BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

challenges faced by local authorities during budget   adoptions in zimbabwe: a case study of bindura district

By

B201034B

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Peace and Governance in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Peace and Governance

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is focused on the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe focusing at Bindura district. The researcher used qualitative research methodology because qualitative research provides a rich and comprehensive description of human experiences and meanings and findings are allowed to emerge, rather than being imposed by an investigator. The design allows for in-depth knowledge for the subject under study as it focuses on answering questions on how and why of the presenting situation or phenomenon.The key findings on this research are that, local authorities challenges have increased and become more and more complicated in recent years. These challenges include, high rate of inflation, corruption and embezzlement of funds. In Zimbabwe there are issues also that comprise of high inflation rate of the local currency thus RTGS. The fluctuation of the Zimbabwean local currency reduces the efficiency of the local authority. High rate of inflation also lead to loss of massive funds that the local authorities need in the provision of service delivery to residents. In Zimbabwe, it is difficult to do fiscal budgeting using the local currency. Corruption and embezzlement of funds also hinders the local authorities during budget adoption. Corruption and embezzlement of funds reduces income of funds to the local authorities resulting in high expenditures leading to difficulties on local authorities during budget adoption. The conclusion is that, the above factors are the major reason why local authorities are failing to provide good services to its clients. Good services include garbage collection, sewage servicing, infrastructural development, social services among other services. More so, because of the above challenges investors and well-wishers are reluctant to work hand in hand with the local authorities. It can be recommended that, Local authorities should practice due diligent in its administration and operations. It should have strong internal audit system and refrain from corruption and nepotism. Also, the local authorities should seek to promote public engagement to improve their performance. This can be done through increased public awareness and education as well as the development of public participation programs.

Declaration Form

I B201034B, hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own research and study, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgements and references included in the body of the paper, and that it has not been submitted in part and full for any other degree to any other degree.

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Student's signature   **Date**

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my late mother. It would have been a greatest blessing if you were here to witness your daughter achieving this high. Rest in peace mama, we shall meet again.

Acknowledgements

I want to give praise and thanks to the Almighty for blessing me this far. His grace is sufficient for me and my family. He always has been faithful to me and my family. To God, be the glory.

I also take this time to thank my supervisor, for being there for me throughout this dissertation. His patients and skills brought me this far. I am so grateful.

List of abbreviations and acronyms

ANT- Actor Network Theory

CCC- Citizen Coalition for Change

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

IT- Internet Technology

LA- Local Authorities

LOGIC- Local Government Investment Conference

MLG&PW – Ministry of Local Government and Public Works

NGO- Non-Governmental Organization

STS- Science Technology Studies

UK- United Kingdom

USA- United States of America

ZANU PF- Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front

ZITF- Zimbabwe International Trade Fair

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTROUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

It is important to note that, the world has changed swiftly in recent decades and particularly in recent years and so have local government challenges. Brun & Khdari (2016) concurs that, in United States of America (USA) the technology explosion of the early 21st century enabled the local authorities to amplify the quality of life for millions of people, making it easier than ever to access essential goods and services with a small number of taps on a phone. As a result, citizens have come to be expecting quick, efficient, and highly responsive services which local governments don't always have the resources to make available.

Brun & Khdari (2016) went on further arguing that, in United Kingdom (UK) the pandemic of Covid 19strained public organizations to rethink some of these dawdling bureaucratic processes that slow down efficient service delivery. However, not all local governments have acknowledged these advancements with open arms. According to France Terre deasil (2006), some agencies are doubtful to make changes like tale-work permanent, leading to high turnover and trouble with local authority employee retention. In today's progressively more connected world, residents have become more conscious of the local authority's roles in their day-to-day lives. Citizens stipulate full transparency and slot in with their government in new ways thus from participating in budget decisions to initiating climate change task forces.

According to daCruz& Marques (2016), in most developed countries like Canada and Australia thus technologically connected globe has amplified cyber security threats, including the number of ransom ware and malware attack that public organizations experience. In fact, local and state governments come across upwards of 70percent of all ransom ware attacks in the United States. Carle & Lombard (2015) concurs that, these attacks hinder government operations for weeks if not longer. This impact also causes problems to the local authorities as far as budgeting is concerned as they will invest in expensive cyber security and other IT technology solutions to counteract these attacks.

Pachawo (2014) is of the view that, given inadequate budgets, in Zimbabwe local governments struggle to allocate sufficient resources for capital enhancement of projects and budgets. As a result, maintenance of Zimbabwean dilapidated roads, bridges, and other infrastructure is continuously delayed. Unfortunately, this leads to more pricey fixes down the line thereby causing challenges during budget adoptions. Kisiang'ani (2016) stipulates that, in countries like Zambia the federal Government has recently made steps to modernize its infrastructure by providing grants to its local authorities. Kisiang'ani (2016) went further arguing that, in maintaining these dilapidating infrastructures requires a lot of money-making budget adoption of a local authority very difficult.

Brun & Khdari (2016) concurs that, the United States has become more increasingly polarized, and Americans has lost faith in federal and state government institutions. And while local governments have evaded the same levels of disbelieve, they must stay on proactive in maintaining transparency and resident communications to guarantee that the same fate doesn't befall them (Brun & Khdari, 2016).

Oppenheim (2012) affirms that, as the climate emergency carry on; local governments will be strained to dedicate their already-limited resources to deal with the impact of natural disasters. This includes preparing for a forthcoming event through resilience and alleviation efforts, providing immediate emergency reaction, and administrating an efficient long-term disaster recovery process which is overwhelming and costly.

Brun & Khdari (2016) went on further arguing that, the pandemic trained residents about local government's responsibility in their day-to-day lives. Additionally, in USA many residents have called for a change and defund police in the wake of George Floyd's murder. As citizens have become more occupied with their local governments, public agencies have had to equilibrate community demands with resource constraint and essential service provision.

Heymans, Eales, & Franceys (2014) concurs that, over the past several years, small businesses have difficulty to survive during the pandemic of Covid 19 and recent economic turmoil. The pandemic thus led to many business closures and reduces the amount of money received from sales tax, a fundamental source of revenue for local authorities and the federal government.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to identify challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe and the possible solutions to these challenges.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Local authorities' challenges have increased and become more and more complicated in recent years. These challenges include high rate of inflation, corruption and embezzlement of funds. In Zimbabwe there are issues also that comprise of high inflation rate of the local currency thus RTGS. According to Chakaipa (2014), the fluctuation of the Zimbabwean local currency reduces the efficiency of the local authority. High rate of inflation also leads to loss of huge funds that the local authorities need in the provision of service delivery to residents. In Zimbabwe, it is difficult to do fiscal budgeting using the local currency. Chakaipa (2014) also went further arguing that, corruption and embezzlement of funds also hinders the local authorities during budget adoption. Corruption and embezzlement of funds reduces income of funds to the local authorities resulting in high expenditures leading to difficulties on local authorities during budget adoption. These factors are the major reason why local authorities are failing to provide good services to its clients such as garbage collection, sewage servicing, infrastructural development, social services among other services (Pachawo, 2014). More so, because of the above challenges investors and well-wishers are reluctant to work hand in hand with the local authorities.

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study will be guided by the following objectives.

1. To identify challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption.
2. To assess how these local authorities respond to the challenges they face during budget adoption.
3. To identify possible solution that local authorities may adopt in response to the challenges they face during budget adoption.

1.5 Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the challenges that local authorities face during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe?

2. What strategies are local authorities using in response to the challenges they are facing during budget adoption?

3. What are the possible measures that can be used in response to the challenges that local authorities face during budget adoption?

1.6 Assumptions of the study

This study assumes that.

1. In Zimbabwe, there is high rate of inflation that affects budget adoption in local authorities. Huge funds are lost because of inflation.

2. Corruption reduces fiscal incomes in local authorities making it difficult for local authorities during budget adoption.

3. Local authorities also face a challenge of embezzlement of funds that results in difficulties while conducting budget adoption.

1.7 Significance of the study

I. **Academics**

This study will be a benefit to academics as they will be able to learn on the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions. Some students may use it as a tool to their own researches.

II.   Ministry of Local Government and Public Works

Ministry of Local Government and Public Works may find benefits in this research as they will know the challenges their local authorities are facing as far as budget adoption is concerned. In so doing the MLG will also be equipped with possible solution to this discourse.

III.   Local Authorities

This study is also important to Local authorities as it will assist them in conducting self-evaluation and learn strategies which they can use in response to the problems they face as far as budget adoption is concerned.

