

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS



**AN ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPACT OF AN E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM ON
PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF THE MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND
SECONDARY EDUCATION**

BY

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***A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF COMMERCE HONOURS DEGREE IN
PURCHASING AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT.***

JUNE 2023

RELEASE FORM

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Title of Dissertation: An assessment of the impact of an e-procurement system on performance:
A case study of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2022-2023).

Degree programme for which the project was presented: Bachelor of Commerce Honours
Degree in Purchasing and Supply

Year Granted : 2023

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family members as a gesture of absolute gratitude for their resolute determination to encourage me, their immense affection and their unwavering moral and pecuniary sustenance. I pray that God showers them with abundant blessings.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the impact of e-procurement on organizational performance, in the case Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) head office in Harare. The research aimed to achieve three objectives: firstly, to determine how e-procurement impacted the attainment of value for money and time effectiveness at MOPSE, secondly, to examine the role of an e-procurement system on the performance of MOPSE and thirdly, to recommend how e-procurement system can improve the performance of MOPSE. In order to determine the impact of e-procurement on organizational performance, the research employed a descriptive methodology that combined both qualitative and quantitative methods. The survey was conducted with a group of 60 respondents who were chosen randomly to complete the questionnaire. In addition, 12 individuals were selected for interviews using purposive sampling techniques. The questionnaire and interview guide were used as the research instruments. The study's results indicated that an e-procurement system had a positive impact in relation to the attainment of value for money and time effectiveness at MOPSE, which resulted in the organization achieving performance levels that meets global standards. The study also identified that e-procurement played a greater role during the procurement process which improved the performance of MOPSE. Finally, the research revealed that introducing an e-procurement system led to cost reduction and increased efficiency for the company. The study's conclusions were twofold: first, an e-procurement system had a beneficial effect on MOPSE's performance and second, the e-procurement system was superior to manual systems, enabling MOPSE to operate more quickly and efficiently. The study recommends that MOPSE it is necessary to integrate all e-procurement elements into the system to enhance the company's overall performance. The research also suggests that MOPSE should maintain its use of the e-procurement system in order to conform with the highest global procurement standards.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most importantly, I am deeply thankful to God for granting me the bravery and intelligence to complete this project. I also want to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr B. Nkala for his trust, willingness and guidance to share his vast experience, skills and knowledge with me, which have been invaluable in completing this endeavour. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude for the support provided by the staff of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Their willingness to exceed the requirements of completing research questionnaires and providing practical insights was instrumental in enabling the successful conclusion of this study.

Table of Contents

RELEASE FORM.....	ii
APPROVAL FORM.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study	5
1.4 Objectives.....	5
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Statement of the hypothesis.....	6
1.7 Significance of the study	6
1.7.1 To the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and Policy makers	6
1.7.2 Academics field	7
1.7.3 The Researcher	7
1.8 Delimitation of the study.....	7
1.9 Limitations	7
1.10 Definition of terms	7
1.11 Summary	8

CHAPTER 2	9
LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Theoretical Review	9
2.2.1 How e-procurement affects the performance of the organization	9
2.2.2 Effects of e- procurement on transactional costs.....	10
2.3 Models.....	10
2.3.1 Resource Based View Theory	10
Figure 2.3.1 Resource Based View Framework	11
2.3.2 The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	12
2.3.3 Transaction Cost Theory (TCT)	12
2.3.4 Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DOI)	13
2.4 Empirical Review	14
2.5 Research Gap.....	18
2.6 Chapter Summary.....	18
CHAPTER THREE	19
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	19
3.1 Introduction	19
3.2 Research Design.....	19
3.3 Subject.....	20
3.3.1 Target Population	20
3.3.2 Sample Size	20
3.3.3 Sampling Techniques	20
3.4 Research Instruments	21
3.4.1 Questionnaire.....	21

3.4.2 Interviews Guides	22
3.5 Data Collection Procedures	23
3.6 Data Presentation and Analysis Procedures	23
3.7 Reliability and Validity	24
3.8 Ethical Considerations.....	24
3.9 Chapter Summary.....	25
CHAPTER 4	26
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	26
4.1 Introduction	26
4.2 Response Rate Analysis	26
Table 4.2 Interviews Response Rate	27
4.3 Questionnaires response rate.....	27
Table 4.3 Questionnaire response rate	27
4.4 Organisational Demographics	28
Figure 4.4.1 Gender Distribution.....	29
4.4.2 Respondents' age groups	29
4.4.3 Education Qualifications of the Respondents.....	30
4.4.5 Job Designation of Respondents.....	31
4.5 THE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF E-PROCUREMENT AT MOPSE.....	32
4.5.1 Online tendering process	32
Figure 4.5 The operational activities of e-procurement at MOPSE.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.5.2 Potential Suppliers Submit Proposals through online platform.....	33
4.5.3 The existence of a functional website to facilitate e-procurement	33
4.5.4 The use of online platforms to conduct both invoicing and sourcing	34

4.5.6 The company website used for publishing procurement items specifications	34
4.5.7 Utilization of online requisitions by all company staff	34
4.6 MOPSE performance after the implementation of an e-procurement system	34
Figure 4.6 MOPSE performance after the implementation of an e-procurement system ..	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.7 The cost and time effectiveness implications of e-procurement	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Table 4.7 Cost and time effectiveness implications of e-procurement	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.9 The cost associated with the acquisition of e-procurement systems.....	39
5.0 Gains derived from using e-procurement by MOPSE	40
5.0.1 Increases the procurement goods and services with better quality.....	40
5.0.2 Massive cost reductions.....	41
5.0.3 E-procurement led to minimized lead time	41
5.0.4 E-procurement led to profitable contracts	41
5.0.5 E-procurement induces transparency into the procurement process	41
5.1 Discussion of findings.....	42
5.2 Chapter Summary.....	43
CHAPTER 5	44
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	44
5.1 Introduction	44
5.2 Summary of findings.....	44
5.2.1 First Objective	44
5.2.2 Second Objective	45
5.2.3 Third Objective.....	45
5.3 Conclusions	45

5.3.1 Role of E-Procurement on Performance of MOPSE	45
5.3.2 Impact of E-Procurement on the Performance of MOPSE.....	46
5.3.3 Benefits of Using E-Procurement.....	46
5.4 Recommendations	47
5.4.1 Role of E-Procurement on Performance.....	47
5.4.2 Impact of E-Procurement.....	47
REFERENCES	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.2 Interviews Response Rate.....27

Table 4.3 Questionnaire response rate.....27

Table 4.7 Impact of e-procurement in relation to cost and time effectiveness.....36

Table 4.9 Summary of Responses from Participants.....37

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.3.1 Resource-Based View Framework.....	11
Figure 4.4.1 Gender Distribution.....	31
Figure 4.4.2 Respondents' Age groups.....	32
Figure 4.4.3 Respondents Educational Qualifications.....	34
Figure 4.4.5 Job designation of respondents.....	35
Figure 4.5 Operational activities of E-procurement at MOPSE.....	36
Figure 4.6 MOPSE performance after the implementation of e-procurement.....	38
Figure 4.9 Cost associated with the acquisition of e-procurement.....	43
Figure 5.0 Gains derived from using e-procurement by MOPSE.....	44

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This preliminary chapter covers various aspects such as the study's background, problem statement, research questions, hypothesis statement, the significance of the study, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, the definition of terms and a summary. All these components were well integrated into this research project which aims to assess the impact of electronic procurement system on the performance of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

1.1 Background of the Study

The insinuation of real-time technological innovations into the procurement system of public organizations is increasingly gaining prominence and is now recognized as an integral part of modern-day business operations. According to Nelson et al. (2011), it is clear that internet-based technologies have significantly revolutionized the operations of government organizations. As per Hawking et al. (2004), the expenditure associated with procuring materials and services to support business operations surpasses the combined cost of all other expenses. The introduction of web-based e-procurement, according to Shaw and Subramanian (2004), is anticipated to not only reduce the cost of the procurement process but also to change the purchasing operations by converting them from operational to strategic processes. According to a study conducted by Mahadevean (2000), the organization can derive three advantages from purchasing electronically, specifically benefits in the areas of value, revenue and logistics.

According to Lysons and Farrington (2016), procurement is a strategic and proactive corporate function that aims to secure a consistent provision of goods and services for the purpose of supporting top-level organizational performance. Monczka et al. (2008), defined the collection of tools utilized to enhance efficiency in purchasing transactions as e-procurement. Davila et al. (2003), described e-procurement as the purchasing process critical to achieving operational excellence in electronic business for larger corporations. Oliveira and Amorim (2001) described e-procurement as the utilization of electronic networks or the internet to purchase goods and services. Croom and Jones (2007); Hawking et al. (2004), indicated that e-procurement has the potential to enhance an organization's overall performance. One example is the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), which, since its introduction in the 1960s, has enabled automated procurement transactions between buyers and suppliers.

During the 1970s, the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) concept emerged and it was followed by the commercialization of the internet in the 1980s. Nonetheless, it was not until the 1990s when the World Wide Web, which provided the internet with multimedia capabilities, became extensively accessible and turned into an essential asset for automating procurement (OGC, 2002). According to Croom and Johnston (2003), there could be a significant reduction of 60% in transactional costs. Similarly, Gabner (2001) found that British Telecom experienced a reduction of 90% in such costs. Numerous e-marketplaces, both vertical and horizontal are accessible on the internet for conducting electronic business. These platforms enable organizations to reach a vast audience of potential suppliers at reasonable costs. As reported by AMR (2002), over \$1.3 trillion worth of goods and services will be transacted through B2B marketplaces, leading to reduced transaction costs.

Amit and Zott (2001) suggest that transaction costs emerge there is a transfer of goods or services across a technology-based interface that creates a separation between the involved parties. Procurement professionals need to use their rational thinking skills to come up with effective strategies that can avoid the risks arising from the use of outdated and ineffective procurement systems. These strategies should not only improve efficiency but also add value to the organization.

Richard et al. (2009) define organizational performance as the achievement of three distinct areas of outcomes within a company, including financial performance (such as profits, return on assets and return on investment), product market performance (including sales and market share) and shareholder return (comprising of total shareholder return and economic value added). E-procurement has become a crucial aspect of e-Government and public sector organizations all over the world have recognized this by making it a priority and initiating its implementation. In order to hasten the adoption of e-procurement in the public sector, Kipyego (2012) suggests a number of tactics. These include encouraging suppliers to integrate with the organization's system, highlighting the advantages of the system, and creating connections between all involved government agencies.

According to Vellapi (2010), the primary objective of public procurement is to attain cost reduction and enhance operational efficiency by utilizing sophisticated planning, scheduling and group purchasing techniques. Zimbabwean government ministries have also embraced e-procurement as a tactic to enhance their overall organizational performance. At its headquarters in Harare, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) has set up a centralized procurement management unit (PMU), which is in charge of making group purchases on behalf of several government schools. As McCrudden (2009) notes, when governments engage in procurement, they are acting on behalf of all citizens and should therefore adhere to certain standards.

