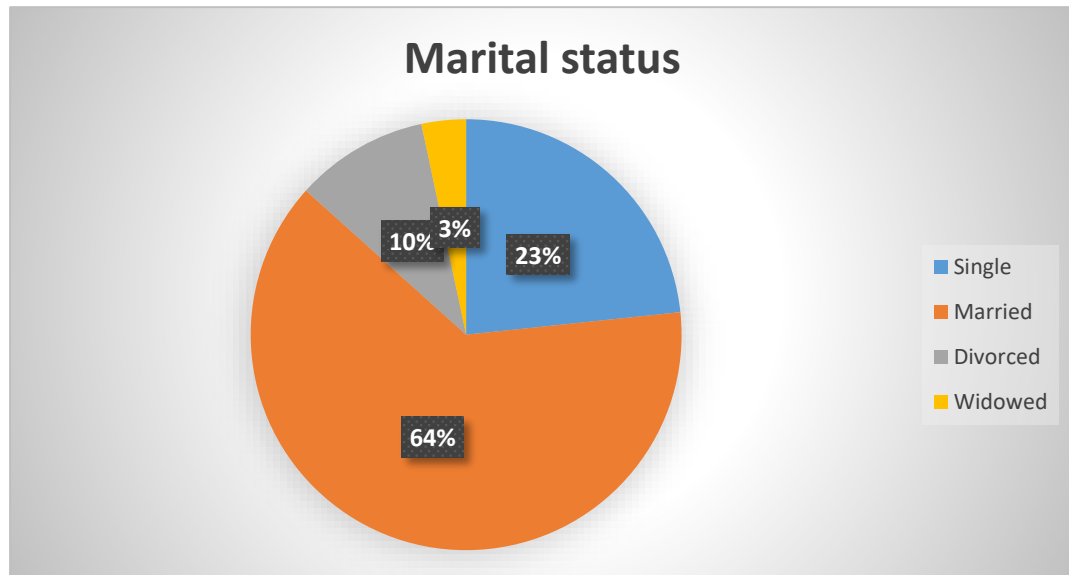
A total of thirty study participants were interviewed for this study. As can be noted from the above, the majority of the participants were females who constituted 62% and the males constituted 38%.

**Figure.4.2 Age**



As can be noted from the above, the age range 31-40 has the highest number of participants with 17 participants falling under this category, this was followed by the 41-50 age range with 9 participants and the 20-30 age range being the lowest had only 4 participants.

**Figure.4.3. Marital Status**



The majority (64%) of the participants indicated that they were married, whilst 23% were still single, 10% were divorced and lastly the category of the widowed constituted 3% of the total number of participants.