IV.   Residents

Residents will benefit from the research as they will know what challenges their local authorities are facing. This will enable residents to be part of the problem-solving system especially on the issue of corruption and embezzlement of funds. They will be able to appreciate how corruption and embezzlement of funds really affects the local authorities during budget adoption.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The research was limited in scope to Bindura, and it focused on the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions. The information covered is from 2022-2023. The study

did not explore in full detail the specific types of involvement that the Central government has put into operation in response to the challenges face by local authorities during budget adoption. Other researchers may find strength in researching further in this aspect for instance the central government interference on the performance of local authorities and decision making in local authorities governing board. Other researchers may also look at effects of poor management by local authorities in service delivery.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The research was viewed by the local authorities as a yardstick measure to assess on their efficiency and incompetency. As a result, the local authorities were a little reluctant to participate. The researcher however explained fully to them why this research is important and how it is strictly for academic purpose. This research identifies the challenges that local authorities in Bindura face during budget implementation and how that affect service delivery to the Bindura residents. More so, the research also proposed relevant solution on how the local authorities can overcome these challenges. This led the local authorities to positively participate in the research. Some participants were too political and could not respond well to the questions asked. The researcher was able to add extra literature through reviewing other written sources towards the topic in question and also researching on how other local authorities in other districts and provinces managed to overcome these challenges.

1.10 Definition of key words

Local Authorities: Heymans, Eales & Franceys (2014) concur that, local authority is the closest sphere of government to local communities. It can also be viewed as an imperative conduit

through which national or central government implements policies and provision of services to communities.

Budget: According to Heymans, Eales & Franceys (2014), a budget expresses intended expenditures along with proposal for how to meet them with available resources. A budget can also articulate a surplus, providing resources for utilizing at a future time, or a deficit in which expenditure exceed income or other resources.

Urban Council: According to Masaki (2018), urban council are city councils or municipal councils established in respect of an area described as an urban.

Service delivery: Hove & Tirimboi (2013) views service delivery as the act of provision of basic resources and services to residents. These include electricity, garbage collection, infrastructural development, land, and housing, among other. When most of the basic needs of people are met then, there is good governance.

Performance: Wunsch (2014) argues that performance is the act of carrying out, taking action, achieving, or representing through action one's accomplishments

Central government: Afreed (2017) argues that central government refers to the state government.

Bindura: Chakaipa (2014) affirms that, Bindura is a town in the province of Mashonaland Central province, Zimbabwe. It is in the Mazowe Valley about 88 km north-east of Harare. According to the 2012 Population census Bindura had reached 46,275 people.

1.11 Dissertation Outline

The dissertation is comprised of five chapters as indicated below:

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter 1 focuses on the introduction and the background of the study. It also discusses on the purpose of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter looks at theoretical framework and the literature review that guides the study. This chapter contains the literature and texts that are related to the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption, a case study of Bindura.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter focuses on the research philosophy, research designs, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and other data presentation methods that will be used to conduct the study. This chapter also described and explained how data and research information were gathered

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

This chapter focuses on data analysis and data presentation of the findings during the research.

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

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

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introductions

This chapter looked at the literature review and the theoretical framework that guide the study towards challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe, A case study of Bindura district. The researcher discussed what other previous researchers have studied and said towards the afore-mentioned topic.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Actor Network Theory

According to Caldeira& Rota-Graziosi (2014), Actor network theory, also known as enrolment theory or the sociology of translation, become known during the mid-1980s. Actor network theory is a conceptual frame for exploring combined socio-technical processes, whose spokespersons have paid meticulous attention to science and technologic activity. Stemming from a Science and Technologies Studies interest in the prominent status of scientific knowledge and counteract to heroic accounts or innovation models, actor network theory suggests that the work of science is not basically different from other social performance. Caldeira& Rota-Graziosi (2014) went further arguing that, Actor network theory privileges neither natural realism nor cultural social constructivism accounts of scientific production, asserting in its place that science

is a process of heterogeneous engineering in which the social, conceptual, and textual are puzzled together or juxtaposed and transformed or translated.

Caldeira& Rota-Graziosi (2014) also concurs that, the ideas, objects, processes and any other relevant factors are seen as just as important in creating social situations as humans. Actor network theory holds that social forces do not exist in themselves and therefore cannot be used to explain social phenomena. Instead, strictly empirical analysis should be undertaken to describe rather than explain social activity

2.2.2 Communicative Action Theory

Baghirathan & Parker (2017) affirms that, Communicative action theory by Jurgen Habermas (1984:86) stipulates a consensual structure of social coordination, in which actors in society seek to reach universal understanding and to coordinate actions by reasonable argument, harmony and cooperation rather than strategic action firmly in pursuit of their own goals. Habermas also played an important role in the student movements of 1968 particularly in the 1960s when he was following the Marxist and Freud ideology. Baghirathan & Parker (2017) went on further arguing that, Habermas also was interested in the fields of philosophy, sociology, economics and politics and in language and communication. Communicative action is an agreement and cooperation rather than strategic action strictly in quest of their goals.

Baghirathan & Parker (2017) also concurs that, Actors who interact for this purpose try to reach an agreement on a subject in the world through argumentations and explanations they put forward on the foundation of tradition and culture. Habermas states that, persons who interact with the aim of achieving conformity try to achieve this through argumentations and remarks they produce on the common opinion of traditional and culture. In this process they refer to genuine

situations, social spheres and confidential life sphere. Communicative action is mainly focused on rationality. In other words, communicative actions also appear as communicative logic which is a sociological alternative that develops to create a common goal (Baghirathan & Parker, 2017).

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Zhou & Chilunjika (2013) affirms that, local authorities are generally at the core of supremacy by the desirable quality of being the government organization that is close to citizens. Furthermore, local authorities can be defined as the administrative structures which have been officially delivered everyday jobs for community service delivery in selected geographical vicinity, boards, municipalities, namely cities, towns and districts. According to Zhou & Chilunjika (2013), under the Urban Councils Act, [Chapter 29:15] of Zimbabwe, local authorities' presence as a rural district council, municipal council, local board or town council. In Zimbabwe local authorities are generally classified into 2 that is, the rural district and urban councils. Zimbabwe at present has 60 rural and 32 urban councils. Furthermore, council neighbourhoods are alienated into wards with a chosen councillor as the leader of the ward. According to Chatiza (2015), the policies building space is further pooled among the ward assemblies in rural district councils, a full Council and village assemblies. Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing have the universal supervisory role over local authorities in stipulations of policy course and guaranteeing that governance issues and financial administration are joined to (Chatiza, 2015).

International Views

Damayanti, Sutrisno, Subekti & Baridwan (2015) concur that, Governments of underdeveloped nations are under pressure to improve public sector performance and at the same time hold expenditure growth. While factors like ageing populations and growing health care and pension costs put into budgetary demands, citizens are challenging that governments be made more accountable for what they achieve with taxpayers' funds. Damayanti et al. (2015) also asserts that, Underdeveloped nations have thus adopted different approaches to reforming key institutional engagements, which include strengthening competitive pressures, increasing devolution and decentralisation, size and changing budget practices, transforming workforce structure and procedures and introducing results-oriented approaches to budgeting and administration.

da Cruz & Marques (2016) are of the view that, although the mainstream of underdeveloped nations has engaged in some institutional improvements. Furthermore, the empirical evidence of their impact on good governance is so far limited due to unavailability of resources to conduct evaluations, the complexities in measuring competence in the public sector, the lack of pre-reform measures of performance and the difficulty of isolating the effects of specific institutional reforms on competence from other external pressures. More so, da Cruz & Marques (2016) concurs that, empirical evidence suggests that the following 3 institutional factors may improve public sector performance that is decentralisation of political power and spending accountability to sub- national governments, appropriate human resource administration practices and in the education and health segment, there is evidence that escalating the scale of operations may improve effectiveness.

Moreover, da Cruz and Marques (2016) affirms that, increasing the use of performance information in budget processes is an important programme that is widespread across underdeveloped nations. It is part of an ongoing procedure that seeks to move the focus of decision making in finances away from inputs towards measurable outcomes. Underdeveloped countries like Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq among other continue to face a number of problems with the use of performance information in the finances process, including how to improve the measurement of performance, the quality of information, and attaining politicians to use it in decision making (da Cruz and Marques, 2016).

da Cruz and Marques (2016) went further arguing that, despite these hindrances, countries are evolving their approaches, not neglecting them. The underdeveloped have developed general guidelines as they agree to and evolve initiatives to progress the use of performance information in budgeting developments. Some important factors to consider in this respect are that there is no one fit all model of performance budgeting, nations need to adapt their approach to the appropriate political and institutional context.

Furthermore, da Cruz and Marques (2016) stipulates that, general whole-of-government planning and reporting framework is significant. Performance Information should be incorporated into the budget procedure. As citizens continue to require better value for money for their tax payments, there will be a continuing necessity for efficiency by the local authorities. Although the speed and methods of improvement will vary across countries, it is vital that countries be familiar with that a long-term approach is essential, that implementing presentation information in budgeting is clearly learning by doing procedure, and that the journey can be1 as significant as the destination (da Cruz and Marques, 2016).

