

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**



**THE IMPACT OF DEVOLUTION TO SERVICE DELIVERY. A CASE
STUDY OF BINDURA MUNICIPALITY**

By

Tinotenda Lynet Chinembiri (B201046B)

chinembiritinotendal@gmail.com

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

Bindura, Zimbabwe

March, 2024

ABSTRACT

Devolution, the transfer of power and authority from the central government to local administrative units, has emerged as a key strategy for improving public service delivery across the globe. In Zimbabwe, the implementation of devolution through the 2013 constitution has presented both opportunities and challenges for local government entities. This study investigates the impact of devolution on service delivery in Bindura Municipality, a local authority located in the Mashonaland Central province. Using a qualitative approach, the research explores the perspectives of municipal officials, councilors, and residents regarding the effects of devolution on critical service areas such as water provision, waste management, and infrastructure development. The findings indicate that devolution has enabled Bindura Municipality to be more responsive to community needs, increase citizen participation, and strengthen local revenue generation. However, the study also identifies persistent challenges, including inadequate financial resources, skills gaps, and unclear delineation of responsibilities between national and local government. The research concludes that while devolution holds significant potential for enhancing service delivery, its successful implementation requires concerted efforts to address the technical, administrative, and political barriers faced by local authorities like Bindura Municipality. Recommendations include strengthening intergovernmental fiscal transfers, building the capacities of municipal staff, and fostering collaborative partnerships between local government, community organizations, and the private sector. These strategies can help unlock the full benefits of devolution and improve the quality of public services for urban residents in Zimbabwe.

DECLARATION FORM

I, Tinotenda Lynet Chinembiri, do hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is entirely a product of my own work with the exception of such quotations or references which have attributed to their sources.

Signed.....

Date.....

STUDENT SIGNATURE

[Signature]

DATE

03/10/24

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE

[Signature]

DATE

3/10/24

CHAIRMAN SIGNATURE

[Signature]

DATE

03/10/24

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my father and mother. You have been my biggest inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work could not be efficient without the continued guidance and advice from my supervisor Dr Muchemwa. His encouragement, criticism and guidance are greatly appreciated.

To my family I greatly appreciate the financial support, criticism and encouragement during the course of the study. Words fall short in explaining the deep feeling of unconditional love you showed me in my quest to accomplish this research. I will forever be grateful thank you

Special acknowledgement and gratitude to all those who participated in the research for their succor. To my siblings Tafadzwa, Tanatswa and Tinevimbo I owe this success to you and may the Lord Almighty richly bless you.

I bestow my final acknowledgements to my friends and colleagues who I studied with during the four-year period at Bindura University of Science Education.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GOZ – Government of Zimbabwe

IPPR – Institute of Public Policy Research

SADC - Southern African Development Community

ZIMSTAT – Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Fig 4.1li

Tablelii

Fig 4.2 liii

Table 4.2 liii

Table 4.3 liv

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	2
DECLARATION FORM	3
DEDICATION	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	7
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	8
CHAPTER ONE	13
INTRODUCTION	13
1.1 BACKGROUND	13
1.3 PURPOSE OF STUDY	16
1.4 OBJECTIVES	16
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	17
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	17
1.7 DELIMITATIONS	18
1.8 LIMITATIONS	18
1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS	18
1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE	19
CHAPTER TWO	21
THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW	21
2.1 INTRODUCTION: LITERATURE REVIEW	21
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	21
2.3 IMPACTS OF DEVOLUTION ON SERVICE DELIVERY	23
2.3.1 Impacts on Autonomy and Flexibility	23
2.3.2 Impacts on Participation and Democracy	23
2.3.3 Impacts on Efficiency and Coordination	24
2.3.4 Impacts on Equity	24
2.4 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE DEVOLUTION	25

2.4.1 Scope and Clarity of Delegation	25
2.4.2 Adequacy of Capacity and Resources	25
2.4.3 Nature of Service	26
2.4.4 Lower-Level Accountability	26
2.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS OF DELEGATION	26
OF AUTHORITY IN IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY	26
2.6 DEVOLUTION IN ZIMBABWE	27
2.7 FORMS OF DEVOLUTION	28
2.7.1 Political Devolution.....	28
2.7.2 Administrative Devolution.....	29
2.7.3 Fiscal Devolution/ Autonomy	30
2.8 PRINCIPLES OF DEVOLUTION	30
2.8.1 Autonomy	30
2.8.2 Accountability	31
2.8.3 Subsidiarity	32
2.8.4 Public Participation.....	33
2.9 Chapter summary	34
CHAPTER THREE	35
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	35
3.1 INTRODUCTION	36
3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY	36
3.3 RESEARCH METHOD	37
3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN	39
3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLE	39
3.6 SAMPLING METHODS	41
3.7 DATA COLLECTION	42
3.7.1 INTERVIEWS.....	43
3.7.2 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	43
3.7.2 FOCUS GROUPS	45
3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	45
3.9 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	47
3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	48

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY	49
CHAPTER FOUR.....	50
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	50
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	50
4.2 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS	50
4.3 Demographic profile of respondents	53
4.11 Chapter Summary.....	66
CHAPTER FIVE	67
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	67
5.1 Introduction	67
5.2 Summary	68
5.3 Conclusions	69
5.4 Recommendations	73
5.5 Areas for further study	76
REFERENCES	76
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS.....	83

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Devolution is seen as a way to meet local needs and promote regional development. It is also seen as a way to improve democracy, accountability and governance. In some countries, devolution has accelerated economic growth and improved public service delivery. In Indonesia, for example, devolution has helped improve health, education, and infrastructure. It also contributed to economic growth and poverty reduction. In Australia, devolution has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of government programs. It also promoted community involvement and participation in local decision-making. In the Philippines, devolution has helped improve local governance and reduce corruption. In terms of devolution of public services, this has led to improvements in healthcare and education. Steven D Gold (2012) argues that transfer of power has negative effects on the economy and national security. Delegation may also lead to loss of accountability as it distributes power and authority to local levels.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has a regional perspective on devolution and sees it as a way to promote economic development, good governance and equity. According to Chatiza (2019), by granting citizens greater voice in matters pertaining to their community, devolution strengthens democracy. When making judgements about issues that have impact on local communities, it enables local authority to use their discretionary powers. SADC has established guidelines for the transfer of power, including

the principles of democratic participation, fiscal fairness and accountability. In the case of the European Union, evolution has taken place in different ways. Some member states have decided to decentralize decision-making within their borders, while others have introduced more federal structures. At the same time, the EU has also implemented policies to support the transfer of power, such as the subsidiary principle. On the implementation side, the EU has taken steps to promote devolution through various programs and initiatives.

In Zimbabwe, discussions about devolution of power through the Ministry of Local Government have been intensifying. The Ministry has identified devolution as a key strategy for improving service delivery, promoting local economic development, and strengthening democratic government. Section 264 (2) of the constitution provides the general objectives of devolution. Devolution is required to provide the people with the authority to govern locally, increase their involvement in the state's exercise of power, and enable them to make decisions that will impact them. In order to advance democratic, efficient, responsible, transparent, cogent governance throughout Zimbabwe, it must be put into practice. To implement devolution the government has created the National Devolution Fund, which provides grants to local authorities for infrastructure and service delivery projects. Under devolution Local Authorities are given more power to make decisions about service delivery, budgeting and planning. According to (Were, 2023) the quality-of-service delivery has improved in some areas such as infrastructure development and health services. It should be noted that there are still challenges in other areas such as water sanitation. However, there were challenges in implementing the mandate, including lack of funding, resources, skills and capacity at the local level. This has led to delays in the implementation of delegation of authority and, in some cases, reduced services provided. Additionally, lack of coordination between national

and local governments is causing confusion and lack of communication. It also creates a lack of trust in local authorities and has a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of local communities. There are also political issues such as conflict between the ruling and opposition parties. The National Devolution Fund is not sufficient to meet all the needs of local authorities in Zimbabwe. Many local governments claim that funding is not enough and needs to be increased. At the same time, there has been criticism of the use of the funds, with some local authorities accused of misusing the funds. Corruption issues were also raised during the transfer of power in Zimbabwe. There were allegations of fraud, nepotism and embezzlement. These issues can undermine the benefits of delegation and create distrust in the system.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The quality-of-service delivery in Bindura Municipality is low due to mismanagement of resources by local authorities. There is a lack of social development, which puts health security at risk. Worsening service delivery standards include water shortages, poor sanitation, inadequate primary health care facilities, and poor maintenance of health facilities. According to the 2019 Auditors General's report on Urban Councils, Bindura Municipality had a bin collection rate at 64% and 35 % are not collected rather the residents are dumping garbage in the open spaces which will lead to the outbreak of diseases like cholera and typhoid, also there is shortage of water, Bindura Municipality is providing 25% of water to the residents per day (I. Hlavati). This therefore led to poor service provision which can lead to dissatisfaction and distrust of local authorities. The growth of domestic companies may also become difficult. Poor service provision can therefore have a negative impact on the overall quality of life of

residents. This study investigates the impact of devolution to service delivery in Zimbabwe's Bindura Municipality.

According to National Statistics Agency estimate (ZIMSTAT, 2018) around 65,000 people lives in Bindura municipality, which is part of the Mashonaland Central Province. The Municipality is in charge of offering a variety of services to its residents like water and sanitation, trash management, roadways, health and education are just a few of the services that the Municipality is in charge of providing to its residents. Since the devolution of authority in 2013, some responsibilities were moved from federal government to the local administration, the municipality has undergone a considerable transition.

Through the use of interviews, focus groups, document analysis, questionnaires and non-participant observations this study will use both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. To shed light on the impact of devolution on service delivery in Bindura municipality, the data will be evaluated thematically to provide insight into the impact of devolution to service delivery in Bindura municipality.

1.3 PURPOSE OF STUDY

Examine factors that influence the effectiveness of devolution in improving service delivery.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the impact of devolution on local government service delivery.
2. To identify factors that influence the impact of delegation of authority on service delivery.

3. To recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of delegation of authority in improving service delivery.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the impacts of devolution for local government service delivery?
2. What are the factors between delegation and availability of local government services?
3. What are the measures to be taken to improve the impact of delegation of authority in improving service delivery?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is going to help the Citizens in understanding devolution better. Devolution is relatively new idea in Zimbabwe that has been applied in different ways all around the nation. This study is going to enlighten more on how devolution has impacted the provision of services at the local level by concentrating on Bindura Municipality. This can assist policy makers and practitioners make more informed decisions about how to enhance governance and service delivery. It can also provide insights into the prospects and challenges of devolution in Zimbabwe. This study can also pin point areas where progress has been made as well as those that still need to be improved by looking at the effect of devolution on service delivery in Bindura Municipality.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS

The study is going to focus on the impact of devolution on service delivery which was the main topic of discussion rather than concentrating on any other component of devolution. The study concentrated from the period of the year 2023 to 2027 of devolution in Bindura Municipality. This study also concentrate only on the provision of services like infrastructure development, health and education in the municipality of Bindura.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

It is possible that the findings cannot be applied to other places because the topic is solely concerned with how devolution has affected service delivery in Bindura. As a result, it is possible that the study's conclusions cannot be accurately generalized to other geographic areas. To circumvent this a student use personal key informant carry out a more thorough investigation that looks at various service sectors and geographic regions to find out how devolution affects service delivery. Comparison of service delivery before and after devolution is absent from the discussion. This limits the capacity to pinpoint the way that devolution affects service delivery. This can be solved by a student may additionally provide a comparison of service delivery prior to and following devolution.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Devolution

Devolution refers to the transfer or delegation of power to a lower level, especially by central government to local or regional administration. Chigwata, (2019) defines devolution as the transfer of administrative and political powers from central government

to lower tiers. The lower tiers become semi-autonomous, but they have decision-making powers.