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education follows the guidelines set out in Statutory instrument 5 of 2018 and the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act [Chapter 22:23], which are managed by the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) and emphasizes the importance of transparency, fairness, honesty, cost-effectiveness and competition. In 2018, as part of its efforts to reform the public procurement system, the authority created the e-GP strategy and guidelines. This strategy involves the use of an electronic procurement system that enables real-time communication between the buying organization and its suppliers, improving transaction processing efficiency. This communication takes place on a 24-hour basis and is facilitated through the exchange of information between businesses.

According to Tukuta and Saruchera (2015), there has been insufficient research conducted on the utilization and impact of e-procurement technologies on procurement procedures and performance in developing nations, particularly Zimbabwe. Although there is a significant need for an evaluation, prior studies have concentrated on fully functional private-sector businesses and disregarded public-sector organizations due to their inadequate technological infrastructure when implementing e-Government in developing nations. To address this gap in knowledge, the current study attempted to examine the influence of an e-procurement system on the performance of a public sector organization.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is a problem of incrementing costs which are encountered as a result of inefficient procurement processes which are restraining public organizations from making great strides in terms of performance. The procurement function is suffering from a chronic problem as procurement is still perceived traditionally as a labour-intensive process and managers allocate more time to activities that do not add-value which allows infamous maverick buying practices that obstruct transparency by making hasty purchasing decisions from non-preferred suppliers at higher prices. E-procurement has been promoted as a means that can unveil resilient end-to-end remedies which can optimize many procurement processes in public organizations as compared to paper-driven manual procurement which seems to be latent in these turbulent times. Manual inefficiencies have a cascading effect on the performance of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE).

Prior to the adoption of e-procurement, the procurement management unit (PMU) experienced multiple hurdles such as persistent transaction disputes, long purchasing cycles, bureaucracies, human error, missed discounts and perpetual lead times which have resulted in astronomical procurement costs. According to the Epiq Technologies (2010) research, the adoption of e-procurement technologies inside an organization enables the company to efficiently manage its interactions with its key suppliers. The technology is accompanied by various monitoring tools that aid in cost control, ensuring optimal supplier performance and facilitating effective contact with potential suppliers during the course of the business.

To solve that, (MOPSE) has partially undertaken the initiative to revamp ancient procurement processes by substituting with modern-day internet-based information and communication technologies to improve organizational performance. According to Da Vila et al's (2003) findings, the use of e-procurement systems within MOPSE is still relatively in the infancy phase and is primarily focused on internal functions such as stock management, ease of stock distribution to departments and procurement record keeping. E-procurement system implementation has not gone as quickly as previously envisaged. Vellapi (2010) indicate that the slow and steady uptake of e-procurement is likely to simplify procurement procedures, decrease expenses and facilitate efficient transaction processing, leading to greater value for money. In this regard, procurement performance can be assessed based on various indicators such as cost-effectiveness, profitability, guaranteed supplies, improved quality and the attainment of a competitive edge.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to assess the impact of an e-procurement system on the performance of an organization. It also seeks to gain an insight into the benefits and challenges which have been realized during the utilization of an e-procurement system.

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 To determine the impact of e-procurement in relation to the attainment of value for money and time effectiveness at MOPSE.

1.4.2 To examine the role of an e-procurement system on the performance of MOPSE.

1.4.3 To recommend how the e-procurement system can improve the performance of MOPSE.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 What is the impact of e-procurement in terms of value for money and time effectiveness at MOPSE.

1.5.2 What role does the e-procurement system play in the performance of MOPSE.

1.5.3 What are the recommendations for an e-procurement system to improve the performance of MOPSE.

1.6 Statement of the hypothesis

H₀: Assumes that technology will remain static during the course of the study.

H₁: Assumes that there will be a technological transformation during the course of the study.

H₀: Assumes that information collected from respondents will be precise, without bias and can be relied on.

H₂: Assumes that information collected from respondents will be vulnerable to bias and cannot be absolutely relied on.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study outcomes will be applicable to government-owned enterprises, policy makers, stakeholders and the academic field. Furthermore, this research study will be of great significance to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education head office which operates using both manual and e-procurement systems. The impact can either be favourable or unfavourable which will enable MOPSE to draw out a cost-benefit analysis of using an e-procurement system and make resolutions which can improve organizational performance to realize value for money.

1.7.1 To the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and Policy makers

The findings of this study will serve as a benchmark which will inform various stakeholders and policy makers on the areas and features of procurement that call for policy interventions to improve procurement efficiency. Thus, policies will be crafted based on the results of this study either negative or positive, for future e-procurement-related strategic planning, whether as a useful tool which can escalate efficiency in the procurement processes of public sector organizations or as a costly system to the organizations' performance.

1.7.2 Academics field

In the field of purchasing and supply chain management this research will augment the already available sources of information in the library archives and be used as a reference by other students who will partake in similar projects. It could also expand the existing literature on public procurement in Zimbabwe, which is a relatively underexplored field.

1.7.3 The Researcher

The study will enhance the researcher's comprehension of the subject matter and promote the practical application of the theories and concepts explored in the research.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The study was conducted for a period covering the year 2023. The study is confined to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education head office in Harare and not all other MOPSE subsidiaries. The focal point of the study was on determining the efficiency aspect of an e-procurement system in processing transactions more quickly to improve organizational performance. Only 120 transactions, out of a total population of 480 procurement transactions, made up the sample.

1.9 Limitations

To ensure the accuracy of the research results, effective management of time and financial resources was necessary. However, the researcher encountered limitations in gaining access to information due to the organization's protocols and authorities. Therefore, to overcome the constraints of time, money and coverage, the study focused on a single company instead of investigating all public organizations across the country.

1.10 Definition of terms

E-procurement - According to Lysons (2006), the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) defines e-procurement as the utilization of electronic communication and information technology to improve both internal and external procurement and supply management processes.

Procurement process - Dai and Kauffman (2001) define it as a closed-cycle system that starts with the request for goods or services and concludes with the payment.

Organizational performance - Kaplan and Norton (2001) it has been described as a collection of financial and non-financial measures that can access how successful an organization has been in meeting its goals and objectives.

1.11 Summary

This introductory chapter, provided a thorough explanation regarding the research topic that is centred around evaluating the impact of an e-procurement system on organizational performance. The background of the study highlighted the main components of the research, namely e-procurement and organizational performance. The statement of the problem clearly identified the specific issue that motivated the researcher to conduct a study in this particular field. Additionally, this chapter analyzed the study's objectives and research questions, assumptions, the significance of the study, limitations, delimitations and definition of key terms.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This particular chapter carried out an extensive examination of both theoretical and empirical literature to gain insights on how to create the most suitable methodology for the study. Examining the existing literature on the research topic was crucial, as it involved assessing the most pertinent studies carried out by earlier researchers and established theories. The study information was obtained from a variety of sources including government publications, journals, books, reports and online articles. The focus was on assessing how e-procurement systems have affected the performance of numerous public organizations worldwide. This analysis examined how different studies interpreted the notion of e-procurement and the effects it has brought upon the businesses that have implemented it. In this chapter, the authors discussed the theoretical and empirical reviews that supported their research, which aimed to enhance the impact of e-procurement on organizational performance. The researcher was able to find current material on the subject by doing this review.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 How e-procurement affects the performance of the organization

Phillips (2003), suggests that e-procurement has significantly transformed the methods that organizations use to engage with their suppliers. Carayannis and Popescu (2005), argue that advancements in internet connectivity have created a chance to enhance transparency and efficiency in the procurement of goods and services. Knudsen (2003) contends that e-procurement is not a solitary program but comprises a range of diverse tools. Knudsen (2003), pointed out that there are six types of e-procurement applications that organizations use to improve their market efficiencies. These applications are e-MRO, e-reverse auctions, e-informing, e-tendering, e-

sourcing and web-based enterprise resource planning. Additionally, e- collaboration is recognized as a crucial facilitator in this process. E-procurement, according to Hawking and Stein (2004), is not only a strategic component in the value chain but also a significant driver of expansion in the extended supply chain.

2.2.2 Effects of e- procurement on transactional costs

Croom and Johnston (2003) state that transactional costs pertain to the effort required in handling an order, which includes the expenses associated with finding and choosing a supplier, validating and authorizing order requests, generating purchase orders, accepting deliveries, invoicing, and making payments. Combining e-procurement with process reengineering can lead to a substantial reduction in transactional expenses. The conventional procurement process necessitates the creation and transfer of an extensive amount of paperwork such as requisitions, purchase orders, and invoices, both within and between organizations. However, e-procurement can considerably decrease the administrative effort required to prepare these documents. According to Amit and Zott (2001), the process of printing and transferring these documents, within and between organizations, incurs a significant cost, with the average transaction cost in large organizations estimated to be around US\$250 per transaction. Hong (2006) contends that e-procurement leads to a decline in paperwork, which, in turn, reduces administrative overheads.

2.3 Models

2.3.1 Resource-Based View Theory

Exploring information technology has always been a key component of supply chain and procurement management (Pressutti, 2003). By exploiting internal resources, the Resource-Based View (RBV), which first appeared in the 1980s and 1990s, seeks to gain a competitive advantage. According to Jolonec (2013), a company's performance depends on adopting a Resource-Based View (RBV). The Resource-Based View is a framework that regards resources as the primary driver of enhanced performance. Successful companies appeared to have superior ability to make better use of their resources compared to their competitors. Resources are broadly in this model to

include both tangible and intangible factors such as technology, financial resources, human capital and knowledge. However, the connections that businesses established with customers, suppliers and investors were regarded as valuable assets.

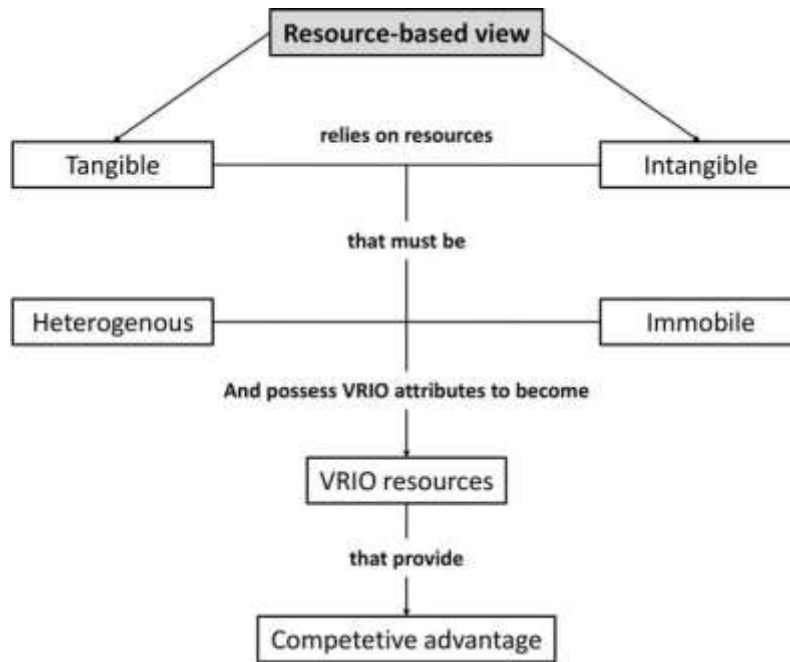


Figure 2.3.1 Resource-Based View Framework

The resource-based view (RBV) is a theoretical model employed to examine and elucidate the competitive actions of corporations. Consequently, the RBV theory of the company has surfaced as a propitious novel approach for analyzing e-procurement and the efficacy of organizations (Weele and Raaij, 2014). The RBV theory holds that organizational effectiveness can be guaranteed through e-procurement, provided that the fundamental resources are valuable, scarce, unique and well-structured (Bales and Fearon, 2006). In addition, the RBV theory suggests that an organization’s resources are relatively diverse and difficult to transfer (Chacha, 2010).