Sub-Saharan Africa

World Bank and Government of Zimbabwe (2017) concur that, in countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and other, local authorities play a noteworthy role in encouraging sustainable economic enlargement and progress. They make available and maintain infrastructure thus housing, water and sanitation, road rehabilitation, waste disposal, municipal lighting and services such as basic education and health. These services are all significant in the sponsorship of social and economic well-being (World Bank and Government of Zimbabwe, 2017). In order to carry out these functions pleasingly, local authorities also rely on main government to make obtainable complimentary infrastructure in places that are outside the control of local authorities. This implies that local authorities can barely function productively if the general state of infrastructure at state level is in a good position (World Bank and Government of Zimbabwe, 2017).

According to Pachawo (2014), the struggles at the local authority level could be compounded by deficit in complimentary support for infrastructure from the main government. The total government allocation for infrastructure projects among 2010 and 2018 as a percentage of total expenditure averaged only 7.6%. As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product, the development budget comprises only about 1.8 percent on standard over the period, falling short of the objective of 25percent of Gross Domestic Product that is predicted under the TSP. The deteriorating tendency as a ratio to Gross Domestic Product shows that the allotment was short relative to the mounting economy, which is likely to generate demand for services further than the potential to provide them. Between 1990 and 2019, finances for financing local authority projects and activities through the national budget have hardly ever exceed 1 percent of the total financial

plan. This would necessitate that local authorities have to be self-supporting to assemble their infrastructure desires (Pachawo, 2014).

Pachawo (2014) went on further arguing that, consequently the conditions of infrastructure in local authorities are now incredibly poor. In Zimbabwe, about US$582.6 million worth of investment is necessary to replace and recover water infrastructure for rural and urban water provisions. Non-revenue water is extremely far above the ground at about 43 percent which implies that, only 57 percent of the treated water end up being billed, which is not adequate to enable the recuperation of water related charge build ups. Local authorities also have a pitiable income collection trace, as only 44.3 percent of the charges related to water provision are collected. Only 4.2 percent of all costs incurred in water supply are utilised as maintenance related expenditures, subjecting the existing infrastructure to hastily wear and tear.

Chakaipa (2014) argues that, in Zimbabwe waste-water administration is also pitiable as about 14.2 percent of the toilets in local authorities are not functional. There is very insignificant waste-water recycling taking place, as about 8.1% of wastewater is recycled. Only about 20.5 percent of the sum waste-water infrastructure transversely all the urban local authorities can be looked upon as being of high eminence. Waste-water infrastructure preservation is very low at only about 8 percent while the sewer cost collection efficiency is only at 30.6 percent. Zimbabwe at present has a bunch of infrastructure gaps with respect to sanitation and water. It was approximate that, in 2019, the investment breach to congregate the national objective and activities for water supply was about US$582.6 million. The money would be needed to restore and regenerate active water infrastructure for rural and urban water provision (African Development Bank, 2019).

On the other hand, about US$504.6 million would be essential to expand access to improved hygiene facilities in Zimbabwe (African Development Bank, 2019). These high estimated values come to pass mainly because a significant level of investment is essential to rehabilitate decaying infrastructure at a time when infrastructure financing had been forced to off-budget causes from multilaterals and NGOs. According to African Development Bank, (2019), at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair Bulawayo during the third Local Government Investment Conference held from the 16th to the 18th of October 2018, it was also pointed out that local authorities would require about US$304.1 million to finance infrastructure for water availability (Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe, 2018).

Due to long-lasting period of underfunding, water and wastewater treatment plants are no longer efficient, with runoff and untreated sewerage entering the rivers and dams. In addition, dry spells in the sewerage systems due to scarcity of continuous water flows that are also led to frequent blockage of sewerage systems. In general, largely of the water distributions systems in Zimbabwe are in need of refurbish (African Development Bank, 2019)

Buettner &Wildasin (2016) concur that, in African countries like Zimbabwe, road infrastructure is also characterised by many difficulties. Only 52% of roads in urban council are conserved, whilst only 21.2% of the conserved roads are in fine state. Carriage markings are readily available in only 10% of roads in urban councils. Only 16.9% have controlled intersections. The countrywide coverage of road network in urban councils can be about 63.1%, implying that further than 36% of settlements do not encompass road networks. The state of infrastructure thus water, wastewater and road generally reflects that the capability of local authorities is too little to adequately execute to expectations. This may imply that local authorities have difficulties in budget adoption.

2.4 Chapter summary

The chapter looked at Actor Network Theory and Communicative Action Theory which were also used to discuss the topic in question. The chapter also looked at literature review discussing what other scholars or researchers thought in line of the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe, a case study of Bindura district. Furthermore, the chapter focused on various issues and concepts used to explain the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe, a case study of Bindura district.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The chapter looks at how the research was conducted, its design and instruments adopted by the researcher. It also describes how the target population will be sampled. Issues of gaining access consent and confidentiality was also explored in the chapter. Moreover, an outline of how data was captured and analysed is also presented in this chapter.

3.2 Research philosophy

According to Pathak (2013), research philosophy refers to the set of principles, belief and assumptions that guide the way researchers carry out their studies and approach the process of generating knowledge. Pathak (2013) went on further arguing that, research philosophy serves as a groundwork that shapes the research design, data collection, methodology, analysis and interpretation. There are common research philosophies that include interpretivism and positivism. Pathak (2013) affirms that, positivism assumes that realities exist objectively, and researchers struggle to reveal objective truths through experiential observation and measurement. Positivists gives emphasis to the use of quantitative methods that look for causal relationships and frequently implement a deductive approach in their research.

Pathak (2013) also affirms that, interpretivism in convention with positivism it acknowledges the function of subjective perception, experiences and meanings in determining

social phenomena. The researcher adopts this viewpoint focusing on perceptive and interpreting social phenomenon through qualitative methods, such as textual, interviews and observations analysis. Constructivism is philosophical and an educational theory that accentuate the role of active learning, personal experience and social communication in knowledge construction. It posits that individuals enthusiastically construct their own understanding and knowledge of the globe based on their prior knowledge, interactions and experiences with others. The researcher used interpretive approach and constructivism approach.

3.3 Research methodology

According to Pathak (2013), research methodology is the detailed procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process and analyse information about a topic. In research, the methodology sections allow the reader to critically evaluate a study's general validity and reliability. Research methodologies may be in forms of surveys, research questions, interviews and focus groups. These chosen research methodologies permit for a rich and detailed understanding of an occurrence in problems faced by local authorities during budget adoption. The researcher is able to appreciate an issue from a first-hand experience. A lot of questions as to how and why could be responded as there is room to make the participant increase in their responses. In addition, Pathak (2013) affirms that, the research methodology makes exploit of in-depth interviews coupled with observations accounting for what is said or done.

3.4 Research design

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques selected by a researcher to conduct a study. This research is going to use qualitative research design. Punch

(2015) stipulates that, qualitative research identifies the essence of human experience. The approach provides a rich and complete description of human experiences and meanings and findings are allowed to emerge, rather than being imposed by an investigator. The design allows for in-depth knowledge for the subject under study as it focuses on answering questions on how and why of the presenting situation or phenomenon. The researcher will use the qualitative methods in collecting data from the research participants. Punch (2014) argues that qualitative research methods help to provide a bigger picture of a situation or issue and can inform in a manageable way.

Noble (2014) assert that, using the qualitative research method the researcher will take three steps which are drafting and organising data into themes and presenting it. The reviewed literature also played an important role in the analysis of raw data by coming up with themes, ideas and concepts relating to the research questions especially those that relate to the world's street children. Data were transcribed, checked, veiled, themed and created.

The research also makes use of case study in trying to get clear understanding of the situation in question which is challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions. According to Oppenheim (2012), an archetypal case study contains four elements thus the research question, the case, the data collection process, and the analysis. Looking at the research question element, the research begins at identifying the research question, which should be precise and narrow. The second element involves collecting information from various sources. The data collection process should be systematic and rigorous to ensure that the data collected are valid and reliable (Oppenheim, 2012).

Oppenheim (2012) went on arguing that, various methods were used to analyse the data collected that are content analysis, narrative analysis, and thematic analysis, to identify patterns, themes, and categories in the data. The data analysis process involves sorting the data, coding it, and organizing it into themes and categories. It also includes interpreting the data to draw conclusions, identify patterns, and generate explanations. The final element of a case study is the write-up.

3.5 Population & sampling

A population sample is a subset of a larger population that is used to gather information about the whole population. The sample is chosen randomly, and the data collected from it is then analysed to make inferences about the entire population. Bryman (2018) notes that, study population is the complete group of people or objects to which the researcher wishes to simplify the study discoveries. Bryman (2008) went further arguing that, target population are typically defined specifically rather than unclearly. The individuals are grouped together by a similar or common characteristic or sometimes two common features. The target population comprised of District Administrator, Bindura councils thus audit and accounts departments, Director under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, Councillor, Mayor and residents.