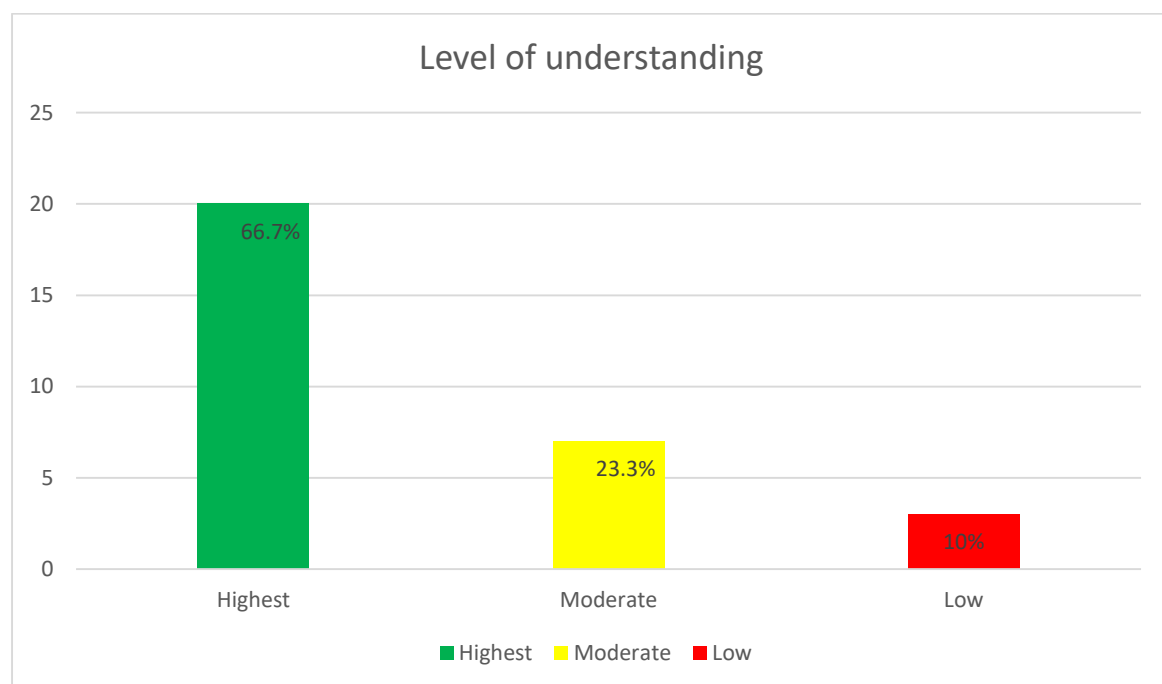
**Table 4.1 Level of Education**

Level of Education	No of Participants	Percentage
Primary	3	10%
Secondary	12	40%
Tertiary	15	50%
Non-schooling	0	0%
Total	30	100%

The majority of participants have completed tertiary education. 50% went to tertiary school, whereas 40% went to secondary school. Only 10% of those polled had less than secondary education, and none did not attend school at all.

#### **4.2. Section B: Understanding community development strategies implemented by local governments in Zimbabwe**

**Figure 4.4. Level of understanding community development**



66.7% of participants showed an understanding of the strategies implemented by the local government. 23.3% of the participants showed a moderate understanding of efforts of the local government for community development, and 10% of the participants showed a low understanding of community developments that are implemented by the government.

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One of the Zimbabwe health service representative interviewed in this study aptly noted that:

*First because of decentralization we have departmental heads here who carry out their functions in the district, however, it is important to know that there are the policy of the Ministry of Health in Zimbabwe and there are the local government policies as well.*

Although these projects may eventually be captured in the annual reports of the local government concerned, it was originally evolved directly from the ministry of health and implemented by the district health administration within the district. Ahwoi (2010), explains that this attitude clearly indicates that departments are actually de-concentrated and not devolved departments. This compares to other perspectives which suppose that in theory the arrangement which built into the decentralized development planning system would involve a devolution of administrative, planning and political authority to local government and by default would empower local communities leading logically to real inclusivity and participation at the local level (Botchie 2000).

One of the staff stated that:

*Strategies implemented by local governments such as social infrastructure included schools, markets, roads, establishment of health centers, refurbishment and equipping of district hospitals, the provision of staff accommodation, and provision of office blocks for the district health management teams. There is also drilling of boreholes, extension of national electricity grid to some communities which were previously left out, and the provision of environmental sanitation, including the sensitization of the rural communities on environmental hygiene.*

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One of the municipality staff also indicated that:

*Due to strategies implemented by the local government we now have social development projects that included micro finance projects, skills training, and supply of gratis equipment; youth employment development projects that offer training and other skills development to the youth in the district.*

The study however observed that these programs were either directly pushed by central government often for political reasons or were aimed to fulfil specific thematic goals of national development strategies and therefore could not be attributed to the local governments who implemented them. Even then, it was evident that without the support of non-governmental organizations, and international development assistance such as the European Union (EU), some of these social development projects would probably not have been implemented.

Interestingly however, the local government studied somehow had customized strategies which suits their local area albeit around the same broad thematic areas of National development strategies noted above. For instance, in areas of agriculture, the local government aimed to reduce post-harvest losses while increasing productivity of all sectors within the agriculture sub-sector. On the human resource development thematic area, the district developed two strands of strategies aimed to improve education. These were targeted at improving the standards of education, increasing transition and infrastructure development.

Another planning officer points out that;

*Look at our budget [for this district]; we spend not less than 70% on the provision of educational infrastructure ...but let me admit however that our contribution to infrastructure*

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*provision especially in education is yet to translate into good performance because for the last five years we have a low pass rate which is not good.*

It was noted that in mostly rural districts, a couple of other reasons including socio-cultural barriers may have accounted for this situation. This notwithstanding, local governments admits that they are faced with too many needs than they could cope with. This, they indicated was because of the nature of the local areas they represent, and that this is further compounded by inadequate funding and other capacity challenges. In particular, the local government pointed to human resources gaps as the second most worrying constraint to achieving their planned strategies.

