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The role of supplier development on procurement perfomance in state owned entities: A Study of the Judicial Service Commission.

By

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The undersigned certify that they have supervised, read and gave recommendations to Bindura University of Science Education for Acceptance of the research entitled:

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I **Yemurai Samantha Zingwena** do hereby declare that this Research is the result of my own research and investigation except the extent to which it is indicated in the acknowledgements, references and by comments included in the content of the study, and it has not been submitted in part or in full to any other University. The researcher guarantees that the information within this write up was obtained ethically. I further declare that l obtained the necessary authorization and consent to carry out this research study.

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Date

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family for their unwavering support and to God ,the Almighty for guidance and strength throughout my academic journey.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of supplier development on procurement performance within the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). The research problem arose from challenges faced by JSC, including long lead times and poor quality of goods and services from suppliers, despite existing contractual agreements. The objective of the study was to examine supplier management practices on procurement performance at JSC., a study of the Judicial Service Commission. The research adopted a descriptive survey design, utilizing a quantitative research methodology. The study targeted a total population of 100 participants across different organizational levels: Senior Management (40), Middle Management (25), Operations (20), and the Procurement Committee (15). A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument, with data analyzed through statistical methods to ensure objectivity and reliability. Descriptive statistics were used in this study to summarize and organize the data, providing a clear overview of the sample characteristics and key variables. Measures such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage were employed to describe the distribution and central tendencies of the collected data. Findings revealed that supplier management practices positively influenced procurement performance, particularly through improved financial outcomes and enhanced supplier relationships. The study recommends that JSC prioritize supplier relationship management to achieve higher performance levels. Furthermore, the Commission should develop and implement clear policies on supplier segmentation and establish formal supplier development programs. These initiatives are critical for improving organizational performance and fostering collaborative relationships with key suppliers.

Contents

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

Procurement forms the backbone of every organization because it ensures the acquisition of goods and services is done on time and in an effective and efficient manner (Howlett et al. ,2024). For State Owned Entities (SOEs) such as the Judicial Service Commission (JSC), public accountability combined with the SOEs' impact on the economy and society at large make the procurement policies and practices particularly sensitive. Changalema et al (2024) argued that supplier development is regarded as one of the most critical strategies aimed at enhancing procurement effectiveness. Supplier development is described as the collective action by firms to elevate the skills, competencies, and resources of their suppliers(Nacchiero et al.,2014). It often includes training, resource allocation, joint problem solving, and performance evaluation.

1.2 Background of the study

Procurement is a key component of the operating activities of State-Owned Entities (SOEs), including the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). The procurement department must make sure that all products and services are obtained through strategic and performance-oriented procedures in order to enhance organizational efficacy and efficiency. In this context, developing suppliers becomes a crucial tactic to improve the effectiveness of public sector organizations' procurement processes.

Building enduring, cooperative partnerships with suppliers is essential to raising service standards, guaranteeing on-time delivery, and improving product quality. This strategy has been widely acknowledged as a way to improve the total value and reputation of provided goods and services, expedite procurement procedures, and drastically lower operating costs (Changalima, 2024; Madzimure et al., 2020). Recent research has connected supplier development programs to better public and private sector procurement results. As an illustration, research conducted on Zimbabwe's state-owned businesses showed that strategic procurement methods positively boost organizational productivity. According to the study, one of the main factors influencing how differently institutions performed was how the procurement process was managed. Additionally, Changalima et al. (2022) found statistical support for the notion that improved performance in public sector organizations is closely linked to strategic procurement and efficient supplier relationship management.

With the aim to enhance effectiveness and streamline the procurement processes, the Judicial Service Commission has undertaken several reforms in the past few years. World Bank (2020) acknowledged Zimbabwe's attempts towards modernizing its public procurement system which included the establishment of the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe and the Public Procurement Act. These reforms sought to bolster value for money, accountability, and transparency in public procurement processes.

These alterations were made by the JSC, a National Government Agency, so that it meticulously follows all National public procurement and governance policies. In addition, the JSC's focus on empowering the Integrated Electronic Case Management System through workflow automation interfaces is part of a broader productivity and justice delivery enhancement initiative.

Through its procurement procedures in particular, the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) exhibits a significant commitment to developing the skills of its staff. The JSC has made retraining administrative and judicial officers a top priority in order to achieve successful procurement reforms, acknowledging the critical role that procurement plays in accomplishing organizational goals. To enhance overall case management and acquaint workers with the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS), the JSC held a number of workshops in 2023. These programs are intended to improve human capital, expedite the provision of services, and conform to responsive procurement and judicial services regulations (Changalima et al., 2022; Madzimure et al., 2020).

The IECMS aims to eradicate the inefficiencies linked to manual procedures in the procurement of goods and services associated with judicial duties as part of the JSC's digital transformation. The system seeks to improve service delivery timeliness, decrease administrative burdens, and increase transparency by standardizing and automating procurement processes (Changalima et al., 2022; Madzimure et al., 2020). Initiatives to create suppliers in the public sector have also been demonstrated to have wider economic impacts. According to research, supplier development and other strategic procurement techniques can boost economic growth and organizational productivity. For example, a study on Zimbabwe's state-owned businesses showed that good procurement practices greatly improve performance results (Changalima et al., 2022). Similar to this, South Africa's Public Procurement Bill is anticipated to stimulate local entrepreneurship, generate employment, and stimulate innovation in the nation, all of which will contribute to economic growth (Naidoo, 2024; SAPICS, 2023).

The UK government has strengthened support for small and medium-sized businesses' (SMEs') involvement in public procurement as a result of its growing recognition of the critical role SMEs play in promoting socioeconomic growth. A number of amendments were implemented by the Procurement Act 2023 with the goal of streamlining procurement procedures and boosting SME participation. These measures include assuring timely payment terms, streamlining application processes, and dividing large contracts into smaller lots (Cabinet Office, 2023). Furthermore, by using Crown Commercial Services (CCS) frameworks and transparent supply chain plans, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has put into practice category strategies that promote SME inclusion (DEFRA, 2023).

Developing suppliers is essential to increasing the effectiveness of procurement in State-Owned Entities (SOEs), such as the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). SOEs can increase value for money, productivity, and transparency by implementing value-based management principles. In order to match with strategic objectives, this method entails changing supplier relationships, procurement procedures, and staff development (Changalima et al., 2022; Madzimure et al., 2020). The strategic evolution of suppliers in response to changing procurement challenges—which are frequently made worse by unanticipated global disruptions—remains a persistent difficulty in the long-term performance of public sector procurement. The necessity of flexible and robust supplier networks has been brought to light by the COVID-19 epidemic and the supply chain disruptions that followed. According to research, successful supplier development programs can lessen these difficulties by encouraging creativity, improving teamwork, and guaranteeing supply continuity (Changalima et al., 2022).

1.3 Statement of the problem

The Judicial Service Commission (JSC) suffers from acute supplier management problems, which undermines the effectiveness and efficiency of its procurement processes. It is apparent that little is known regarding the impact of the supplier management processes on the operations of the Commission and the processes aimed toward enhancing procurement efficiency, cost reduction, and ensuring prompt service delivery. There are also issues within the JSC concerning the management of supplier performance, selection of optimal vendors, and management of conflicts within the supplier relationship. These unmet needs result to disruption in the balanced flow of the procurement process that is required to be smooth, agile, and efficient while alleviating the demands of the JSC and the saturating abilities of the suppliers. It is evident that to achieve effective supplier management and enhance procurement performance, it is critical to systematically define appropriate supplier management policies for the JSC.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To ascertain the supplier management procedures followed by Judicial Service Commission.
2. To examine how supplier management strategies impact the operations of Judicial Service Commission.
3. To analyse the difficulties the Judicial Service Commission faces with supplier management procedures.
4. To identify issues that arise during the selection of suppliers by the Commission
5. To determine solutions for resolving issues that arise in the supplier management process.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the supplier management procedures followed by the Judicial Service Commission?
2. How do supplier management strategies impact the operations of the Judicial Service Commission?
3. What difficulties does the Judicial Service Commission face in managing suppliers?
4. What issues arise during the supplier selection process in the Judicial Service Commission?
5. What solutions can be implemented to resolve the issues arising from supplier management procedures in the Judicial Service Commission?

1.6 Statement of the hypothesis

1. **H_1**: The supplier management procedures followed by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) have a positive effect on the operational efficiency of the organization.

2. **H_2**: Supplier management strategies implemented by the JSC significantly influence the quality and timeliness of goods and services provided to the Commission.

3. **H_3**: Difficulties in supplier management procedures negatively impact the procurement performance of the Judicial Service Commission.

1.7 Significance of the study

To begin with, the study will assist the JSC in learning how effectively its current supplier management practices and policies are functioning. The study will help the Commission simplify its procurement processes and ensure better efficiency in the use of public funds by determining the barriers and inefficiencies within the supplier management system. This will also improve the operational effectiveness of the JSC by achieving increased and timelier delivery of goods and services while aiding the JSC in fulfilling its primary objective of administering justice expeditiously and effectively.

Secondly, the study will serve politicians and public institutions interested in improving the public sector's procurement processes by providing example recommendations. Anti-corruption and good governance will be incorporated into the procedures for managing and ordering supplies within State-Owned Entities (SOEs) as a result of the public procurement system. This research will ensure that national standards for public sector sustainability and efficiency will be met by addressing the gaps in supplier management and selection.

This study will furnish the learners of procurement with relevant information on the challenges encountered in managing suppliers within a government system.

Along with highlighting how supplier management practices influence procurement effectiveness, procurement outcomes, and relationships with suppliers will be enhanced through customized management interventions.

With this, the research contributes to the literature on public procurement, specifically concerning State-Owned Entities and the judiciary for some scholars. By documenting the procurement processes of the JSC, this research will address the gap on supplier management knowledge in public sectorUnderthe governance of State-Owned Entities, more studies focusing on the efficiency of procurement systems in public institutions and supplier integration into institutional frameworks will emerge.

1.8 Assumptions

i. It was assumed that all respondents in the study had an appreciation of the supplier management practices. Respondents were presumed to have some rudimentary knowledge on the matter.

ii. All respondents to the questionnaire had sufficient background information on the supplier management practices used by the Commission.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

I. Geographic Scope: This is a case study of the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) in Zimbabwe.

II. Due to distinct local policies, regulations, and prevailing market conditions which may apply to specific entities, the results and subsequent interpretations may not be applicable for other State-Owned Entities (SOEs) or sovereign institutions in other regions or countries.

III. Sectoral Focus: This concern is limited to the judiciary, and more specifically, the JSC and its practices concerning supplier management. This study is directed to the judicial system, and while it may touch on other sectors like healthcare, education, or even infrastructure, those sectors may not receive the broader applicability due to the unique characteristics of other public service sectors.

IV. Scope of Supplier Management Procedures: Focusing on problem identification and correction, the study concentrates on the practices and strategies of the JSC regarding supplier management. Within this scope, the study will explore supplier management and procurement results, excluding macro considerations such as market conditions or other economic factors influencing the market fundamental or peripheral supply chain issues.

V. Sample Size: Focus will be placed on data obtained from key JSC staff, particularly from the manager level to the procurement level and other relevant administrative positions. External stakeholders such as suppliers were not included in the research scope as their insights may provide a deeper understanding of the supplier management process relevant to their role. Therefore, the findings may lack some diversity in the perspectives on supplier management from the suppliers.

1.10 Limitations

I. Limited Data Access: One of the weaknesses of this study is the restricted access to up-to-date and complete procurement information held by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). Authoritative constraints, nondisclosure agreements, and sensitive information policies may limit access to comprehensive procurement documents, supplier evaluations, and their accompanying performance data. This may influence the effectiveness and depth to which supplier management processes are scrutinized.

II. Sample Size and Generalizability: Core staff members of the JSC such as administrative and procurement officers will be the focal participants for the study, which will be conducted on a relatively small sample size. Although these individuals are crucial in the procurement process, further participation from other relevant stakeholders such as suppliers and external auditors may enhance the general applicability of the results.

III. Bias in Self-Reporting: The study uses questionnaires with JSC employees, which could be biased. Concerns about job security or the organization's reputation may cause respondents to give socially acceptable responses or steer clear of touchy subjects like supplier management difficulties or inefficiency. This can result in a distorted or insufficient comprehension of the real procurement difficulties the JSC faces.

IV. Changing Procurement Practices: The results of this study could soon become out of date due to the fact that procurement laws and procedures are always changing. Some of the findings may become less applicable if supplier management procedures or procurement strategies undergo changes after the study is finished.

1.11 Summary

This research centers on how supplier development may enhance procurement performance at State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) with particular attention to the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) of Zimbabwe. Assessing the JSC's supplier management practices, exploring the impacts of supplier management strategies on its operational processes, diagnosing supplier selection and management issues, and recommending possible alternatives are the primary objectives. It is apparent that the study seeks to enhance operational performance at the JSC by providing recommendations aimed at improving procurement processes, lowering expenses, and ensuring timely provisioning of services and goods. The study, while offering a rich review of procurement processes within the JSC, does focus geographically on Zimbabwe and sectorally on the judicial sector which bounds it to within-JSC employee perspectives. These findings may be affected by limited sample size, limited access to data, and pervasive socially-desirable responding or self-data reporting biases. Regardless, the study draws most attention because it attempts to address SOE procurement challenges and independently fund further research on supplier management in the public sector.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.0 Theoretical Reviews

2.1 Resource-Based View (RBV Theory)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) paradigm, especially in the context of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), gives us a fundamental approach on how procurement effectiveness can be enhanced through supplier growth. As posited by Barney (1991), an organization's enduring competitive superiority stems from its peculiar resources and capabilities: value-creating, rare, non-imitable, and inimitable. Concerning procurement, the relevant resources encompass both tangible and intangible assets including relationships with suppliers, relevant skills, and proprietary knowledge. Therefore, supplier development becomes a calculated approach towards ad strategic planning aimed at achieving organizational effectiveness.

In supporting the discussed claim, RBV could aid to posit that fostered supplier relationships, once built and sustained, qualify as vital organizational resources leading to sustained competitive edge in SOEs and their performances. Several of these studies have confirmed how supplier development initiatives work to improve procurement outcomes by providing state-owned enterprises with distinctively valuable resources that describe competences which enhance the performance of the enterprises. Kaur and Awasar (2021) for example, explored the connection between enhanced procurement performance and the development of qualitative and technological competencies at the supplier level.

This research incorporates development of supplier resources such as advanced technologies and quality control systems as a strategic asset for gaining competitive advantage for SOEs which is in line with RBV. In this situation, SOEs can exploit the subordinate suppliers' enhanced capabilities to guarantee more cost-effective, higher quality, and reliable deliveries which improves procurement performance. Also, Zhao et al. (2022) examined cooperative supplier development through information exchange and joint ventures and how it leads to superior technological capabilities among suppliers. Such technical improvements are vital in industries where success relies on innovation and quality.

Taking everything into consideration, the RBV theory provides the rationale and adds value to understanding supplier development in relation to the SOEs procurement performance. With the focus on suppliers as distinct resources, unique resources that add value to the organization within the context of competition, RBV provides an understanding of the strategic nature of these relationships as investments towards improved procurement results. The enhanced skills as a result of supplier development initiatives add value that differentiates the firm from competitors, thereby improving cost efficiency, long-term competitiveness, and overall competitiveness.

Through RBV's lens, supplier development is viewed as an investment strategy with greater organizational capability and enduring value as a core competency rather than a mere procurement remedy of immediate concern.

2.2 Transaction Cost Economics (TCE)

This theory of transaction cost economics (TCE) will propose a rationale how supplier development impacts procurement performance especially with state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in mind.). TCE focus on the costs of economic transactions such as searching, negotiating, monitoring, and enforcing contracts which were all ideas of Coase (1937) and Williamson (1981). These transaction costs arise due to the need to maintain relationships, ensure compliance to contractual obligations, and manage defaulting opportunistic behaviour by suppliers. Such costs in procurement can be considerable especially in complex structures like state owned enterprises (SOEs) where the procurement systems tend to be more detailed and systematic than those found in private sector firms. In the context of the research on the effects of supplier development on procurement performance in state owned enterprises, TCE will help to show how supplier development initiatives can lower transaction costs and enhance procurement outcomes.

State-owned enterprises obtain numerous advantages when building and developing relationships with suppliers, as these eliminate or diminish many cut costs related to the procedures of selection, contracting, and monitoring of quality, such as administrative costs. The other example was provided by Singh et al. (2023), who looked into the impact of supplier development on transaction costs in SOEs and found that businesses significantly reduce enforcement and monitoring costs by establishing trusted partnerships--and not merely contractual ones--with their vendors. When suppliers are formed through cooperation and cooperative problem-solving, there is less need for sophisticated and expensive control mechanisms, as these suppliers will meet and reliably satisfy the requisite standards and fulfil contracts

According to TCE, trust that is associated with long-term, established relationships and cooperation among various parties usually leads to better economic outcomes. In other words, long lasting cooperation mitigates the need for unnecessary controls. This is ranked amongst the more common elements of fostering effective collaboration within the supply chain. In this situation, supplier development plays a role in aligning suppliers' actions with the expectation set by the SOE that would ultimately undo the risk of “opportunism.”

Moreover, as with other SOEs, Ghosh and Chandra (2021) advance their argument by analysing how developmental procurement practices in supplier development theory economize on procurement transaction costs in SOEs. It appears from their analysis that properly developed suppliers through training, technology transfer, and communication minimize the need for constant supplier rotation or perpetual renegotiation.

On the contrary, powerful primary subcontractors provide more control to the SOE without sacrificing higher operational reliability and alignment to the SOE's strategy. Thus, developed capable suppliers enable the SOE to negotiate a straightforward long-term contract with low-cost energy for electricity, thereby significantly reducing transaction costs. The TCE asserts that firms seek governance structures whose costs are lower than the expenses necessary to conduct transactions and that in order to streamline transaction costs, governance frameworks must invest in supplier development. The TCE is equally concerned with the sufficiency of these governance structures when it comes to minimizing transaction costs. As stated by Williamson (1981), various governance forms are applicable to various types of transactions like market transactions, long-term contracts, or vertical integration based on transaction intricateness and associated risks.

2.3 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory which emphasizes the significance of identifying and managing the interests of all parties impacted by an organization's decisions gained increased attention in public procurement studies. Procurement is no longer seen as a purely administrative function in the context of State-Owned Entities (SOEs) like the Judicial Service Commission (JSC), but rather as a strategic process involving a wide range of stakeholders, each with their own expectations and influence, including suppliers, regulatory bodies, civil society, and the general public.

According to Mandiriza and Fourie (2023), stakeholder views and involvement greatly influenced the adoption and execution of public-private partnerships in South Africa's water infrastructure sector. In a similar vein, Moshtari et al. (2022) discovered that better procurement performance in humanitarian organizations was a result of inter-organizational coordination motivated by stakeholder expectations. Stakeholder theory is further supported by the UK's Procurement Act 2023, which requires a stronger focus on "social value" in contract awards with the goal of empowering communities and assisting small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) (Gould, 2024; UK Government, 2023).

This strategy is in line with research by Purdy and Smart (2021), who maintained that ethical governance and transparency, which are based on stakeholder participation, are critical to fostering public confidence in procurement systems. Stakeholder-responsive reforms are demonstrated in the JSC through programs that prioritize supplier development and inclusive procurement, such as workshops on digital procurement platforms like IECMS (Chirasha et al., 2022). The JSC improves procurement efficiency and resilience while fortifying accountability by incorporating external (suppliers, regulators) and internal (staff, management) stakeholders in procurement decisions (Changalima et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Lacity and Van Hoek (2021) highlighted the significance of flexible, stakeholder-centric procurement strategies in light of recent global disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic. They demonstrated that multi-stakeholder collaboration was essential to sustaining public supply chains under pressure. Together, these advancements show that Stakeholder Theory is more than simply a theoretical framework; it is a useful instrument for directing supplier growth and procurement reform in SOEs, where social effect, legitimacy, and transparency are critical factors.

The Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) is one example of how the JSC's recent digitization initiatives show how supplier development is being adjusted to stakeholder-informed performance and transparency goals (Chirasha, Ncube & Nhamo, 2022). Furthermore, Purdy and Smart (2021) highlight ethical interaction with suppliers and communities as a key component of stakeholder-focused governance, which is crucial for fostering public trust in procurement procedures. Accordingly, Stakeholder Theory describes how supplier development, guided by stakeholder engagement, can improve procurement performance through increased transparency, interest alignment, and long-term relational value—all of which are crucial results for SOEs like the JSC that are subject to legal requirements and public scrutiny.

2.4 Institutional theory

Institutional theory provides a useful framework for comprehending how institutional environments rules, norms, and cultural expectations shape procurement practices in State-Owned Entities (SOEs), which is relevant to this study on supplier development and procurement performance at the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). According to institutional theory, in order to preserve access to vital resources and acquire legitimacy, organizations must also abide by social forces in addition to being motivated by efficiency (DiMaggio & Powell, 2023).

Formal laws like the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act, as well as more general standards of openness, equity, and moral leadership, have a significant impact on JSC procurement procedures. According to recent studies, procurement behavior in public institutions is significantly influenced by institutional pressures, including normative (professional standards), mimetic (copying best practices), and coercive (rules and procedures) (Changalima et al., 2022; Musanzikwa, 2020). For instance, Chirasha et al. (2022) contend that the JSC and other Zimbabwean SOEs have implemented procurement digitization changes (such as IECMS) in response to public pressure for transparency and regulatory expectations, rather than only for operational efficiency.

Furthermore, Mupedziswa and Nhede (2023) emphasize how public institutions follow international procurement standards, particularly when sponsored by donors, demonstrating the expanding significance of global institutional influence. These institutional needs frequently influence supplier development practices, motivating organizations such as the JSC to fund compliance audits, capacity-building workshops, and local supplier inclusion plans in order to meet social legitimacy standards as well as enhance performance. When reforms clash with long-standing bureaucratic practices or power structures, institutional theory also aids in explaining why procurement reforms are met with resistance (Ameyaw et al., 2020). In order to comprehend how supplier development initiatives in the JSC are driven by external expectations and regulatory compliance, as well as how these institutional elements eventually affect procurement performance outcomes, Institutional Theory offers a critical perspective for this study.

It is crucial to remember that public procurement in SOEs like the JSC is frequently subject to complex institutional constraints that go beyond national legislation, building on the knowledge that Institutional Theory prioritizes adherence to external influences. Institutional behavior is shaped by the regular imposition of procurement norms and compliance requirements by international donor agencies and development partners as part of financing conditions (Mupedziswa & Nhede, 2023). Entities such as the JSC are compelled by external coercive pressure to implement supplier development strategies that enhance procurement efficiency and guarantee compliance with donor expectations for sustainability, fair competition, and transparency (Ngoma & Sibanda, 2021). In order to preserve their legitimacy, public institutions mimic effective procurement strategies seen in other organizations, a phenomenon known as institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Changalima et al., 2022).

Institutional theory also sheds light on the difficulties SOEs encounter when bureaucratic lethargy or ingrained organizational cultures clash with institutional forces. Procurement changes, especially supplier development programs, can be slowed down or made more difficult in many public institutions by internal resistance and long-standing practices (Ameyaw, Mensah & Osei-Tutu, 2020). Thus, for the JSC, internal factors like low staff skills, poor change management, and opposition from vested interests can impede progress even as external expectations and regulatory frameworks drive for modernization and supplier capacity enhancement (Chirasha, Ncube & Nhamo, 2022). Deliberate initiatives that strike a mix between stakeholder engagement, internal capacity building, and compliance are needed to address these institutional hurdles (Musanzikwa, 2020).

2.5 Empirical Literature Review

Effective practices for managing suppliers strategically are crucial for the smooth execution of procurement activities, mostly in the public domain. Supplier management is subject to dire control of fiduciary responsibility, accountability, and even equity for some entities like the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). As Singh et al (2023) note, public sector organizations, including those in the judiciary, employ some rigid, compliance-driven, and transparency-obsessed bureaucratic processes. These processes often entail stringent criteria for selecting suppliers, stringent contract management policies, and constant monitoring of suppliers' performance.

A quantitative analysis of supplier methods for development in public sector enterprises was carried out in China by Zhang and Liu (2021). Their study used structural equation modeling to investigate how supplier development affects procurement performance using survey data gathered from procurement managers in several state-owned businesses. The findings showed a strong and favorable correlation between improved supplier delivery dependability and cost effectiveness and supplier development programs, such as training and collaborative process enhancements. However, the study only looked at Asian economies with comparatively developed procurement infrastructures, which left out information about how well these approaches work in developing nations with fewer resources and distinct institutional settings.

Wang and Zhang (2024) used a longitudinal quantitative study to examine procurement performance and supplier development in China's industrial SOEs. The authors used sophisticated econometric models to evaluate the long-term effects of supplier development on cost reduction, quality improvement, and delivery reliability using panel data gathered over a five-year period from procurement records and supplier performance measurements. Their results demonstrated that ongoing supplier involvement and collaborative innovation projects greatly improve procurement effectiveness and competitiveness. Nonetheless, their research was conducted in a highly regulated, industrialized setting with comparatively developed procurement infrastructures. This calls into question whether their findings can be applied to less established public sectors with various institutional limits, like Zimbabwe's Judicial Service Commission, where supplier development initiatives may encounter unique operational and regulatory obstacles.

In a similar way, Ghosh and Chandra (2021) carried out a study on supplier development strategies in the public healthcare industry in India. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers combined in-depth interviews with important supply chain stakeholders with survey data from procurement officials in government hospitals. By cutting lead times and improving the quality of medical supplies, they emphasized how supplier development initiatives—particularly training and capacity-building programs—significantly increased procurement efficiency. However, the study's conclusions are not as applicable to other public sector organizations like judicial or legal services because it was primarily focused on healthcare institutions with particular procurement requirements. Additionally, because the study was carried out in a developing nation, it did not fully address the institutional difficulties that state-owned businesses with intricate bureaucratic processes, such as those in Zimbabwe, face.

In contrast, a qualitative case study was conducted in South Africa by Mandiriza and Fourie (2023) to examine the role of stakeholders in supplier development for municipal water infrastructure projects. Their study used document analysis and semi-structured interviews to investigate the relationship between supplier performance and project success and stakeholder engagement. The results showed that active stakeholder participation increased procurement transparency and built trust, which in turn enhanced service delivery and supplier responsiveness. Although this study focused on supplier development in underdeveloped nations, it only looked at infrastructure projects and local government settings, ignoring national-level or judicial SOEs like the JSC, whose procurement procedures and difficulties may be very different.

Additionally, O'Donovan and Loughran (2023) investigated the influence of supplier development in enhancing procurement outcomes in public healthcare facilities in Ireland through a qualitative study. Case studies and interviews with suppliers and procurement managers from several hospitals were part of their research. According to the study, strengthening supplier capability and cultivating cooperative partnerships resulted in more robust supply chains, increased innovation, and better service quality. Additionally, they underlined how crucial it is to match procurement tactics with more general public sector objectives, such as sustainability and the production of social value. The study's conclusions could not apply entirely to SOEs in underdeveloped nations, like Zimbabwe's Judicial Service Commission, whose institutional structures and resource availability vary significantly.

Focusing on training and other forms of active collaboration with the suppliers can lead to better performance, lower prices, and greater adherence to contract terms based on Ghosh and Chandra's (2021) study on public sector supplier development and its impact on procurement outcomes. These strategies may improve operational outcomes by preparing providers to meet the specific demands of judicial service such as punctuality, legal compliance, and adherence to quality measures. Despite these findings, little is known about how these supplier control techniques are applied within corporations and their impact, if any, on judicial processes. Additional studies are needed to determine how these management strategies, tailored specifically to the procurement procedures of the organization, can be designed to effectively manage suppliers in relation to the organizational mission.

Changalima et al, (2022) used a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews with procurement officers in several SOEs, to investigate supplier development and procurement performance in Tanzania's public sector. Strategic supplier development improved procurement results and contract management effectiveness, especially in terms of lowering delays and enhancing compliance, according to their analysis. Although they provided insightful information about public procurement in East Africa, their study concentrated mostly on contract management procedures, paying less attention to the institutional and human capital elements that are essential to the execution of reform in judicial or legal sector organizations.

With a focus on SOEs that receive foreign aid, Ngoma and Sibanda (2021) empirically examined the impact of donor funding on public procurement procedures in Zimbabwe. The study, which included interviews and cross-sectional survey data, discovered that donor-driven procurement criteria forced SOEs to enhance transparency and implement supplier development practices. Although the study focused on donor-funded programs, it did not examine how institutional pressures impact supplier development or internal capacity building in independent organizations like the JSC.

It is particularly problematic to manage suppliers within public sector organizations such as the JSC due to the overly complicated public procurement processes, the multitude of regulations, and the overly intrusive political influence. O'Donovan and Loughran (2023) analyzed the impact of transaction costs on public procurement and argue that supplier management is difficult because of legislative inflexibility, political bottlenecks, and managing multiple intertwining parties. They argue that these factors tend to increase the control and enforcement costs, which leads to inefficient procurement.

Moreover, Zhao and co-authors (2022) argue that public procurement agencies are often confronted with issues such as political interference, breach of contract quality standards, or procrastination in contract performance. Political considerations may lead to procrastination in the finalization of the list of the selected suppliers, while the lack of sufficient and defined control mechanisms may facilitate supplier non-compliance. According to the findings, to mitigate these problems, such bodies as the JSC would benefit from implementing more flexible and agile approaches to supplier management. However, there remain compelling concerns regarding how exactly the JSC deals with these challenges in its procurement systems, especially concerning the management of political interference and supplier accountability. Choosing a supplier is very crucial in the procurement cycle, especially in the public sector where ethics and legal compliance are expected to take center stage (Singh et al 2023).

(2023) claimed that overly rigid policies often create problems in identifying potential suppliers for public sector undertakings, which in turn results in the slowing down of procurement cycles and inhibits flexibility. Supporting Zheng's reasoning, this study analyzes the cost of transactions, especially those associated with locating and evaluating potential suppliers. Public scrutiny exacerbates the situation, requiring bound selection processes to uphold integrity, fairness, and transparency, thus complicating the vendor selection process further.

Although such policies are important for ensuring transparency and curbing corrupt practices, Zhang and Liu (2021) argue that these policies often ignore optimal pathways to reasonably efficient supplier selection and tend to build walls related to compliance costs, both monetary and temporal. These barriers in the eyes of Wang and Zhang (2024) concern the belt of criteria dominated by compliance that public sector firms tend to overuse, which leads to the neglect of the lasting strategic value of suppliers, thus negatively impacting procurement outcomes.

The State-Owned Enterprises, as suggested by the problems outlined in previous sections, would benefit from implementing multiple techniques aimed at refining shareholder management.

According to Ghosh and Chandra (2021), support monitoring techniques can be relaxed with the introduction of training and performance improvement initiatives. These initiatives can build supplier capabilities. The competencies that suppliers possess are refined to the requirements of the JSC in particular, which narrows the chances of non-compliance and performance issues. Performance-based contracts are of primary importance in several other public procurement contexts; in this case, O'Donovan and Loughran (2023) argue performance contracts allow greater control at lower levels and provide more freedom to actual suppliers in controlling their relationships with their suppliers while also meeting some requirements set by the contracts.

There is little to no prior research that specifically addresses the issues the JSC encounters in trying to manage suppliers under these constraints, however. Zhao et al. (2022) do not consider The JSC and the specific issues it faces in their study despite discussing how political gridlocks and legal constraints overly incur transaction costs in public procurement. Over and above these transaction costs, the JSC’s other burden as a body corporate is further peculiar stresses such as political interference and heightened public and Government scrutiny. Zhao et al. (2022) does not analyse how these limitations affect the JSC's procurement processes.

Many researchers have focused on the steps involved in selecting contractors for government tenders, noting the role of the contractor selection decision as a significant component of public procurement (Singh et al., 2023; Zhang & Liu, 2021). There is, however, no scholarship which discusses how the JSC executes the control of the selection of the suppliers. Most of the material that is available seems to focus on general public procurement procedures which may not address the specific needs of the JSC and its position in the legal order. For example, Wang and Zhang (2024) discuss supplier selection based on cost and quality, but fail to consider how those aspects may be defined for judicial services where ethics, reliability, and legal compliance are paramount.

A comprehensive examination of the JSC's literature fails to provide an insight into how it balances the tension between rigorous supplier vetting processes and operational flexibility and efficiency. Additionally, Zhang and Liu (2021) emphasize the procurement process's bottleneck within strict regulatory frameworks; however, they do not particularly explain the impact of these frameworks on the judicial branch. Consequently, there is a gap in literature on how the JSC could optimally design its supplier selection process within the confines of institutional, legal, and organizational frameworks while ensuring equity, legality, and maximum service delivery.

According to multiple studies, adopting supplier development initiatives, e-procurement systems, and performance-based contracts can alleviate challenges encountered by public sector procurement organizations (Ghosh & Chandra, 2021; Zhao et al., 2022). While these suggestions have been thoroughly investigated within the public sector, it remains unknown whether they extend to judicial entities such as the JSC. O'Donovan and Loughran (2023) discuss the potential of performance-based contracts to reduce transaction costs while increasing supplier accountability, but fail to address how these contracts can be tailored to the JSC, where legal and ethical compliance is as paramount as cost-effectiveness.

Given the insights provided by public sector procurement studies, one of the glaring gaps that remain unfilled is the unique challenges and tailor-made solutions pertaining to the JSC. Even though Singh et al. (2023), Ghosh and Chandra (2021), Zhao et al. (2022) have contributed to the field, none of these studies examine the tailoring of supplier management practices, strategies, and detailed solutions to the specific needs of the judicial sector or focus on the JSC. There is especially a gap in research regarding the JSC's supplier management processes and the strategic development of provider alliances aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, considering the impacts of transaction costs, political influence, and legal confines competing for institutional resources.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Introduction

In order to address the research questions listed in Chapter 1, this chapter describes the methods used in the study. The purpose of the study determines the methodology and is focused on an evaluation of the most suitable approach strategy for answering the research questions. This chapter describes the research methodology of the study that was utilized to achieve the objectives of the study. Research methodology is a comprehensive explanation of the measures and techniques that were used while collecting, processing and analysing data Pandey and Pandey (2021). This chapter describes the research design, study population sample used, data collection instruments, procedures, analysis management and the ethical considerations that the study used, the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires.

3.2 Research philosophy

3.2.1 Positivist (quantitative) research

Positivist research is mainly quantitative and includes the use of numerical measurements and statistical analysis of measurements to evaluate social phenomena. The positivist research philosophy used in this study is in line with a quantitative methodology, which is best suited for objectively and measurably analyzing the connection between procurement performance and supplier development. The foundation of positivism is the conviction that reality is external and measurable by empirical evidence (Saunders et al., 2021). Because it permits the use of standardized tools, such questionnaires, to gather numerical data from procurement officials, this philosophy is suitable for this study. This allows for statistical analysis and the generalization of findings within the Judicial Service Commission (JSC).

A quantitative approach makes it easier to test hypotheses and provides a methodical way to evaluate the relationship between procurement outcomes like cost effectiveness, compliance, and delivery performance and variables like training, supplier collaboration, and process improvement (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022). A positivist, quantitative approach has been successfully used in recent public procurement research to examine related topics. For instance, Wang and Zhang (2024) used econometric models and a positivist methodology to assess supplier performance across Chinese SOEs, demonstrating that large-scale, objective data sets produce reliable and consistent results. Similarly, Changalima et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of statistically sound evidence in guiding procurement reforms by using quantitative analysis to investigate the impact of supplier development on procurement efficiency in Tanzanian SOEs. By using this approach, the current study guarantees the gathering of accurate, legitimate, and repeatable data, advancing a more scientific comprehension of the ways in which supplier development programs may affect procurement performance in Zimbabwe's public sector organizations.

3.3 Research Design

There is always a gap in literature that looks at impact of supplier development on procurement performance in relation to state owned organizations which include the Judicial Service Commission and this is perhaps why they do not address these issues at all. This study seeks to further this understanding of the issue. It is, indeed, a descriptive study design. There is no denying that a quite a number of other studies that have looked at this issue of supplier development in state owned organizations have employed this design. When talking about lack of such data, which is a simple description, this constitutes a basic research gap which every researcher seeks to bridge. Descriptive research designs generally use structured surveys, interviews, or observation as primary tools to collect data about characteristics and behaviors of an observable group or area of interest.

Descriptive research enables the analysis of methods concerning supplier relationships and their influence on procurement outputs such as supply dependability, cost efficiency, and overall organizational productivity during supplier development and procurement performance. As an example, Chikozho et al (2022) studied the impact of supplier development policies on procurement performance in state-owned firms in Zimbabwe from a descriptive research perspective. Also, Ndlovu (2023) employed a descriptive research design to investigate the relationship between efficacy in procurement by government agencies and collaboration with the suppliers from the perspective of supplier engagement.

These studies sought to determine relationships and trends between supplier development activities and procurement performance, relying on quantitative data captured through interviews conducted with procurement officers and suppliers. As articulated by Moyo and Chikozho (2021) and Ndlovu (2023), such an approach is effective as it captures the lived reality of the respondents, and therefore, offers information that is actionable to change strategic procurement processes within the public sector. Researchers may recommend focused interventions to improve procurement performance in state-owned enterprises and pinpoint areas for improvement in supplier development plans by using descriptive research.

3.4 Target Population

Population can be defined as the study population includes all aspects of the phenomenon under investigation by the researcher (Ayyash, 2017). The population of the study consisted of all Public Institutions in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has 107 parastatals and state-owned businesses as of 2023 (Sibanda, 2024). According to Rahi (2017), a sample is drawn from the target population to save time because it is not realistically possible to conduct research on the entire target population. Generally, the researcher aims to choose a sample that is free of bias. Sampling is of great importance as it lowers the research costs, leads to better results accuracy, and ease of access to research participants. The study must be measured enough to legitimise the study of facts. The researcher used Judicial Service Commission (JSC) in this study and institution was contacted requesting permission to participate in the study. The members of staff from the Senior Management, Middle Management, Operations Department and Procurement Committee participated in the survey.According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), participants are selected purposefully, a technique known as purposive sampling to understand the research problem and systematic or random sampling or large sample/population is not always necessary.

3.5 Sampling Method

Taherdoost (2016) argued that it is important to use the appropriate sampling technique to select the representative sample as well as the necessary sample size. To ensure that all members of the subpopulation have an equal chance of being selected, this study used a probability sample (simple random sampling) for the quantitative aspect of the study. The lack of sampling generalizations led the researcher to choose random sampling and use it to provide representation of generalization as well as precision regarding the population. Moyo and Chikozho (2021) for instance, randomly selected procurement officials from different state-owned businesses to evaluate the impact of supplier development on procurement efficiency. Also, Ndlovu (2023) used random sampling to select suppliers from different government contracted servicing industries ensuring that the sample represented homogeneous and heterogeneous types of suppliers and the diverse procurement processes. Here, random sampling is particularly advantageous in reducing selection bias, and thus providing more accurate and reliable results. Members of the studied population were randomly selected from the defined region which increases the probability of actually being correct about the dynamics of supplier development and procurement performance vis-a-vis public sector in the other big four sectors.

3.6 Research Instruments

According to Mchunu (2019), the research instruments were designed to collect as much data as possible. There are two main sources of data used by researchers namely primary and secondary data. The study was based on primary data and the data was collected using structured questionnaires. Primary methods utilize the data collected by the researcher directly from the participants. In the current research study, the researcher has provided questionnaires. The data collection instruments for this study were closed questionnaire. The target respondents were the staff from the JSC key departments.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire was physically distributed to the participants. The researcher prepared a study tool to understand the significance of the procurement function in the public sector; the researcher followed the following steps to build the questionnaire:

1. To understand and take advantage of the administrative literature and previous studies relevant to the subject of the study in the development of the questionnaire and in the composition of its stipulations.
2. In determining the components of the questionnaire and its stipulations, the researcher consulted a number of experienced individuals.
3. Identifying the key areas that the questionnaire covers.
4. Determination of the paragraphs which fall within each factor.

5. There are already two basic parts to the design of the questionnaire in the initial image.

Questions can be closed or open ended and are addressed by taking into account the demographics of consumers as well as their preferences. This study embraced the standard e-learning acceptance model (ELAM) questionnaire as proposed by Farida and Sridhar (2009). This has a five-point Likert scale to be the primary strategy in the survey, using the Likert scale (1-5) varying from strongly disagree to strongly agree, whereby:

- 1- Strongly disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly agree.

The questionnaire contains instructions that are detailed, clear and concise, and was designed to elicit simple answers. An introductory letter notified respondents about the essence and motivation behind this study. To answer the questionnaire, respondents were encouraged to pick the most rational and sincere approach. Participants were also promised that the information will be kept confidential and told not to write any name or information that might refer to them or their character.

In addition, it explained that participation in the survey was willful and that without penalty, one would pull back at any point. This type of research design was chosen after taking into account the type of universe and its composition, the study goals, the sampling frame, and the precision design. The procurement function in the public sector greatly influences the area of study. Choosing the research area was therefore based on the control procedures that have been put in place.

Each questionnaire contained two sections:

Section One: Questions about the respondents' personal details including the age, gender, duration of employment with the organisation, educational credentials, and their broad designation.

Section Two: Questions about the significancy of the procurement function in the public sector as guided by the research aims, objectives, questions and hypotheses.

The researcher used close-ended questions to provide the respondents with an appropriate forum to clarify their views.

Advantages of using questionnaires

Given the study's positivist views and quantitative approach, there are a number of significant benefits to using questionnaires as the main data collection method. First, the researcher can obtain objective, quantifiable data on supplier development practices and procurement performance across various departments within the Judicial Service Commission by using questionnaires, which are very effective at gathering standardized data from a large number of respondents (Saunders et al., 2021). This improves the capacity to spot correlations, patterns, and broadly applicable trends. Second, relevance and clarity are guaranteed by a carefully crafted questionnaire that is adapted to the unique circumstances of Zimbabwe's public sector. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2022), a well-crafted questionnaire that is customized for the unique circumstances of Zimbabwe's public sector guarantees relevance and clarity, which improves response accuracy and reduces ambiguity.

Third, questionnaires save money and time, particularly when used online, which is important in a setting with limited resources like Zimbabwe (Bryman, 2021). They also provide confidentiality and anonymity, which promotes more candid answers on touchy subjects including supplier prejudice, corruption, and inefficient procurement. Additionally, the tool improves validity and comparability by aligning with previous empirical studies by pre-structuring the questions based on existing factors, such as supplier collaboration, training, and performance measures (Changalima et al., 2022; Wang & Zhang, 2024). Overall, using a customized questionnaire facilitates strong statistical analysis, which makes it a good instrument for assessing how well supplier development programs work in state-owned companies like the JSC.

Disadvantages

Even though surveys provide numerous benefits, there are a number of drawbacks that should be noted, particularly when considering Zimbabwe's governmental institutions. One significant drawback is the possibility of poor response rates, which could jeopardize the data's representativeness and dependability (Bryman, 2021). There is a chance of non-response bias at state-owned organizations like the Judicial Service Commission (JSC), where the workload and bureaucratic culture may deter participation. This is especially true if important procurement officers neglect to fill out the questionnaire. Another drawback is the lack of context and depth; questionnaires usually limit answers to pre-established choices, making it difficult to get more in-depth information or delve deeper into complicated topics like systemic procurement difficulties, informal supplier relationships, or internal political influence (Saunders et al., 2021).

Furthermore, if the questions are not properly tailored to the local procurement environment or if the respondents are unfamiliar with the study language, they may misunderstand the questions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022). In environments with limited resources or multilingual populations, where public officials may not speak English as their first language, this danger is particularly pertinent. Additionally, questionnaires use self-reported data, which can be skewed by social desirability bias. Respondents may give a more positive picture of their departments or practices, especially when discussing delicate subjects like corruption, supplier favoritism, or inefficient performance (Chirasha et al., 2022). Last but not least, after they are delivered, questionnaires provide little flexibility, making it challenging to investigate developing themes or provide clarification for unclear responses without conducting follow-up interviews. These drawbacks imply that although surveys are useful for statistical analysis, qualitative approaches might need to be used in addition to them to give a more comprehensive picture of supplier development and procurement in SOEs.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

There are processes applied when administering instruments and gathering data from the subjects being examined. The questionnaires were distributed to the 100 participants. Primary data will be collected using structured questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions which will have five sections; background information, supplier selection procedures, buyer-supplier relationships, organizational capacity and lastly ethical practices. Structured questions save on time and are easier to analyse. Questionnaires are efficient, cheap and easy to be administered. Secondary data was collected from company publications and annual reports.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

Descriptive statistics are commonly used in data analysis to summarize and characterize the features of the collected data in studies that look at how supplier development affects procurement performance in state-owned organizations like the Judicial Service Commission. Without exploring the connections between variables, descriptive statistics offer a summary of the participants' answers by highlighting trends and key tendencies. Measures like means, frequencies, percentages, and standard deviations are examples of descriptive statistics that are frequently employed. These materials contribute to understanding how suppliers and procurement personnel feel regarding the impact of supplier development programs on procurement performance through the distribution of the answers received.

Moyo and Chikozho (2021) used descriptive statistics to capture the responses' frequency concerning various supplier development methods such as collaboration, training, and capacity building. Then, there was an attempt to enumerate how the respondents experienced enhanced procurement efficiency due to these procedures in their respective state-owned entities. Procurement officers' average assessments based on the supplier development program's impact are also calculated through central tendency measures, usually mean scores. For example, if procurement officers evaluate the influence of supplier development on procurement performance as impactful, and do so uniformly, then a higher mean score would indicate a positive assessment.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Research accuracy and consistency is a product of the validity and reliability of the results when it comes to impact assessment of supplier development on procurement performance in state owned entities such as Judicial Service Commission. Validity is also the extent to which a measuring instrument is relevant to the topic being researched.

Content validity in quantitative research is critical for ensuring that all relevant areas for supplier development and procurement performance are captured in the survey or questionnaire. In Moyo and Chikozho (2021), for example, content validity was ensured through expert advice and aligning survey questions with literature's body concerning supplier development and procurement efficiency. This guarantees that the tool captures all elements of supplier development such as collaboration, monitoring, and training which are fundamental when evaluating procurement performance. To confirm accurate measurement of procurement performance and supplier development, construct validity is also essential. Ndlovu (2023) evaluated the construct validity of their study by assessing the extent to which procurement effectiveness and supplier relationship management were used in the survey's items. In order to establish construct validity and ensure the survey items correspond with the expected theoretical dimensions, many researchers use factor analysis.

In the measurement analysis, the instrument's reliability, or the capacity of its scales to produce the same consistency is important. Collecting data with an unforeseen scale is analogous to taking measurements with an elastic tape measure; the same thing can be measured multiple times, but the length will vary each time (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). Cronbach's Alpha is a good test for internal consistency and reliability. Reliabilities less than 0.60 are considered poor, those in the 0.70 range are adequate, and those greater than 0.80 are acceptable (Sekaran and Bougie 2016).

The questionnaires ensured that confidentiality was maintained by not asking for the respondent's personal information, resulting in the questionnaires becoming anonymous. Investigator's work was more reliable since respondents were able to respond honestly and without fear. Less respondents are trustworthy than a significant number of untrustworthy ones. As a result, the researcher collected data from a limited number of respondents who work in manufacturing firms' finance department. The internal stabilities of each concept were examined using reliability analysis, ensuring a high degree of generalisation around substances in the assessment. The reliability of primary data was also established by using questionnaires to collect information on the company's current level of environmental performance and economic impact. The questionnaire was completed by finance personnel who are generally deemed to be trustworthy. Some of the finance personnel belong to professional bodies that bind their actions to high ethical values. The case study's population and data collection methods are appropriate for the research problem. The case study's reliability was established by utilizing multiple sources of evidence. As a result, the findings of this case study are thought to be more accurate and convincing.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The data for this study was collected after receiving the gatekeeper's letter from the university. Consent from the Head of Departments under JSC was obtained as well before collecting data from the selected participants. Personal details like contact details will not be included on the questionnaires.

3.11 Conclusion

To illustrate the study, the researchers applied the quantitative method approach. In this chapter the researcher described the research method and instruments used to collect and analyse data. The researcher has defined the research instruments, methodology, design, and analysis, all of which are important aspects of this study. There has been a formalization of research methods. The researcher assessed the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires as sources of information. A procedure for selecting participants who are representative of the population was also chosen and explained by the researcher. The information gathered will be displayed in charts and tables, making it easier for readers to comprehend and interpret the information. The next chapter (Chapter 4) will present the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Introduction

The Judicial Service Commission's (JSC) supplier management procedures are thoroughly examined in this chapter. The investigation addresses important research topics aimed at comprehending the JSC's supplier management practices, strategies, difficulties, supplier selection problems, and possible solutions. Focusing on the impact of supplier management techniques on the JSC's operations and procurement performance, the results have been segmented based on the objectives of the study. The analysis identifies the strengths and some of the key areas for improvement within supplier management as communication, efficiency, organizational structure, and evaluative measures from faced-sourced vendors. The conclusions made provide a rational foundation proposal JSC is facing with supplier relationship management and procurement outcome improvement.

4.2 Distribution of Participants by Demographic Variables and Response Rate

Table 4.1

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Response Rate	-	100	100%
Sex	Male	55	55%
	Female	45	45%
Age (years)	18-25	30	30%
	25-35	35	35%
	35-45	15	15%
	45-55	15	15%
	55 and above	5	5%
Position in Org.	Operations	20	20%
	Procurement Committee	15	15%
	Middle Management	25	25%
	Senior Management	40	40%

Source: Author (2025)

This study defines response rate as the percentage of completed questionnaires returned by participants out of the total number distributed. The responses from the 100 questionnaires administered to the JSC participants are critical to the overall outcomes' reliability and validity. As noted in this study, high response rates such as 100% have been reported in the literature as more reliable and representative. A higher response rate, as highlighted by Chikohora and Ncube (2020), enriches the data and reduces the scope of bias in the outcomes. This is particularly important in procurement studies, because understanding the full scope of supplier management procedures requires multiple organizational levels and stakeholder engagement.

The sample also consisted of 55% male respondents and 45% female respondents. Although men are slightly predominant in comparison to women, it still reflects a balanced gender distribution. Gender relations as a sociological phenomenon have become of growing interest to scholars in public administration concerning management and procurement functions of supplier management system. According to earlier research by Jackson et al. (2022), decision-making and the inclusion of procurement processes may be impacted by gender balance in procurement management teams. In particular, gender diversity in procurement decision-making promotes more balanced viewpoints on supplier selection, which in turn fosters a greater range of options and, frequently, more ethical procurement decisions, according to Jackson et al. (2022).The marginally greater male representation on the JSC may be a reflection of broader patterns in many businesses where procurement positions, particularly those at higher levels, have traditionally been dominated by males (Wheeler, 2020). However, Barnes et al. (2021) discovered that procurement performance improves when gender balance is somewhat near, as it is in this study, because of the diversity of viewpoints that are brought to the table. Consequently, the respondents' gender distribution may indicate that supplier management practices and strategies would profit from a diversity of viewpoints, leading to better supplier selection and management results.

Table 4.1 reveals that 45 respondents, or 45% of the sample, were female and 55 respondents, or 55% of the sample, were male. According to the data, both genders were represented, which means that gender bias did not affect the outcomes.

Given that people of different ages may respond differently to a given topic, Sekaran and Bougie (2023) suggested that age was a crucial variable to examine in the analysis of the respondents. The age distribution of the respondents reveals that the majority (35%) were in the 25–35 age range, with 30% falling into the 18–25 age range. The proportion of responders in the higher age groups declined, with only 15% falling into the 35–45 and 45–55 age groups. The shift toward younger employees aligns with the growing global participation of youth in the public sector, particularly in procurement. Younger professionals in procurement tend to be more digitally savvy and innovative, which can positively affect supplier relationships through the application of new technologies, advanced data analytics, automation, and streamlined workflows, as noted by Tembo and Wabala (2022).

Such a distribution may imply that younger JSC procurement professionals are more willing to implement new technologies or contemporary practices of supplier relations which increases operational efficiency and transparency. At the same time, there seems to be a gap in procurement experience perhaps due to a lack of older, seasoned staff in decision-making positions, which explains the low percentage of older respondents 35-45 years: 15%, 55 years and above: 5%. This is relevant because research suggests that while younger employees bring in fresh ideas, seasoned staff are essential for solving complex procurement problems, particularly in the public sector where policies and bureaucracy slow down decision making (Patel, 2020). The survey's skewed representation suggests that senior employees at JSC are underrepresented, indicating that the organization struggles with balancing youthful creativity and strategic insight needed for sophisticated procurement decisions.

As illustrated in Table 4.1, middle management captured 40% of the responses while being followed by senior management with 25%, operational staff with 20% and the procurement committee with 15%. This distribution implies that people in administrative and operational positions, as opposed to those at the strategic decision-making level (such as the procurement committee), have a greater influence on the viewpoints expressed in this poll. According to research by Ncube and Wabala (2021), middle management frequently plays a crucial role in operationalizing procurement strategies and guaranteeing that supplier management policies are followed in real-world situations. Nonetheless, their choices might be impacted by orders from procurement committees and top management, which could account for the comparatively unbiased reactions to supplier management practices and tactics in the JSC.

Karanja (2021), on the other hand, highlighted that procurement committees, which are usually composed of higher-level officials, have more control over strategic procurement choices and that their participation in supplier management procedures tends to affect the effectiveness of procurement as a whole. Members of the procurement committee (15%) and operational personnel

(20%) may have responded less directly to supplier management, especially when it comes to strategic decision-making. Tung (2023) contends that senior management and operational staff alignment is crucial to the success of procurement management, implying that there may be a divide between these groups in the JSC.

As per the experience within the company, 35% of respondents had 6-10 years of experience while 30% had 1-5 years. 10% have under a year's experience, as do 10% with over 15 years. Respondents, for the most part, seem to understand the inner workings of the JSC's supplier management systems, based on their moderate to high (1–10 years) experience. This aligns with Chikohora and Ncube (2020) research which found that managing complex supplier relationships and strategic decision making at the procurement level is largely determined by experience. On the other hand, the relatively small proportion of responders that have more than 15 years of experience could suggest a troubling lack of sustained career development within the JSC procurement function, or an actual attrition of more senior procurement personnel. Mhlanga (2022) discussed that organizational knowledge and years of experience are vital to the effective management and selection of suppliers, particularly for state owned enterprises (SOEs) where procurement involves complex relationships with contractors and enduring commitments. Because of this, the JSC may struggle to maintain diminishing resources and fully exploit the wealth of information available around supplier management, impacting the overall efficacy of the JSCs procurement processes.

4.3 Presentation and Explanation of the Results

In this part, we analyze in detail the responses to the supplier management practices questionnaire given to 100 Judicial Service Commission (JSC) participants. The analysis addresses important research questions aimed at understanding the supplier management practices, strategies, challenges, complicated issues surrounding their selection, and possible ways through which the JSC can address them. To illustrate how supplier management practices influence the operations and procurement performance of the JSC, the outcomes are structured according to the specific objectives of the study.

4.3.1 Establish supplier management practices of Judicial Service Commission.

In this case, the study attempts to determine the accessibility, consistency, and comprehensiveness of JSC's supplier managers' actions. This analysis contributes new perspectives to the existing literature on supplier relationship management and procurement process within the organization.

Aspect	Strongly Disagree (SD) (%)	Disagree (D) (%)	Neutral (N) (%)	Agree (A) (%)	Strongly (SA) (%)	Agree
1.The Judicial Service Commission has clear supplier management procedures in place.	4%	12%	10%	40%	34%	
2.The Commission consistently follows its supplier management procedures.	4%	12%	12%	44%	28%	
3.Supplier management procedures in the Commission are well documented and accessible to all relevant staff.	6%	14%	10%	40%	30%	

Table 4.2

Most respondents, in this case 74% as highlighted in Table 4.2, agreed or strongly agreed with the assertion that JSC has defined supplier management methods which means procedures have been created. Responsive's attempts to formulate clear policies for controlling suppliers seems to have worked. Nonetheless, the remaining 16% (4% SD + 12% D) suggests that some respondents do not think the processes are transparent enough or efficient enough. According to recent research, efficient procurement operations depend on supplier management processes being clear. Clear processes improve supplier relationships and lower operational errors, according to Mhlanga (2022). In a comparable manner, Chikohora and Ncube (2020) suggested that companies with clear procedures prevent misunderstandings and delays in supplier relationships, while Wheeler (2020) underlined that clear supplier management practices guarantee seamless procurement processes.

Clear supplier management practices are a strategic organizational resource that aids in supplier relationship optimization, according to the Resource-Based View (RBV). The firm can improve procurement performance by efficiently utilizing the capabilities of its suppliers thanks to these well-defined procedures. Clear procedures minimize misunderstandings, renegotiations, and disagreements, which lowers transaction costs, according to TCE. Clear supplier management procedures lower coordination costs by ensuring that suppliers and the JSC are aware of expectations.

A rather high degree of consistency in procurement policies is shown by the fact that 72% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the JSC consistently follows its supplier management procedures. Nonetheless, the 16% who disagree or are uncertain (12% D + 4% SD) indicates that a small percentage of respondents believe that processes are not being followed consistently. For a business to function efficiently, supplier management protocols must be followed consistently. According to Patel (2021), stronger connections and better supplier accountability result from regular methods. According to Jackson et al. (2022), following supplier management standards guarantees that procurement processes run smoothly, lowering errors and enhancing supplier cooperation. Consistent supplier management practices support the upkeep of solid supplier relationships and guarantee the best possible use of supplier resources, according to RBV. The JSC is able to establish enduring, mutually beneficial partnerships with suppliers because of this constancy. Consistently adhering to protocols in TCE lowers transaction costs related to renegotiations, changes, and conflict resolution while also reducing uncertainty.

A positive assessment of the JSC's supplier management processes' accessibility and transparency is indicated by the 70% of respondents who agree or strongly agree that they are well-documented and available to all pertinent staff. The remaining 20%, however (6% SD + 14% D), suggests that some respondents believe these procedures are not sufficiently recorded or made available to all pertinent workers. Procedures that are well-documented are crucial to the effectiveness of an organization. Clear documentation guarantees that employees are prepared to follow procedures consistently and successfully, according to Huang et al. (2021). According to Wheeler (2020), firms experience less mistakes and are better able to teach employees when procurement processes are well-documented and readily available. This improves supplier management and procurement results.

According to the RBV viewpoint, a crucial organizational capacity that enables the JSC to optimize the value obtained from supplier partnerships is well-documented supplier management procedures. The JSC guarantees that all pertinent employees may efficiently manage suppliers by offering clear and understandable guidelines, which enhances procurement results. By lowering the need for explanation and the possibility of misunderstandings or disputes, TCE claims that clear and easily available procedures reduce transaction costs.

4.3.2 Examining how supplier management strategies impact the operations of Judicial Service Commission.

This was among the objectives of the study. The respondents were given assertions on procurement procedures and asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with the statement the supplier management procedures followed by the Judicial Service Commission. The questions' response scale was as follows;

Aspect	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1. Supplier management strategies improve operational efficiency.	4%	10%	12%	40%	34%
2. Supplier management strategies ensure timely delivery.	5%	8%	15%	38%	34%
3. Effective supplier management improves product/service quality.	6%	9%	20%	37%	28%
4. Supplier management strategies lead to cost savings.	7%	11%	20%	38%	24%

Table 4.3

Supplier management strategies increase operational efficiency, according to the majority of respondents (74%) who agree or strongly agree as shown in the table 4.3. The implication is that the JSC's supplier management procedures are thought to significantly enhance daily operational operations. Numerous studies have demonstrated the crucial connection between improved operational efficiency and efficient supplier management. Strong supplier ties in SOEs lead to more efficient procurement procedures, less delays, and better resource allocation, claim Jackson et al. (2022). Patel (2021) also discovered that strategic supplier management frequently results in improved coordination, which lowers procurement operations' inefficiencies, especially in state-owned enterprises.

These findings are supported by the JSC's affirmative response, which shows that supplier management techniques can, in fact, improve operational performance by lowering bottlenecks and raising overall productivity when properly applied. Resource Based View also considers the JSC's capacity to establish solid, trustworthy supplier relationships to be a significant asset. The new relationships acquired by the organization help in addressing inefficiencies which enables the organization to utilize the supplier’s knowledge, cut waste, restructure the procurement process, and improve operational productivity.

Most of the respondents (72 percent) support or somewhat support that supplier management practices enable timely delivery of services and goods. This evaluation highlights the predominant belief that supplier relationships and management practices are critical to ensuring procurement demand fulfillment in a timely manner. Many studies focus on the importance of a supplier’s timely delivery. Tembo and Wabala (2022) point out that strategic supplier development enhances responsive and dependable supplier relationships, which directly improves delivery schedules. Their study indicates that close contact with suppliers ensures that delivery times are met consistently. This is crucial in SOEs where procurement delays can disrupt operations and service delivery. These conclusions are verified with the JSC supplier management practices’ results that demonstrate effective supplier management can significantly reduce delays and ensure timely procurement.

In addition, suppliers that are managed properly also improve the quality of the products and services as noted and agreed by 65% of respondents. This positively reflects on JSC’s supplier management practices concerning enhancement of products and services received. The literature on procurement has systematically documented the relationship between supplier management and the quality of goods and services. Wheeler (2020) found that the efficiency of supplier management, which involves regular performance assessment and joint constructive feedback, significantly improves the quality of goods and services. Following this, Chikohora and Ncube (2020) argued that active and continuous supplier development and participation leads to improvement in the quality of goods because suppliers are better prepared to meet or exceed the expected performance issued by their public sector clients. The results of this study reinforce the argument that supplier management strategies, when accurately implemented, can improve the quality of goods and services provided, which is crucial in the overall functioning of procurement in state owned enterprises (SOEs). The premise that supplier relationships as an invaluable asset resource can influence procurement results directly is demonstrated by the 72% agreement on meeting delivery timelines and 65% agreement regarding the quality of products and/or services provided.

Based on RBV, there is a positive correlation between strong supplier relationships and the improvement of product quality and delivery schedules. This would in turn favorably impact operational results for the JSC. The positive responses indicate that the JSC leverages its resources, in this case, management and relationships with suppliers, to gain a competitive advantage in servicing the market. Additionally, a significant majority of participants (74%) concur that supplier management tactics enhance operational effectiveness. According to Transaction Cost Economics Theory, effective supplier relationships save transaction costs by improving communication, lowering uncertainty, and eliminating the need for frequent renegotiation. The JSC can avoid the high transaction costs linked to bad supplier relationships and operational inefficiencies by implementing clear, efficient supplier management practices. This leads to more efficient procurement and improved operational results. TCE's belief that long-term supplier relationships lower uncertainty and guarantee higher quality and reliability is supported by the 72% agreement that supplier management techniques assure timely delivery and the 65% agreement that they increase the quality of products and services. The JSC can guarantee that delivery and quality criteria are fulfilled more reliably and reduce the need for ongoing renegotiation by collaborating with suppliers over time.

Sixty-two percent of those surveyed agree or strongly agree that supplier management practices result in lower procurement costs. Although this still represents a majority, it is somewhat lower than the other categories, indicating that although most respondents acknowledge the possibility of cost savings through supplier management, some might believe that the JSC's current supplier management practices are not entirely cost-effective. One of the main benefits of efficient supplier management is cost reduction. Strategic supplier connections can result in cost savings through better pricing arrangements, better procurement terms, and a decrease in the requirement for restock or emergency purchases, claims Mhlanga (2022). Furthermore, Tung (2023) discovered that SOEs that actively manage their suppliers can attain economies of scale, streamline procurement procedures, and negotiate cheaper pricing. But according to Karanja (2021), it can be difficult to achieve meaningful cost savings through supplier management, especially if procurement strategies are not well aligned with more general financial objectives or if suppliers are not sufficiently collaborated with.

According to the JSC's findings, there might be space for improvement in terms of using supplier management techniques especially for cost reduction, as seen by the lower proportion of strong agreement in this category.RBV offers a useful lens for evaluating this finding, even if the study found that a slightly lower majority (62%) agreed that supplier management tactics result in cost reductions. According to RBV, the JSC could use suppliers' knowledge and skills to cut costs, bargain for lower prices, and streamline procurement procedures if it enhances supplier development and cooperation. The comparatively low response rate here would indicate that in order to fully realize the cost-saving potential, supplier connections must be further developed.

According to TCE, one of the main drivers of cost savings is transaction expenses. The JSC can save money by investing in building solid relationships with its suppliers and lowering transaction expenses. Although the JSC has made progress in reducing transaction costs, additional efforts to do so through strategic supplier development may be required, as seen by the significantly lower agreement (62%) that supplier management tactics result in cost reductions. Through economies of scale, better contract terms, and lower administrative expenses, the JSC may be able to save additional money by forming more cooperative agreements with suppliers.

According to the survey's results, supplier management tactics are thought to have a generally positive impact on the JSC's procurement performance in terms of cost savings, timely delivery, operational efficiency, and product/service quality. The findings are consistent with a large portion of the body of research on state-owned enterprise (SOE) procurement performance and supplier development. The significance of strategic supplier management in improving operational effectiveness and guaranteeing timely delivery two factors that are highly valued within the JSC and is confirmed by studies like those conducted by Patel (2021) and Tembo and Wabala (2022).

4.3.3 Dissect the challenges the Judicial Service Commission encounters in relation to managing suppliers.

Aspect	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.The Commission often faces delays in the delivery of goods or services due to ineffective supplier management.	4%	12%	10%	40%	34%
2.Communication issues with suppliers hinder effective procurement management in the Commission.	2%	6%	20%	38%	34%
3.The Commission has challenges in monitoring and evaluating supplier performance effectively.	10%	10%	15%	37%	28%
4.There is a lack of clarity in the roles and responsibilities of staff managing suppliers.	10%	11%	17%	38%	24%

Table 4.4

According to the survey's findings, 74% of participants (40% agree, 34% strongly agree) say that poor supplier management frequently causes the JSC to experience delays in the supply of goods and services as shown in Table 4.4. This implies that the organization's needs are not being met by supplier management tactics that are either poorly developed or poorly managed. Undoubtedly, suppliers' delivery delays are a key issue in managing suppliers. Businesses who are poor at managing suppliers stand to incur major delays in the procurement processes, operational disruptions, and discontent with the quality of services rendered as noted by Hendricks & Singhal (2021). Likewise, Chikohora and Ncube (2020) reported that SOEs are often victims of supplier delays due to poorly managed contracts, absent performance evaluation systems, and lack of communication between the procurement functions and the suppliers.

Additionally, the noted delay in the supply chain is often the result of poor communication between the suppliers and the procurement staff as pointed out by Khan & Sadiq (2023). Unlike the firms with set procedures for managing performance and meeting supplier expectations, these inefficiencies are most pronounced in the firms which do not have established procedures to manage the delivery and performance expectation of the vendors. Based on the Resource-Based View (RBV), a systemic approach to supplier appreciation as resources aids in fulfilling the organizational prior commitments would remove delays. However, neglecting the vendors could result in operational inefficiencies. As demonstrated, the JSC suffers delays, strains operations, and faces disruption because it cannot optimally utilize resources without properly configured supplier relationships.

(TCE) uses a case study such as supplier relationship management and contract negotiation to explain how poor supplier relationship management directly increases transaction costs associated with renegotiation, delays, and regular procurement schedule changes. The literature on supplier management suggests that ineffective supplier management results in inefficiencies in the procurement activities as well as higher costs for monitoring and enforcing timely deliveries.

Almost all respondents (38% agree, 34% strongly agree) assert that inadequate supplier communication hinders the JSC from executing better procurement management. The above findings indicate how important communication is between the JSC and its suppliers so that procurement processes can be executed without a hitch. From all of the criteria for successful supplier management, effective communication tends to be capitally cited. Tembo & Wabala (2022) highlight the negative impact of inadequate communication between procurement staff and the suppliers which results to breakdowns, delays, and other complications in the procurement process. In the case of the JSC, lack of communication resulted in misconstrued orders, wrong delivery schedules, and inadequacies of organizational needs. There is also a need to ensure that operational delays are mitigated and business processes are conduct seamless, which as Wheeler (2020) points out, requires active, clear communication with suppliers.

Huang et al. (2021) noted that suppliers who actively participate in the communication process and maintaining business contacts with other organizational departments are managed more successfully on procurement. Since the JSC has shown problems concerning the disabled communication systems in other areas, it is reasonable to suggest that some of the current bottlenecks in procurement may be eliminated with a different approach to communication systems.

Per RBV, organizations that maintain supplier relations effectively accrue some advantages. Managing supplier relations as a resource requires dealing with a crucial element, communication, which assists the JSC in aligning the suppliers' capabilities with the organization's needs. This alignment is restricted due to lack of communication on top of the value additions from the supplier relations being diminished. From TCE's view, weak communications increase the transaction costs for the management of procurement. Weak communications, for example, can lead to repetition in clarifications, incorrect orders, and renegotiations among others which increase operational costs. Through improving communication, the JSC can reduce these expenses and improve the efficiency of procurement processes. Data suggests that 28 percent and 37 percent of respondents completely and moderately agree with the claim that the Commission does not effectively monitor and evaluate the performance of the suppliers.

The JSC and other public service SOEs seem not able to efficiently monitor and evaluate their suppliers' performance, as Mhlanga claims they do not possess measure-specific follow-up practices, lacking proper meter systems, are poorly managed, and fall within gaps of having untraceable metrics of suffrage. This suggests that the JSC does not have the ability to systematically review and enhance supplier results. Mhlanga (2022) suggested that poorly defined performance measures and insufficient monitoring make it impossible for businesses, especially SOEs, to evaluate their suppliers and hold them accountable.

This neglect of suppliers KPIs alongside a defined central monitoring system enables enterprises to escape the challenging responsivity of holding suppliers accountable for poor performance— and KPIs become irrelevant. Without set-defined critical performance indicators, there is an absence of measurement tools, giving businesses flexibility whilst enabling them to control accountability acceptance. Supply underperformance and lack of investment on strategy addressing the issue led to poor procurement outputs, driving weaker vendors further deteriorating working relations with their buyers.

As Khan & Sadiq (2023) defined, the possibility of being tied to poorly performed vendors stems from not installing a defined robust procurement schema hinged on proven cardinal (C4) vendors with higher margins policy.</br>Ideal value is not attained and processes vastly diverge being less optimized, managed, or controlled as the case of public SOEs leads to needed public funds causing unregulated waste by enabling enemies of the state posing as contractors to freely transact with public funds unchecked.

Exploiting enabled strategic assets becomes impossible without proper rigorous performance tracking, removing the supplier side from purposed resource-based reasoning removes ignoring supplier side logic enables need to concede are needed for adherence to are used cutting off diminutive rubrics. Strong enabled arranged sustaining connections with having to remove are needed to control strategy managing to achieve necessary peripherals and enabling defined ongoing monitored progress.

In the absence of adequate supervision, the firm stands to lose valuable opportunities for improvement, and suppliers may fall short of delivering quality work. Higher transaction costs stem from an inability to evaluate a supplier's performance. For example, stagnant or sub-standard services come with a heightened cost if evaluation and rectification procedures are bypassed. Lack of sufficient oversight can lead to undue expenses that could be avoided with more active management of supplier performance.

As per the findings of the survey, 38% of respondents agreed while 24% strongly concurred that the duties and obligations of people assigned to manage suppliers are not well-defined. Role ambiguity as well as other organizational deficiencies within the JSC seem to be hampering optimal supplier management. Numerous scholars have analysed role ambiguity in supplier management as a source of organizational ineffectiveness. According to Patel (2021), poorly defined roles in procurement departments can lead to abandonment of critical activities, redundant responsibilities, and ambiguity with regards to responsibility. This is the imbalance that can cause delays, poor management of suppliers, and ineffective decision making. Wheeler (2020) also showed that companies manage supplier relationships more effectively when they have well-defined roles and responsibilities in procurement functions.

An employee's ability to streamline interactions with suppliers and enhance procurement results improves when the employee is fully aware of their specific tasks within the organization. As suggested by the RBV theory, maintaining supplier interactions as valuable assets requires the procurement unit to function within specific scoped roles, duties, and responsibilities. The inefficiency of utilizing supplier resources stems from the absence of clearly defined policies within the organization, which in turn creates ambiguity. TCE theory further supports this assertion by arguing that ambiguity in scope of roles creates greater transaction costs because more coordination, elucidation, and problem solving is required. Coordination and communication costs associated with managing relationships with suppliers is optimized and supplier management is streamlined when roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

The results of prior work correlate with the JSC's supplier management issues concerning delays in supply, gaps in communication, monitoring performance, and unclear roles. These gaps add up to transaction costs that derive straight from inefficient supplier relationship management based on RBV and TCE theories. The JSC can eliminate these barriers and add value by optimizing communication, clarifying employee roles, and implementing better performance monitoring systems in place to lower transaction and operational costs.

4.3.4 To determine concerns which arise during the supplier selection process by the Commission.

Most respondents (72%) agree (42%) or strongly agree (30%) that the Commission's supplier selection procedure is open and equitable as illustrated in Table 4.5. This means that the majority has a belief that the JSC maintains an open and equitable supplier selection mechanism. Nonetheless, 16% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that some respondents believe the process is opaque and unfair. Building trust and guaranteeing the legitimacy of procurement procedures depend heavily on openness and equity in supplier selection. According to Barnes et al. (2021), companies with open and honest supplier selection procedures typically have more cooperation and confidence from their suppliers. Fairness in supplier selection promotes long-term relationships with suppliers and helps avoid disagreements, according to Patel (2021).

According to RBV, a fair and open supplier selection procedure is an important asset for the JSC that supports the upkeep of cordial and helpful supplier relationships. It builds trust, which is necessary for efficiently utilizing supplier capabilities. Contrarily, TCE theory contends that fairness and openness in the supplier selection procedure lower transaction costs associated with renegotiation, disagreements, and possible legal action. Suppliers are less likely to engage in opportunistic behavior when they believe that the selection process is fair.

Sixty-six percent of those surveyed think the Commission selected suppliers based on transparent and uniform standards (38% agree and 28% strongly agree) as shown in Table 4.5. This indicates that people have a positive opinion of the JSC's supplier selecting procedures. 20% disagree or strongly disagree, nevertheless (8% SD + 12% D), indicating some discontent with the criteria's coherence or clarity. In order to guarantee that the supplier selection procedure is equitable and effective, Jackson et al. (2022) assert that precise and uniform criteria are crucial. Using inconsistent criteria might result in misunderstandings, disagreements, and less-than-ideal supplier selections. In order to minimize mistakes, enhance decision-making, and cultivate enduring supplier relationships, Wheeler (2020) highlighted the importance of using clear and unambiguous criteria when choosing suppliers.

According to RBV, the JSC can improve procurement performance and supplier collaboration by using clear and consistent criteria in supplier selection, which is a key organizational capacity. According to TCE theory, transparent criteria lower transaction costs by lowering the possibility of supplier conflicts and opportunistic actions, which are frequent in selection procedures that are ambiguous or inconsistent. According to 72% of respondents, delays are typical in the supplier selection process (38% agree and 34% strongly agree). Procurement delays can result in inefficiencies, higher expenses, and operational disruptions, which makes this a serious worry. However, 12% of respondents disagreed with this statement (4% SD + 8% D), indicating that some respondents do not believe that delays are a significant problem throughout the selecting process. As Mhlanga (2022) discovered, ineffective decision-making and a lack of defined procedures can cause delays in the supplier selection process. These hold-ups may result in lost opportunities and higher expenses. Delays in supplier selection can result in greater procurement costs, customer discontent, and project delays, according to Hendricks & Singhal (2021).

Delays in the supplier selection procedure are seen by RBV as a barrier to efficient supplier relationship management. Delays make it more difficult to choose the best suppliers fast, which restricts the JSC's capacity to take use of supplier skills. Delays raise transaction costs from a TCE standpoint since they extend negotiations and result in inefficiencies in the procurement process that could have been prevented with a more efficient selection procedure.

63% of respondents (38% agree + 25% strongly agree) concur that finding suppliers that can match the unique demands of the JSC is challenging as shown in Table 4.5. This suggests that the JSC may have a difficult time locating suppliers who fully meet its needs, which is a major obstacle in the supplier selection process. Some respondents, however, disagreed, with 22% (10% SD + 12% D) stating that supplier identity is not a significant concern for the Commission. Organizations frequently struggle to find the correct suppliers, especially when there are specialized demands or when supplier competencies are not clearly matched with organizational requirements, according to Chikohora and Ncube (2020). Additionally, Wheeler (2020) pointed out that when an organization's needs are extremely specialized, the process of choosing the correct providers becomes more difficult.

According to RBV, challenges in finding suppliers who can satisfy particular requirements point to a possible weakness in the Commission's capacity to efficiently use its procurement resources. The selection and performance of suppliers may be enhanced by a more methodical approach to supplier identification. TCE would contend that because these challenges lengthen the time and effort required to find and negotiate with suppliers, they raise transaction costs.

Aspect	Strongly Disagree (SD) (%)	Disagree (D) (%)	Neutral (N) (%)	Agree (A) (%)	Strongly Agree (SA) (%)
1.The supplier selection process in the Commission is transparent and fair.	6%	10%	12%	42%	30%
2.The Commission uses clear and consistent criteria for selecting suppliers.	8%	12%	14%	38%	28%
3.The Commission experiences delays in the supplier selection process.	4%	8%	16%	38%	34%
4.There are difficulties in identifying suppliers that meet the Commission's specific needs.	10%	12%	15%	38%	25%

Table 4.5

4.3.5 To determine solutions for resolving issues that arise in the supplier management process.

Aspect	Strongly Disagree (SD) (%)	Disagree (D) (%)	Neutral (N) (%)	Agree (A) (%)	Strongly Agree (SA) (%)
1.Providing additional training for staff would improve supplier management in the Commission.	4%	6%	14%	42%	34%
2.Improved communication tools and channels would resolve most of the issues with suppliers.	2%	4%	16%	44%	34%
3.Regular performance reviews of suppliers are necessary to improve supplier management and procurement performance.	2%	4%	16%	46%	32%
4.Streamlining the supplier selection process would improve supplier management and procurement efficiency.	4%	8%	10%	38%	40%
5. Actively involving suppliers in the decision-making process would improve procurement outcomes and supplier relations.	4%	8%	12%	42%	34%

Table 4.6

76% of respondents concur that giving employees more training will greatly enhance the Commission's supplier management (42% agree and 34% strongly agree). This shows that there is broad agreement that enhancing procurement procedures requires employee training. 10% (4% SD + 6% D) disagreed, indicating that a tiny percentage of respondents don't think more training is necessary. Uncertainty over the necessity of more training was expressed by the 14% who were neutral. Improving supplier management requires educating employees about procurement procedures. According to Chikohora and Ncube (2020), procurement employees with proper training are better able to handle supplier relationships, make wiser judgments, and make less mistakes. According to Patel (2021), more training improves decision-making and supplier negotiations, which raises the effectiveness of procurement. The RBV asserts that employee training improves the Commission's human capital, which is a vital asset that can boost supplier management efficacy. According to TCE, training can reduce transaction costs by minimizing errors, miscommunications, and procurement inefficiencies.

The majority of respondents (78%) think that better channels and methods for communication may address the majority of the problems the Commission has with suppliers (44% agree and 34% strongly agree). This demonstrates unequivocally that respondents believe that communication is essential to strengthening supplier relationships and enhancing procurement management. 16% were neutral and 6% disagreed, suggesting that some respondents may not be entirely certain that communication tools would substantially address the problems. Communication technologies are essential for improving cooperation between suppliers and organizations, according to Barnes et al. (2021). Misunderstandings, delays, and expensive mistakes are avoided with open lines of communication. Better supply chain communication increases cooperation and decreases conflict, which improves procurement results, according to Hendricks & Singhal (2021). According to the RBV theory, enhancing communication tools will improve operational performance by strengthening the JSC's capacity to manage supplier relationships. TCE claims that by reducing miscommunications and increasing negotiating effectiveness, improved communication tools lower transaction costs.