3.6 Sampling

Taylor (2018) view sample as a process of selecting components from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population which they were chosen from. A total of 30 participants were selected for the study. Key informants were sampled due to their level of contact and interaction with the local authorities.

3.6.1 Purposive Sampling

According to Creswell (2014), population is an entire group about which some information is required to be ascertained. The research targets a group of people that include 1 District Development Coordinator, 1 Finance Director, 1 from Audit department, 2 accountants, 1 Director of Housing, 1 Councillor, 1 Mayor and 14 residents. Creswell (2014) affirms that, Purposive sampling is used when a varied sample is necessary or the opinion of experts in a particular field is the topic of interest. Creswell (2014) went on asserting that, Purposive sampling is identification and selection of individuals that are knowledgeable about and have experienced the situation. District Administrator, Bindura councils thus audit and accounts departments, Director under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, Councillor, Mayor and residents were targeted under purposive sampling due to their interaction with the local authority. The researcher will purposively sample groups that are linked to local authority's administration and service delivery. The researcher chooses purposive sampling in selecting the study participants (Creswell, 2014).

3.7 Data collection methods

3.7.1 Qualitative Research Interviews

The Qualitative research interview seeks to describe the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects. Creswell (2014) is of the view that, the main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewee says. A qualitative research interview seeks to cover both a realistic and a meaning level, though it is usually more difficult to interview on a meaning level, Creswell (2014).

3.7.2 In-Depth Interviews

According to Boyce (2016), in-depth interviewing is a qualitative research system that involves conducting rigorous individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their viewpoints on a particular idea, program, or situation. Using an interview guide, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with District Administrator, Bindura councils thus audit and account departments, Director under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, Councillor, Mayor and residents to explore the intersecting challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption. The in-depth interview method is suitable as it allows probing.

3.7.3 Observation

Creswell (2014) stipulates that, observation is a way of gathering data by watching behaviour, events, or noting physical gestures. The researcher will also observe the participants as they respond to the interview questions and will write down some field notes. The study area is where the researcher lives temporarily, having high knowledge of the place and the residents, one will be able to observe in a successful and comprehensive manner.

3.7.4 Key Informant Interviews

According to Creswell (2014), key informant interviews are those interviews held with people whose experience or expertise in research and practice in the area under study provides a better understanding of the situation of the participants. Kothari (2014) went further arguing that, key informant provides valuable understanding to the target population's behaviour and attitudes thus producing reliable and valid responses due to their technical know-how and expertise in the topic under study. Key informants were sampled due to their level of contact and interaction with

local authorities. District Administrator, Bindura councils thus audit and account departments, Director under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, Councillor, Mayor and residents.

3.7.5 Community Meetings

Kothari (2014) is of the view that, community meetings are gatherings where people from a community come together to discuss issues, share information and make decisions. They can take many different forms for example town hall meetings, neighbourhood association meetings or even online forums. They are a great way for people to connect with each other and make their voices heard. The research was able to conduct 1 community meeting to discuss the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Bindura. The people present were members of the community, those who were willing to participate. Questionnaires were administered to them for discussions.

3.7.6 Documentary Research Methods

Heymans et al. (2014) concurs that, documentary research involves collecting new and original data directly from the source. Researchers usually conduct primary research when there is need to obtain specific data or fill gaps in existing knowledge. Documentary research includes questionnaires, interviews and observations. Also, documentary research involves analysing existing data and information collected by others. It focuses on reviewing, summarizing, and analysing available sources to gain insights and draw conclusions (Heymans et al. (2014). The researcher however used primary research to gather information thus through questionnaires, interviews and observations which were administered to participants.

3.8   Validity & reliability

3.8.1   Validity

Long (2004) defined validity as, integrity and application of the methods undertaken and the accuracy in which the findings accurately replicate the data and reliability describes consistency within the employed analytical procedures. According to Smith and Noble (2014), the true value in research is when the researcher recognises that multiple realities exist. The researcher will collect data from three sources and will triangulate the findings. Interviews were conducted with the groups linked to local authorities' service delivery. The research will be conducted amongst District Administrator, Bindura councils thus audit and account departments, Director under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, Councillor, Mayor and residents.

3.8.2 Reliability

Golfshan (2013) defines reliability as precision in which research findings precisely reflect the data and integrity and application of the methods commenced. Data collected will be carefully kept and ensuring interpretation of data is done accurately and consistently. To ensure consistency the researcher made use of interview guides. Whilst interviewing the research participants, the researcher observes the non-verbal clues and derived meaning. When transcribing the data, the rich literal descriptions of participants were used to support findings (Golfshan, 2013). The data will be presented in the next chapter.

3.9 Data presentation & analysis

Austin (2014) stipulates that, Data analyses through Qualitative research is biased and challenges the researcher to analyse data to form ideas. The researcher will take three steps which

are drafting and organising data into themes and presenting it. The reviewed literature also played an important role in the analysis of raw data by coming up with themes, ideas and concepts relating to the research questions especially those that relate to challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe. Data were transcribed, checked, veiled, themed and created.

The researcher will pick on all aspects that came out of the interview including pauses, laughter or looks of discomfort or any other contextual information. The transcribed data will be coded. Austin (2014) went further arguing that, coding refers to the identification of topics, issues, similarities, and differences that are revealed through the participants' narratives and interpreted by the researcher.

3.10 Ethical considerations

The researcher observed the ethical principles of informed consent and assent, harm avoidance and confidentiality as they were conducting the study.

The researcher was very respectful to her participants. Jean (2013), respect means that the autonomy, privacy, and self-determination of those who participate in research must be safeguarded. The researcher will make sure that the research participants will willingly participate in the research without forcing them and the whole process and data use will be explained to the participants. Data collected will be kept safe and will only be used for the purposes of the study.

The researcher used harm avoidance ideology in dealing with participants. Jean (2013) affirms that, in social research the main risk to participants is causing emotional or psychological distress. Jean (2013) went on outlining some of the issues that can be linked to risk when participating in a research study. These issues include vulnerable individuals can find participating

in research stressful per se, the research may reawaken old feelings or memories, the research may uncover hidden or suppressed feelings, the research may create additional concerns, the participant may be concerned about what they have shared.

The researcher will clearly explain to the study participants that they are allowed to share only the information that they are comfortable with. Questions that will be asked will only be in-line with the research objectives.

The researcher also maintained confidentiality in conducting research. Jean (2013) affirms that, confidentiality means that information is restricted to those authorized to have access to it. The strictness of confidentiality normally increases with the degree of sensitivity of the information and the degree of vulnerability of the research subject (Jean, 2013). The researcher will first assure the research participant that one has an obligation to uphold confidentiality regarding any personal data that will be shared during the study research. The researcher will be able to build a relationship of trust with targeted population. The in-depth interviews will be carried out far from public populace. Field notes taken during the study will be kept in a bookcase only accessible to the researcher. In-depth interviews that will be conducted will have no name attached to them.

3.10 Summary

The researcher looked at several instruments which was used in data collection and analysis so as to come out with valid and reliable data or information. The researcher also discussed on ethical considerations thus ethics which was observed whilst conducting the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The chapter analyses the researcher's data analysis, presentation, and discussion of findings gained in Bindura on the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions. In Bindura, data was acquired through interviews and questionnaire surveys. Tables and graphs are used to present the findings. Every participant was given enough time to respond fully and appropriately.

4.1. Marital status

Table 4.1: Marital status

STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE percent
SINGLE	9	30percent
MARRIED	14	46.7percent
DIVORCED	4	13.3percent
WIDOWED	3	10percent
TOTAL	30	100percent

In this research 46.7percent are married participants, 30percent being single participants, divorced consist of 13.3 of the total number of participants, and 10percent are widowed participants.

4. Level of education

Table 4.2 Level of education

Level of Education	No of Participants	Percentage
Non-schooling	1	3.3 %
Primary	3	10 %
Secondary	7	23.3 %
Tertiary	19	63.4 %
Total	30	100 %

The population that completed tertiary education dominates the research with 63.4percent, 23.3 being participants who completed Secondary education, 10percent completed their Primary education, and only 3.3percent did not have the chance to attain formal education.