One of the senior District Planning Officer indicated that:

*This is the gap! Just as that which is fit for community “A” would not be fit for community “B”, so is it with local governments. But in most cases, they [local governments] make the mistake and try to fit development programs wholesale when they should be tailored to their specific needs.*

This is a clear indication of how local governments have often struggled to erratically ‘fit’ their plans into the national framework rather than feeding them in as the participatory bottom-up approach requires. However, within the current need to ‘fit’ plans into the national framework, it has been difficult to achieve this preference.

As the field data confirms, this kind of politics directly drives as well as challenge effective planning of local development. One official from the district council lamented that this leads to a situation where some communities are left out. He noted this is the case:

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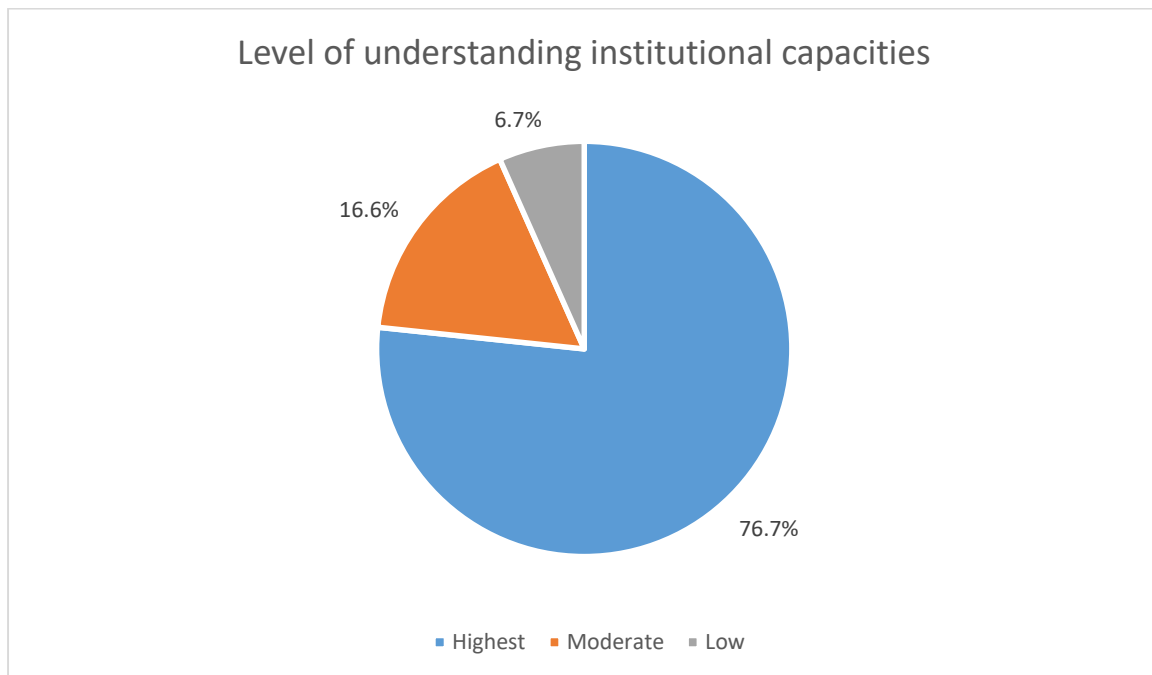
*Particularly when a community is perceived to be on the opposing side or is sympathetic to the opposition political party, it is not considered in the planning process, even though the council is considered to be non-partisan, elements of partisanship crop in [and] that distorts the whole thing.*

The drivers of the current nature of local government development planning systems do not appear to support a truly participatory process which would guarantee that development strategies reflect the needs and aspirations of local government jurisdictions. It is evident that local government planning has effectively been confiscated or is directly under the wimps and caprices of central government. The research suggests that local governments lack jurisdiction regarding planning even within their own locales, especially in the provision of social services.