This diversity and lack of mobility encompass factors such as property specialization (Teo and Benbasat, 2003), exceptional historical circumstances (Beger and Calabrese, 2005), and uncertainty about cause and effect (Liabao, et al, 2007). Scholars like Foss, Klein and Mahoney (2008); Makadok, (2001); Foss and Knudsen, (2003); Spender, (2006) have been criticizing the RBV theory for more than two decades. Wagner (2006) presents a different perspective, stating that innovation is characterized by effective technology that leads to desirable practices. These practices help to enhance technical capabilities which ultimately results in the provision of high-quality services and sustained performance. Accordingly, the innovation framework is a valuable asset for RBV as it can lead to better service delivery and performance.

2.3.2 The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis in 1989, describes numerous factors that affect a person's decision to adopt new technology as well as how they use it. Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, which are commonly incorporated in the adoption model when utilizing TAM, are the two key qualities that are frequently used to evaluate innovation. According to Gibbs et al. (2007), "perceived usefulness" is the degree to which a person thinks using a specific technology will enhance their ability to accomplish their work.

The only method used to determine whether a user would accept or reject the use of information and communication technology in a commercial environment, such as e-procurement systems, is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The widespread utilization of technology is due to the benefits it provides and as such, companies should leverage technology to their advantage despite the costs involved. Martins and Oliveira (2009), state that the uptake of technology within an organization is affected by multiple factors which include the technology's accessibility, its usefulness for both the organization and its users, as well as its level of security.

2.3.3 Transaction Cost Theory (TCT)

Ronald Coase (1973), introduced the transaction cost approach to business. According to Williamson (1981), transaction costs occur when there is a transfer of goods or services across a

distinct technical boundary. In other words, transaction costs are generated when goods or services are moved from one phase to another, requiring the development of fresh technical skills to produce the product or service. To engage in a market transaction, one must first identify trading, negotiate the terms of the transaction, draft a contract and perform necessary inspections to ensure compliance with the contract's provisions.

According to the transaction cost theory, e-procurement can lower the expenses associated with finding, selecting and monitoring suppliers leading companies to shift towards market-based economic activity. This was initially proposed by Coase (1973) and later supported by Malone et al. (1987). Dedrick et al. (2008), propose that when an organization chooses its suppliers, it should aim to achieve an optimal equilibrium between critical trade factors such as suitability, coordination and risk opportunism. The utilization of information technology has the capability to decrease the expenses associated with coordination by streamlining and automating procurement procedures and also by reducing the costs of collaborating with a large number of suppliers they work with, concentrating on economical suppliers who provide standardized goods, coordinating purchases and acquiring discounts for bulk purchases. Dedrick et al. (2008), explain how information technology can enable organizations to achieve these benefits.

2.3.4 Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DOI)

One of the earliest social science theories is the diffusion of innovation (DOI) theory, which was developed by E.M. Rogers in 1995. This theory originated from the field of communication and explains how concepts and products become popular over time and disseminate through particular communities and societal structures. The characteristics and situations of disruptive innovation are consistent with advanced e-procurement. According to Govindarajan (2010), the implementation of e-procurement is a novel procedure that necessitates effective management. In order to proficiently handle innovational activities, it is essential to distinguish between the different kinds of innovation. E-procurement is a dominant force for transformation in procurement, as it offers convenient and immediate access to information, introduces novel methods for communication between buyers and bidders, decreases transaction expenses and simplifies the monitoring and tracking of procurement data (OCDE, 2007). As e-procurement systems are created to lower costs,

it is crucial to supervise the system's efficiency and effectiveness concerning the resources invested.

2.4 Empirical Review

Li and Su (2020), conducted a research study that analyzed information obtained from 217 companies in China with the aim of investigating the correlation between e-procurement and the overall performance of a firm. According to the findings, the introduction of e-procurement systems had a noteworthy favourable impact on various aspects of performance, such as decreasing costs, enhancing operational performance and strengthening relationships with suppliers. A study by Dachyar and Sabrina (2017) found that e-procurement adoption positively affects organizational performance. The authors collected data from 41 companies in Indonesia and found that e-procurement adoption was significantly associated with improved operational efficiency and productivity. A study by Lim, Seol and Kim (2017) examined whether e-procurement systems affect organizational performance in the South Korean public sector. The authors found that e-procurement systems positively influenced performance, including cost savings, process efficiency and quality improvements.

Bakland and Kilvic (2015), conducted research that centred on the effective adoption of e-procurement, with a particular focus on its implementation in the public sector. They identified four additional cost benefits which included lowered costs resulting from catalogue digitization, decreased errors, reduced inventory and lower marketing costs for suppliers. By using this approach, the costs linked with the preparation and submission of bid documents such as paperwork, postage and other costs can be eliminated. Furthermore, sending bid documents electronically is a quicker alternative compared to the traditional method of mailing documents. The utilization of this system will enhance the ability to track orders since it will be easier to trace and rectify any errors discovered in prior orders. E-procurement is a time-saving solution which enables purchasing managers to allocate more time to address strategic e-procurement matters.

Kamotho (2014) conducted a study examining how state-owned companies utilize e-procurement to enhance their procurement performance. A group of 42 companies were examined in the study and it was found that they were using various e-procurement techniques to improve their procurement performance. The use of regression analysis showed that the procurement performance of state-owned companies was significantly influenced by the e-procurement practices they implemented. Other research has indicated that numerous companies have experienced advantageous outcomes upon implementing e-procurement systems. Barbieri and Zanoni (2005), suggest that incorporating web-based e-procurement into business-to-business purchasing transactions can lead to several benefits for companies. These include lowering transaction costs, increasing the effectiveness of internal procurement processes and strengthening collaboration with suppliers. Future studies could focus on examining the experiences of companies that have successfully adopted e-procurement, along with the obstacles they encountered during the implementation process.

According to research conducted by Wang et al. (2014), the adoption of e-procurement in Chinese manufacturing companies resulted in a decrease of 6,5% in procurement expenses and a 40% reduction in procurement cycle times. The implementation of e-procurement systems contributed to better supplier selection and supplier relationships, as well as improved data and analytics for informed decision-making.

In 2013, Omen Fredric Otieno conducted study to identify the elements that influenced the adoption of e-procurement in various organizations in Kisii City, Kenya. The researchers gathered data from procurement offices that were chosen from a pool of 105 potential procurement offices belonging to the selected companies. The majority of respondents who were surveyed agreed that e-procurement leads to greater profitability and competitiveness for their respective companies. Despite the numerous advantages of implementing e-procurement, certain obstacles still exist. These obstacles include cost-cutting, paperless transactions, and improved inventory management. The case studies were analyzed within the framework of organizations that had recently implemented electronic procurement and a program designed to encourage multiple people to accept the system. Research has shown that incorporating e-procurement can enhance the overall

effectiveness of an organization. Ashenbaum and Yaniv (2013), discovered that the use of e-procurement by Israeli municipalities resulted in a decrease of 10-20% in procurement expenses. Additionally, e-procurement systems have been found to boost adherence to procurement policies and regulations.

A study by Damavandi (2011) in Tewan, centred on the adoption of e-procurement and its impact on ship management's performance. The objective of the research was to examine the influence of e-procurement implementation on ship management firms. Interviews were carried out with all departments that were involved in procurement operations. The study found that implementing an e-procurement system at the Islamic Shipping Company (IRISL) resulted in both direct and indirect reductions in procurement process expenses, according to the collected data. The results imply that e-procurement's use has enhanced the performance of shipping firms in the Islamic Republic. The use of e-procurement has been demonstrated to be an effective way to enhance performance, especially during economic difficulties and could be a viable strategy for shipping companies. It is advised that research be done to determine the causes of system failures and the elements that contribute to the efficient improvement of the system in order to further enhance it.

Ngai and Cho carried out research in 2008 to determine how Hong Kong companies' performance was impacted by e-procurement. Their findings showed that e-procurement systems had a beneficial impact on various aspects of performance such as reducing costs, improving operational efficiency, increased customer satisfaction and strengthening relationships with suppliers. In August 2007 Anelise Dahlstrom, conducted a study on the cost-effectiveness of using an e-procurement system. The purpose of the research was to identify how e-procurement adds value to the traditional procurement process and to determine the alterations in the procurement process when it is moved online. The focus of his analysis was primarily on the A.P. Moller-Maersk Procurement Group where he was employed since December 2006. The findings of his research indicate that the implementation of e-procurement enables companies to access previously unreachable markets, facilitates smoother and quicker communication between companies and accelerates task execution and project completion times.

Davila (2003) reported that businesses that utilized e-procurement solutions experienced a decrease of 42% in purchase transaction expenses. Croom and Brandon (2003), conducted further investigation and found that implementing e-procurement can result in significant cost savings in the procurement process, up to 75% reduction and can also lead to a decrease in the purchase price of indirect purchases by a range of 16-18%. According to Chua et al. (2005), achieving success in e-procurement is distinct from achieving success in other areas, and it requires specialized tools that are not currently accessible. Edie et al. (2007) state that some organizations encounter difficulties in acquiring a suitable platform for implementing e-procurement, possibly because of the high cost of installing the appropriate IT system that can fully leverage the benefits of the e-procurement process.

Mukhopadhyay et al. (2002) proposed that e-procurement can enhance technical performance throughout an organization and reduce transaction expenses associated with sourcing and supplier selection. The writer described two scenarios in which e-procurement could influence the process of selecting suppliers. The author emphasized the significance of ascertaining whether e-procurement would lead to forging stronger relationships with a small number of suppliers or engaging in more partnerships with a greater number of suppliers. This is supported by the notion that reduction in costs and expanding purchasing options could foster competition among suppliers and boost the bargaining leverage.

Taken as a whole, these studies suggest that introducing e-procurement systems can result in notable enhancements to organizational performance. Specifically, such systems can improve operational efficiency, reduce costs, support compliance efforts, facilitate decision-making processes, and strengthen relationships with both customers and suppliers. It is crucial to acknowledge that the effectiveness of e-procurement implementation can vary depending on a range of factors, such as organizational culture, support from management, technological resources, business size, industry, and geographic location.

2.5 Research Gap

The term “gap analysis” pertains to the process that organizations use to measure their performance against predetermined standards and to assess whether they are utilizing their resources effectively. Despite the identification of various benefits linked to e-procurement, the existing literature does not clarify the distinctions between these advantages. This research project has created a framework that addresses the deficiencies in the existing literature by establishing a connection between e-procurement models and the benefits that MOPSE anticipates from implementing these models to enhance organizational performance. While numerous studies have been conducted on this topic, empirical evidence is scarce in most other domains, as stated in the literature review.

Based on the literature, most of the research on this topic has been carried out on a global or regional scale, leaving gaps that require further research to address, particularly concerning local situations. Additionally, most of the research has focused on corporate organizations that are private sector organizations driven by profit motives, as opposed to public sector organizations which emphasize more on service delivery. These research gaps present significant opportunities for comparative analysis. As a result, researchers agree that further investigation and documentation are necessary to advance both scientific understanding and practical applications.