4.3. Section B: Understanding the effects of central government interference on the performance of local authorities

4. Understanding the effects of central government interference on the performance of local authorities

Figure 4.1: Level of understanding
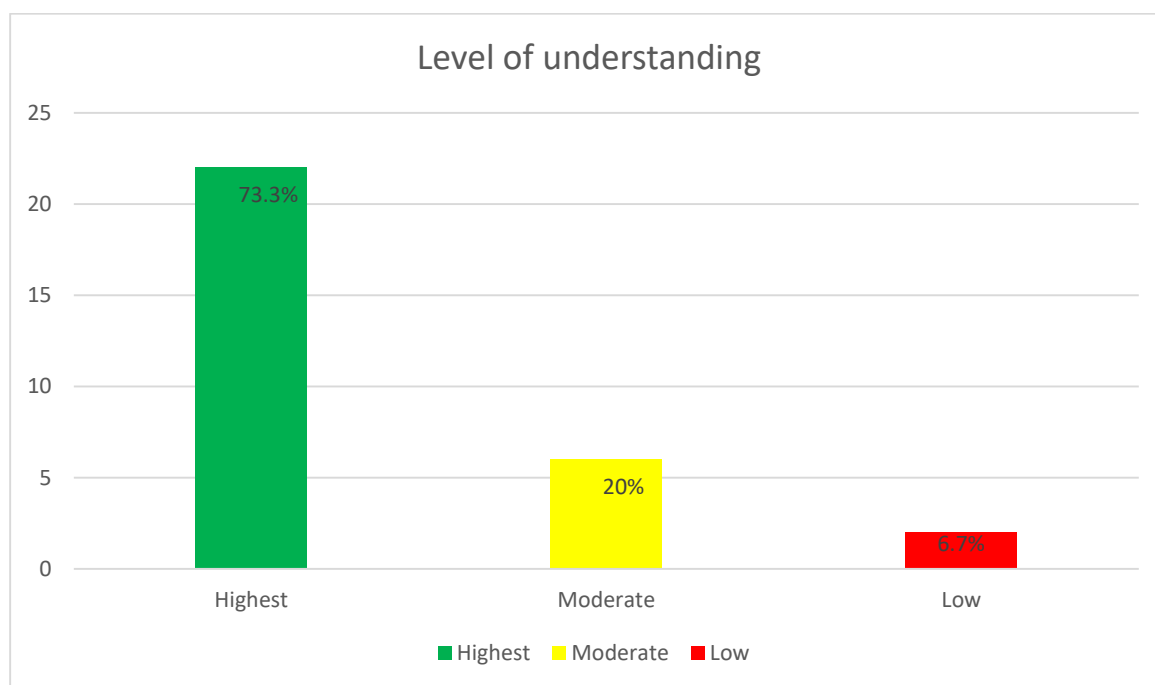
73.3percent of participants showed much understanding of the effects of the central government's interference on the performances of local authorities. 20percent of the participants showed a moderate understanding of the effects of central government interference on the performances of local authorities, and 6.7percent of the participants showed a low understanding of the effects of central government interference on the performances of local authorities.

One municipality staff indicated that,

It is difficult to talk about issues such as this one since it is more of political but at the end the truth needs to be said. The Government of Zimbabwe has excessive supervision on local authorities though they claim that much power was given to people at grass-root level through devolution strategy. The excessive supervision jeopardizes the local authorities' functions and gives room for corruption and nepotism. The corruption and nepotism can be seen through unjustifiable dismissal, suspensions, promotions, and appointments of incompetence staff. At the end, staff members sabotage each other reducing the efficiency of the local authority. However, there is need for transparency from the central government when they interfere on the performance of local authorities.

According to MacEnry (2018), most government uses their power over local authorities for their personal interest. ZANU PF would want their political party candidates to dominate so as to push their agenda towards members of the public. The central government's inquisitive with local governments created mixed attitudes because it is the government's work to administrate the councils' actions. The participants affirm that, the central government's inferences have different agendas especially to local authorities run by opposition party for instance CCC. The government would claim incompetence from the members and replace them with ZANU PF patriots who will push its agendas at grass roots in preparations of elections. This however caused conflicts and disputes between the local authorities and central government (MacEnry, 2018).

4.4. Section C: Understanding the challenges faced by the local authorities during budget adoption

5. Understanding the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption

Table 4.3: Participants' perception on the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Bindura

Challenges identified	Frequency	Percentage
Corruption, misuse of funds and bad governance	10	33.3 %
Strained relations between the central government and the council	4	13.3 %
Poor service delivery& Natural disasters e.g. cholera, covid 19, El Nino	8	26.7 %
Poor revenue collection due to corruption	3	10 %
Excessive political interference	5	16.7 %
TOTAL	30	100 %

33.3percent of the participants identified corruption and bad governance as challenges facing local authorities during budget adoption; 26.7percent indicated poor service delivery; 16.7percent indicated excessive political interference; 13.3percent indicated poor relations between local authorities and the central government; and 10percent indicated corruption and bad governance as a challenge faced by local authorities during budget adoptions.

In response, participants cited several problems that the local authorities are encountering, which have weighed down service delivery, revenue collection, and development.

One of the Councillors argues that.

The central government still has more power to politically influence local authorities through the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works. The central government makes several key decisions making especially awarding tenders to applicants who are politically connected. Most of these applicants are unworthy and incompetent who lack both financial and technical competence. Such people are even complex to supervise, monitor and audit. They tend to provide poor services, miss deadlines and do not prioritize value for money concept.

A resident indicated corruption and its effects and how it has affected developmental issues within the Bindura Local Authorities.

One of the main hindrances that have affected the whole system is corruption. There is too much corruption and nepotism in Bindura local authorities that have hindered development as funds and other resources are being used by those in power for their gains. Local authorities are buying unnecessary expensive vehicles, residential stands are sold by individuals, staff members working in cohorts with land barons to dupe desperate home seekers parcelling state land to them without proper documentation. There is too much corruption and nepotism in our Bindura local authorities.

There is also misuse of funds within the local authorities, people controlling major ranks in the local authorities claiming huge amount of money for meetings they did not attend. They also take bribes from different people which have direct impact on the local authorities' financial stand position.

The residents also state their attitudes regarding the challenges faced because of central government interference in local performances. According to Mupedziswa (2018), due to various challenges, including political dynamics impacting their operations, all local authorities have been flourishing at full ability. The main causes of the challenges faced by local authorities are an amalgamation of socio-economic problems within the country, corruption, and political interference by ZANU PF and ZANU PF members, as well as some political hindrance factors (Chauta, 2016).

Some participants indicated that the local authorities are facing challenges of inadequate funding and limited capacity which are hindrances, to good service delivery to the locals by the local authorities. Due to its limited capacity, the local authorities are unable to take on enough personnel or acquire the required equipment that is needed to carry out its responsibilities to the public. Furthermore, the available financial support is often misused or misappropriated, and this has resulted in deficient service delivery and the failure of the local authorities to meet its commitments.

Another participant also indicated that the local authorities also face lack of strong supremacy which has resulted in weak oversight and accountability. This has resulted in lack of simplicity and also the failure of the local authorities to be held accountable for its actions. Furthermore, the deficiency of public engagement in decision-making has really hindered the local authorities' abilities to accomplish the general populace' demands.

4.5. Section D: Understanding the centre-local relations

6. Understanding centre-local relations

Figure 4.2: Level of understanding of the relations
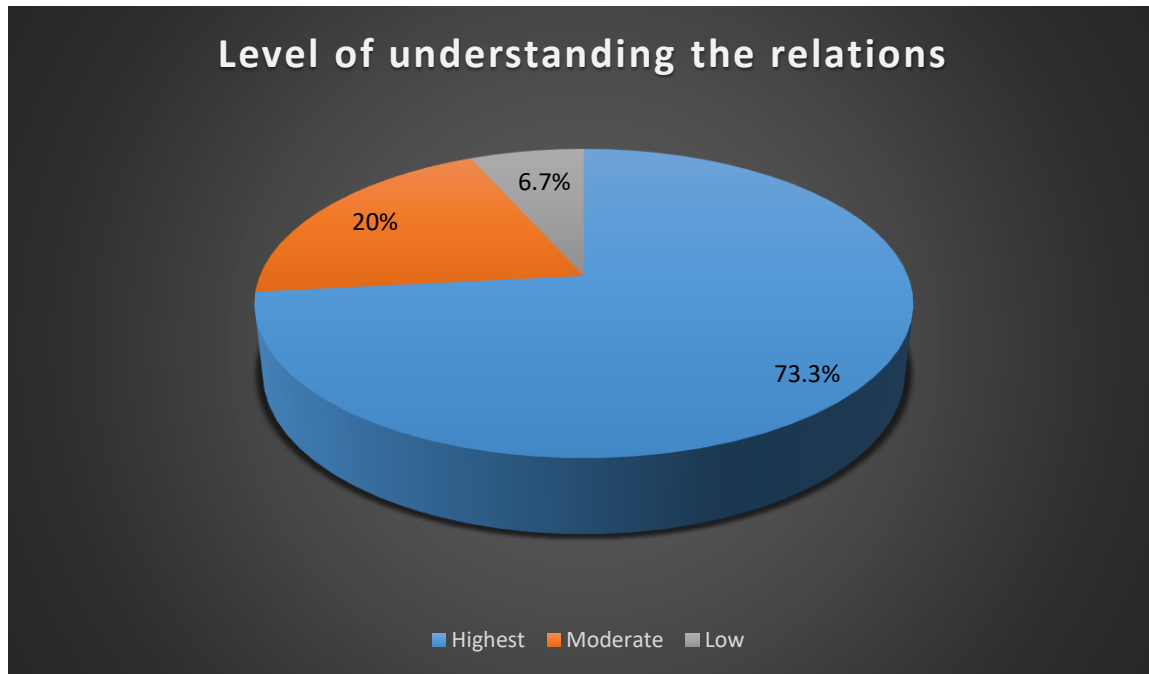
The findings under the above discussion portray that, 73.3percent of the participants show highest level of understanding the centre-local relations. 20percent of the participants showed a moderate understanding of centre-local relations, and about 6.7percent showed a low understanding of centre-local relations.