Service delivery

Devolution refers to the delivery of any certificate, receipt, license, orders related to services and physical service like water connection, sewerage connection, dustbin deployment, repair and maintenance of any roads or property. According to Hussain, (2019) defines service delivery as an organisations openness to new ideas and propensity to change through adopting new technologies, resources, skills and administrative systems.

Local Governance

Local Government is a generic term for the lowest tiers of public administration within a particular sovereign state. Lepcha, (2017) defines Local Governance as the management of their affairs by the people of the locality where they are.

Governance

Governance is the process of making and enforcing decisions within an Organisation or society. Governance is the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development.

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1

Chapter one consists of background of the study, problem statement and the aim of the study. Research objectives and questions will be indicated as well as the significance of the study. Also, delimitations and limitations and definition of key terms are highlighted.

Chapter 2

This chapter has literature review indicating the theoretical framework that will be used in the project. Also, the perceptions of other scholars concerning the impact of devolution on service delivery.

Chapter 3

Addresses the methodology and techniques, research designs and research instruments that are going to be used in the study. Together with the data analysis methods with ethical principles being taken note of and the targeted population.

Chapter 4

Data is presented in this chapter and the research findings are discussed as they are the key findings of the project.

Chapter 5

It will conclude the summary, conclusions, recommendations, and areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION: LITERATURE REVIEW

Devolution has been topical in Zimbabwe and the World at large. Devolution has been surrounded with different explanations and opinions and the implementation has seemed to be a challenge for a number of governments in African. Others view devolution as an extended arm of decentralization and that there should be political, administrative and fiscal devolution. This chapter will explain the impact of devolution, explain devolution, explain various forms of devolution and a theory of distributive justice surrounding the phenomena. Global cases will be highlighted and finally the summary of the chapter.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research views the theory of distributive justice as the most appropriate theory that can explain the impact of devolution to service delivery. The theory of distributive justice of devolution is a theoretical framework that seeks to explain how the distribution of power and authority among different levels of government can be used to achieve greater fairness and equity in society. According to this theory, devolution is not just a matter of political decentralization but also a tool for achieving distributive justice.

Knight (2014) explains that the theory of distributive justice of devolution argue that the distribution of power and authority among different levels of government can be used to address regional disparities and promote economic and social development. For example, by

devolving power to subnational entities, policymakers can provide greater decision-making authority to those who are closest to the needs of local communities. This can lead to more responsive and effective policies that address the specific needs of different regions and promote equitable development (Rawls, 2013).

At the same time, the theory of distributive justice of devolution also emphasizes the importance of ensuring that devolution does not reinforce existing inequities or create new ones. Bentham (2010) argued that devolution must be accompanied by policies and institutions that promote fairness and equity, such as progressive tax systems, social safety nets, and anti-discrimination laws.

The theory of distributive justice of devolution also emphasizes the importance of citizen participation in the decision-making process. Temkin (2013) explains that by providing opportunities for citizen participation, such as through participatory budgeting or community-based planning processes, policymakers can ensure that the distribution of power and authority among different levels of government is responsive to the needs and preferences of local communities.

Overall, the theory of distributive justice of devolution emphasizes the potential of devolution to promote greater fairness and equity in society. By using devolution as a tool for addressing regional disparities and promoting economic and social development, policymakers can create a more just and equitable society for all citizens.

2.3 IMPACTS OF DEVOLUTION ON SERVICE DELIVERY

2.3.1 Impacts on Autonomy and Flexibility

According to Dresser (2012) devolving authority empowers municipalities setting priorities aligned with local contexts versus standardized central dictates. Autonomy facilitates demand-driven innovations responsive to community needs (Rondinelli et al., 2014). New Zealand's 1989 Resource Management Act granting regional councils environmental planning powers saw integrated ecosystem-based approaches emerge. Flexibility allows corrections adapting unsuccessful experiments as Chile discovered decentralizing healthcare (Bossert, 2013). However, unclear roles leave services fragmented when politics override place-based considerations as Philippines discovered (David and Vera, 2010). Over-localization risks narrow-mindedness when professional standards relax with no national coordinating body as Tanzania faced (Hyden, 2011).

2.3.2 Impacts on Participation and Democracy

Public engagement increases with subsidiarity bringing decisions closer to the people they affect (OECD, 2013). The UK's 1997 devolution to Scotland's Parliament saw higher voter turnouts and local media coverage of politics (Cairney et al., 2019). Madrid's 21 districts council system established in 1985 according to proximity-based election procedures boosted access and representation (Solé-Ollé, 2020). However, disadvantaged groups face activism barriers particularly without civic education as Bangladesh found (Ahammad & WB, 2018). In Latin America, elite capture readily co-opts neighbourhood councils lacking accountability safeguards according to Perez-Linan (2019). Impartial electoral commissions mitigate politicization challenges experienced by Maritime Canada's municipal reformations (Sancton, 2015).

2.3.3 Impacts on Efficiency and Coordination

Transferring competencies to one-stop-shops rationalizes fragmented responsibilities as the European Union discovered with subsidiarity (Oates, 2015). China's 1996 decentralizing village governance improved allocative performance through experiments (Hong, 2015). Municipal procurement streamlining reduced costs in Chile (Tokman & Martinez, 2016). Co-located services promoted synergies in Colombia's healthcare deconcentration (Bossert, 1998). However, free-riding occurs when local benefits fail considering wider externalities as Tanzania learned with resource management (Rondinelli et al., 2014). Australia's federal-state squabbling wasted funds where duties blurred (Sproats, 2011). Integrated strategic planning vanishes lacking joint incentives and management across boundaries within Nigeria's system (Falleti, 2010). Capacity differentials leave coordination more theoretical than practical according to Bermeo (2009).

2.3.4 Impacts on Equity

Universal minimum standards lower risking disproportionate service levels between richer and poorer localities with asymmetrical fiscal capabilities (Oh, 2018) evidenced in Brazil (Samuels, 2010). Divergent growth becomes spatially concentrated perpetuating spatial inequities without area-based investments (Oates, 2015). Kenya's 2013 decentralization faces accusations worsening historically marginalized communities' educational and healthcare disparities by devolving to sections within the capacity and funding unevenness (Rose and Shin, 2018). Transfers failing targeting redistribution concentrate opportunities in elites' urban strongholds as Pakistan found (Khemani, 2015). Monitoring equalization mechanisms mitigate but may enforce centripetal forces compromising subsidiarity's localization strengths as Canada and Germany discovered redecentralizing (Mérette, 2011). Although

participation addresses equity's process aspect, outcomes depend on resources enabling substantive empowerment.

2.4 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE DEVOLUTION

2.4.1 Scope and Clarity of Delegation

One factor that influences the impact is the scope and clarity of what has been delegated. Unclear, overlapping or incomplete delegation can lead to confusion over roles and responsibilities between levels of government. This was seen in the Philippines where unclear mandates after decentralization undermined coordination and accountability in sectors like health (David & Vera, 2010). In contrast, Kenya experienced improved education performance after the 2010 constitution clearly outlined county governments' powers and funding sources (Kanyinga, 2014). Clear delineation of roles supports coherent, well-planned delivery without duplication or gaps.

2.4.2 Adequacy of Capacity and Resources

Delegating new responsibilities requires adequate capacity and resources at the local level to effectively carry them out. Underfunded or understaffed lower levels often struggle with the operational complexity. Decentralization in Indonesia improved infrastructure but staggered due to personnel shortfalls in districts (Hofman & Kaiser, 2014). Similarly, resource gaps constrained quality healthcare delivery after Kenya decentralized without equipping under-resourced sections (Ndambiri, 2016). Sufficient capacity building and fiscal transfer design influences success.

2.4.3 Nature of Service

Some services are more amenable to localized delivery based on their nature. Education saw clearer benefits from Uganda's delegation as localized inputs could be tailored (Reinikka & Svensson, 2010). However, coordinated, long-term services like health programs faced challenges without cross-jurisdiction cooperation (Bossert, 2013). Flexibility is greater for some services versus those requiring standardization or higher-level coordination.

2.4.4 Lower-Level Accountability

Accountability is influenced by the strength of local democratic institutions and community engagement mechanisms. While proximity facilitates participation, elite capture risked co-opting community bodies in Latin America (Perez-Linan, 2011). But Germany's robust municipal governments competently managed delegated responsibilities (Mérette, 2011). Strong transparency and local checks on power encourage complimenting delegation with reinvigorated grassroots governance.

2.5 WAYS TO IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS OF DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IN IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY

Almquist et al (2013) mention precise delineation of mandates given to lower levels of government to avoid ambiguity and duplication of efforts. This was demonstrated to significantly improve outcome in Kenya (Kanyinga 2014).

Building local capacity is also essential, as the transfer of new obligations requires skills development at decentralized levels (Rodinelli et al 2011) Indonesia showed the value of training programs empowering districts to gradually assume responsibilities autonomously (Hofman & Kaiser 2009). Likewise funding models must be sustainable. Devolution led to equitable access in Brazil through tax-sharing and equalization grants (Samuel 2009).

Strengthening accountability further optimizes impact. Germany exemplified effective oversight through regular municipal elections and consultations (Merette, 2011). The Philippines saw value in community scorecards giving residents monitoring mechanisms (World Bank 2012). Scholars also stress policy continuity and limiting political interference which disrupted services when unstable in Thailand (Manor 2013).

Coordinating efforts across levels remains pivotal to avoid silo mentalities. Sproats (2010) argues that Australia may have mitigated inefficiencies through intergovernmental bodies. Cheema and Rodinelli (2011) highlight Kenya's district council which synchronized planning between units. Similarly, performance tracking cultivates learning and continuous improvement central to efficacy (IPPR 2017).

Inclusion is another crucial factor. Nigeria encountered challenges due to lack of strategic guidance and joint incentives managing responsibilities spanning boundaries (Falleti 2015). Targeted redistribution also prevents concentrated opportunities exacerbating inequalities as seen in Pakistan (Khemani 2015).

2.6 DEVOLUTION IN ZIMBABWE

Constitutional provision of devolution in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a unitary state with three tiers of government - national, provincial and local. Local authorities are urban and rural District Councils responsible for local services and development (Muzsna, 2020). Central government historically retained significant control through Presidential appointments of mayors and councillors (Matyszak, 2014). Devolution aims to empower community-driven planning, enhance accountability and rectify neglected regional imbalances through fiscal decentralization and subsidiarity (GOZ, 2013). It displayed decentralizing competencies in line with regionalism globally and new public management theories (Matyszak, 2014; World Bank, 2020). Goals include improving quality, access, participation and efficiency of key sectors (GOZ, 2013).

2.7 FORMS OF DEVOLUTION

Formbad (2018) explained that devolution is generally classified as the most extensive form of decentralization. There are basically three forms of devolution that is political, administrative and fiscal devolution.

2.7.1 Political Devolution

It is understood that a decentralized administration has political independence as well as power (Formbad, 2018). Political authority should therefore be granted to local events and government units in order for a nation to be considered to have fully devolved its powers. Chigwata (2022) thought that devolution strengthens and heralds the transfer of significant authority, decision making resources, and the ability to raise taxes to regional and local governments. Increasing the decision-making resources authority of citizens and elected representatives is the concept behind political autonomy. These groups ought to be free to choose their political course without intervention from the national government. In Zimbabwe this is totally different as the central government interferes with the decisions made by the

local government. Section 300 of the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29:15) gives the Minister powers to interfere with decisions made by the electorate. Chigwata (2022) stated that the central government's supervisory powers must be significantly limited. Political devolution ensures accountability and transparency in these subnational units and local government. With political devolution or autonomy, subnational or local governments would have diverse powers and functions including the power to make and adopt by-laws and implement laws and policies (Fessha and Kirby, 2008). The Urban Councils Act (Chapter 28:15) gives local governments the powers to formulate by-laws, but the approval rests with the Minister. Therefore, it is difficult to identify Zimbabwe as a fully devolved country as there is interference of the central government in decision making, formulation of policies and by-laws.

2.7.2 Administrative Devolution

Administrative devolution involves the transfer of decision-making authority, resources and responsibilities for the provision of specified public services and activities from central government to sub-national governments, agencies, voluntary organisations, line ministries and field officers (Formbad, 2018). Chigwata (2022) believed that this form of autonomy or devolution means sub-national or local governments can appoint and dismiss its staff as well as determine the remuneration levels for their employees. Therefore, these lower units of governments are given powers to administer and manage their governments without the interference of the government. This makes the government closer to the people to be more transparent and accountable.

UN-Habitat (2007) explained that administrative autonomy is necessary to lower tiers of government as it enables a devolved unit of government to adapt its administrative

establishments to the requirements of the locality which ensures effective governance. In Zimbabwe local government sector, before any recruitment takes place, a written application should be considered by the responsible Minister, first before the recruitment. This creates a challenge for public officers in the administration of their day-to-day business.

2.7.3 Fiscal Devolution/ Autonomy

Political and administrative autonomy will be ineffective if not supported by fiscal devolution. UN-Habitat (2007) highlighted that political autonomy is meaningless if not accomplished by fiscal autonomy which entails the ability to raise and spend revenue. For local governments and other sub-unit of governments to be effective and efficient, they should enjoy some form of fiscal autonomy and these units must have the power to raise and expend revenue raised. Fiscal autonomy is provided for in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. of 2013 section 264 and 301. Chigwata (2022) believed that it is however unusual for subnational units of governments to over-rely on national government for funding as is the case in South Africa where the national government fund not less than 95% of the nine provincial governments. These provincial governments however have power to raise their own revenue.

2.8 PRINCIPLES OF DEVOLUTION

The principles identified as the general principles of devolution are autonomy, accountability, subsidiarity and public participation.

2.8.1 Autonomy

Devolution should promote political, administrative and fiscal autonomy as explained above.

2.8.2 Accountability

Public accountability refers to the practice by public institutions of giving account to horizontal or higher levels public sector institutions, which is extremely critical in establishing controls and efficiency in local government operations (Lister, 2010). The principle of accountability is set out under the section 9 of the Zimbabwean Constitution (Good Governance) asserting that local authorities are accountable to the local communities and central government regarding the decisions, the implementation of such decisions and the management of financial resources. The African Charter on Decentralisation provides that there ought to be national legislation that outlines the various measures used in the promotion of transparency and accountability. The public accountability framework includes these three categories namely, political accountability, administrative accountability and social accountability.

Political accountability is a process where citizens hold elected officials responsible for their actions (World Bank, 2009) through elections, recalls and write-ins. Kyohairwe (2014) Administrative accountability refers to the bureaucratic hierarchy that provides checks on the regulatory powers of governments. Kyohairwe (2014) also added on to say administrative accountability could be deduced from audit and public accounts committee reports. This should be fostered through ward and village meetings where in the representatives of the people give feedback to the electorate on how they are making decisions. This enables an interaction between these two groups of people and the electorate is able to hold their leaders accountable. Administratively, public officials should

be accountable to the residents and ratepayers. Financial matter should be reported transparently and should be free from manipulation. This helps the residents and ratepayers to hold them accountable on the utilization of funds.

Social accountability refers to the actions and mechanisms, such as voting and petitioning, that the public (World Bank, 2006) can use to hold the state accountable for their performance. World Bank (2006) Social accountability suggests using a ‘bottom-up’ approach to demand accountability that is demand-driven, that requires the availability of the structures and laws that define people’s rights, and the extent to which they can go in exacting accountability from duty bearers (King and Owusu, 2013).

2.8.3 Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity in devolution is regarded as the rationale behind the system of devolution and that public responsibilities are performed well by those closest to the citizens (King and Owusu, 2013). World Bank (2006) the principle of subsidiarity is defined as the principle that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed at a more local level. This principle requires that governmental functions be exercised at the lowest level of government unless in circumstances where there is a convincing case for them to be exercised at higher levels of government. Nationally determined standards of local service provision should take into account the principle of subsidiarity when they are being drawn up. There are local government service delivery functions that are linked to the fulfillment of fundamental human rights, such basic services which include, food, water, shelter and these can be best

addressed at the local levels where community representatives can respond appropriately on a need-basis to the needs of the community.

The principle of subsidiarity in the African Charter on Decentralization is established based on the rationale of guaranteeing ‘pertinence and efficacy’ of policy-making and implementation. The African Charter on Decentralization goes on further to state that the principle of subsidiarity should foster conditions for cooperation and coordination between national and all sub-national levels of government. This reflects the importance of strong and functional inter-governmental relations in the implementation of devolution. Therefore, when there is subsidiarity it means governmental functions are devolved close to the people. This promotes ownership, transparency, participation and accountability.

2.8.4 Public Participation

The underlying principle in decision making at the local level is acknowledged as being participation. The freedom to engage, which includes the right to be heard in decisions that have an impact on one's life is the foundation of public participation (Hope, 2013). According to Brand (2011), local governments pursuit of social justice is contingent upon popular participation in local governance. In order to advance human rights, democracy and the rule of law, the right to participate in government is a component of good governance since it guarantees the efficient, responsible and transparent performance of public duties (Hope 2013).

The constitution or laws should grant local authorities the authority to specify, by way of providing accommodations for marginalized and vulnerable groups, the proper means of fostering public involvement and civic engagement in decision-making. Local government bodies have an obligation to make the most use of their financial and human resources,

together with their legislative, executive and administrative responsibilities to facilitate community members participation in the creation and execution of local policies, plans,, program and legislation.

Devolution of governmental power, according to Olum(2014), should be a framework that strives for actual involvement in the decision-making processes rather than being used to encourage people's support for the central government's initiatives, as is the case in developing nations. To prevent manipulation by the central government, it is important to have a well defined and legally enforceable public participation system.

2.9 Chapter summary

The literature presented aims to help the reader understand how devolution as a governance approach works to decentralize power away from central governments and redistribute authority to local/regional levels. The goal of this is to empower communities through the principle of subsidiarity and make services and planning more aligned with citizen needs at the grassroots. The theoretical framework also helps one comprehend how subsidiarity, as the key guiding idea, can foster successful delivery outcomes if implemented correctly. It also gave a short overview of devolution reforms that have occurred in Zimbabwe and how these have impacted local populations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides more details regarding the study design and research methodology. The use of qualitative methodology for data collection was the study's primary focus. This chapter in particular addresses the qualitative approach to data gathering. Key informant interviews, and focus groups are some of these methods. The study focused on applied research, on the impact of devolution on service delivery were searched out. Chapter 4 provided a comprehensive overview of the instruments utilized in the research.

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

According to Saunders et al (2019), research philosophy is a set of guiding principles, presumption and worldviews that inform and direct a researcher's philosophies. Such as constructivism, interpretivist epistemology and hermeneutics are occasionally used interchangeably with interpretivism. The underlying premise of it is that reality is not a static, objective entity, but rather it is formed by individuals and communities. Accordingly, there is no one "truth" about the universe, and several people may interpret the same item in different ways. According to interpretivism it is critical to comprehend people's lived experiences and context and how these influence their opinions and convictions. It is frequently linked to participant observation and interviewing techniques used in qualitative research. Interpretivism includes reflexivity as a key idea. According to reflexivity researchers contribute their own prejudices and experiences to the study process rather than acting as impartial or objective observers. Therefore, when analysing data, it is important to consider the viewpoint and position of the researcher. Through journaling, debriefing and other techniques reflexivity is commonly employed method in qualitative research.

Thick description is another essential idea in interpretivism. According to thick description data should not be reduced to a straightforward qualitative measurement but rather examined and explained in great depth. Triangulation is a concept that is included in thick description. To improve validity and credibility of the research, triangulation is the practise of employing numerous data source and multiple analysis techniques. This can involve comparing data from many sources, utilizing various data kinds and applying several analysis techniques. Through the utilization of diverse data sources and analysis techniques, researcher can enhance the reliability of the research by cross checking the finding

The application of interpretivism in research has various benefits. It enables a thorough comprehension of people's viewpoints and experiences. Unexpected or hidden meanings in data can be uncovered with its assistance. Concentrating on more than one specific side of phenomenon it enables a more comprehensive knowledge of it. It can also review fresh viewpoints and ideas that quantitative approaches can omission.

However, interpretivism have its limitations for it can be extremely labour and time intensive. This is so because interpretivism research frequently focuses on particular people or groups. It can also be challenging to generalize its conclusions.

3.3 RESEARCH METHOD

As defined by Saunders et al (2019), research methodology is the general plan or technique used to carry out a study and produce knowledge about specific phenomenon. For data collection, analysis and interpretation, it involves the choice of particular procedures and approaches. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are the two main types of research

methodology approaches . Based on the meanings, experiences and viewpoints of the people involved, qualitative research methodology aims to comprehend and interpret social phenomena (Crewell 2014).A qualitative analysis is distinguished by its focus on comprehension, use of natural settings for observations and measurements, intimacy with the data, process orientation, ability to draw generations through comparison, and consideration of the context of particular organisms (Dilman, 2012).

According to Ribar, (2019), qualitative research is properly described as the methodological collection, arrangement and analysis of textual data obtained through dialog. To acquire diverse viewpoints and diverse viewpoints and ideas from Local Authority in the study region, a qualitative methodology was employed. This method helped to examine factors that influence the effectiveness of devolution in improving service delivery through questionnaires and interviews, and it was crucial in addressing difficult and important problems. A quantitative technique was also used in the study to quantify data and look at numerical trends. According to Walliman (2011) the quantitative approach entails measurements, event counting and statistical analysis of financial data. In order to acquire data, the study employed many sources and both methodologies, which were made possible by the case study research.

Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews and document review between June-August 2022. Interviewing participants with diverse experiences is well-suited for case study research (Rukuni, 2013). Twenty participants, including 6 municipal officials, 6 councilors, 4 service providers, and 4 community members were interviewed. As findings indicated data saturation was reached after 20 interviews, additional recruitment ceased (Saunders et al., 2018). The 30–60-minute interviews followed an interview guide with open-ended questions developed based on a literature review

(Brennen,2021). Archival records from Bindura Municipality on budgets, plans, and reports from 2010-2021 were also analyzed (Shank, 2002).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A study design was employed in the investigation of the effect of devolution on service delivery. The study design employed in the research was case study. A case study is a research methodology that aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of a given object or event at a particular period, according to Gravetter (2009). In order to evaluate the effect of devolution on service delivery in Bindura Municipality, the researcher finds this design pertinent, because the location being studied was easily accessible, it gave researcher the knowledge necessary to conduct a thorough analysis of the data and provide recommendations for additional research. This made case study suitable research topic. Saunders (2013) claim that a case study provides the research with a significant amount of data from a sizeable population in an economical manner. Investigating the effects of devolution on service delivery was done in this study using case study of the Bindura District.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The target population for this study was stakeholders involved in local governance and service delivery within Bindura Municipality. As the case study focused on understanding the impacts of devolution reforms implemented since 2008, the population included municipal officials, councillors, service providers and community members with experience during this period. Bindura Municipality covers roughly 150 square kilometres and services a population of around 65,000 residents according to the latest Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency estimate (ZIMSTAT, 2018). The local government is responsible for administration and manages a budget to provide various services across

sectors including health, education, sanitation, transport and more to town residents. At the time of the study, there were 110 municipal employees of various job roles implementing council plans and budgets. In total 22 elected councillors represent 7 wards on the municipality board. For this study, the sample comprised individuals purposefully selected as information-rich sources able to provide 'thick descriptions' based on living and working under the devolved system (Maxwell, 2011). Sample size was determined using the concept of data saturation, whereby no new perspectives or insights were emerging from additional participants (Aspers, 2021). An initial target was set at 15-20 interviews with flexibility to extend if needed to reach saturation.

Conducting preliminary scoping interviews with 3 municipal managers assisted in developing an interview guide and generating an initial list of potential participants to approach. These included names of service department heads, ward development coordinators and council committee chairs identified as knowledgeable agents. The use of referral sampling from initial participants also aided recruitment by tapping into their networks to find other information-rich cases (Noy, 2008). Through this iterative process combining purposive and snowball techniques, a final sample of 20 participants was obtained. Included were six municipal administrators such as finance, works and engineering directors. Another six current and former councillors provided political oversight perspectives. Four local non-profit service providers operating under contract gave supplier insights. Finally, four community members provided citizen viewpoints as end users of municipal services. Participant demographics were diverse in terms of roles, experience levels, gender and ethnicity in order to capture a range of lived experiences with the reforms (Maxwell, 2011).

By directly approaching and obtaining consent from each participant, a 100% response rate was achieved. Data saturation was confirmed by the 20th interview when no substantially new insights emerged from an additional scoping interview and the accounts became increasingly redundant (Pieere, 2021)). While larger samples can strengthen generalizability, the sample size achieved was sufficient to address the research problem within logistical constraints of time and access to limited local stakeholders (Kariuku, 2017). Documentation of the sampling process supports dependability and confirmability of the study findings despite the small scale (Rukuni, 2013).

3.6 SAMPLING METHODS

Non-probability purposive sampling was utilized to select interview participants with rich knowledge on the subject (Kothari, 2010). Participants were identified through referral chains as knowledgeable agents (Cresswell, 2008). Maximum variation was ensured through recruiting a wide range of roles including managers, frontline staff and outside stakeholders (Welman, 2012). Documents were selected purposively based on relevance to objectives and ability to triangulate interview data (Gravetter, 2009). This sampling approach balanced breadth and depth of perspectives while containing scope given resource limitations (Rukuni, 2013).

Purposive sampling involved deliberately selecting individuals judged as especially informative based on their knowledge, experience and roles (Brennen, 2021). Initial scoping interviews with key municipal leaders assisted in identifying frontline personnel directly overseeing service divisions as well as community stakeholders engaged in ward development initiatives. Criteria for inclusion revolved around holding positions since the 2000s devolution process. Excluded were newly hired employees lacking historical

perspectives. By initially approaching 3 predetermined key informants, referrals began "snowballing" outward as each provided leads to other relevant candidates. Contacting these secondary sources expanded the sample scope while allowing recruitment of additional specialists not part of the municipal structure. At this juncture, the sample expanded to include independent service contractors familiar with commissioning and tendering procedures. Saturation was monitored throughout, with recruitments ceasing once few novel insights emerged (Mester, 2018).

Due to resource constraints necessitating a finite sample, maximum variation aimed to encompass divergent viewpoints through targeting participants from multiple stakeholder groups and genders (Ribar, 2019). This enhanced credibility by surfacing distinct lived realities. Role diversity touched on political, administrative, operational and citizen experiences. Snowballing organically incorporated further attributes like years involved and ethnic identity. Though non-random, documented procedures and recruitment rationales uphold this study's theoretical underpinnings (Dilman, 2012). The potential for bias inherent to purposive and snowball techniques was addressed through measures including triangulation, researcher reflexivity and participant validation (Shank, 2002). While not generalizable statistically, analytical generalizations from sufficiently collecting and analyzing data may transfer to other contexts (Saunders, 2013). Overall, sampling offered an optimal means for addressing the research question given practical constraint.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION

In order to prove validity and lower interpretational uncertainty, the study will employ several measure instruments. The process of using several techniques or data sources to support research findings and improve its validity and reliability is known as triangulation

(Creswell, 2008). The researcher used a range of research instruments, including interviews, focus groups and document analysis.

3.7.1 INTERVIEWS

Complimentarily the researcher used structured interviews as a widely used method of gathering data. Interviews are one of the most commonly used qualitative data collection methods in research projects across many disciplines. They involve the researcher asking participants questions designed to elicit detailed narratives, stories, and explanations pertaining to the research topic (Gill et al., 2008). Most interviews are semi-structured, using an interview guide with pre-determined open-ended questions, but allowing flexibility to probe further based on responses (Wilson, 2014). Successful interviews require carefully developing the question guide, obtaining ethical consent, actively listening, and ensuring confidentiality (McGrath et al., 2019). Challenges include interviewer biases, difficulties establishing rapport, and participants giving socially desirable rather than truthful answers (Wilson, 2014). However, when conducted skillfully, qualitative interviews allow researchers to generate rich descriptive data capturing participants' lived experiences, opinions, and perspectives (Brinkmann, 2014). Through rigorous planning and execution, interviews remain a highly effective data source for qualitative research projects.

3.7.2 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

This study utilized document analysis as a supplementary qualitative data source to complement primary data from interviews. Documentaries provide rich contextual insights

through audio-visual narratives from multiple perspectives (Hesford & Kleinfeld, 2019). Several locally produced short films on Bindura Municipality were identified from interviews as impactful representations of community experiences with service provision.

Three 20–30-minute films were analyzed using content analysis, which systematically interprets meaning from visual and audio content (Krippendorff, 2018). A protocol was developed to extract relevant quotes, events, statistics and themes portrayed around issues like housing, water access and public transportation over the study period. Document analysis offer an unremarkable means to gain contextual understandings not easily captured through interviews alone (Altheide & Schneider, 2012). Viewing documentaries supported immersing in Bindura's socio-political landscape and triangulating lived realities against interview accounts (Bryman, 2006). Their strength lies in sparking reflection on taken-for-granted community dynamics and providing a historical record for identifying changes over time on key issues (Ruby, 2005). Care was taken to avoid assuming documentaries directly represent objective “truths,” recognizing they are subjective artistic constructions open to multiple interpretations (Nichols, 2010).

Ethical dimensions were considered regarding permissions, representation and privacy of documentary subjects now considered public figures (Israel, 2015). Names were anonymized in transcripts. Documentaries gave "voice" to perspectives unable to participate directly due to accessing deceased or inaccessible community elders. While not serving as a primary data source given their inherent biases, documentaries as cultural products grounded the inquiry within Bindura's local context when triangulated with interviews (Rapley, 2007). They enriched explanation building by visualizing complex stakeholder relationships challenging to fully capture through words alone.

3.7.2 FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups are one also one kind of study data collection technique. Focus groups consists of a limited number of participants in a discussion facilitated by a moderator. By examining participants viewpoints, attitudes, experiences and views regarding the impacts of devolution to service delivery in Bindura, the aim is to collect qualitative data. The conversations are taped, written down and then examined to find recurring themes and trends. Focus groups are a useful method for learning about people's viewpoints, experiences and social environments according Kitzinger (1995). Focus has the advantage of producing more genuine and less biased data. This is so because participant in focus groups can engage with one other instead of merely responding to questions posed by the researcher.

3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Multiple quality criteria were applied including credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability (Nowell et al., 2017). Triangulation between interviews and documents strengthened credibility through convergence of different data sources (Guion et al., 2011). An audit trail of process notes, transcripts and coded extracts supported confirmability and dependability (Liu, 2016). Providing rich description allowed other researchers to assess transferability (Amankwaa, 2016). Power dynamics as an insider researcher enhanced rapport building yet required care to mitigate potential bias (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

Establishing the trustworthiness and quality of qualitative findings requires addressing concepts of validity and reliability (Ribar, 2019). This case study employed techniques to bolster credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as prescribed by Rukuni (2013). Credibility was enhanced through triangulation of multiple data sources

including interviews, documents and direct observations. Cross-checking emerging themes through member-checking interviews with 5 participants strengthened their plausibility (Brennen, 2021). Prolonged engagement in the field through 3 months of data collection facilitated building trust and gaining an authentic understanding of the municipality context.

Thick, rich description of Bindura's geographic area, demographics, governance structures and services implemented allows readers to assess the transferability of findings to other comparable low-income urban local authorities. Transferability was also supported through maximum variation sampling to incorporate heterogeneous viewpoints (Meister, 2018). An audit trail comprising reflexive memos tracking the research process and decisions, coded transcripts and study documents enhances the dependability of methods and interpretations by enabling peer scrutiny (Kothari, 2010). Scrutiny by a second researcher not involved in data collection checked coding consistency.

Conformability is evidenced through directly quoting participants to demonstrate findings logically link to the data rather than researcher biases (Dilman, 2012). Cross-checking codes and themes with an independent coder supported deriving interpretations from the data (Pieere, 2021). Overall, rigorous application of multiple validation strategies aimed to safeguard the trustworthiness and theoretical rigor of this qualitative case study's conclusions on devolution impacts. Commitment to quality and integrity strengthens the research usefulness.

3.9 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and imported into NVivo for thematic analysis (Ribar, 2019). An inductive analytic approach using open coding allowed key themes to emerge directly from the raw data rather than being driven by preconceived categories (Cresswell, 2008). Analysis involved reading and re-reading transcripts, generating initial codes, collating codes into potential themes, reviewing themes against coded data extracts, and defining themes (Collins, 2018). Quantitative data from documents was compiled and organized thematically. Bracketing ensured themes accurately reflected participants' voices rather than researcher assumptions (Meister, 2018).

Thematic analysis was chosen as it is well-suited to synthesizing diverse perspectives across interviews and documents (Shank, 2002). The six phases of Hussain (2019) approach were adopted for a rigorous yet flexible process. Analysis commenced by immersed engagement through repeated readings of the interview transcripts and archival data. Initial coding of meaningful units captured key ideas through noting preliminary codes in the margins. Second cycle pattern coding grouped first cycle descriptive codes under overarching analytic categories or themes (Maganga, 2021). Identified themes were reviewed to ensure coded extracts accurately represented the essence of each. This phase of analysis involved constant comparison between themes and raw data to refine and define themes. Thematic maps were drafted to visualize relationships between themes. NVivo 12 software supported efficient organization and management of the large qualitative dataset by facilitating coding queries, annotating thoughts, and compiling portable extracts

(Zinyama, 2021). Coded data was compiled in matrices crossing themes with participant demographics for socio-demographic comparisons (Cresswel, 2010).

Quantitative data on budgets, service access statistics and infrastructure investments obtained through archival document review underwent descriptive statistical analysis for trends over specified periods using Excel pivot tables and graphs (Kariuku, 2017). Direct quotes captured the essence of themes in participants' own voices while numerals contextualized themes within broader outcome patterns. Integration of qualitative and quantitative methods aided drawing robust conclusions through triangulation (Rukuni, 2011). Discrepant data was evaluated for contrary explanations. Rigorous documentation of the multi-staged analysis aids transparency and transferability of findings to other contexts (Aspers, 2021). The detailed methodology ensures this study meets the criteria of quality, validity and ethical research conduct.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics approval was obtained from the university's research ethics committee prior to commencement to ensure all procedures conformed to ethical standards of research involving human subjects. Informed consent was a critical aspect addressed through a written form outlining the study, risks/benefits, measures to ensure confidentiality and participants' right to withdraw at any time without consequence (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). All participants provided written consent confirming voluntary participation after comprehending the information sheet.

Confidentiality and anonymity were protected using pseudonyms instead of real names during data collection, transcription and analysis stages. Identifying information was

removed from verbatim quotes. Only the researcher had access to the password-protected participant database linking pseudonyms to identities. Consent forms and records are securely stored in locked cabinets separate from transcripts and will eventually be destroyed after an appropriate period (Pieere, 2021). Potential harms to participants from the study were minimized. Sensitive topics around poor governance or corruption were approached carefully and participants could decline responding without pressure (Maxwell, 2011). Benefits included contributing to improved local service planning through a collaborative project with the municipality. Debriefing encouraged participants' well-being through discussing any stress during or after interviews.

Insider positionality as a former municipal employee required bracketing personal views and suspending "taken-for-granted" assumptions to avoid bias (Dilman, 2012). Regular reflexive journaling documented thought processes. Ongoing reflection and peer debriefing throughout ensured interpretive authenticity representing participants' meanings rather than researcher views alone (Kothari, 2010). Overall, attention to ethical practice reinforced commitment to advancing knowledge for the public good while protecting vulnerable informants.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the research methodology for investigating the impact of devolution reforms on service delivery within Bindura Municipality through a qualitative case study approach. Primary data collection involved interviews and document review, with a sample of 20 participants accessed using purposive and snowball sampling. Thematic analysis was conducted on qualitative interview data using NVivo software, while quantitative archival data underwent statistical analysis. Validity and reliability were ensured through

techniques like triangulation, thick description and participant validation. Adhering to ethical standards and rigorous research practices, the methodology aimed to generate an in-depth understanding of stakeholder experiences with devolution to inform public administration theory and practice.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

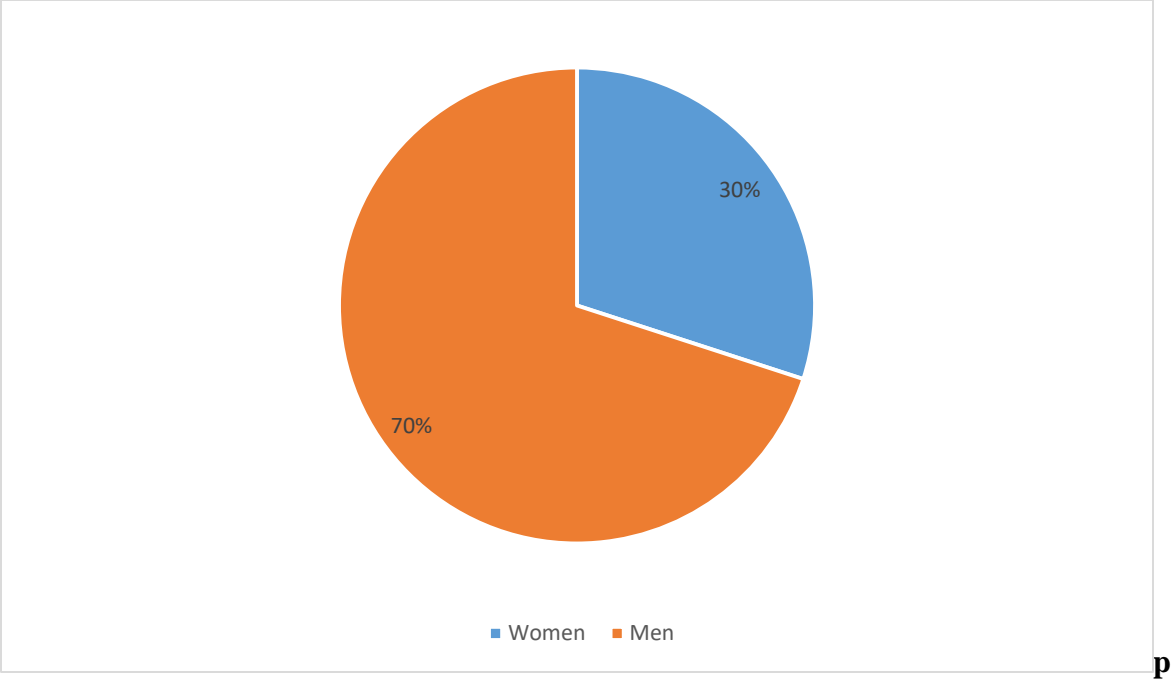
4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will dwell on data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. Presentation of information was done in the form of charts and tables were utilized to give a clear picture of views and perceptions; the data was also presented in line with the research objectives. The respondents were grouped into four categories namely the community members, the Bindura Rural District councilors, administrators and service providers on the impact of devolution to service delivery.

4.2 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

FIG 4. 1

Gender



Age

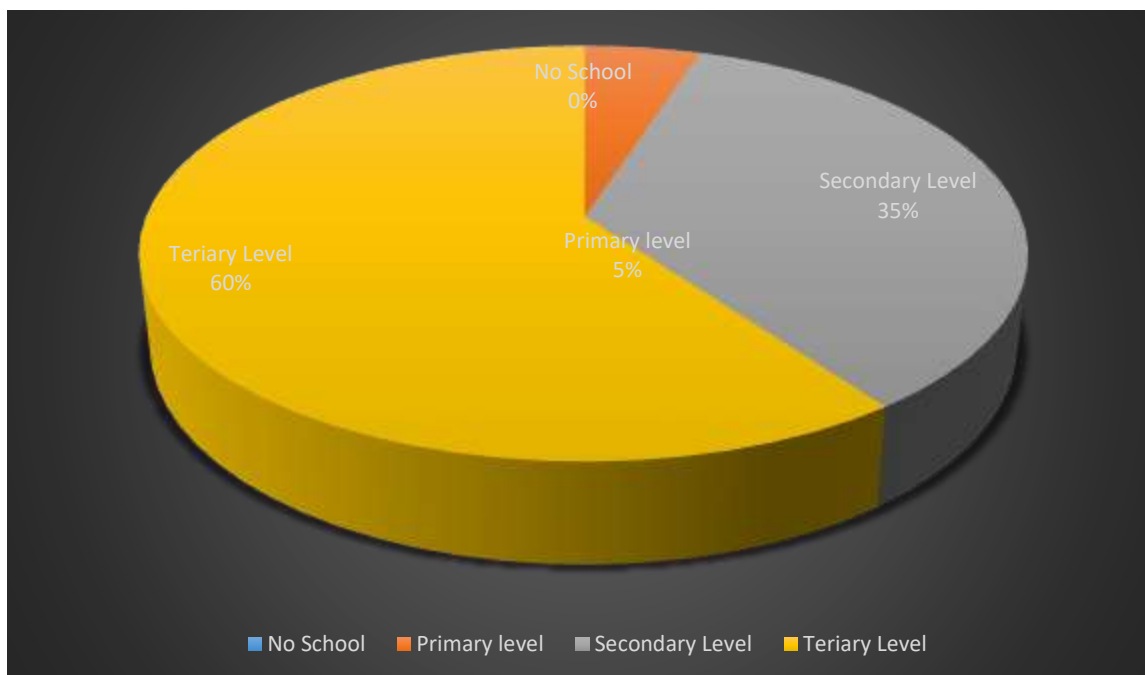
Table 4.1

Category	Participants	Percentage
18-25	2	10%
26-35	5	25%
36-45	6	30%
46-55	4	20%
56-65	3	15%
Total	20	100%

The greatest percentage of respondents was aged between 36-45years with 6 participants (30%) followed by 26-35years with 5 participants (25%). The respondents aged between 46-55 years with 4 participants (20%), followed by the age of 56-65 with 3 participants making up (15%) and the least age was 18-25 with 2 participants making (10%).

Level of Education

Fig 4.2



The figure above illustrates the different numbers of educational levels with the highest level being the tertiary level with 12 participants 15(60%), followed by the Secondary level with 7 participants making it (35%), then the primary level with 1 participant (5%), last category was the no school category with no participant.

Table 4.2

Marital Status

Marital Status	Participants	Percentage
Single	1	5%
Married	12	60%
Divorced	5	25%
Widowed	2	10%
Total	20	100%

The above table illustrates the marital status of different participants with the married category having the highest number of the category were 12 participants that were married making it 60%, followed by the divorced category with 5 participants 25%, then 2 participants (10%) that were widowed and lastly the single category with 1 participant making it 5%.

4.3 Demographic profile of respondents

20 people in total - 6 Administrators - 4 Service providers – 6 Councillors – 4 Community members.

Table 4.3

Name	Gender	Age	Profession
Participant 1	Female	27	Administrator
Participant 2	Male	20	Service Provider
Participant 3	Female	49	Service Provider
Participant 4	Male	42	Community Member

Participant 5	Male	45	Councillor
Participant 6	Female	42	Community Member
Participant 7	Male	24	Councillor
Participant 8	Male	34	Councillor
Participant 9	Male	48	Administrator
Participant 10	Female	44	Administrator
Participant 11	Male	38	Councillor
Participant 12	Male	56	Administrator
Participant 13	Male	50	Administrator
Participant 14	Female	35	Administrator
Participant 15	Female	60	Community member
Participant 16	Male	47	Service Provider
Participant 17	Male	40	Councillor
Participant 18	Male	57	Service Provider
Participant 19	Male	37	Councillor
Participant 20	Male	28	Community Member

The response rate was a 100%.

4.4 Decentralization of Power

This theme explores the broader concept of decentralization and its relationship to local governance. It delves into the specific form of decentralization known as devolution, which

involves the transfer of power, responsibilities, and resources from the central government to local authorities. The theme examines the rationale behind devolution, its objectives, and the potential benefits of decentralized governance in improving service delivery. It also discusses the challenges and trade-offs associated with devolution, such as the need for effective coordination between different levels of government. Devolution in Zimbabwe aims to decentralize political and economic power from the central government to provincial and local authorities. This is intended to give more autonomy and decision-making capabilities to regional and local governments. The 2013 constitution of Zimbabwe enshrined the concept of devolution, shifting power away from the central government in Harare. This was a response to longstanding concerns about the concentration of power and resources in the capital city and perceived neglect of other regions. Devolution aims to give provincial and local authorities more say in areas like policymaking, resource allocation, and service delivery.

4.4.1 Equity and Inclusion of Citizens

The research found out that there is an equity and inclusion theme in the study. Equality and inclusion are the values of the commission that are most susceptible to political decisions and are most difficult for constitutional design to ensure. Which rights are accorded constitutional significance and by whom are determined by political decisions in every particular society. Similarly mechanisms do not dictate democratic engagement or access and treatment equality.

Participant 1 said:

"Equality and inclusion are influenced by individual circumstances, financial limitations and geographical considerations. The realization of equality and inclusion may also be hampered by a nation constitution, although actual implementation will depend on political decisions. That

being said, the constitution 's provisions for adequate checks and balances on the use of power and for independent regulators with strong enforcement authority can aid in implementing these useful measures. The relationship between political decisions and rights is demonstrated by electoral systems. Inclusion and the rights to equality have an international component.

Public engagement increases with subsidiarity bringing decisions closer to the people they affect (OECD, 2013). The UK's 1997 devolution to Scotland's Parliament saw higher voter turnouts and local media coverage of politics (Cairney et al., 2019). Madrid's 21 districts council system established in 1985 according to proximity-based election procedures boosted access and representation (Solé-Ollé, 2020).

The issue on equity and inclusion gives the nation more power and devolution are most likely implemented in such scenarios. A country will have more opportunity to integrate equity and inclusion into its governance structures and policies the more power it possesses. Written constitution can provide equality and inclusion rights with certainty and clarity, but they can also grant additional power to reverse or depart from equality guarantees, therefore enacting devolution.

4.5 Empowering Provinces and Local Governments

Zimbabwe is divided into 10 administrative provinces, each with its own provincial government. Devolution is intended to strengthen these provincial governments by granting them legislative, executive and fiscal powers. Local authorities like district and municipal councils are also being empowered with more autonomy and resources. However, the delineation of responsibilities

between different levels of government is still being worked out. The devolution process seeks to empower Zimbabwe's provinces and local authorities by granting them more resources, responsibilities, and control over their own affairs. This includes areas like service delivery, development planning, and revenue collection.

4.5.1 Fairness and Policing

This is the policy recommendations for enhancing the impact of devolution on service delivery in Bindura District and similar contexts. It draws on the findings from the previous themes to suggest strategies for addressing challenges and maximizing the benefits of decentralized governance. The theme considers issues such as capacity building, resource mobilization, community engagement, intergovernmental coordination, and governance reforms. It aims to provide actionable recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in devolution processes. Justice and policing are devolved. There has been much thought given to the prospect of delegating these policy areas. The subcommittee concluded that there is a compelling case for change in order to achieve better results, better value for the money, greater accountability, and more transparency. The sub-group searched for data to bolster the current devolutionary boundaries for justice and policing, but the evidence for change greatly exceeded the scant response they received. The sub-group discovered that devolution is feasible with little to no disruption to services if proper preparation is done. Despite disagreeing with the devolution recommendation, the sub-group reached on the facts regarding the faults of the current system and the possibility of devolution.

Participant 2 said;

“The authority of that commission derives from its comprehensive evidence base and the expertise of its members, which included senior members of the judiciary, experts in penal reform and the operation of prisons and probation.”

Administrative devolution involves the transfer of power, funds and duties for the execution of certain public services and activities from the national government to sub-national government, agencies, nonprofit, line ministries, and field officers (Formbad 2018). According to Chigwata (2022), subnational or local governments have the authority to hire and fire personnel as well as set their own pay scales under this type of autonomy or devolution. As a result, authority to run and manage their government is granted to these lesser levels of government. This brings the government and the people closer together, increasing transparency and accountability .

Justice and policing help in devolution. The process of devolution includes sub-groups and these sub-groups found that the evidence makes a strong case for change to secure better outcomes, better value for money, increased transparency and more accountability. The sub-groups have more efforts to support boundaries of the policies. Devolution is achievable with nominal interruption to services.

4.6 Addressing Regional Inequalities

Under this theme, the focus is on how devolution has empowered local authorities in Bindura District to make decisions that are more responsive to the needs of their communities. It investigates how the devolved system has improved decision-making processes, including the speed and efficiency of decision-making, and the ability to address local priorities and preferences. Zimbabwe has historically experienced uneven development, with the capital Harare and the Mashonaland provinces dominating economically. Devolution is seen as a way to channel more

resources and investments to marginalized regions like Matabeleland and Manicaland. This could help reduce economic disparities and promote more balanced, inclusive growth. Devolution is seen as a way to address the historical imbalances and inequalities that exist between Zimbabwe's different provinces and regions. It aims to promote more equitable development and resource distribution across the country.

4.6.1 Responsibility of the Municipality

Devolution, by definition, involves some shared or overlapping accountability. The Zimbabwean government determines overall public expenditure and thus the size of the government's budget, and the government decides on spending priorities within it. Accountability for decisions on levels of funding or local government is shared. between the governments. Devolved and non-devolved services impact on each other.

Participant 7 said;

“Accountability is a process where citizens hold elected officials responsible for their actions through elections, recalls and write-ins. Accountability refers to the bureaucratic hierarchy that provides checks on the regulatory powers of governments. This enables an interaction between these two groups of people and the electorate is able to hold their leaders accountable.”

Transferring competencies to one-stop-shops rationalizes fragmented responsibilities as the European Union discovered with subsidiarity (Oates, 2015). China's 1996 decentralizing village governance improved allocative performance through experiments (Hong, 2015). Municipal

procurement streamlining reduced costs in Chile (Tokman & Martinez, 2016). Co-located services promoted synergies in Colombia's healthcare deconcentrating (Bossert, 1998).

Responsibility is very essential as it paves way for accountability and transparency thus effective implementation of devolution. Accountability is very crucial as it helps in decision makings in local government and between the governments. Responsibility helps by impacting devolution on each other on each other. Devolution settlements include concurrent (shared) powers that can be exercised by the government. The changes required under enhanced devolution would reduce many of these problems, but there would still be a complex interplay between devolved and reserved powers.

4.7 Promoting Participatory Governance

This theme explores the capacity building initiatives and institutional strengthening efforts undertaken in Bindura District to support the implementation of devolution. It assesses the effectiveness of training programs, technical assistance, and capacity development initiatives in enhancing the ability of local authorities to deliver services effectively. Devolution is expected to bring government closer to the people and enhance opportunities for public participation. Citizens in provinces and local areas are meant to have more say in development planning, budgeting and service delivery. This aligns with the constitution's emphasis on decentralization and democratic values. By shifting power and decision-making closer to the people, devolution is intended to foster greater public participation in governance and local development processes. This could enhance democratic accountability and citizen engagement.

4.7.1 Improved devolution

This option would require further changes to make devolution viable for the long term, building on the changes recommended above. It would not require a referendum and would avoid some of the risk (and opportunity) of wholesale change. It is strong on capacity and cost, co-ordination of cross-border services. Zimbabwe is a unitary state with three tiers of government - national, provincial and local. Local authorities are urban and rural District Councils responsible for local services and development (Muzsna, 2020). Central government historically retained significant control through Presidential appointments of mayors and councillors (Matyszak, 2014).

Devolution's main aims is to empower community-driven planning by enhancing accountability and rectify neglected regional imbalances through fiscal decentralization and subsidiarity. It displayed decentralizing competencies in line with regionalism globally and new public management theories. Goals include improving quality, access, participation and efficiency of key sectors.

4.8 Enhancing Efficiency and Service Delivery

This theme focuses on the coordination and collaboration mechanisms established between different levels of government, departments, and stakeholders in Bindura District. It examines the effectiveness of intergovernmental relations and partnerships in enhancing service delivery outcomes. The theme explores how coordination and collaboration have facilitated the alignment of priorities, resource sharing, and the efficient delivery of services. It also identifies challenges and opportunities related to coordination and collaboration under the devolved system. The idea is that provincial and local authorities will be better positioned to identify and address the specific needs of their communities. This contextual approach is hoped to lead to more effective and responsive public services. However, capacity constraints at subnational levels remain a challenge.

Proponents of devolution argue that it can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery by tailoring solutions to local needs and contexts, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach from the central government.

4.8.1 Individuality

Independence was the option that online survey respondents were most comfortable discussing, based on the relative willingness to expand on their viewpoints in their written answers. They seemed more familiar with the concept and implications of independence than those of federalism or enhanced devolution. This included respondents who opposed independence as well as those who supported it. In attentiveness there is the heightened awareness of devolution's potential. Recognizing the importance of devolution as a policy approach in Zimbabwe. Emphasizing the need for a careful and attentive examination of its impact on service delivery. Highlighting the significance of Bindura District as a case study. Keen observation of the devolution process in Bindura District. Attentive analysis of the implementation of devolution in Bindura District. Close examination of the legal, institutional, and administrative frameworks enabling devolution. Meticulous understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local authorities.

Participant 4 said;

“Devolution brings a sense of independence within the community; people know they can develop their community well and in accordance to how they want to develop it rather than waiting for the government.”

According to Dresser (2012) devolving authority empowers municipalities setting priorities aligned with local contexts versus standardized central dictates. Autonomy facilitates demand-driven innovations responsive to community needs (Rondinelli et al., 2014). New Zealand's 1989

Resource Management Act granting regional councils environmental planning powers saw integrated ecosystem-based approaches emerge.

Independence is essential as it allows flexibility. Flexibility allows modifications and the adaption of unsuccessful experiments. An example of such a flexibility is Chile. In Chile they discovered healthcare decentralization. However, unclear roles leave services fragmented when politics override place-based considerations as Philippines discovered. Over-localization risks narrow-mindedness when professional standards relax with no national coordinating body as Tanzania faced.

4.9 Preserving Cultural Diversity

Devolution can help preserve the cultural and linguistic diversity of Zimbabwe's different regions and ethnic groups, by allowing them greater autonomy to maintain their unique identities and traditions.

4.9.1 Attentiveness

Embracing the diversity of experiences. Recognizing the unique and individualized experiences of various stakeholders in Bindura District. Emphasizing the importance of capturing diverse perspectives to understand the impact of devolution. Highlighting the significance of Bindura District as a case study to explore the nuances of devolution's effects. There are the diverse voices in the devolution process by capturing the individualized experiences of local authorities, community members, and service providers. Highlighting the unique perspectives of different demographic groups, such as gender, age, and socioeconomic status. Acknowledging the diverse interpretations and understandings of the devolution process within Bindura District. The research reveals that citizens expect uniformity of treatment and equality of respect with the other nations.

The citizens are in favor of respecting the devolved institutions. Amongst these respondents there was little support for a government attempting to block devolved governments from acting within their powers. A plurality of respondents favored intervention only when the devolved institutions were acting outside their powers.

Participant 15 said:

“Devolution is our solution to have our needs met. Devolution is mostly likely to get our voices heard thus our services being met and this helps us to get the service delivery we want. We acknowledge devolution”

Universal minimum standards lower risking disproportionate service levels between richer and poorer localities with asymmetrical fiscal capabilities (Oh, 2018) evidenced in Brazil (Samuels, 2010). Divergent growth becomes spatially concentrated perpetuating spatial inequities without area-based investments (Oates, 2015). Kenya's 2013 decentralization faces accusations worsening historically marginalized communities' educational and healthcare disparities by devolving to sections within the capacity and funding unevenness (Rose and Shin, 2018).

Respect is very important in the implementation of devolution. When there is respect from both parts as in the community members and the local government there is most likely to be the smooth running of things and this helps. The Zimbabwean citizens are in favor of respecting the devolved institutions and do not support government intervention or legislation on devolved matters without consent.

4.10 Economic Development and Resource Utilization

Devolution is expected to spur economic development at the provincial and local levels, by enabling regions to better utilize their natural resources and comparative advantages.

4.10.1 Economic stability

There are different views about the extent to which the constitutional settlement is delivering economic stability, and the extent to which the poor performance of the economy and falling living standards. International markets prefer certainty, are wary of change and react badly to political instability and uncertainty. Additionally, a hostile negotiation period for independence, or even a negotiation based on the interests of England as the largest economy in a federation, could have negative impacts for economic stability in the future.

Participant 3 said;

“Enhanced devolution would be more likely to provide economic stability, than the radical change involved in federalism or independence. At the same time, in a devolved or federal system, the government has no choice but to work within the economic decisions taken by the government, which as we set out above risks continued problems of disadvantage and relatively weak economic performance.”

Political and administrative autonomy will be ineffective if not supported by fiscal devolution. UN-Habitat (2007) highlighted that political autonomy is meaningless if not accomplished by fiscal autonomy which entails the ability to raise and spend revenue. For local governments and other sub-unit of governments to be effective and efficient, they should enjoy some form of fiscal autonomy and these units must have the power to raise and expend revenue raised. Fiscal autonomy is provided for in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. of 2013 section 264 and 301.

The major change in constitutional arrangements can generate economic instability in the short to medium term. The extent of this would be determined by change. There is most likely to be a gap on independence and implementing the outcome. Long term constitutional uncertainty can lead to economic instability. In uncertainties have a negative impact on business investment, along with people choosing not to migrate to those areas and residents choosing to move away. The uncertainty about currency and debt in an independent country is also likely to affect market confidence.

4.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter examined the impact of devolution on service delivery in Bindura District, Zimbabwe. Through an in-depth analysis of various themes related to devolution and service delivery, we sought to understand the extent to which devolution has improved the delivery of essential services in the district. The findings presented in this chapter shed light on the benefits, challenges, and lessons learned from the implementation of devolution in Bindura District. While the impact of devolution on service delivery in Bindura District has been largely positive, several challenges and areas for improvement have been identified. These include political interference, corruption, power struggles, financial management issues, and the need for ongoing capacity building. Addressing these challenges will be crucial to maximizing the benefits of devolution and ensuring sustainable improvements in service delivery. In conclusion, the implementation of devolution in Bindura District has brought about significant improvements in service delivery. The increased decision-making authority, resource allocation, and community participation have contributed to enhanced service accessibility, quality, and coverage. However, continued efforts are needed to address the remaining challenges and consolidate the gains made thus far. By learning from the experiences and lessons of Bindura District, policymakers and practitioners can further refine and

strengthen the devolution process to promote effective and inclusive service delivery in other regions of Zimbabwe and beyond.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is a conclusion of the study, and also provides an outline of recommendations for future studies and improvements on the situations under study emanating from the research findings on the impact of devolution to service delivery. It focuses on the conclusions of the whole research that is from the introduction, literature review and theoretical framework, research methodology, data presentation, analysis and discussion as well as the conclusion chapter. This chapter also focused on how the research objectives were achieved and how the research has answered the research questions. The major findings from the research are also highlighted as well. Recommendations were also given to the Local Authorities, Bindura Rural District, Councilors and the Community Members.

5.2 Summary

Chapter one of the research discussed the background of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the study, objectives, research questions, assumptions, significance, limitations, delimitations as well as defining technical terms of the impact of devolution on service delivery in Bindura district.

Chapter two focused on the literature review existing on the impact of devolution in service delivery. The study dwelled on the theory of distributive justice of devolution emphasizes the potential of devolution to promote greater fairness and equity in society. The chapter demonstrated the impacts of service delivery, identifying the factors that influence the impact of delegation of authority on service delivery and recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of delegation of authority in improving service delivery.

Chapter three focused on the methodological aspect of the study and the research design. The study used research philosophies in the study. The study used mixed methodology in analyzing the findings. The study used mixed methodology methods with the population study of Bindura Rural District. The research used purposive sampling to select the general respondents from Bindura community. The study made use of interviews, focused group discussions and documental analysis to obtain the data. Validity and reliability were considered during the data collection. Data analysis was done thematically. Ethical considerations were also considered during the data collection.

Chapter four focused on the key findings of the research and analysis as well. From the research it was clear that devolution had an impact on the service delivery in Bindura district. The chapter demonstrated the impacts of service delivery, identifying the factors that influence the impact of delegation of authority on service delivery and recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of delegation of authority in improving service delivery. The respondents were grouped into four

categories namely the community members, the Bindura Rural District councilors, administrators and service providers on the impact of devolution to service delivery. There were 20 respondents throughout the data collection.

Chapter five focused on the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations for the impact of devolution on service delivery and Areas of further research. The research questions are answered in this chapter and research objectives were met.

5.3 Conclusions:

Objective 1: To assess the impact of devolution on local government service delivery.

The first objective posed by this study was on the implications of devolution on service delivery. Devolution, the transfer of power and decision-making authority from central governments to local or regional authorities, has had significant impacts on service delivery in many countries. While the specific effects may vary depending on the context and implementation, there are some general conclusions that can be drawn regarding the impacts of devolution on service delivery. Devolution empowers local authorities to make decisions that are more responsive to the unique needs and preferences of their communities. This localized decision-making allows for greater flexibility in allocating resources and designing services tailored to the specific requirements of the local population. Devolution can also increase accountability in service delivery by bringing decision-making closer to the people who are directly affected by the services. Local authorities are more accessible to citizens and can be held more directly accountable for the quality and effectiveness of the services they provide. This can lead to improved performance and responsiveness. Devolution provides an opportunity for local authorities to experiment with new approaches and innovations in service delivery. With greater autonomy, local governments can develop and

implement policies and programs that are better suited to their communities' needs. This flexibility fosters innovation, as local authorities can learn from both successes and failures and adapt their strategies accordingly. Devolution can pose challenges in terms of capacity and resources. Local authorities may have limited administrative and technical capabilities to effectively manage and deliver services. Additionally, the redistribution of resources from central to local governments may not always be equitable, leading to disparities in service delivery between different regions or municipalities. Devolution requires coordination and collaboration between different levels of government and stakeholders. Effective collaboration is crucial to ensure smooth service delivery, especially for services that require cooperation across multiple jurisdictions. Developing mechanisms for coordination and information sharing is essential to avoid fragmentation and duplication of efforts. While devolution aims to promote local autonomy and empower communities, there is a risk of exacerbating existing inequalities. Regions or municipalities with greater resources and capacity may benefit more from devolution compared to those with limited resources. Efforts should be made to ensure that disadvantaged areas receive adequate support to overcome disparities and deliver essential services effectively.

Objective 2: To identify factors that influence the impact of delegation of authority on service delivery.

The second objective was on the factors that influence devolution. The impact of devolution on service delivery can vary depending on several factors. The specific context and governance structure of the devolved system play a crucial role. Factors such as the level of decentralization, distribution of powers and responsibilities between different tiers of government, and the presence of adequate checks and balances can significantly influence service delivery outcomes. The capacity and resources available to the devolved entities are vital determinants of service delivery.

Adequate financial resources, skilled personnel, infrastructure, and administrative capacity at the local level are essential for effective implementation and delivery of services. The clarity, coherence, and flexibility of the policy and legal framework governing devolution impact service delivery. Well-defined policies, laws, and regulations that provide guidance and support to devolved entities enhance their ability to deliver services efficiently. The quality of inter-governmental relations between different tiers of government is crucial. Collaborative and cooperative relationships, effective coordination mechanisms, and information-sharing channels among the central government and devolved entities contribute to better service delivery outcomes. The commitment and political will of leaders at both central and local levels greatly affect the impact of devolution on service delivery. Strong leadership that prioritizes and supports effective service provision can drive positive outcomes. The level of public participation and accountability mechanisms within the devolved system influences service delivery. Engaging citizens, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders in decision-making processes and ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of resources can enhance service delivery effectiveness. Socio-economic factors such as the level of development, income disparities, and regional variations can impact service delivery outcomes. Areas with higher levels of poverty, inequality, or infrastructure deficits may require additional attention and targeted interventions to ensure equitable service provision. External support from development partners and donor agencies can significantly influence service delivery outcomes in devolved systems. Technical assistance, capacity-building initiatives, and financial aid provided by external actors can enhance the effectiveness of service delivery.

Objective 3: To recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of delegation of authority in improving service delivery.

The third objective was on the recommendations to improve the effectiveness of devolution. There is need to strengthen capacity and resources by providing adequate and sustainable financial resources to devolved entities to support service delivery efforts by investing in training, recruitment, and retention of skilled personnel at the local level. It is crucial to prioritize infrastructure development and maintenance to support service provision. There is also need to enhance policy and legal framework by ensuring clarity, coherence, and flexibility in policies, laws, and regulations related to devolution. It is also important to align national policies with the principles and objectives of devolution to create an enabling environment. It is essential to foster collaborative inter-governmental relations by promoting collaborative relationships between different tiers of government through regular communication, coordination mechanisms, and information sharing and also establish effective inter-governmental forums and committees to facilitate joint decision-making and coordination of service delivery efforts. There is also need to cultivate political will and leadership by encouraging political leaders to demonstrate a strong commitment to devolution and prioritize service delivery. Advocate for policies and actions that support the objectives of decentralization and enhance local service provision. It is important to promote public participation and accountability by creating mechanisms for meaningful citizen engagement in decision-making processes and service delivery planning. There is also need to address socio-economic factors that develop targeted interventions to address regional disparities, income inequalities, and specific socio-economic challenges. Seeking external support and donor engagement is needed also as it engages development partners and donor agencies to provide technical assistance, capacity-building support, and financial aid to strengthen devolved entities' service delivery capacity. Implementing these recommendations requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving all relevant stakeholders, including central governments, local

authorities, civil society organizations, and development partners. Continuous monitoring, evaluation, and learning from best practices and experiences within and outside the country can further inform policy decisions and improve the effectiveness of devolution in enhancing service delivery outcomes.

5.4 Recommendations

The Research managed to come up with the following recommendations

- **Local Authorities** – There is need for institutional strengthening. Strengthen the institutional capacity of regional or local authorities to ensure effective service delivery. This includes developing robust governance structures, improving administrative systems, and enhancing human resource management. There is also need to improve community engagement. This will be possible by postering active community participation and engagement in decision-making processes. Involve local communities in identifying their needs, prioritizing services, and monitoring service delivery outcomes. Collaboration and coordination is also as essential by establishing effective coordination mechanisms among different departments and agencies within the regional or local authority. This promotes integrated service delivery and avoids duplication of efforts. Performance management will also help with performance management systems to track service delivery outcomes, set targets, and incentivize performance improvement. Regular reporting and feedback mechanisms can enhance accountability.
- **Bindura Rural District** – there is need for the needs assessment and planning by conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to understand the specific service delivery requirements of the district. Identify priority areas and develop a strategic plan that aligns with the devolved responsibilities and local context. There is need for collaboration and

coordination:

among different departments and agencies within the district administration. Establishing mechanisms for regular communication, information sharing, and joint planning to ensure integrated and efficient service delivery. Citizen Participation is also as important as it actively involve citizens and local communities in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of service delivery. Establish platforms for citizen engagement, such as public consultations, community meetings, and citizen feedback mechanisms, to ensure that services are responsive to the needs of the people. There is also need for Advocacy and Feedback Mechanisms for the district's service delivery needs and priorities at higher levels of government. Establishing effective feedback mechanisms to capture citizen feedback, complaints, and suggestions, and use this feedback to drive improvements and address grievances.

- **Councillors** – There is need to understand the Devolution Framework by familiarizing with the devolution framework and the specific responsibilities and powers delegated to the local level. Understand the scope of decision-making authority and the services that fall under your jurisdiction. There is also need to engage with Local communities to actively engage with local communities to understand their needs, priorities, and concerns related to service delivery. Conduct regular consultations, community meetings, and public hearings to gather feedback and involve citizens in decision-making processes. Participatory budgeting is also as important as it helps to promote participatory budgeting processes that allow citizens to have a say in allocating resources for service delivery. Involve community members in budget discussions, identify their priorities, and ensure that resources are allocated accordingly. Fostering collaboration and partnerships with

relevant stakeholders, including other councilors, government departments, civil society organizations, and private sector entities is also as important. This collaboration can help leverage resources, share expertise, and improve service delivery outcomes. Enhancing Administrative capacity strengthens the administrative capacity of the local authority to effectively manage and deliver services. This includes improving governance structures, streamlining administrative processes, and investing in staff training and development. Transparency and Accountability is very essential as it promotes service delivery by ensuring that information is readily available to the public. Communicate decisions, budgets, and service delivery plans openly and provide avenues for citizens to access information and lodge complaints. Continuous Learning and Development is also important as it Invests in continuous learning and development opportunities to enhance your understanding of governance principles, service delivery best practices, and emerging trends in your field. Stay updated with relevant policies, regulations, and innovations.

- **Community Members** – there is need raise awareness and advocacy. Citizens should raise awareness about devolution and its potential impact on service delivery. Advocate for transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in decision-making processes. Monitoring and feedbacks are also as important as it helps monitor service delivery outcomes and provide feedback to relevant authorities. This can be done through citizen scorecards, community-based monitoring, or social audits. Reporting issues and suggesting improvements can help drive positive change. Collaboration and partnerships will also help foster collaborations between civil society organizations, citizens, and devolved entities. Joint initiatives can enhance service delivery, share best practices, and address community

needs effectively. Capacity building is as essential as it will build the capacity of civil society organizations and citizens to actively engage in the devolution process. This includes providing training on monitoring techniques, data analysis, and advocacy skills.

5.5 Areas for further study

The research has paved way for more areas which required some further research on the impact of devolution to service delivery.

REFERENCES

- Aspers, P. and Corte, U., 2021. What is Qualitative in Research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 44(4), pp.599-608.
- Bossert, T. J. (2013). Analyzing the decentralization of health systems in developing countries: *Decision space, innovation and performance. Social science & medicine*, 47(10), 1513-1527.
- Bossert, Thomas J., and Jean-Robert Beauvais. (2013). Decentralization of health systems in Ghana, Zambia, Uganda and the Philippines: *A comparative analysis of decision space. Health policy and planning* 17, no. 1: 14-31.
- Brennen, B.S., 2021. *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. Routledge.
- Boyle R. and J. O'Riordan (2013). Capacity and competency requirements in local government. *Local government research series* No 5. Institute of Public Administration.

- Cairney, P., Boyle, R., Rau, H., & McGarvey, N. (2019). Devolution and constitutional change in the United Kingdom: Is Scotland different?. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 21(3), 476-491.
- Chaudhary, M. A. (2021). Institutional Design of Local Governments in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- Collins, C.S., 2018. The central role of theory in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), p.1609406918797475.
- Chatiza and Sithole (undated) *The Preparedness of National Institutions for Devolution in Zimbabwe with respect to Selected Services* (Accessed on 21 November 2019)
- Cheema, G.S. and Rondelli, A. eds. (2014). *Decentralization in Developing Countries: Global Perspectives on the Obstacles to Fiscal Devolution*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chigwata T. C. (2019) Devolution demystified: *Emerging debates and prospects for devolution in Zimbabwe A discussion paper* (Accessed on 21 November 2019)
- Chinsinga, B (2018), *Decentralization and Poverty Reduction in Malawi – A Critical Appraisal*, <https://books.google.co.zw/books?>
- Creswell, J. (2008). *Political attitude and democracy*. London: Sage.
- Cresswell, E. (2010). *Writing research proposal and report*. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.
- David, R., & Vera, H. (2010). The Philippines health sector: Issues and options for reform. World Bank Manila.

- Dillman, L. (2012). *Research Methods qualitative approaches African Center for technology studies* (ACTS). Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.
- Dube (2019). *Main bottlenecks at the local authority level that could pose challenges for growth and sustainability*. Harare: ZEPARU
- Evans-Winters, V.E., 2019. Black feminism in qualitative inquiry: A mosaic for writing our daughter's body. Routledge.
- Falleti, T. G. (2010). *Decentralization and subnational autonomy in Latin America*. *Latin American Research Review*, 44(3), pp.-164.
- Fetters, M.D., 2018. Six equations to help conceptualize the field of mixed methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 12(3), pp.262-267.
- Gehman, J., 2018. Finding theory–method fit: A comparison of three qualitative approaches to theory building. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 27(3), pp.284-300.
- Gravetter, F., & Forzano, L. (2009). *Selecting Research Participants*. *Res Methods Behavior Sci*.
- Hussain, M., Rind, Z. K., & Shah, A. A. (2019). WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS UNDER DEVOLUTION OF POWER PLAN (DOPP): A CASE STUDY OF BALOCHISTAN. *Government: Research Journal of Political Science*, 8.
- Johnson, C.W. and Parry, D.C. eds., 2022. *Fostering social justice through qualitative inquiry: A methodological guide*. Taylor & Francis.

- Kariuki P. and Reddy P. (2017). Operationalising an effective monitoring and evaluation system for local government: *Considerations for best practice*. African Evaluation Journal, Vol 5(2).
- Kharl, S. H., & Mehboob, A. (2022). Political Parties and Devolution of Power in Punjab after the 18th Amendment. *BTTN Journal*, 1(2), 63-82.
- King, N. A. (2020). Anatomy of Pay in Decentralization by Devolution in Tanzania: Advanced Study. *Current Research in Education and Social Studies Vol. 4*, 47-55.
- Kothari, C. (2010). *Research Methodology-Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: Wiley Earstern.
- Lelegwe, S. L. (2022). *Influence of Devolution on Public Service Delivery: a Case of Samburu County, Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
- LEPCHA, O. (2017) COMPREHENSIVE LITERATURE SURVEY ON THE LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT FINANCES WITH REFERENCE TO THE RECOMMENDATION OF FINANCE COMMISSION OF INDIA. *Stochastic Modeling*.
- MAGANGA, J. M. (2021). *The role of municipal councilors in ensuring public service delivery: The case of Kinondoni Municipality Council, Tanzania* (Doctoral dissertation, Mzumbe University).
- Marquez, A.M., 2021. *Identity, Education, and the American Dream: A Mixed Method Study of Chicana/Latina/Hispanic Scholars* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Arizona).
- Maxwell, J. (2011). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (3rd ed). Carlifornia: Sage.

- Meister, L., 2018. On methodology: How mixed methods research can contribute to translation studies. *Translation Studies*, 11(1), pp.66-83.
- Moyo P., and Ncube C. (2014). *Devolution of power in Zimbabwe's new constitutional order: Opportunities and potential constraint*
- Mukoyi, J. (2021). Local Governance as a creature of statute: Decentralisation and Local governance in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Scientific and Publications*, 11(3), 66-72.
- Mufti, M. (2020). 18. Devolution and the multilevel politics of gender in Pakistan. *Handbook on Gender, Diversity and Federalism*, 263.
- OECD. (2009). OECD principles for innovative and responsive government. Paris.
- OECD. (2013). Territorial reviews: Ireland 2013. OECD Publishing. Paris.
- Perez-Liñan, A. (2019). Democratization and bureaucratic responsibilities: *Tax collection in nineteenth-century Latin America. Comparative Politics*, 39(2), 147-167.
- Pollitt, C. and Bouckaert, G. (2011). Public management reform: *A comparative analysis-new public management, governance, and the neo-Weberian state*. Oxford University Press.
- Rasool, S. W., & Ali, B. AN ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT DYNAMICS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA: 2015 AND 2022 ELECTIONS.
- Rajala, T., & Sinervo, L. M. (2021). The beauty of constructive culture: planting the seeds for widespread performance information use among councilors. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 34(4), 459-485.

- Reinikka, R., & Svensson, J. (2005). Fighting corruption to improve schooling: Evidence from a newspaper campaign in Uganda. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 3(2-3), 259-267.
- Ribar, M., 2019. *Mixed-Methods in Political Science: How IR Scholars Respond to Benchmark Events*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Rukuni, M. (2013). *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution Revisited*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe.
- Rose, P., & Shin, D. (2018). Decentralized but unequal: Explaining the unexpected persistence of educational disparities after decentralization. *Comparative Education Review*, 62(1), 17-43.
- Samuels, D. (2002). Fiscal decentralization and subnational variation in Brazil. Publius: *The Journal of Federalism*, 32(4), 1-22.
- Sanaullah, S. (2021). T., & Rehman, H. (2021). Problems and Prospects of Decentralization in Pakistan: A Study of Musharraf Devolution Plan. *Global Regional Review*, VI, 6, 266-272.
- Saunders, T. (2013). *Introduction to the practice of statistics* (5th ed). New York: Freeman and Comp.
- Shank, G. (2002). *Qualitative Research. A Personal Skills Approach*. New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall
- Shayo, G. S. (2022). October, 2022 Administrative Law and Management.
- Sulle, A. The Implementation of Decentralization Reform Policy in Tanzania: The Case of Singida Municipality.

- Solé-Ollé, A. (2006). Expenditure spillovers and fiscal interactions: empirical evidence from local governments in Spain. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 59(1), 32-53.
- Sproats, K. (2011). Federal-State relations in Australia. *Federalism-E*, 2, 1-14.
- Tokman, V. E., & Martinez, C. L. (2016). *Decentralization: Latin America's reply to a worldwide trend*. *International Labour Review*, 127(6), 713.
- World Bank. (2012). *Philippines: Empowering communities through local governance and community-driven development*. Washington, DC.
- Vlahos, N. C. (2019). Decentralization, Devolution and the Political Economy of Scale in Britain from 1945 to 2016.
- Walliman, N. (2011). *Research Methods: The Basics*. New York: Routledge.
- Welman, C. K. (2012). *Research Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Were, E. M. (2023). The Second Republic and the Politics of Devolution. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Kenya* (pp. 199-213). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Zinyama, T. (2021). Local Government, Decentralization, Devolution, and Service Delivery in Zimbabwe. In *Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology, Fifth Edition* (pp. 1597-1611). IGI Global

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

NAME OF INTERVIEWER :

.....
.

AGE :

.....

SEX :

.....

DATE OF INTERVIEW :

.....

**A.THE IMPACT OF DEVOLUTION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE
DELIVERY**

QUESTION 1 : Has devolution resulted in any new or improved services in your community?

ANSWER :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

QUESTION 2 : How has devolution affected the quality of Local Government services in your

Community?

ANSWER:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

QUESTION 3 : Has devolution made it easier or more difficult for Local Government officials to make

Decisions about service delivery?

ANSWER :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

B. FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE IMPACT OF DEVOLUTION ON SERVICE DELIVERY.

QUESTION 1: What are the major challenges that Local Government officials face in implementing devolution?

ANSWER :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

QUESTION 2: How do Local Government officials perceive the authority and responsibility that have been delegated to them?

ANSWER :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....
.....

QUESTION 3: Are there any barriers in implementing devolution effectively?

ANSWER :

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

C. WAYS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IN IMPROVING SERVICE

DELIVERY.

QUESTION 1: What changes would Local Government official recommend to improve the effectiveness

devolution?

ANSWER:

.....
.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

QUESTION 2: How could the central government support Local Government in implementing these

Changes?

ANSWER :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