2.6 Summary

The chapter reviewed several authors who have researched e-procurement and it was observed that this strategy can yield favourable outcomes for organizational performance. The chapter provided a thorough examination of both the theoretical and empirical literature on e-procurement. It was pointed out that many companies, particularly in developed nations, are implementing e-procurement methods as they can offer a competitive edge. According to the available literature, the purchasing department's operations are positively impacted by e-procurement. The empirical literature has been examined to highlight the specific advantages of e-procurement in boosting the effectiveness of the procurement process. The literature's goals are to identify the advantages of e-procurement adoption while giving senior management guidance, to develop a thorough understanding of e-procurement challenges in the public sector, and to acknowledge the advantages of e-procurement implementation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the various components of the research methodology utilized in the study. These components consist of the research design, the target population, the sampling procedure, the process of collecting data, the analysis of data and ethical considerations. Additionally, there was a discussion on the reliability and validity of the research instruments employed. As Punch (2000) suggests, the effectiveness of any research hinges on the methods used to conduct it.

3.2 Research Design

Churchill (2005), defines research methodology as a framework or plan that guides the collection and analysis of data. The research method chosen for this study is a comparative analysis design, which was utilized to compare the traditional procurement process with the electronic procurement systems and assess their impact on costs at MOPSE. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) maintain that this design permits the acquisition of specific details to effectively test hypotheses. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of e-procurement, the research opted to use a case study approach. Nevile (2007) states that, a case study involves examining a specific subject, such as an organization or a group of individuals and involves collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data. The research adopted a deductive and positivist approach, focusing on transactions rather than individuals, to assess the impact of an e-procurement system on an

organization's performance. Focus was on assessing the e-procurement system's impact on the performance of an organization.

3.3 Subject

3.3.1 Target Population

A target population, according to Wilson (2003), is a collection of people or things that are chosen for study depending on the study's goals. The selection of the target demographic was based on its capacity to shed light on how an e-procurement system affects an organization's performance. According to Orodho (2003), the term "population" can also refer to the larger group of people or things from which a sample is drawn. 480 purchasing transactions that were conducted utilizing the e-procurement system were included in this study's population. These transactions included normal purchase orders, contract purchase orders, blanket purchase orders, and planned purchase orders. The research concentrated on a single entity, specifically the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education head office located in Harare at Ambassador House. The procurement of all the organization's subsidiaries is centralized at the head office procurement management unit (PMU) which is staffed with 12 members serving all of the organization's needs for goods and services.

3.3.2 Sample Size

A sample size, according to Dattalo (2008); Sekaran and Bougie (2013), refers to the specific number of study population components that will be examined for the research. In this instance, 120 transactions were chosen at random from a population of 480 transactions to make up the sample size. When the target population is large, sampling's main goal is to cut expenses and the amount of work required to survey the entire population (Sekaran & Bougie 2013).

3.3.3 Sampling Techniques

According to Voght et al. (2012), to conduct a survey, it is necessary to consider the population of interest. In this study, the researcher will employ two sampling techniques: simple random

sampling, which is a probability-based approach and purposive sampling, which is a non-probability-based approach. Purposive sampling involves selecting individuals who are believed to be suitable for the study, as explained by (Chaturvedi 2008). It ensured that any revolutionary changes in the majority were represented in the data. This method was convenient for the deliberate selection of purchasing transactions which were suitable for this study.

A simple random sampling technique was employed to gather responses for the questionnaires, whereby participants were chosen from the procurement, stores, finance and IT departments. This approach was chosen to ensure that all employees within these departments had an equal likelihood of being selected and those who were chosen were expected to provide valuable information and insights on e-procurement due to their relevant experience and knowledge.

3.4 Research Instruments

According to Kato (2002), a research instrument is any suitable instrument or tool utilized in research to collect information or data aimed at solving the problem under investigation.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Thomas et al (2010), stated that a questionnaire is typically created by the researcher and serves as a tool for collecting data. Best and Khan (2006) characterized a questionnaire as a written set of inquiries that individuals respond to by selecting from closely related options. Similarly, Chandran (2003) noted that questionnaires offer a standardized way of gathering data and allow for generalized information to be obtained from a population. The questionnaire included semi-structured questions in both open-ended and closed formats because of the nature of the research, allowing respondents to express their thoughts.

Lancaster (2006), suggests that while structured questions are straightforward to analyze and manage, unstructured questions provide a useful platform for respondents to express their thoughts and perspectives on the research topic flexibly. Questionnaires provided multiple benefits for data

collection, including the ability to gather data via email or phone and make comparisons based on the responses. According to Collins (2010), questionnaires typically allow for anonymous responses and if they are administered properly, they do not exhibit any bias from an interviewer.

A questionnaire was the most appropriate tool, especially when handling a large number of subjects. The questionnaires are inexpensive, as the only cost incurred was the printing of many copies of the questionnaires required for the study. Adamchank (2000) notes that questionnaire responses can be rapidly tabulated and analyzed. Questionnaires had some limitations, such as the possibility of some respondents not being able to understand complex questions, leading to inaccurate responses. Additionally, to obtain a representative population sample, a large number of respondents was required. The use of close-ended questions in questionnaires also restricted the variety of responses given by participants. One major disadvantage of questionnaires was the inability to observe non-verbal cues from respondents (Admachank, 2000). According to Snyman (2014), there are situations where the researcher can compromise the reliability of the results by posing biased questions or administering the survey differently to different individuals. However, despite these drawbacks, a semi-structured questionnaire was deemed more suitable for achieving the objectives of this study because the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

3.4.2 Interviews Guides

According to Modwell (2007), interviews are a technique for collecting data by posing questions to a group of individuals or people who have a stake in the system. Interviews can be conducted in a structured, semi-structured or unstructured format. For this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, which involved the use of an interview guide which outlined the topics to be covered with the participants. The interview guide consisted of a blend of open-ended and closed questions, which facilitated the investigation process. The semi-structured interview guide was designed with well-organized questions to make sure that they were easy to comprehend, all-encompassing and not subject to multiple interpretations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007).

The interview guide was organized in a manner that simplifies the participation of the primary respondents in the procurement management unit (PMU). Interviews were valuable since they enabled the interviewer to obtain insights into the interviewee's perspectives, thoughts and recommendations. This approach permitted the interviewer to ask a range of questions and gather as much information as feasible. Interviews provided the interviewee with the opportunity to answer questions directly without external influence. However, conducting interviews was both time-consuming and costly. Additionally, the interviewer's comprehension of the interviewee's responses influenced their interpretation, which might have potentially led to biased conclusions. Therefore, there was the possibility of incorrect interpretations. The act of conducting interviews made the respondents feel exposed, especially when they were asked sensitive questions.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), define data collection as the process of gathering information from the chosen subject of the study. The researcher requested permission from the director of the procurement management unit (PMU) to access transaction records for use as secondary data. The researcher, with the help of a research assistant, personally distributed the questionnaires and made sure that instructions were clear for the respondents. Kothari (2004), identifies two sources of data: primary and secondary. This study utilized both primary and secondary data to gather pertinent information for the research.

3.6 Data Presentation and Analysis Procedures

Sharma (2005), stated that data analysis is the procedure of gathering, modelling and converting data into valuable information that can suggest conclusions and assist in decision-making. This research project aimed to generate both quantitative and qualitative data that provided a comprehensive understanding of the impact of e-procurement. Quantitative and qualitative data collected was analyzed using both mathematical and non-mathematical analytical methods. Descriptive statistics were employed to provide a broad summary of the analysis results. This method simplifies the data and presents quantitative descriptions in an easily understandable format (Orodho, 2003).

3.7 Reliability and Validity

Reliability is defined by Saunders et al. (2005) as the degree to which data gathering yields consistent results that are plainly derived from raw data. The study was conducted openly in order to verify its validity and dependability. Saundres et al. (2012) assert that reliability in a research endeavor is characterized by consistency and simplicity in replication. On the other hand, validity, as defined by Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003, refers to the degree to which data obtained by instruments can be regarded as suitable for analysis and making conclusions. Grey (2005), suggests that for a research instrument, such as a questionnaire, to maintain validity, it must comprehensively cover the research issues with relevant content and detail. Mutai (2000), argues that the questionnaire content must be pertinent to the variable being investigated for it to be considered valid. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data-gathering methods, the questionnaires and interview guides were designed to be straightforward to comprehend.

A pilot test, according to Mugenda (2003), is essential for ensuring the reliability of a study. The purpose of the pilot study is to find flaws in the research design and instrumentation and to get exact data for sample selection (Young, 2009). The researcher did a pilot test by giving some of the questionnaire samples to people who weren't involved in the main study in order to assess how well the questionnaires worked to elicit the intended replies and whether they provided enough information.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

According to Saunders et al., (2012), research ethics refers to the principles of conduct that govern how you treat and interact with individuals who are either the subjects of your research or are impacted by it. To avoid ethical concerns, the researcher gave utmost importance to obtaining informed consent from all participants and furnished them with a comprehensive explanation of the research objectives before conducting any interviews. Informed consent involves providing information consciously, willingly and intelligently (Marianna, 2011). Additionally, the researcher ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

3.9 Summary

This chapter emphasized more on the rationale behind the procedures adopted during the study. The research methodology was summarized, with additional information about how the instruments were administered and the respondents were chosen. Additionally, it delved into the details of data collection methods, data analysis and the instruments and procedures employed for data presentation, along with their advantages and potential drawbacks. The study selected the population from the transaction records generated through both manual procurement and e-procurement systems. In addition to this, interviews were done to collect information from the staff members. The research also ensured that the validity and reliability of the study were taken into account, along with ethical considerations.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this chapter emphasized the analysis and presentation of data obtained from respondents through the use of questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The chapter addressed three research questions that were designed to answer the main research objective which was to assess the impact of e-procurement on organizational performance using the case of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. In addition, the researcher utilized tables, bar graphs and pie charts to facilitate the presentation and clear depiction of the results. Each diagram is accompanied by a concise explanation to complement these visual aids. The results are interpreted in light of the goals and issues of the study, as well as the theoretical analysis and empirical data covered in the earlier chapters. The study has made conclusions and recommendations based on the data analysis.

4.2 Response Rate Analysis

Individual interviews were conducted with respondents who were professionals involved in the procurement process at the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. The group was diverse in terms of its professionals. The procurement management unit had the highest response rate and their input was particularly valuable to the researcher. According to Table 4.2, the researcher intended to conduct interviews with 12 experts from the procurement management unit. However, only 11 interviews were carried out as the procurement director was unable to participate due to urgent work commitments. As a result, the response rate was 92%.