A city Mayor stated that.

The interference between the central government and local authorities is acknowledged as centre-local relations, and it is how the centre determines if the local authorities' performance meets expectations.

The standpoint of participants on centre-local contacts joins on the realization that this relates to the relationship between the central government and local governments.

Bindura Mayor indicate that,

The intervening of central government ministers in the daily issues of local authorities is a distinctive feature of centre-local relations. The central government Minister would argue that he need to make sure that the local authorities goes in line with government mandate. The government' mandate to be an upper-middle income nation by 2030.

This study attempts learning on participants' insights of Centre-local interconnectedness and how it affects service delivery of local authorities to general populace. The study's result indicated that, there is still too much centralization of authority at the centre, as many decisions about the administration of operations and performances in local authorities are still determined by the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works. According to Makoni (2020), central government superiority in local authorities has an institutional structure dating back to the colonial era. As a result, the relationships that exist between local governments and the central government have been centralized, and the local governments play an acquiescent role, the connection is further analogous to a master-servant rapport (Nyikadzino, 2015).

7. The role of the central government in local authorities

Figure 4.3: Roles of the central government in local authorities
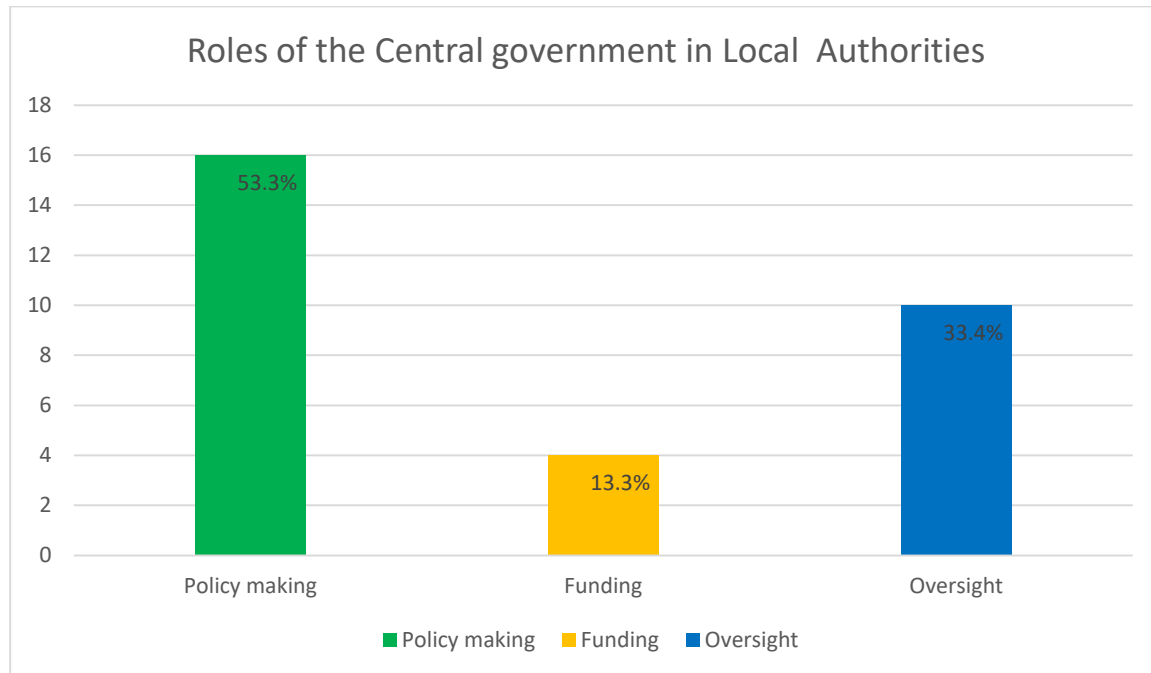
53.3percent of the participants indicated that the central government has a policy making role in local authorities; 33.4percent indicated that the central government has an oversight role in local authorities; and 13.3percent of the participants indicated that funding is also a fundamental role of the central government in local authorities.

One member of the audit department indicates that.

> *The central government should not stick their nose in the day-to-day operations of local authorities, but rather serve as an oversight body.*

Another participant affirms that.

Central government should be of much support not burdening local authorities and the continued interference has destroyed the legitimacy of local authorities around Zimbabwe as a whole.

Another resident stipulates that.

The central government its role is to support local authorities financially when necessary, however instead of supporting them with finance the local government demands money from local authorities even though they're still weak to stand up on their own. They secretly do so through giving the local authorities mandate to financially support ZANU PF programs and agendas in the community.

According to Rusike (2021), the central government provides financial assistance to urban councils in Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works. This financial assistance is used to fund various projects and services, such as road rehabilitation, waste management, and water supply among other services. Furthermore, the central government is responsible for setting the policy framework that guides the operations of local authorities in Zimbabwe. This includes developing legislation and regulations that govern the management and administration of urban councils, as well as the provision of services to the public.

Furthermore, the central government also plays a major role in administrating the operations of local authorities in Zimbabwe. This involves monitoring their financial management and performance, as well as ensuring accomplishment with relevant legislation and regulations. Mupariwa (2021), the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works is responsible for conducting regular audits and inspections of local authorities to ensure they are operating efficiently and effectively in its services.

8. Why there is poor management and corruption in local authorities

Figure 4.4: Level of Poor Management and Corruption
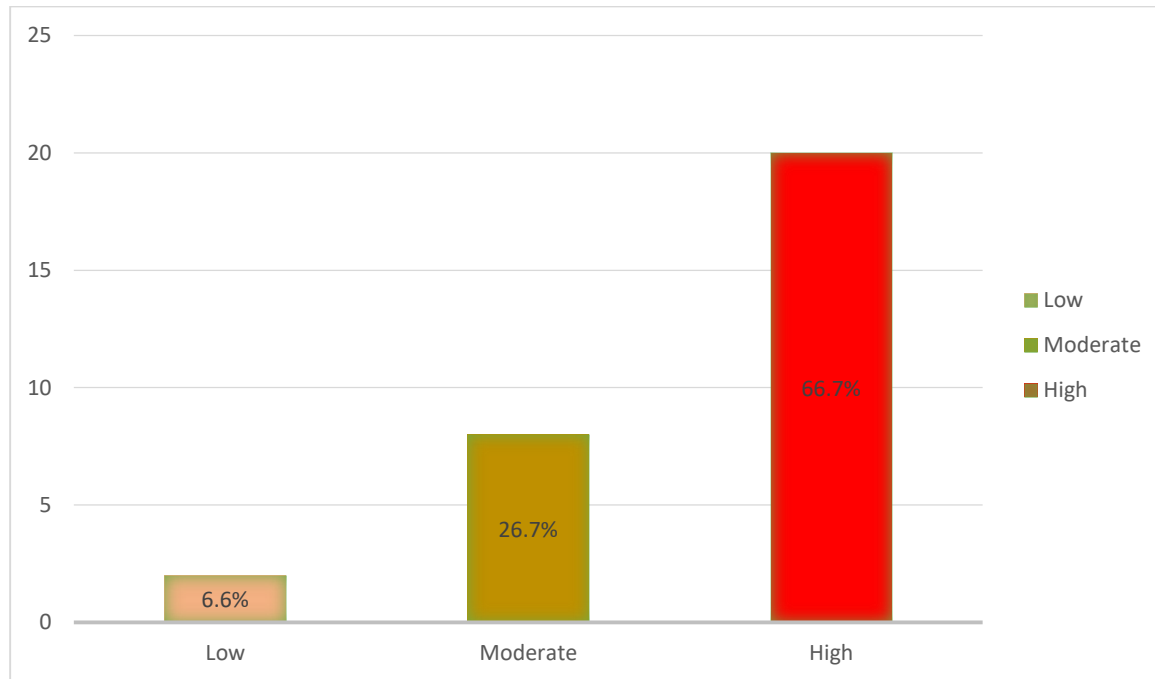
66.7percent of the total number of participants said the prevalence of bad governance in Bindura local authorities is high, 26.7percent postulates that the prevalence of bad governance in Bindura local authorities is moderate, and 6.6percent indicated that the prevalence of bad governance is extremely low in Bindura local authorities.