According to 78% of respondents, enhancing supplier management and procurement effectiveness requires regular performance assessments of suppliers (46% agree and 32% strongly agree). This suggests a strong conviction that performance reviews guarantee supplier accountability and help pinpoint areas for development. The finding that 16% were neutral and 6% (2% SD + 4% D) disagreed suggests that some people do not think regular evaluations are important. Regular performance reviews are essential to maintaining supplier relationships and guaranteeing high-quality delivery, according to Jackson et al. (2022). Organizations can monitor supplier performance, align expectations, and promote ongoing development with the aid of performance reviews. According to Wheeler (2020), performance reviews enable businesses to proactively resolve problems and lower the possibility of procurement delays. According to RBV, conducting frequent supplier performance assessments helps create a feedback loop that improves the company's capacity and use of its resources. According to TCE, performance reviews save transaction costs by setting clear expectations and lowering the possibility of suppliers acting opportunistically.

Simplifying the supplier selection process will greatly increase supplier management and procurement efficiency, according to 78% of respondents (38% agreeing and 40% strongly agreeing). This indicates a high degree of consensus that improving procurement performance requires streamlining and expediting the supplier selection process. 10% were neutral, and 12% (4% SD + 8% D) disagreed, suggesting that some respondents may not think this is significant. According to Mhlanga (2022), procurement decisions can be made more effectively, with delays and expenses decreased, by simplifying and streamlining the supplier selection process. Patel (2021) further emphasized that companies with a streamlined supplier selection procedure typically have more satisfied suppliers and better procurement results.

By cutting down on the time and effort required for supplier discussions, simplifying the supplier selection process improves organizational efficiency from an RBV standpoint. By lowering complexity, increasing negotiating effectiveness, and guaranteeing speedier decision-making, TCE contends that process simplification lowers transaction costs.

According to 76% of respondents, actively include suppliers in the decision-making process will improve supplier relations and procurement outcomes (42% agree and 34% strongly agree). This indicates a strong conviction that more efficient procurement results from supplier cooperation and active participation. The fact that 12% (4% SD + 8% D) disagreed and 12% were neutral suggests that some respondents might not be entirely in favor of giving suppliers more say in decision-making. Involving suppliers in decision-making enhances collaboration, lowers conflict, and promotes creativity in the procurement process, according to Chikohora and Ncube (2020). Involving suppliers intersectional into the decision making processes proves to have better procurement outcomes for companies (Barnes et al., 2021). Incorporation of suppliers into the decision-making process inosculates value from supplier capabilities while enhancing the value of cooperative partnership. In the context of TCE theory, higher commitment of suppliers leads to reduced transaction costs because of greater trust, reduction in opportunistic behaviour, and alignment of expectation.

4.4 Summary

The conducted survey provided supplier development insights related to the procurement performance of the JSC which are of great value. To achieve better control of supplier management, most participants emphasized the need for enhancing employee motivation through training and effective communication. Complementary with other studies, these results highlight the importance of communication and human resources in effective procurement processes. Routinely conducting evaluations of vendors for their performance as well as speeding up the process of selection for new vendors were highly recommended, which shows that successful procurement is increasingly reliant on internal processes and relations with... suppliers.. or that there is a dynamic shift in how these relationships are perceived. Alongside other studies that endorse greater trust and cooperation in supply chain relations, participation of suppliers in their own decision making was also regarded as instrumental with respect to improving supplier relations and procurement, fostering better supplier relationships and optimizing procurement outcomes.

When integrated in the context of the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, those findings sustain the position that the Commission's competitive advantage in the procurement situation is heightened when internal resources such as trained personnel and communication systems are developed.According to the Transaction Cost Economics (TCE) hypothesis, simplified procedures, frequent supplier assessments, and clear decision-making reduce transaction costs while improving supplier relationships. These evaluations, when viewed collectively, illustrate the importance of external supplier partnership alongside internal capability development, aligning with contemporary discourse in procurement research concerning the need for dynamic and agile procurement strategies in public enterprises.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 Summary of Findings

In analysing the supplier management practices of Judicial Service Commission, the study noted that the Commission has many significant practices in vendor management. These include vendor categorization, performance evaluation, planning approaches, and vendor selection techniques. For example, in vendor categorization, a vendor is classified based on their level of expertise and the nature of goods or services they provide. The evaluation is done based on the supplier's ability to deliver quality outputs and reliability to meet the Commission's needs. The strategic intent of the JSC purchasing procedures is to streamline the processes and enhance accountability during procurement.

The findings indicate that effective supplier management positively influences the performance of the Commission, which corresponds with the second research goal that sought to study the impact of supplier management practices on the organizational performance of JSC. Some of the notable impacts include improved service delivery, reduced procurement costs, lowered operational risks, shorter lead times, and increased stakeholder satisfaction. The study has also shown that the JSC effectively achieves the institutional objectives as defended by strong supplier relationships, thus highlighting the interdependence between suppliers' performance and that of the supporting organization.

The study identified a number of challenges concerning effective procurement dealing with the third research goal which sought to explore the challenges faced during the supplier selection process. Inadequately qualified procurement staff, too rigid an exchange of vital information, inadequate suppliers' technological alignment with the JSC's systems, and too great an exchange of critical information are the primary causes of these problems. Additional problems include bureaucratic 'go-slow', troublesome evaluation criteria, and obsolete supplier databases. These problems collectively affect the transparency, effectiveness, and timeliness of the supplier selection process which impacts the quality and timeliness of products and services supplied to the Commission.

5.2 Conclusions

Supplier management approaches practiced by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) encompass supplier segmentation, supplier evaluation, and supplier development and selection, as the research findings suggest. These approaches are design to achieve optimal value in procurement while ensuring responsibility and inbuilt accountability. Supplier segmentation facilitates categorizing suppliers based on the nature of goods and services provided, while performance evaluation captures the dimension of reliability and quality. However, the benefits of these approaches are undermined by the lack of consistency and alignment to overarching strategy with which they are applied. A different approach is needed that is harmonized and integrated to provide purposeful direction to supplier management in fulfilling the needs of the Commission.

The research identifies that with regard to organizational performance; supplier management has a direct and positive impact on the JSC.When supplier relationships are well managed, The Commission benefits from improved service delivery, lower costs, enhanced risk management, and reduced lead times. These outcomes also improve stakeholder satisfaction alongside operational efficiency. It is evident from the study that there is a close relationship between an organization's (in this case, the JSC's) performance, and that of its suppliers. Thus, the Commission needs to implement proactive supplier management approaches at the very least, if it seeks sustained institutional success in the long run.

The study concludes with the notion that the Judicial Service Commission has quite a number of challenges with supplier selection. The compatibility of modern technology with the JSC and its suppliers, the absence of properly trained procurement personnel, and the restricted access to critical information relevant to procurement procedures are some of the main challenges. Moreover, lack of appropriate provider selection and selection procedures hinders identification of the best providers. Failure to address these problems will jeopardize procurement timeliness, quality, and overall expenditure efficiency. The report stresses the need for improvement by justifying that investment in selection criterion frameworks and inordinate frameworks is essential for constructing transparent, clear, and efficient procurement processes.

5.3 Recommendations

In the context of these conclusions and findings, many recommendations are provided to enhance the supply and procurement functions of management in the Judicial Service Commission.

Providing tailored training in Supplier Relationship Management will greatly improve the efficiency of the procurement office. As outlined, best practice—especially for selection, assessment, and development—requires well-trained personnel. This training should be advanced and ongoing to keep pace with the evolving procurement practices, technologies, and standards.

Another key pillar is the trust and openness that the Commission maintains with its suppliers. Open and ongoing communication will facilitate the sharing of essential business information required for constructive expectation setting. This type of communication will also aid in enhancing performance and, most importantly, pre-emptively tackle problems. Strong supplier relations also encourage long-term collaborations that can ultimately offer increased value.

Moreover, procedures for management of suppliers should be integrated into the JSC procurement policy. These guidelines should govern the selection and evaluation processes of suppliers to also serve as benchmarking standards for procurement staff. Accountability and consistency in all procurement activities will be assured by these policies via the formalization of supplier management procedures through the policy frameworks.

Another imperative recommendation is to adopt modern, adaptable procurement systems that integrate seamlessly with those of their suppliers.

Addressing the technological mismatches will enhance the accuracy of data, speed up activities, and reduce congestion in the procurement process. Furthermore, the commission should integrate the concept of supplier relationship management as a core capability that analyzes and influences the bottom line, service optimization, risk mitigation and expenditure reduction, and readiness of resources for use when required, even during periods of economic contraction or supply shortages.

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Annexure

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I'm an under-graduate student at Bindura University of Science Education , where I'm pursuing a Bachelor of Commerce (Hons) degree in Purchasing and Supply. I am conducting a study on "The role of supplier development on procurement performance in State owned entities (SOE's). A case of Judicial Service Commission" This study is only being done for academic purposes. Your opinions are vital to the accomplishment of this research. Kindly fill in the included questionnaire as accurately as possible, paying attention to the instructions provided for each item, and send the full form back to the researcher. The information you are going to share will be greatly appreciated, and your contribution will be kept private and utilized exclusively for the purpose of composing academic reports (do not put your name on this document).

Please tick the correct answer OR, write appropriately your best answers to the questions.

Section 1

1. What is your gender

Male	Female

2. Choose your age group.

18-25years	25-35years	35-45years	45-55years	Above 55years

3. Position in the Company

Senior Management	Middle Management	Operational Staff	Procurement Committee

4. Years of Experience in the Organization

Less than a year	1-5 years	6-10years	11-15 years	More than 15 years

Section 2

To ascertain the supplier management procedures followed by Judicial Service Commission

1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Aspect	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	TheJudicial Service Commision has clear supplier management procedures in place.					
2	The Commision consistently follows its supplier management procedures.					
3	Supplier management procedures in the Commision are well documented and accessible to all relevant staff.					

Section 3

To examine how supplier management strategies impact the operations of Judicial Service Commission.

1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	**Aspect**	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
1	**Supplier management strategies improve the overall operational efficiency of the Commission.**					
2	**Supplier management strategies ensure the timely delivery of goods and services.**					
3	**Effective supplier management contributes to improved quality of products and services.**					
4	**Supplier management strategies lead to cost savings in procurement activities.**					

Section 4

To analyze the difficulties the Judicial Service Commission faces with supplier management procedures.

1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Aspect	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The Commission often faces delays in the delivery of goods or services due to ineffective supplier management.					
2	Communication issues with suppliers hinder effective procurement management in the Commission.					
3	The Commission has challenges in monitoring and evaluating supplier performance effectively.					
4	There is a lack of clarity in the roles and responsibilities of staff managing suppliers.					

Section 5

To identify issues that arise during the selection of suppliers by the Commission

1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Aspect	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The supplier selection process in the Commission is transparent and fair.					
2	The Commission uses clear and consistent criteria for selecting suppliers.					
3	The Commission experiences delays in the supplier selection process.					
4	There are difficulties in identifying suppliers that meet the Commission's specific needs.					

Section 6

To determine solutions for resolving issues that arise in the supplier management process

1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Aspect	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	**Providing additional training for staff would improve supplier management in the Commission.**					
2	**Improved communication tools and channels would resolve most of the issues with suppliers.**					
3	**Regular performance reviews of suppliers are necessary to improve supplier management and procurement performance.**					
4	**Streamlining the supplier selection process would improve supplier management and procurement efficiency.**					
5	**Actively involving suppliers in the decision-making process would improve procurement outcomes and supplier relations.**					