Table 4.2 Interviews Response Rate

Respondents	Target Interviewees	Actual Interviewed	Frequency
Procurement Officers	12	11	92%

4.3 Questionnaires response rate

Table 4.3 Questionnaire response rate

Respondents	Questionnaires Administered	Questionnaires returned	Response rate
Procurement Officers	12	12	100%
Stores Clerks	12	12	100%
Accountants	12	6	50%
IT Specialists	12	9	75%
Business Administrators	12	10	83%
Total	60	49	82%

Source: primary data 2023

Based on the information provided, to achieve a complete response rate, the researcher directly administered 60 questionnaires to potential respondents, but only 49 were returned, resulting in a

response rate of 82%. The researcher distributed 12 questionnaires to the procurement management unit and 12 to the stores department, both of which had a 100% response rate. However, the response rate for the IT department was 75%, as only 9 out of 12 questionnaires were returned. This transpired due to the absence of one of the IT department respondents during the researcher's administration of the questionnaires. Additionally, in the accounting department, 50% of the 12 questionnaires distributed could not be completed because the intended respondents had to be excused due to urgent work obligations. Finally, 10 out of 12 questionnaires were completed in the administration department giving an 83% response rate. According to Mugenda (2003), a response rate of more than 50% is sufficient to portray the phenomenon being studied. The researcher's high response rate was largely due to their ability to personally deliver and collect questionnaires, as well as conduct interviews. This significant response rate affirmed the credibility of the research outcomes and validated its employment as a foundation for proposing suggestions pertaining to the research topic.

4.4 Organisational Demographics

This study examined the impact of e-procurement on organizational performance across different demographic groups including gender, posts held in the organization and educational qualifications of the respondents. The study also aimed to explore the relationships between these demographic variables and e-procurement or organizational performance. The use of demographics in this study provided valuable insights into how different groups within MOPSE responded to e-procurement and the technological impact it has made on organizational performance. Understanding how different demographic groups respond to e-procurement can help MOPSE to tailor its implementation strategies and maximize the benefits of this technology. A detailed analysis of the results is presented in the following sections.

4.4.1 Gender Distribution

The study sought to identify the gender of the respondents

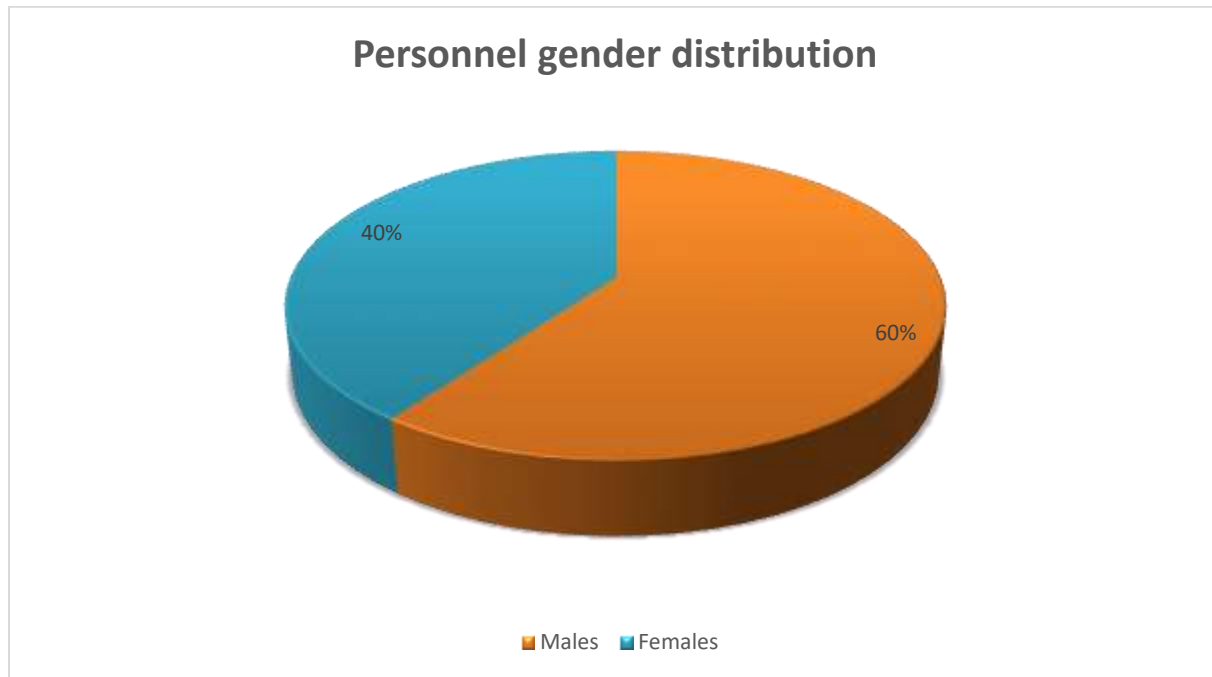


Figure 4.4.1 Personnel Gender Distribution

Source: Field Data 2023

Based on the findings presented in Table 4.4.1 above, it is clear that 60% of the participants in the study were male, while 40% were female. Although the study did not have a direct objective to investigate gender dynamics, it acknowledges the importance of gender equality in many organizations. It is worth noting that women often face more disadvantages than men, which is a general piece of information provided by the study. The findings suggest that there is a significant male presence in the MOPSE departments.

4.4.2 Respondents' age groups

The study found that, of the 60 participants, 7% were under the age of 25, 46% were between the ages of 26 and 35, 36% were between the ages of 35 and 50, and the remaining 11% were over the

age of 50. According to the research, the majority of the workforce was between the ages of 26 and 35, as shown in figure 4.4.2.

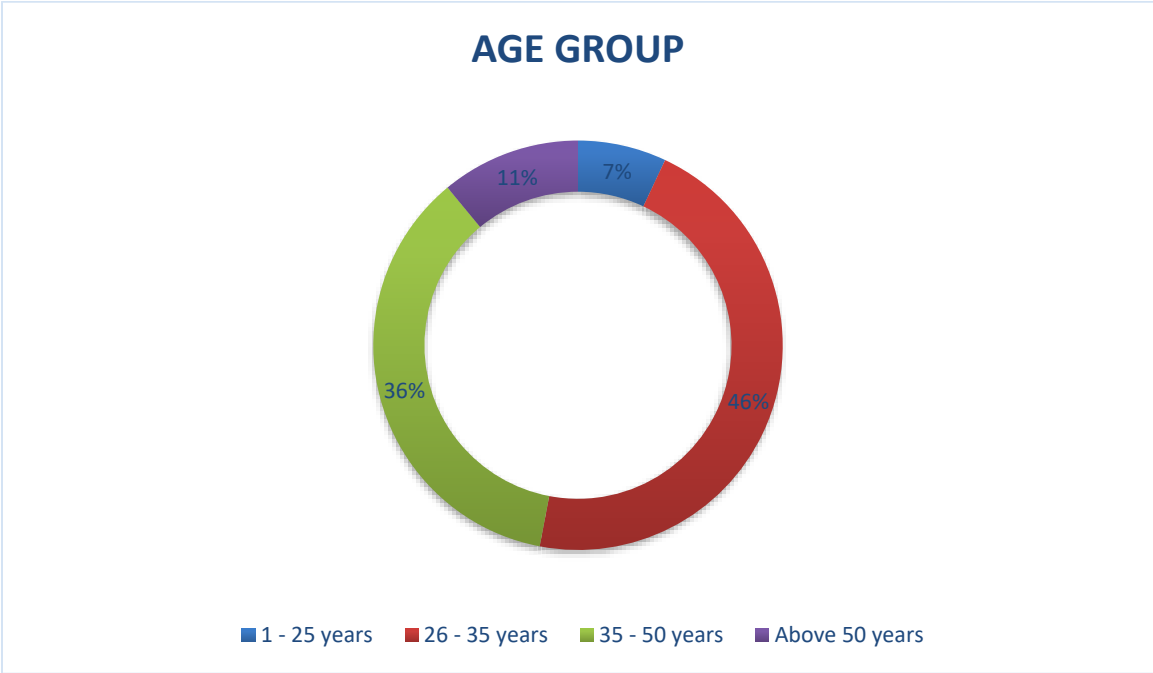


Figure 4.4.2 Respondents' age groups

Source: Field Data 2023

4.4.3 Education Qualifications of the Respondents

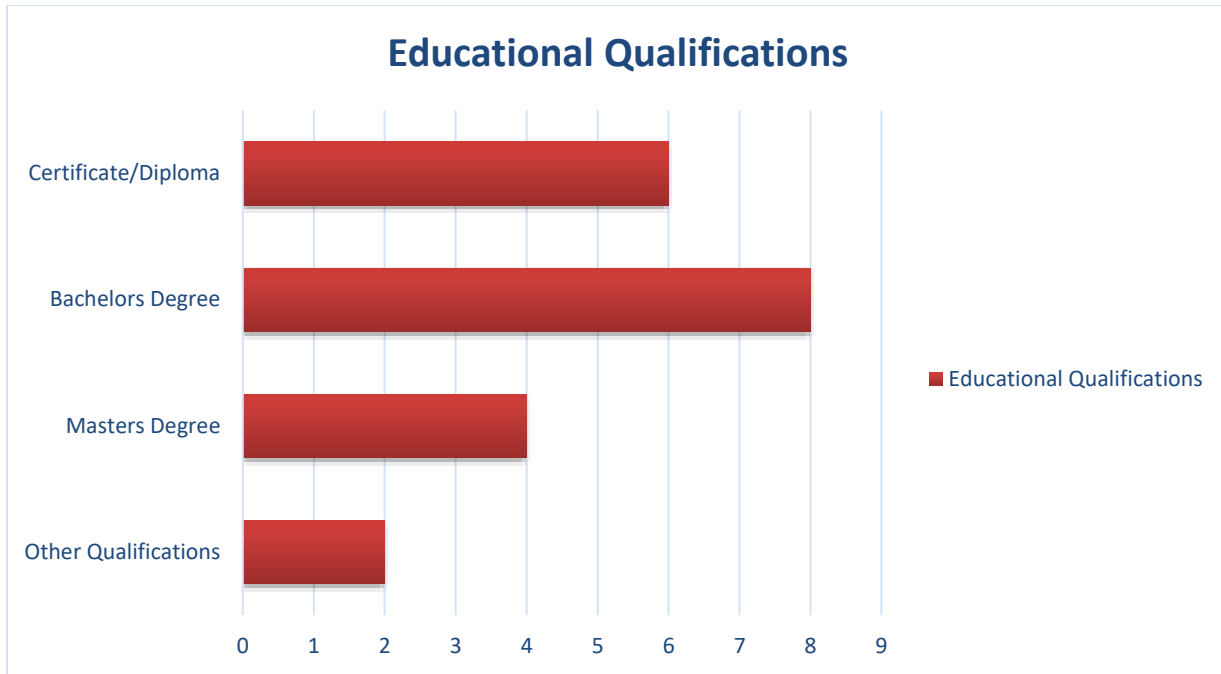


Figure 4.4.3 Education Qualifications of the Respondents

Source: Field Data, 2023

The bar graph above illustrates the educational background of the participants, which is divided into five categories. Figure 4.4.3 presents the findings that 10% of the respondents had other qualifications, 20% held a masters degree, 40% had a bachelor’s degree and the remaining 30% possessed either certificates or diplomas. Having the appropriate educational background is essential since many e-procurement systems and applications necessitate a certain level of proficiency and competence. The study demonstrated that the staff possessed a good understanding of the subject matter, indicating that their knowledge was adequate for operating such systems and applications.

4.4.5 Job Designation of Respondents

Figure 4.4.5 presents the job positions of the respondents in the organization, which was the aim of this particular question. The job positions included procurement officers, stores clerks, finance and accounting officers, IT specialists and business administrators.

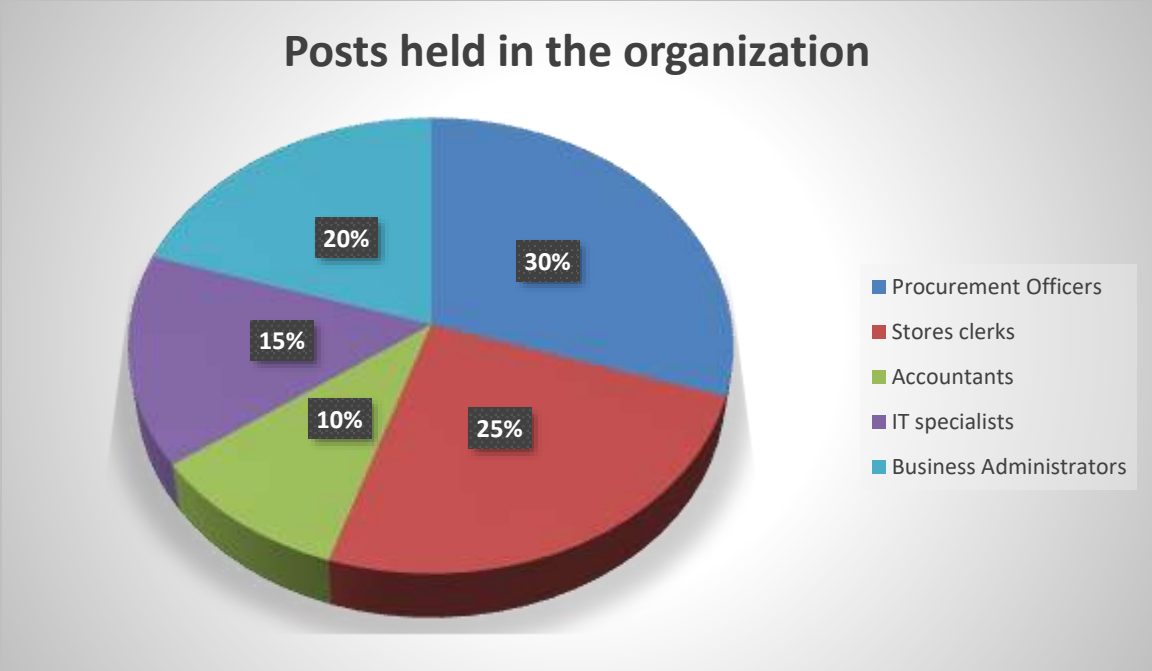


Figure 4.4.5 Job Designation of Respondents

Source: Field Data, 2023

Figure 4.4.5 presents that 30% of the participants held the position of procurement officers, while 25% were stores clerks, 15% were IT specialists, 10% were accountants and 20% were administrators.

4.5 THE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF E-PROCUREMENT AT MOPSE

4.5.1 Online tendering process

Figure 4.5 below depicts the purpose of this question, which was to determine whether MOPSE was floating or advertising tenders online, while 50% agreed and 20% disagreed. The outcomes indicate that e-procurement is being utilized during the tendering procedure.

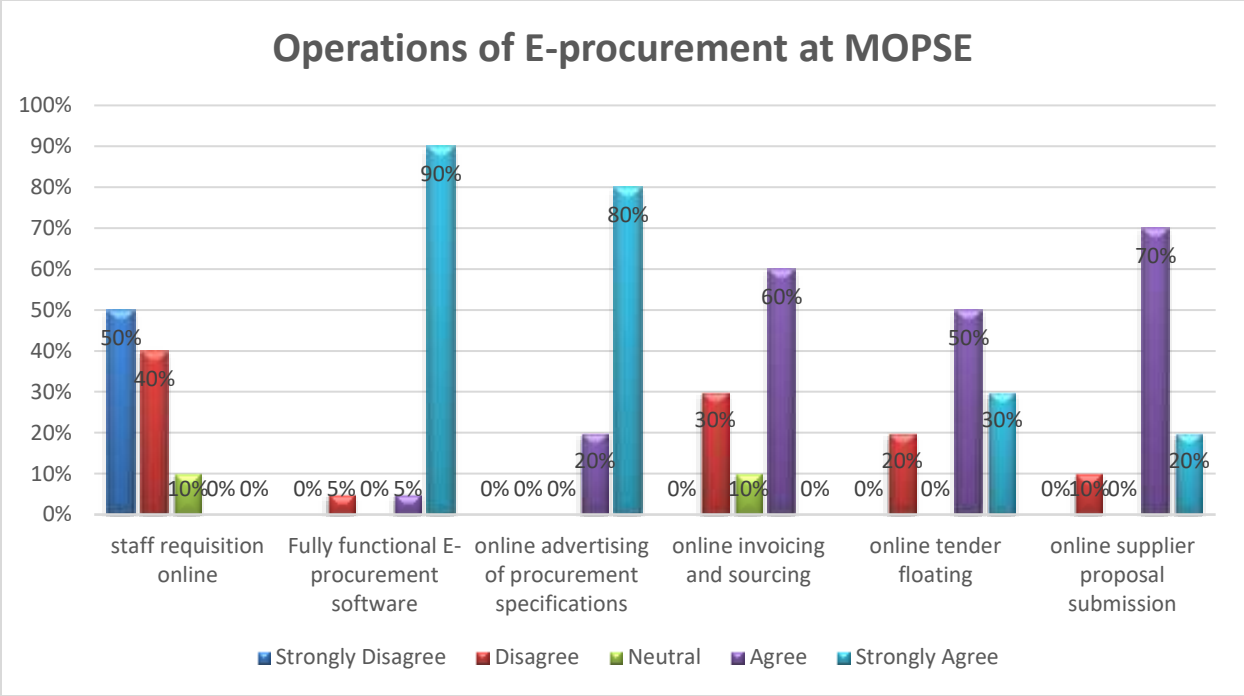


Figure 4.5 The operational activities of e-procurement at MOPSE Source: Primary Data 2023

4.5.2 Potential Suppliers Submit Proposals through an online platform

The aim of this question was to ascertain whether MOPSE used an online platform for suppliers to submit their proposals or whether the process was being conducted manually. The findings showed that 70% of the participants agreed with this proposition, while 20% strongly agreed and 10% disagreed. These results suggest that MOPSE was receiving proposals from prospective suppliers through an online system. Figure 4.5 displays these findings.

4.5.3 The existence of a functional website to facilitate e-procurement

The survey aimed to establish if there was a functional website and the results displayed in figure 4.5 indicate that 90% of the participants strongly agreed that such a website existed, 5% agreed and an additional 5% were either uncertain or uninformed about its existence.

4.5.4 The use of online platforms to conduct both invoicing and sourcing

The survey aimed at determining the extent to which MOPSE has implemented e-procurement, with a specific focus on whether invoicing and sourcing were done online. The outcomes exhibited in figure 4.5 indicate that 60% of the participants consented to the online execution of both invoicing and sourcing, while 30% disagreed and 10% were neutral. These findings are consistent with MOPSE's effective e-procurement system, which includes online invoicing for their clients.

4.5.6 The company website used for publishing procurement items specifications

The findings revealed that the company website contained procurement item specifications. To be specific, 80% of the respondents strongly agreed and 20% agreed that the website presented the specifications for procurement items. This suggests that the procurement item specifications were made available electronically.

4.5.7 Utilization of online requisitions by all company staff

The survey aimed at determining whether all company staff made online requisitions. The findings indicated that none of the requisitions was being conducted online and all the employees made their requisitions manually, which is a bureaucratic time-consuming process. To be precise, 50% of the participants strongly disagreed that they made online requisitions, while 40% disagreed and 10% remained neutral. The survey results demonstrate that MOPSE has not fully embraced e-procurement, despite expressing strong interest in doing so.

4.6 MOPSE performance after the implementation of an e-procurement system

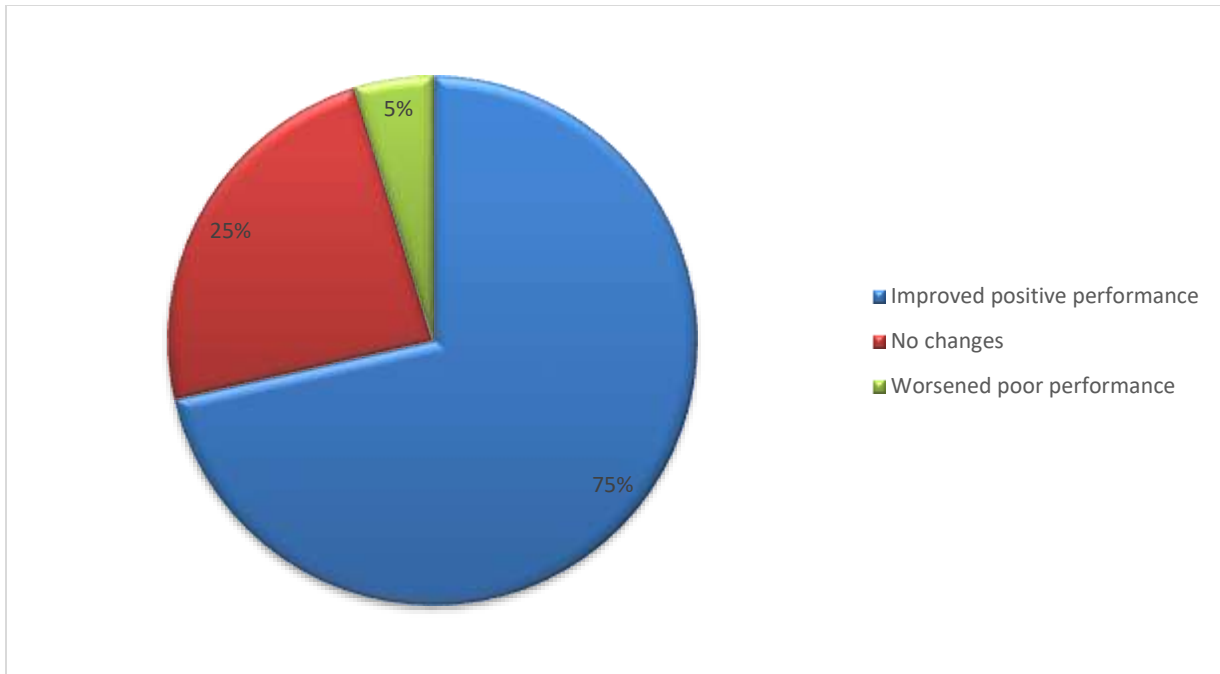


Figure 4.6 Performance after the implementation of e-procurement Source: Primary Data 2023

Based on the information shown in figure 4.6, it can be concluded that e-procurement has enhanced the performance of MOPSE by 75%. This is validated by the company's shorter lead times. However, 25% of the respondents had no opinion on the matter, while 5% believed that e-procurement had a negative impact on MOPSE's performance.

4.7 The cost and time effectiveness implications of e-procurement

Table 4.7.1 Impact of e-procurement in relation to costs

<i>Impact of E-Procurement in Relation to Costs</i>	
Mean	20
Standard Error	12.5830574
Median	10
Mode	#N/A
Standard Deviation	21.7944947
Sample Variance	475
Kurtosis	#DIV/0!
Skewness	1.63005916
Range	40
Minimum	5
Maximum	45
Sum	60
Count	3
Confidence Level (95.0%)	54.1405262

Source: Field Data 2023

According to the results, the mean is 20 and the standard deviation is 21.7, indicating that e-procurement has a significant influence compared to the expenses associated with operating the business at MOPSE.

Table 4.7.2 Impact of e-procurement in relation to time effectiveness

<i>The impact of e-procurement on Time Effectiveness</i>	
Mean	15
Standard Error	7.359801
Median	12.5
Mode	N/A
Standard Deviation	14.7196
Sample Variance	216.6667
Kurtosis	1.5
Skewness	0.940661
Range	35
Minimum	0
Maximum	35
Sum	60
Count	4
Confidence Level (95%)	23.42217

Source: Field Data 2023

Table 4.7.3 Summary of Responses from Participants

		<i>E-procurement</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Cost reductions	Strongly Agree	35	58%
	Agree	15	25%
	Neutral	10	17%
	Disagree	0	0
	Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total		60	
Time effectiveness	Strongly Agree	40	66.6%
	Agree	10	16.7%
	Neutral	0	0
	Disagree	10	16.7%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total		60	

Source: Field Data 2023

The majority of participants (58%) strongly concurred that e-procurement resulted in cost reduction at MOPSE, according to the statistics shown in table 4.7.3 above. This was credited to the integration of e-procurement systems, which consolidated multiple tasks into a single process, thereby reducing the costs of all transactions. Additionally, 25% of the respondents agreed with this view, while 17% had no opinion on the matter. The findings depicted in figure 4.7.3 also suggest that e-procurement was perceived as a time-efficient process by the respondents. Approximately 66.6% of the participants who took part in the survey reported that e-procurement

had a positive impact through enhanced time effectiveness during their procurement processes. This was mainly due to the significant reduction in lead time when the e-procurement system was applied, resulting in a noticeable improvement in the quality and timeliness of product and service delivery at MOPSE. Additionally, 16.7% of the participants concurred with the statement, while 16.7% disagreed and did not believe that e-procurement had a favourable impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of procurement processes.

4.9 The cost associated with the acquisition of e-procurement systems

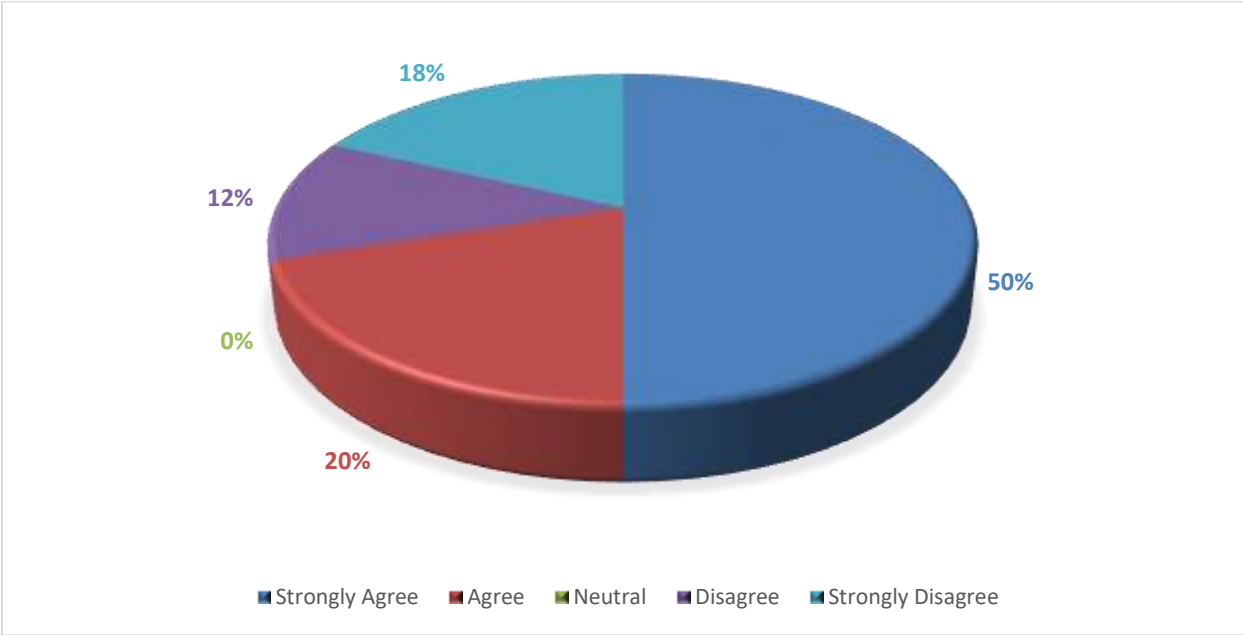


Figure 4.9 Cost associated with the acquisition of e-procurement systems Source: Field Data 2023

The diagram labelled as figure 4.9 illustrates the proportion of respondents who provided feedback on the high cost associated with acquiring e-procurement systems at MOPSE. The highest percentage of respondents, which accounted for 50%, strongly agreed with this statement. This is not surprising as new technologies often come with a significant price tag and require ongoing maintenance and upgrades. The statement was agreed upon by an additional 20% of the

respondents, whereas 12% had a contrasting opinion and 18% strongly disagreed. It can be noted that none of the respondents remained neutral in their viewpoint.

4.10 Gains derived from using e-procurement by MOPSE

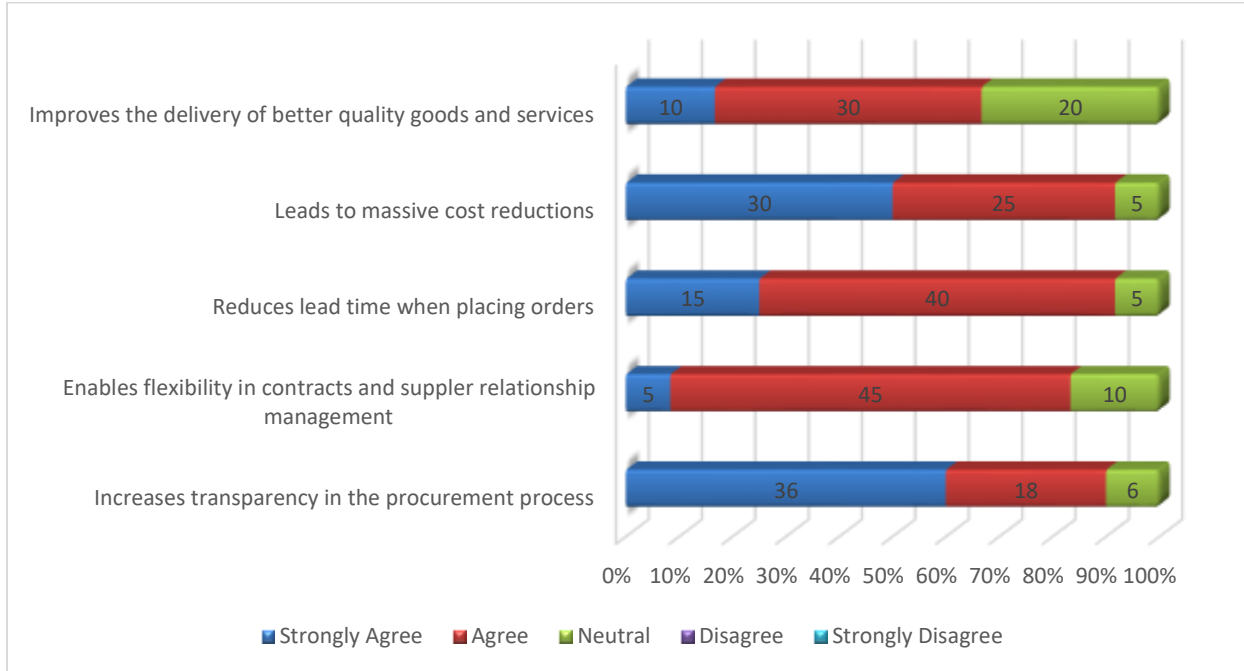


Figure 4.10 Gains derived from using e-procurement by MOPSE

Source: Field Data 2023

4.10.1 Increases the procurement of goods and services with better quality

The assessment aimed to ascertain if the adoption of e-procurement had a beneficial impact on the calibre of products and services obtained by the company. As illustrated in Figure 4.4 the majority of respondents (50%) agreed that e-procurement had a favourable impact on the quality of the organization’s purchased items. An additional 17% strongly agreed with this statement, while 33% remained neutral. Overall, the responses show that e-procurement improved the company’s capacity to deliver better goods and services.

4.10.2 Massive cost reductions

The results presented above demonstrate the advantages of implementing e-procurement systems instead of relying on manual systems. These benefits include reductions in costs, which can result in the delivery of high-quality goods and services procured, reduced lead times, more flexible contracts and greater transparency in the procurement process. Half of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement, while 42% agreed with it. A small percentage 8% of respondents remained neutral.

4.10.3 E-procurement led to minimized lead time

The results of the study show that e-procurement is efficient at shortening lead times. As seen in Figure 4.10, 67% of respondents specifically agreed that it cuts down on lead time. Furthermore, 25% of the respondents strongly agreed with this claim, while just 8% disagreed, demonstrating that the majority of respondents believe e-procurement helps to shorten lead times.

4.10.4 E-procurement led to profitable contracts

According to the findings of the research, e-procurement has a favourable influence on the quality of contracts. To be precise, 75% of the participants concurred that it results in improved contracts, whereas only 8% strongly agreed with this statement. Nonetheless, figure 4.10 demonstrates that 17% of the respondents remained impartial regarding the impact of e-procurement on contract quality.

4.10.5 E-procurement induces transparency into the procurement process

The majority, or 60% of respondents, strongly agreed with the idea that e-procurement encourages transparency in the procurement process, according to the study's findings. Additionally, just 10% of respondents were neutral, whereas 30% of respondents agreed with this viewpoint.

4.11 Discussion of findings

The RBV theory suggests that e-procurement can contribute to organizational success if the organization possesses valuable, scarce, irreproducible and well-organized resources (Bales and Fearon, 2006). Additionally, the RBV theory assumes that resources owned by the enterprise are relatively diverse and immobile (Chacha, 2010). Wagner (2006), asserts that innovation is characterized by beneficial practices that arise from effective technology. Maintaining good practices that are aligned with technical capabilities can enhance overall performance and result in the delivery of high-quality services. The innovative framework is considered a valuable resource that aligns well with the RBV theory since it can lead to enhanced performance and service delivery.

The objective of the research was to investigate the impact of e-procurement on the performance of MOPSE. This is consistent with the assertion that management has a responsibility to safeguard the organization from supply interruptions and adapt to a dynamic economic and technological landscape. This chapter described the main e-procurement tasks which were directed at facilitating the supply chain process and withstanding major changes in the technological environment. Research findings show that MOPSE was improving its business performance, which is reflected by the timely delivery of high-quality products and services.