A resident indicated that.

There is poor service delivery in Bindura local authorities due to poor management and poor governance. In these local authorities there is no transparency and accountability. This is evidenced in areas where garbage collection is not done, sewages flowing over the residential place posing the spread of cholera and diarrhoea.

Figure 4.6: Bindura town uncollected Garbage

Figure 4.7: Bindura town un-serviced sewage pipes

Figure 4.8: Bindura town un-serviced roads

The participants enabled the researcher to learn the reasons why there is so much corruption and bad management in local authorities. According to the outcomes, most participants characterized local authorities as corrupt organizations distinguished by nepotism and misuse of

funds. Mashayamombe (2018) is of the view that, corruption in local authorities is destroying its efficiency. It needs to be nipped into the bud to avoid continued mismanagement and misuse of funds.

9. The impacts of the legal framework on the local government system

Figure 4.8: Participant's perception of the impacts of the legal framework on the local governance system
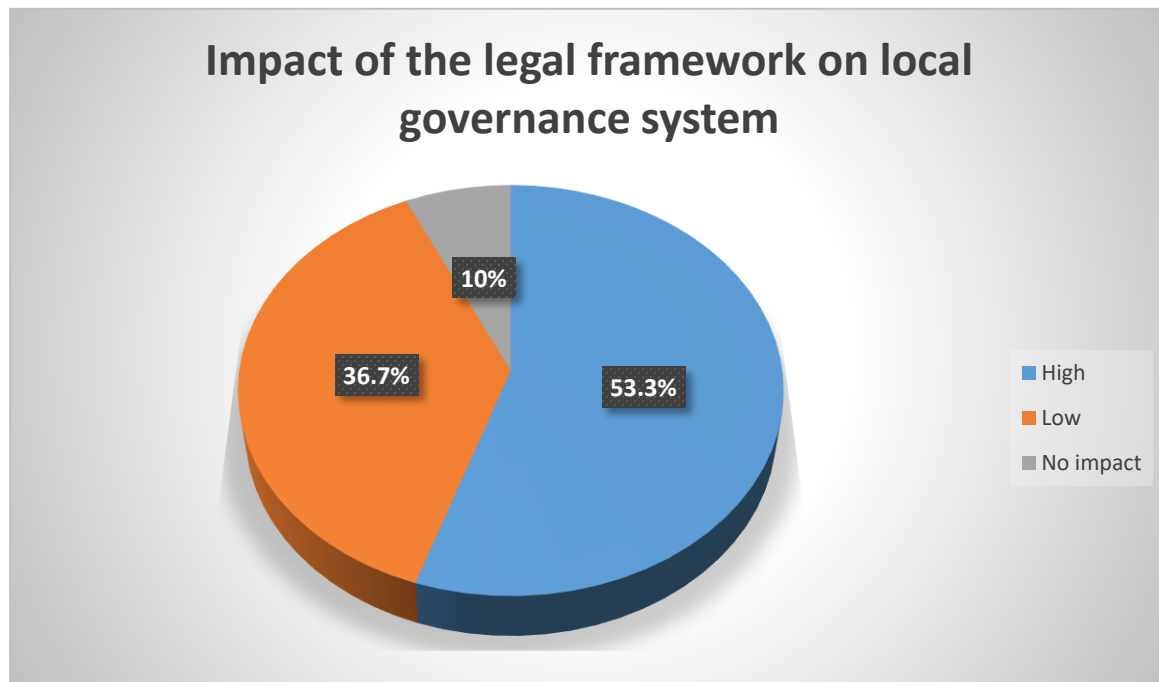
The findings obtained shows 53.3percent of the participants indicated that the legal framework has a high impact on the central government's interference with the performances of Bindura local authorities. 36.7percent of the participants also indicated that the legal framework for the local governance system has little impact on the central government's interference with the

performances of Bindura local authorities. 10percent of the participants indicated that the legal framework for local governance systems have no impact on the effects of interference by the central government on the performances and operations of local authorities.

Municipality officials concur that.

The legal frameworks are just blueprints that are only there but do not serve their full purposes. These legal frameworks include ZIMASSETS and National Development Strategy 1among other. These policies are excellent on paper but on practical prove otherwise. The major reason why these legal frameworks fail to have a big impact is because there is too much central government and political interference. As a result, the local authorities fail in their mandates.

Another participant affirms that.

It is important to note that interference by the central government have destroyed the smooth operation of local governments in Zimbabwe. Local governments need to be autonomous and free to shape the needs of their citizens and implement policies efficiently. This continued centralization and control by the central government will bear no fruits in the development of local authorities.

A Councillor stipulates that.

Ministry of Local Government and Public Works regulations are repressive and impede the growth efforts of local authorities.

The researcher learns from participants about the consequences of the existing legislative framework on local authorities. There is emphasis on the effects of central government invasion on the functioning of local authorities. The participants agree that the legal frameworks are a good

strategy to use, the problems come on implementation whereby ZANU PF will force its agenda using these legal frameworks. They went on further arguing that the local government systems were restrictive in nature and have affected the legitimacy and autonomy of most local authorities. According to Chigovanyika (2021), the legal and policy framework of the local government system in Zimbabwe indicates that the local authorities have the right to govern under the constitutional order with the supervision of the central government. Excessive supervision of local authorities can jeopardize the council's development and growth.

The participants' replies revealed their negative experiences, sentiments, and impressions about Zimbabwe's existing legislative framework for the local government system. This clearly contradicts Zhou (2012), who asserted that despite gaining independence in 1980, the existing legislative structure of Zimbabwe's local government system has not ousted or eased the central government's control of local authorities.

Zhou (2012) went on further arguing that, the current legislative law allows the government to intervene in local authorities' affairs. The legal framework is somehow biased as it opens doors for corruption and unjustified interference in local affairs. As a result, there are poor outcomes from local authorities.

10. Solutions to improve the performances of local authorities

To improve the performances of local authorities, the participants recommend that, there is a need to increase their funding and capacity. This can be done through increased support from the central government as well as other development partners.

One participant indicated that.

The local authorities should seek to diversify its income sources through local taxation, fees, charges, donations, and other revenue streams. The local authorities should invest in other businesses like hotels, lodges, car parks, leisure parks, and pay toilets among other. Also, the staff should be capacitated to offer quality services to the general populace.

More so, the participants also suggested that the local authorities should seek to promote public engagement to improve their performance. This can be done through increased public awareness and education as well as the development of public participation programs.

One participant argues that.

The local authorities should seek to strengthen its partnerships with civil societies, communities, and other stakeholders to increase public involvement in decision-making.

Furthermore, the participants also posed that, the local authorities need to be audited frequently to minimize mismanagement of funds, embezzlement of funds and corruption. There should be strict laws that govern local authorities especially towards service delivery. There is need to high competent personnel and reduce nepotism in the management systems. Tenders should be awarded to deserving contractors as this improves the quality-of-service delivery.

4.6. Chapter summary

In this chapter, the study findings were presented, analysed, and discussed. Most of the data was given through graphs, pie-charts, pictures, conversations and analysis. The key findings of the study are the challenges face by local authorities during budget adoptions, the impacts of the legal framework on local authorities and the interference existing between the central government and local authorities, and solution to improve the performances of local authorities.

CHAPTER FIVE

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

5.1. Introduction

This chapter converses the research findings, depicts conclusions, and makes recommendations about the research topic. Much information on the findings of the study is also presented in this chapter.

5.2. Summary

The key findings on this research are that local authorities' challenges have increased and become more and more complicated in recent years. These challenges include high rate of inflation, corruption and embezzlement of funds. In Zimbabwe there are issues also that comprise of high inflation rate of the local currency thus used to be RTGS. The fluctuation of the Zimbabwean local currency reduces the efficiency of the local authority. High rate of inflation also leads to loss of massive funds that the local authorities need in the provision of service delivery to residents. In Zimbabwe, it is difficult to do fiscal budgeting using the local currency. Corruption and embezzlement of finances also hinders the local authorities during budget adoption. Corruption and embezzlement of finance decreases income of funds to the local authorities resulting in high expenditures thereby leading to difficulties on local authorities during budget adoption. The study was categorized into five chapters:

Chapter one, it focuses on the introduction and the background of the study. It also discusses on the purpose of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, limitations and delimitations of the study. According to Chakaipa (2014), In Zimbabwe local governments struggle to allocate sufficient resources for capital improvement projects and budgets. As a result, maintenance of Zimbabwean aging roads, bridges, and provisions of other services is continuously deferred. Unfortunately, this leads to more costly fixes down the line thereby causing challenges during budget adoptions (Chakaipa, 2014). These and other factors acted as a push factor to the researcher to have a passion to research further.