#### **4.4. Section C: Institutional capacities of local government in the effective decentralization of local development**

**Figure 4.5: Level of understanding institutional capacities**



From the findings obtained, 76.7% of the participants showed the highest level of understanding institutional capacities. About 16.7% of the participants showed a moderate understanding of institutional capacities, while 6.7% showed a low understanding institutional capacities relations of local government in the effective decentralization of local development.

One municipality staff indicated that:

*Opportunities in Zimbabwe for community participation and influence of developmental decisions are limited. Therefore, the local governments are generally weak to deliver social services to the satisfaction of citizens because decentralized local government appears challenging.*

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One of the participants sums up the situation in Zimbabwe as follows:

*You see the structures and policies that we have in place are not different, they are broad national policies, we implement our programs alongside these national policies. Our plans were based on the Zimbabwe Vision 2030 document, so we prepared our plans using the guidelines of the vision 2030.*

Another respondent, one of the member of the district council adds that:

*I think that the district does not live in isolation; it tows the political policies implemented in the various districts and at the national level. However, there are structures put in place where it pertains to local issues, but even then, we still have to follow national political policies in the implementation of local issues.*

Notwithstanding those national policies and legal frameworks are transplanted wholesale to the local level, these are supposed to lend functional and performance capacity to local governments, it would have been safe to conclude that local governments would equally be elaborately capacitated and functional. The analysis of this study however reveals a distinctive deviation from this expected outcome. Without discounting the fact that national policy is needed to guide, monitor and sometimes mitigate potential excesses in local government actions. The study found that the inherent difficulty to separate national policy and locally evolved policy or legal framework appears a universal phenomenon and therefore represent the biggest source of local government incapacity to perform. There is no doubt that the decentralized policies of Zimbabwe are laudable, concerns however exist on the capacity of these to translate into practical realities that work for locals.

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While officials of political regimes argue to the affirmative, opponents severally disagree. The mere existence of the frameworks is not sufficient to guarantee the effective functioning of local governments. On the contrary, the study noticed that, local government institutions' service delivery ability is not commensurate with the amount of legal and policy frameworks aimed at ensuring they function properly. As the analysis suggests, some of these policies and regulations have become the nemesis to local governments' effective functioning. The study observed that, the direct transplant of national policies and legal frameworks without due regards to the local context and realities may have effectively incapacitated local governments flexibility contrary to popular views that it accords them considerable freedom and leverage to act in the best interest of their constituents.

One participant pointed out that:

*Looking at the structure of the Assembly we have at the community level, what we call the unit committees and area counsels, these for the past years have not been functional due to the scarcity of human resource and other capacities to man these units.*

In addition to the aforementioned practical functional challenges, a further analysis suggests that even the few existing structures appear to have been hijacked by central government agents or powerful political elites who manipulate them for their political or personal purposes. When this is the case, a political smear is put upon otherwise nonpolitical structures, in which case they lose their neutrality and therefore face challenges of becoming effective rallying forces for community mobilization. In the light of these, Smoke (2003) conclusion that without appropriately designed and implemented structures, processes as well as adequate local capacity to manage the political and fiscal functions of sub-national

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government, decentralization will fail appears to be an eminent reality within Zimbabwe's local government context.

Confirming that a financial inadequacy is a major constrain to the service provision capacity of many a local government, one participant from council put it forcefully that:

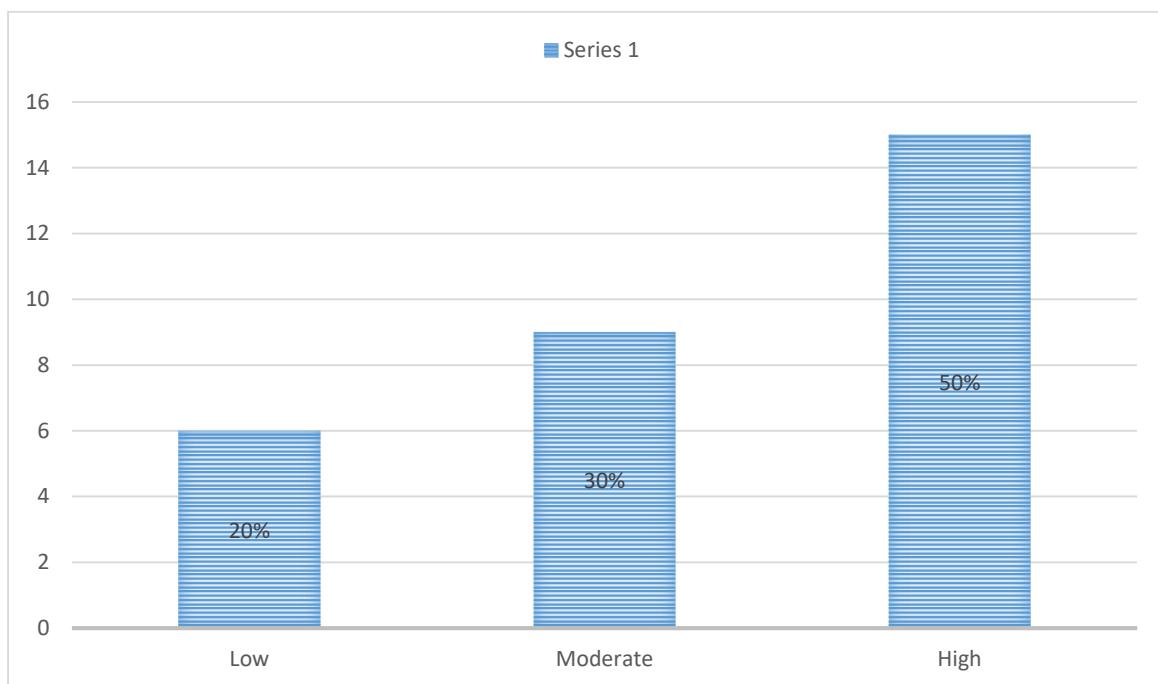
*Inadequate funding is number one! This is because the developmental projects or effective service provision that we are talking about here all involves money, and before anything could be executed there is a need to spend money, but this money hardly comes from the central government.*

A senior planning officer supports the view, adding that probably this is the case across all local councils within the study area when he lamented that:

*From where I sit, I am responsible for the local development plans and I can attest that we try our best to develop relevant community development plans. However, my biggest frustration with this system is that we simply do not have adequate resources to implement our activities.*

#### **4.5 Section D: The effects of partisan party politics on service delivery in local governments**

**Figure 4.6. Level of understanding effects of politics**



The findings indicated that 50% of the participants said the effects of partisan politics is high in Hopley City Council, 30% indicated the effects of partisan politics is moderate, and 20% show that the effects of partisan politics is extremely low.

The study, revealed that partisan party politics undermine the smooth functionality of an institutions through bureaucratic inefficiencies and frustration among other things to investors and residents. This will make the cost of doing business very expensive as a result some of the investors end up leaving their zest to invest HDO and its related organs.

One of the respondents noted that:

*Corruption militates against efficient and effective resource utilisation due to financial leakages. Partisan party politics nurtures political structures with certain interest group that*

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*are not accountable to the people, transparent in their political dealings, do not respect the rule of law or political and social freedoms and some of them no longer represent people's interests in fact the residents have become serious casualties and the entire organization was left vulnerable to unmerciful political vultures.*

The majority of the respondents agreed that the partisan party politics negatively inflicting harm in the entire Hopley District Offices body politic from Town House to residents' homes problems are manifesting in different dimensions. Most of the effects pointed out include bad governance which covers corruption, financial losses, poor and deterioration of service delivery, loss of lives among other things. Hopley District Office has been corroded and destroyed by partisan party politics. Residents become major casualties of the system they created. From the findings, most respondents concurred that partisan party politics has negatively affected the Hopley District Office.

An anonymous councillor pointed out the following:

*Partisan politics in Hopley District Office has resulted in gross human rights violation essentials as citizens were deprived right to life, right to shelter, clean environment and clean water. This further trigger unnecessary loss of lives by pandemic diseases like cholera and typhoid.*

Another participant pointed out that:

*It was also noted that erratic water supplies and poor waste management has caused typhoid outbreak in Harare that result in a thousand of residents in the previous years.*

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The study further is of the assertion that partisan party politics eliminate effective control and monitoring of security systems and quality management as administration plays saviour role to their supporters for example due to partisan politics chemicals for water treatment was pilferage and residents unknowingly began to drink untreated water and contaminated water that jeopardise their health. This was further exacerbated by disregard of procedures in waste disposal and water treatment. Allegations are, Kasukuwere in 2016 was quoted saying Hopley District Office is supplying water with raw faeces despite collecting water rates. In-depth interviews by respondents shows that Harare used an unidentified poison to purify water from unidentified supplier. In regard to this partisan politics has serious threats to human life which is essential to human development.

One of the resident pointed out that:

*The causes of the 2008 outbreak have not been addressed and the main reason for the typhoid and cholera outbreak is the unavailability of water. People are resorting to alternative sources of water which are not very safe, Surely Partisan party politics has turned Hopley District Office into a death trap or human tragedy as people are exposed to hazardous environs open pits, exposed electrical wire raw sewage coming out on tapes, hazardous substance are being disposed into the community thus as result HDO continue to lose money and resources through self-induced crisis.*

It was also found out from the study findings, that partisan politics weakens administration of HDO as it creates passivity and political bias among employees. Interviews conducted has it that, for an organisation to be effective and efficient it must be manned by

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competitive staff with high ethical values and professionalism. Most of the interviewees concurred that there is no meritocracy in hiring employees for HDO.

### **4.6 Chapter summary**

This chapter focused on the presentation of findings from the field, analysis and discussion of these findings. It provides the answers to the research questions that were highlighted in chapter one. This chapter is structured in a way that the first part speaks to the first objective, and then the second part speaks up to the third objective in that order. The findings of the study have been also discussed in relation to other relevant literature



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter gave an overview of research findings, makes recommendations and draws conclusions about research topic. The significant outcomes of the study are also presented.

#### **5.2. Summary**

The study was categorized into five chapters:

The introduction was the first chapter of this research, which highlighted the background of the study on the topic, devolution and service delivery in local authorities. It presented the problem statement, research objectives, research questions, purpose of the study, and importance of the study. The first chapter sought to analyse how devolution and service delivery is being introduced in other countries such as Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa as way to avoid the abuse of power and promote decision-making in local authorities. In Zimbabwe, a country in the Southern Africa, devolution was embraced in the 2013 new constitution which aim to increase efficiency and effectiveness in making decisions in local authorities.

Chapter 2 concentrated on literature review and other materials linked to devolution and service delivery in local authorities. Actor network theory and new public management were the two theories used in the research, as well as their criticisms, received special attention. The Actor network theory analyse how different actors such as local government officials,

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citizens and service providers interact with each other and how their interactions shape service delivery. Therefore by looking at how different actors interact with each other, there will be an insights into how to improve service delivery and address challenges such as poor coordination, corruption and lack of accountability. Actor network theory also highlighted how lack of coordination between the central government and the local government can cause inefficiency and corruption in service delivery. The public management theory was considered essential and useful in understanding the relationship between the local and central government. The public management theory emphasizes that efficiency and result-based management can only be seen if the central government allow local municipalities to perform their duties without too much interference in their affairs. The chapter also explore all the concept of decentralization and devolution as enshrined in the new constitution citing relevant sections and its criticism. All the objectives mentioned in chapter one were discussed in this chapter.

In chapter 3, the researcher explored much on methodology, the qualitative research method was used to gather data since it allowed the research to do follow ups on unclear responses and also allowed the interviewee to ask for clarification of questions and this helped in gaining in-depth understanding of devolution. The research design was a case study of Hopley Council. The targeted population comprise of the Hopley city council employees and residents and they served as key informants for the research and they were chosen using simple random sampling approach. A sample of thirty participants was used. A pilot testing approach was also included in the study. Ethical issues which were being considered included informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and privacy.

The main conclusions of the study were highlighted in chapter 4, it focused on the analysis, presentation and discussion of findings found during data gathering. This chapter presented data collected through primary and secondary sources in form of tables, bar graph

and pie chart. The researcher analysed data in this chapter through the guidance of research questions. The key informants' replies touch major issues such as strategies that are being used by local authorities in the implementation of devolution agenda in Zimbabwe and it also shows how capacitated are local governments in the effective decentralization of local development. This chapter also highlighted how politics has affected devolution on issues of service delivery in Zimbabwe. However, it is facing smooth implementation challenges due to lack of funds, political interference and unwillingness of the government to fully decentralize local authorities.

Chapter five summarized the entire research, highlighting the summary, findings, recommendations and areas for further research. It also explored strategies that are being used by local authorities in the implementation of devolution and service delivery in Zimbabwe. The study recommend that the local authorities follow the Actor network theory and new public management theory and limit the powers of the Ministry of local Government and Public Works. They should also include stakeholder such as the Private sectors and Non-Governmental Organisations in order to improve their financial situation. The area for further research was on exploring strategies to enhance community engagement in decision making.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

The following conclusions were drawn from research objective.

- I. To examine the strategies that are being used by local authorities in the implementation of the devolution agenda in Zimbabwe.**

The study explored, strategies that are being used by local authorities in the implementation of the devolution agenda in Zimbabwe. Local authorities in Zimbabwe are employing various strategies in the implementation of the devolution agenda, drawing from

local government strategies and planning district-wide development strategies supported by legal provisions in the constitution (Mapuva & Muyengwa-Mapuva, 2014). The study also highlighted, the role of decentralization and devolution in improving development is emphasized, particularly in terms of financing infrastructure under the control of local governments (Makumbe, 2018).

The implementation of the devolution agenda involves supporting local development strategies, as evidenced by the city government's collaboration with local entities for the collaboration with local entities for the development of local plans. Additionally, the passing of new laws on fiscal rules for local authorities underscores the legal support for local development initiatives and this indicates the central government focus on empowering local authorities to drive development initiatives.

## **II. To analyse institutional capacities of local governments for effective decentralised local development.**

The study highlighted institutional capacities of local government in the effective decentralization of local development. It shows that local government in Zimbabwe often lack the necessary institutional capacities to effectively decentralize local development because of a lack of skilled personnel, inadequate resources, and weak administrative structures (Muyengwa & Mhaka, 2022). The researcher established that the, enabling environment for effective local government performance in Zimbabwe is constrained by political interference, lack of autonomy, and bureaucratic inefficiencies (Mapuva, 2022). Local governments in Zimbabwe are facing financial constraints, limited revenue sources, and dependency on central government funding. The study also discovered that, the legal and regulatory frameworks at the national level in Zimbabwe is not always support decentralization efforts. Ambiguities in

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laws, conflicting mandates, and unclear guidelines are hindering the decentralization process (Mupandawana, 2022).

However, efforts has been made by the central government, through capacity building programs, training, improving the governance structures, promoting transparency, and enhancing accountability which could create a more conducive environment for local government performance. Improving revenue collection mechanisms, enhancing budgetary processes, and exploring alternative financing options which could strengthen the financial resources capability of local governments and strengthening local laws and regulations to empower local authorities and clarify decision-making processes.

### **III. To assess the effects of politics in devolution process on issues of services delivery in Zimbabwe.**

The study discovered that, politics has had a significant impact on devolution and service delivery in Zimbabwe. The politics of urban control has influenced service delivery in Zimbabwe, as highlighted in the study. Lack of clean water in the capital city has been attributed to political issues, adversely affecting water service delivery (Mushamba, 2023). . The study also highlighted, in the context of devolution, it is crucial for subnational governments to be granted budgetary autonomy so that they can determine their own expenditure choices, which can directly impact service delivery (Chigwata T. , 2022). The study also explored challenges of devolution in Zimbabwe and their negative impact on issues service delivery in local authorities. There is need for budgetary autonomy for subnational governments is emphasized as a means to improve service delivery.

However efforts has been made by the central government by addressing the lack of clean water in urban areas through making attempts to resolve the water supply issues,

though they have been hindered by political factors. The government has initiatives underway to build the capacity of subnational governments to manage devolved responsibilities and improve service delivery.

#### **5.4. Recommendations**

When addressing devolution and service delivery in local authorities, there are several recommendations to consider to improve the lives of their communities. The following recommendation are very important to the Hopley District Office Council, Non-Governmental Organizations, Private sectors, and to the Ministry of Local Government centred on my research findings.

##### **i. Ministry of Local Government, Public Works**

The local authorities should understand devolution, therefore, they should begin by clarifying what devolution entails. Explain that it is the process of transferring power, authority, and resources from central to local levels. Emphasize that it aims to enhance local decision-making and responsiveness to community need.

##### **ii. Hopley District Office Council**

Urban councils should involve all relevant stakeholders, including municipal officials, community leaders, and residents.

##### **iii. Private Sectors**

The local authorities should collaborate with private sectors to shape the delivery of public services, this collaboration can help in improving public services for the local area and ensuring more effective, better-targeted services.

**iv. Non-Governmental Organizations**

Urban councils must collaborate with Non-Governmental Organizations to support and enhance service delivery.

**5.5. Areas for further research**

This study focused on devolution and service delivery in local authorities. Some scholars must research on exploring strategies to enhance community engagement in decision-making.

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## **Annexures**

### **Questionnaire on devolution and service delivery in local authorities. A case study of Hopley District Office (City of Harare).**

My name is Tabeth Nyasha Kambarami, a student at Bindura University of Science Education, studying Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Peace and Governance. My registration number is B202346B. The research is on devolution and service delivery in local authorities as part of the fulfilment of my studies. I'm kindly seeking for your assistance to contribute to my study through responding to the questions below. The information that you will provide will be strictly for research and academic purposes only. As a student I promise that confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed.

### **Instructions:**

The questionnaire will be answered in form of a tick and sentence writings.

### **SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA**

1. Gender.

Female	Male

2. Age group.

20-30	31-40	41-50

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3. Marital status.

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed

4. Level of Education:

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Non-schooling

## SECTION B

5. What strategies are being used by local authorities in the implementation of the devolution agenda?

.....

.....

.....

6. How capacitated are local governments in the effective decentralization of local development?

.....

.....

.....

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7. What role does the legal framework play in separating duties and roles of the central government and local authorities on devolution?

.....

.....

.....

## SECTION C

8. Does local authorities have adequate resources for devolution?

Yes	No	Not sure

9. Are there any improvements on service delivery as a result of devolution?

Yes	No

10. Can politicians work well with office bearers in the implementation of devolution?

Yes	No



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**SECTION D**

11. What are similarities of operation during the period before the implementation of devolution and after?

.....

.....

.....

12. How politics has affected devolution on issues of service delivery in Zimbabwe?

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.....

13. Are there any recommendations on how local authorities can successfully implement devolution?

.....

.....

.....

**THANK YOU**

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### **Interview guide: Hopley City Council Employees**

My name is Tabeth Nyasha Kambarami, a student at Bindura University of Science Education, studying Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Peace and Governance. My registration number is B202346B. The research is on devolution and service delivery in local authorities as part of the fulfilment of my studies. I'm kindly seeking for your assistance to contribute to my study through responding to the interviews questions below. The information that you will provide will be strictly for research and academic purposes only. As a student I promise that confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed.

1. How long have you been working here?
2. What are your duties and responsibility?
3. What is the impact of devolution and service delivery on the administration of Hopley city council?
4. What's is your general understanding of devolution?
5. What challenges are you facing as a result of devolution due to service delivery?
6. How have this challenges affected the performance of local authorities in Zimbabwe?
7. What strategies are being used to enhance quality service delivery at your District?
8. What can be done to uphold the service delivery at your territory?

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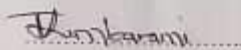
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2

**Declaration**

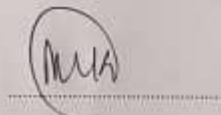
I, (B202346), declare that this dissertation is the outcome of my personal study and research, excluding those specified in the acknowledgements and references included in the body of the paper, that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.



Student's Signature

18-09-2024

Date



Supervisor's signature

18/09/2024

Date

V. Supu

Chairperson's Signature

18/09/2024

Date

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BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Date: -----

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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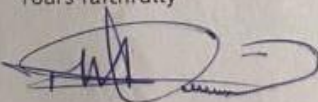
RE: REQUEST TO UNDER TAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION/AREA

=====


This serves to introduce the bearer TABETH KAMBARAMI, Student Registration Number 82023468 who is a HBSc Peace and Governance student at Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out a research project in your area.

Your usual cooperation and assistance is therefore being sought.

Yours faithfully



D. Makwerere (Dr)  
CHAIRPERSON - PEACE AND GOVERNANCE





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