The study also uncovered how e-procurement affects cost and time efficiency. It was noted that cost is a barrier to the implementation of e-procurement systems. This aspect is consistent with a study by Chipiro (2009), which identified that e-procurement is primarily driven by cost and strategic factors, but technical difficulties are identified as the main obstacle. The findings of this study show that MOPSE costs have been significantly reduced due to the automation of integrated processes.

In addition to identifying the benefits of e-procurement for MOPSE, this research aimed to highlight them as well. Just as each technology has its own set of benefits, e-procurement systems offer numerous advantages such as increased efficiency in the delivery of goods and services. This

aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model put forth by Davis (1989). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) identifies the essential attributes of innovation such as the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. This underscores the fact that companies are adopting technology based on the perceived advantages. Additionally, a study by Ngeno and Omwenga (2015) demonstrated that e-procurement is the optimal procurement method for modern-day organizations.

4.12 Summary

Finally, the chapter provided insight into the impact an e-procurement system has on the performance of MOPSE. The data was collected from respondents through interviews and questionnaires. The findings of the survey indicated that e-procurement is having a beneficial effect on MOPSE. The study also revealed several other advantages of e-procurement compared to traditional manual procurement methods. The procurement department will deliver goods and services more effectively and transparently, which will result in lower costs and shorter lead times. Additionally, other findings showed that e-procurement is more lucrative and significantly affects MOPSE performance, making it a more effective and efficient procurement approach. A summary is provided in the following chapter, which will help in the development of conclusions and suggestions.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

A summary of the study's key findings, conclusions, and recommendations makes up the majority of this chapter. It gives a summary of the key conclusions drawn from the data in chapter four that were given. This chapter examined how well the information gathered matched the study's objectives and research questions. The conclusions reached from the results, recommendations made in light of the results, and ideas for additional research are also discussed in this chapter.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of e-procurement on organisational performance. This was a case study of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education head office based in Harare, Zimbabwe. For this study, a case study methodology was employed, utilizing a sample of 60 participants who completed questionnaires. Additionally, individual interviews were conducted with 12 procurement professionals. The questionnaires response rate was 82%, while 92% of the interviews were completed. This response rate is considered adequate for research purposes (Mugenda, 2003). The research discovered that a majority of the organization's members are male. In addition, a high number of respondents were holders of bachelors degrees in terms of educational qualifications.

5.2.1 First Objective

The first objective was to determine the impact of e-procurement in relation to the attainment of value for money and time effectiveness at the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. According to the study, e-procurement had a noteworthy effect on cost-effectiveness, as most participants strongly agreed that it reduces transactional costs and shortens lead times.

Nonetheless, the study's results are consistent with Croom and Johnston's (2003), claim that integrating e-procurement with process re-engineering can significantly decrease transactional costs compared to traditional procurement systems, which are both time-consuming and expensive to operate.

5.2.2 Second Objective

The second objective aimed at examining the role of an e-procurement system on the performance of MOPSE. The survey results revealed that MOPSE had integrated e-procurement systems that played a key role in enhancing the efficiency of the online floating of tenders, online bid submission and online invoicing and sourcing.

5.2.3 Third Objective

The third objective of the study aimed to suggest ways in which an e-procurement system could improve the performance of MOPSE. The researcher stressed the significance of e-procurement as a vital aspect that modern organizations cannot afford to ignore, as it can serve as a critical source of competitive advantage.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Role of E-Procurement on the Performance of MOPSE

By using e-procurement for all its transactions, MOPSE was able to streamline its procurement processes, reduce costs, improve efficiency and enhance transparency and control. Leveraging e-procurement systems brought significant benefits to MOPSE including streamlined workflows, reduced paperwork and automation of many tasks associated with e-procurement such as tender advertising, proposal submission and tender evaluation. E-procurement platforms can also provide transparency into the procurement process, making it simpler for management to keep tabs on expenditure, follow supplier performance, and spot cost-saving opportunities. By allowing suppliers to submit proposals online, e-procurement systems can also help MOPSE to attract a

wider range of suppliers and increase competition for contracts which can lead to better value for money. This gave staff more time to focus on more strategic activities and improve overall efficiency.

It's apparent that e-procurement plays a critical role in MOPSE's organizational performance, as demonstrated by the study's findings. By posting procurement specifications on the company website and enabling staff to make requisitions online, MOPSE was able to streamline its procurement processes, reduce costs and improve efficiency. In addition, the study found that e-procurement systems also helped to reduce errors, improve compliance with procurement policies and regulations.

5.3.2 Impact of E-Procurement on the Performance of MOPSE

It is not uncommon for companies to experience improved cost and time effectiveness when implementing e-procurement systems, as appears was the case of MOPSE. Automating and streamlining procurement processes, reduced the lead times and minimized errors. Additionally, e-procurement systems provided better visibility into the procurement process allowing for more informed decision-making. However, the study found, there can be a significant upfront cost associated with acquiring and implementing e-procurement systems. Moreover, these systems often require ongoing updates and maintenance, which can also increase costs over time. It is important for MOPSE to carefully weigh the costs and benefits of implementing e-procurement systems to determine if it is the right choice for their specific needs and circumstances.

5.3.3 Benefits of Using E-Procurement

The study described the advantages of e-procurement systems which can be significant and wide-ranging. As noted, e-procurement reduces costs by automating and streamlining procurement processes, which can lead to better contract terms and more competitive pricing from suppliers. They also helped to ensure the delivery of high-quality goods and services, as well as improve transparency in the procurement process. In addition, the benefits also include the risk of fraud and errors, improve compliance with regulations and company policies and provide better data and

analytics to inform decision-making. Such a system is worth having as it can improve the overall performance of companies and help them to better meet their business objectives.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Role of E-Procurement on Performance

Based on the findings of the study, it does seem that e-procurement has had a favourable impact on MOPSE's cost and time effectiveness. Therefore, it may be beneficial for the company to continue investing in and improving its e-procurement systems in order to further enhance its performance. To do so, MOPSE could consider investing in more advanced e-procurement technologies which can help to optimize procurement processes even further. Additionally, the use of e-procurement improves supplier relationships and collaboration which leads to better contract delivery. It is important, however, for MOPSE to carefully evaluate the costs and benefits of any investments in e-procurement systems to ensure that they align with the company's overall strategic goals and objectives.

5.4.2 Impact of E-Procurement

The study goes on to suggest employee training as a crucial component in assuring the success of an e-procurement system. Employees need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to handle these systems as technology continues to advance. By providing training to all employees involved in the procurement process, MOPSE can ensure that they are equipped to deal with any challenges that may arise when using the e-procurement system. This can help to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the system and can also reduce the risk of errors and other issues. Additionally, providing training can help to increase employee engagement and buy-in for the e-procurement system as employees will better understand the benefits and value of the system. This can lead to a more positive and productive work environment and can drive better business results.

To reduce transactional costs, the organization should engage in business with other organizations that have reliable e-procurement system applications. This will ensure that any issues resulting from incompatibility between the supplier's and the organization's systems are minimized, facilitating the continued reduction of costs through e-procurement. It might be sensible for certain suppliers, especially small and new businesses, to take a cautious "wait and see" approach. This approach involves carefully considering factors such as system integration, initial investment expenses (including operational costs) and changes to procurement processes before fully committing to e-procurement. By doing so, these suppliers can make informed decisions about whether e-procurement is the right fit for their business. To improve the performance of the organization, it is advisable to refrain from conducting business with suppliers who do not have websites. As a result, the procurement process will move along more quickly and efficiently.

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APPENDIX 1

Bindura University of Science Education

741 Chimurenga road

Bindura

5 May 2023

Human Resources Manager

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

P.O Box CY 121

Causeway

Harare

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: INTRODUCTORY LETTER – RESEARCH PROJECT

As an undergraduate student at Bindura University of Science Education pursuing a Bachelor of Commerce Honours degree Purchasing and Supply, I am conducting a research project titled “The impact of an E-procurement System on Organizational Performance: A Case Study of Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.” I kindly request permission to conduct my research in your organization as part of the partial fulfillment of my degree requirements. It is vital to note that any information given by the respondents will be held in strict confidence and solely used for academic purpose. Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully

Mcdee Tatenda Gwasira (B1850310)

mcwizzygwasira@gmail.com

APPENDIX II

Questionnaire for employees

Dear Respondent,

My name is Mcdee T. Gwasira, and I am currently an undergraduate student at the Bindura University of Science Education. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information regarding the impact of e-procurement on organizational performance, with a specific focus on the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, head office in Harare. Your assistance in completing the following questions using the scales provided. Please indicate your responses by checking the appropriate boxes and utilizing any provided spaces. The information gathered will only be used for academic reasons and will be kept in the strictest of confidence. Do not hesitate to contact the researcher if you have any queries or concerns on 0771357269.

SECTION A: Organizational profile

1. Department.....

2. Job Designation in the organization.....

3. Gender Male

Female

4. Age of respondents

1 – 25 years	
26 – 35 years	
36 – 50 years	
Above 50 years	

5. Educational Qualifications

Certificate/Diploma

--

Bachelors Degree

--

Post Graduate

--

Other Qualifications.....

SECTION B: Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements concerning the impact of e-procurement on performance.

Please indicate with a 'tick' using the scale of:

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Not sure
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

The role of e-procurement on the performance of MOPSE

Please show the extent to which you believe MOPSE has implemented e-procurement and its roles.

EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION	1	2	3	4	5
Tenders are advertised online					
There is a functioning website to facilitate e-procurement					
All company staff make requisitions online					
Prospective Suppliers submit proposals online					
Specifications for procure items are posted to company website					
Invoicing and sourcing are carried out online					

Others please specify.....

SECTION C: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement.

Impact of e-procurement on performance of MOPSE

IMPACT	1	2	3	4	5
Leads to cost reduction					
Leads to better service delivery					
Enables the organization to streamline processes					
Facilitates real time response to customers					
Guarantees real time response to the market					
Improves transparency in the procurement process					
It improves the flow of information					
It leads to competitive bidding and sourcing					

SECTION D: Please indicate the extend to which you agree with the following statement.

The impact of e-procurement in relation to cost and time effectiveness

IMPACT	1	2	3	4	5
E-procurement reduce costs					
Acquisition of e-procurement systems is expensive					
E-procurement has improved MOPSE lead time					
MOPSE has achieved efficiency and effectiveness with e-procurement					
E-procurement at MOPSE needs improvement					

SECTION E: Please indicate the extend to which you agree with the following statement.

Benefits associated with e-procurement to MOPSE

BENEFIT	1	2	3	4	5
Leads to cost reduction					
Leads to company delivering better goods and services					
Reduces lead time					
Leads to better contracts					
mproves Transparency in the procurement process					

Others please specify

.....

.....

.....

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questions

Does your organization utilize E-Procurement?

What functions does e-procurement serve in enhancing the performance of MOPSE?

What are the positive outcomes of utilizing E-Procurement?

Would you say that E-Procurement has had a beneficial effect on the performance of MOPSE?

Would you concur that E-procurement aids in decreasing the lead time.

Does the acquisition of E-procurement system come at a high price?

Do you believe that the supply chain has experienced cost savings as a result of E- Procurement?

What alterations have been implemented through the use of E- Procurement?

AN ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPACT OF AN E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM ON PERFORMANCE_ A CASE STUDY OF MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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