Chapter two, this chapter looks at the theoretical framework and the literature review that guides the study. This chapter contains the literature and texts that are related to the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption, a case study of Bindura. The researcher uses Actor Network Theory and Communicative Action Theory. Zhou & Chilinjika (2013) affirms that, Actor Network Theory and Communicative Action Theory can be used to come up with holistic results on issues faced by local authorities during budget adoptions.

Chapter three focuses on the research philosophy, research designs, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and other data presentation methods that will be used to conduct the study. This chapter also described and explained how data and research information were gathered. Qualitative design was chosen because it allows for a rich and detailed understanding of an occurrence in challenges face by local authorities during budget adoption. The researcher is able to understand an issue from a first-hand experience. Pathak (2013) stipulates that, research methodology also makes use of in-depth interviews coupled with observations thereby accounting for what is said or done. The research target 1 District Development Coordinator, 1 Finance

Director, 1 from Audit department, 2 accountants, 1 Director of Housing, 1 Councillor, 1 Mayor and 14 residents.

In this chapter four, the study findings were presented, analysed, and discussed. MacEnry (2018) argues that the majority of the data gathered can be presented through graphs, pie-charts, pictures, conversations and analysis. The key findings of the study are the challenges face by local authorities during budget adoptions, the impacts of the legal framework on local authorities and the interference existing between the central government and local authorities, and solution to improve the performances of local authorities.

Chapter five, the final chapter comprises the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the whole study. The analysis concluded that local authorities face a number of challenges during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe. These challenges in include corruption, misuse of funds and bad governance, strained relations between the central government and the council, poor service delivery, poor revenue collection due to corruption, excessive political interference and natural disasters.

5.3. Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from research objectives

1. To identify challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption

There is a challenge of corruption, misuse of funds and bad governance in local authorities. One of the main hindrances that have affected the whole system is corruption. According to Zhou & Chilinjika (2013), there is too much corruption and nepotism in Bindura local authorities that have hindered development as funds and other resources are being used by those in power for their

gains. Local authorities are buying unnecessary expensive vehicles, residential stands are sold by individuals, staff members working in cohorts with land barons to dupe desperate home seekers and parcelling state land to them without proper documentation. There is too much corruption and nepotism in our Bindura local authorities. Zhou & Chilinjika (2013) concurs that, there is also misuse of funds within the local authorities, people controlling major ranks in the local authorities claiming huge amount of money for meetings they did not attend. They also take bribes from different people which have direct impact on the local authorities' financial stand position.

Strained associations between the central government and the local authorities also pose as a challenging factor to local authorities during budget adoptions. Zhou & Chilinjika (2013) agrees that the central government dominated by ZANU PF tries to push their agenda to the general populace through local authorities. At the end there is clash of interest between local authorities and the central government. More so, there is poor revenue collection due to corruption. Much of the funds collected are used for personal gains by administration staffs. There is too much embezzlement of funds in the local authorities, a lot of money is unaccounted for. There is also a challenge of natural disaster that affects local authorities during budget adoption, disasters just pope up without any preparation for instance covid 19, cholera outbreak and El Niño among other disasters (Zhou & Chilinjika, 2013). Such disasters require financial provision of the local authorities, and they will be forced to stretch their budget.

2. To assess how these local authorities respond to the challenges they face during budget adoption

According to Chakaipa (2014), these local authorities are trying to address embezzlement of funds through the introduction of internal audit department. Also, the local authorities are reducing

their activities in service provision and these services will go in line with the available resources. More so, these local authorities look for financial support from the central government treasury ministry or department.

3. To identify possible solution that local authorities may adopt in response to the challenges they face during budget adoption

There is need to increase the funding and capacity of local authorities. This can be done through increased support from the central government as well as other development partners. Chakaipa (2014) argues that, the local authorities should seek to diversify its income sources through local taxation, fees, charges, donations, and other revenue streams. The local authorities should invest in other businesses like hotels, lodges, car parks, leisure parks, and pay toilets among other. Also, the staff should be capacitated to offer quality services to the general populace. The local authorities should seek to promote public engagement to improve their performance. This can be done through increased public awareness and education as well as the development of public participation programs.

Chakaipa (2014) went on further arguing that, the local authorities should seek to strengthen its partnerships with civil societies, communities, and other stakeholders as a way to increase public involvement in decision-making. In addition, the local authorities need to be audited frequently to minimize mismanagement of funds, embezzlement of funds and corruption. There should be strict laws that govern local authorities especially towards service delivery. There is need to high competent personnel and reduce nepotism in the management systems. Tenders should be awarded to deserving contractors as this improves the quality-of-service delivery.

5.4. Recommendations

The following recommendations are to the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, and Local authorities. Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, and Local authorities are crucial for ensuring cooperation and better performance by local authorities based on the findings of this research.

I.   **The Ministry of Local Government and Public Works**

The central government should continue decentralizing decision-making and resource allocation to local authorities through devolution strategy. This can be achieved through the creation of regional government authorities, where the local authorities will operate from. The regional authorities will be autonomous, making the decision-making process efficient and more effective, Kaseke (2014). This will allow urban councils to have more control over their resources, enabling them to plan and deliver services effectively.

II.   **Local Authorities**

The local authorities should seek to promote public engagement to improve their performance. This can be done through increased public awareness and education as well as the development of public participation programs. They promote through seeking to strengthen its partnerships with civil societies, communities, and other stakeholders to increase public involvement in decision-making. Also, they promote through practicing due diligent in its administration and operations.

II. The residents

Residents should play their part is the successful service delivery of the local authorities through paying their taxes and minimizing corruption. Residence needs also to vote for efficient

candidates based on what the person can deliver and not through popularity alone. These candidates may include Councillors and Member of Parliament.

5.5. Areas of further research

The aim of this research is to analyse the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption in Zimbabwe. Other researchers may find strength in researching further in this aspect for instance, the central government interference on the performance of local authorities and decision making in local authorities governing board. Other researchers may also look at effects of poor management by local authorities in service delivery.

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Annexure

Annexure 1

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE:

Research Topic: Challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Zimbabwe. A case of Bindura district.

My name is Ruvarashe Roya a student at Bindura University of Science Education studying towards degree in Peace and Governance.

Name of interviewee…………………………………………………………………..

Occupation……………………………………………………………………………….

Age……………………………………………………………………………………

Gender…………………………………………………………………………………

Marital…………………………………………………………………………………

Level of education……………………………………………………………………..

1. What do you understand by the term budget adoption and how do you conduct budget adoption?..
    ....
    ....
    ....

2. What are the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoption?...

....

....

....

3. How do you respond to the challenges you face during budget adoption?...

....

....

....

4. What possible solution do local authorities need in response to the challenges they face during budget? ....

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Appendix 2

What is your perception on the challenges faced by local authorities during budget adoptions in Bindura. *Please tick where you see the right response.*

Challenges Identified	Please tick
Corruption, misuse of funds and bad governance	
Strained relations between the central government and the council	
Poor service delivery	
Natural disasters e.g. cholera, Covid 19, El Nino	
Poor revenue collection due to corruption	
Excessive political interference	

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Date: 28-11-23

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

==

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

This serves to introduce the bearer .RUYARASHE ROYA.., Student
Registration Number B201034B............ who is a HBSc Peace and
Governance student at Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out
a research project in your area.

Your usual cooperation and assistance is therefore being sought.

Yours faithfully

D. Makwerere (Dr)
CHAIRPERSON - PEACE AND GOVERNANCE

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
PEACE & GOVERNANCE
CHAIRPERSON

2 2 NOV 2023

FACULTY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
PRIVATE BAG 1020 BINDURA, ZIMBABWE

MUNICIPALITY OF BINDURA

All Communications To
Be Addressed To The
TOWN CLERK
P O Box 15,
BINDURA
ZIMBABWE

565 Thurlows Avenue
Bindura, Zimbabwe
Phone: 6430/6453/7391-4

Our ref: S4/0227
Your ref:

05 December 2023

Ruvarashe Roya
Bindura University of Science Education
P. Bag 1020
BINDURA

Dear Sir,

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROJECT

We acknowledge receipt of your letter on the above received on 01 December 2023.

Please be advised that you have been granted permission to carry out your research as requested. The permission is granted on the following conditions: i) that you should share the results of your research with Council in order for her to learn from your findings ii) that the research findings will be used for academic and no other purposes.

Should you require any more information in connection with this issue please contact the undersigned.

Yours Faithfully

....
W. Masimba
Chamber Secretary
For Town Clerk

MUNICIPALITY OF BINDURA
CHAMBER SECRETARY
1 9 JAN 2024
P.O. BOX 15, BINDURA
TEL: 066210 7513/7518/7361
SIGNATURE: