



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

**A MODEL TO IMPROVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE
PUBLIC SECTOR: A CASE OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.**

BY

KUDZANAI CHIPATI KO

B240169A

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
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APPROVAL FORM

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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) for acceptance a Dissertation entitled **"A MODEL TO IMPROVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A CASE OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION"** by **KUDZANAI CHIPATIKO** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for 'Master of Leadership and Corporate Governance Degree'.

Student Name: K. CHIPATIKO Signature: [Signature] Date: 17/4/2025

Supervisor: Ac R M Rusike Signature: [Signature] Date: 08/04/2025

GSB Director Signature: Date:

Faculty Chairperson Signature: Date:

External Examiner Signature: Date:

RELEASE FORM

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: KUDZANAI CHIPATI KO

STUDENT NUMBER B240169A

TITLE OF DISSERTATION:

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Signature: 

Date: 17/4/2025

Permanent Address: 5999 Matshobane Road, Zimre Park, Ruwa

E-mail: amakhuzin@gmail.com

Cell Number: 0777 650 530

DECLARATION

DECLARATION

I Kudzanai Chipatiko Student Reg Number B240169A do hereby declare that this dissertation is a result of my investigation and research, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgments, bibliography, references, and comments included in the body of the report, and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

STUDENT SIGNATURE.....

DATE: 17/4/2025.....

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family, Nicholas G, Maud, Arthur T Chipatiko and late parents Nathan and Patricia Chipatiko.

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I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed to this research. Special thanks to my supervisor Dr. R. M. Rusike, for his invaluable guidance and support, and to my colleagues for their insightful feedback and encouragement. Above all, I acknowledge God for His unwavering presence and guidance throughout this journey, giving me strength and inspiration. Lastly, I extend my appreciation to my family and friends for their love and support during this time.

ABSTRACT

This research explored the critical need for an improved corporate governance framework within Zimbabwe's Public Service Commission (PSC). The researcher used a mixed method approach. The findings of the research are that, while there are strengths, such as leadership clarity, significant challenges remain, particularly in areas of training, communication, and transparency. To conclude the researcher developed a model to improve the corporate governance framework for PSC. The PSC is mandated with implementing government policies and ensuring effective public service delivery. However, the organization's effectiveness has been undermined by challenges such as corruption, political interference, and inadequate regulatory frameworks, resulting in eroded public trust. While the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act of 2018 aimed to enhance accountability and transparency, obstacles persist. This research aims to develop a model tailored to the PSC's unique challenges, aligning it with established corporate governance benchmarks, and restoring public trust. The study evaluated the existing corporate governance framework within the PSC, analyzes challenges to effective governance practices, and examines the impact of governance effectiveness on the implementation of accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility. Ultimately, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive corporate governance model that addresses underlying failures, promotes transparency, and improves service delivery within the PSC, thereby contributing to Zimbabwe's national goals which include NDS2 and Vision 2030.

Keywords: Public Service Commission, Corporate governance, Government policies, Zimbabwe, Corporate Governance benchmarks

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PSC	Public Service Commission
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
NDS1	National Development Strategy 1
NDS2	National Development Strategy 2
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
ZIPAM	Zimbabwe Institute Public Administration Management
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
R	Respondent

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Corporate governance is the system by which companies are directed and controlled (Cadbury, 1992). Tehrani (2016) defines, in general, that corporate governance includes legal, cultural, and institutional arrangements that will determine companies' future direction and performance. Knell (2006) claims that governance means to control and regulate. Stoker (1998) supports the use of influence to uphold good order and adherence to established standards of behavior, stating that the ultimate goal of governance is to establish the framework for ordered rule and group action. A Framework according Hernandez (2013), is a structured approach that provides a set of guidelines, principles, or tools to help organizations or decision-makers understand complex issues and solve problems effectively. Frameworks help simplify decision-making by establishing clear boundaries and providing actionable insights that guide practitioners in achieving desired outcomes. Corporate governance framework comprises a set of rules, practices, and processes that define how a company is governed (Tricker, 2019).

Challenges of corporate governance in the public sector are multifaceted and stem from the political environment, stakeholder diversity, resource constraints, accountability mechanisms, and leadership issues. Scholars such as Kaufmann et al. (2005), Hood (2000), and Bovens et al. (2008) have highlighted these challenges and suggested that governance reforms in the public sector must address the need for greater transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the face of political pressures and resource limitations. Effective governance in the public sector requires tailored approaches that consider the unique characteristics of public organizations and their broader societal responsibilities.

The importance of effective corporate governance in public sector organizations cannot be overstated, particularly in Zimbabwe, where the Public Service Commission (PSC) plays a pivotal role in ensuring accountability and efficiency in public service delivery. Restoring public trust and improving service delivery depend on public institutions being transparent, accountable, and acting ethically, all of which are fostered by effective corporate governance. This Research aims to

improve the model of corporate governance framework which is tailored for the PSC, addressing its unique challenges and aligning with established benchmarks in corporate governance.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.2.1 Public Service Commission's Mandate

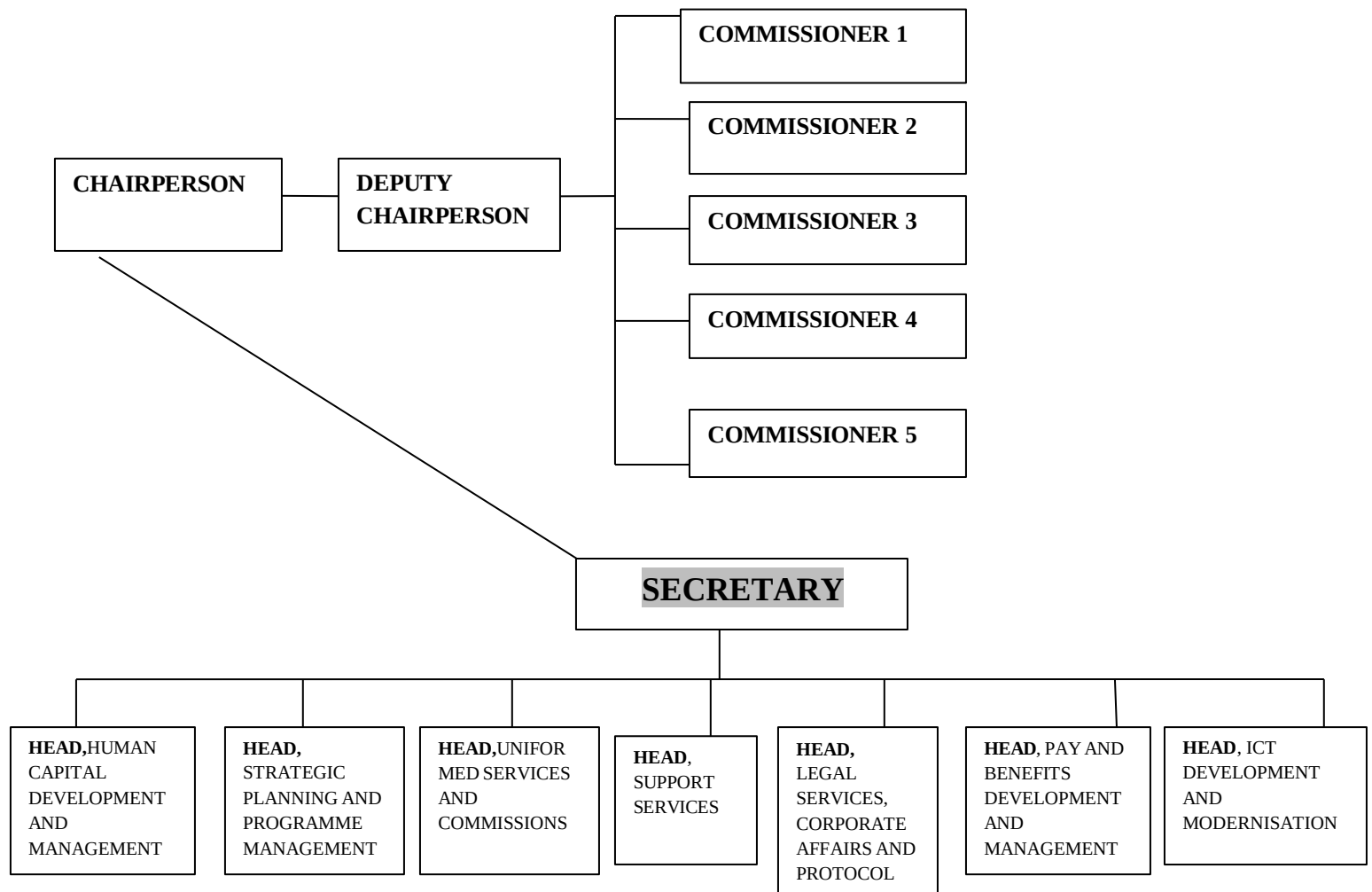
The Constitution of Zimbabwe of 2013, Chapter 10, Section 199 (1) (page 79), states that "There is a single Public Service to implement the policies of the Executive branch of the Government, to assist it in the administration of Zimbabwe and to deliver public services to the people." This is the Constitution that established the Public Service Commission (PSC) of Zimbabwe. As the government's administrative branch, the PSC is essential to carrying out government policies and providing public services, with the goal of empowering public service to lead and propel sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic growth and prosperity for all Zimbabweans. PSC aims to empower public service delivery, aligning its objectives with national goals such as Vision 2030, which aspires to create an upper middle-income society (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021).

1.2.2 Public Service Commission Structure

A chairperson, deputy chairperson, and at least two to five additional members chosen by the president make up the Public Service Commission, as shown in figure 1. PSC members are selected based on their expertise in management, administration, or public service delivery (Constitution of Zimbabwe, Chapter 10 Section 202 (1a, b) (2), 2013).

Below in Fig 1 is an illustration of the PSC Structure;-

Figure 1. 1: PSC Structure (Organogram)



NOTES:

- Agencies are headed by HEADS.
- Within the agencies are Departments headed by GENERAL MANAGERS.
- Within the Departments are Units headed by MANAGERS with OFFICERS as subordinates.

Source: PSC Annual Report 2023

1.2.3 An Overview of Corporate Governance Frameworks in the Public Sector

Corporate governance, according to Mukute and Marange (2006), is the framework that governs how organisations are run, managed, and held accountable. Furthermore, as it guarantees accountability, ethics, and transparency in public administration, good governance is essential in the public sector. Sustainable economic and social prosperity is built on a foundation of integrity in business and good corporate governance (Gono, 2008).

Globally, the governance landscape has evolved due to high-profile corporate failures and a heightened demand for transparency in organizational practices. Events such as the Enron scandal and the Parmalat fraud have underscored the critical need for robust corporate governance frameworks (Chandrajit Banerjee & Abhay Gupte, 2015). This led the Sarbanes Oxley Act (SOX) of 2002 to come into force after a series of Congressional hearings on the Enron scandal. Similarly, governance challenges experienced in Zimbabwe are mirrored across Africa, where initiatives like the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) seek to enhance accountability and governance standards (African Union, 2019). The PSC must align its governance strategies with these continental efforts to foster effective public sector governance.

The government of Zimbabwe has since created the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act which serves as a foundational framework for improving governance practices within the PSC and the wider public sector. By establishing clear accountability lines, the Act aims to restore public trust in government institutions (Chikwanje, 2021). Nonetheless, historical issues such as political interference and a lack of accountability mechanisms continue to challenge the PSC's effectiveness (Mawere, 2019). The absence of oversight allows corrupt practices to persist, further diminishing public trust and engagement, which are essential for effective governance (Chikwanje, 2021).

Restoring public trust in the PSC necessitates a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes of governance challenges. This includes the implementation of robust accountability measures, enhancing transparency in decision-making, and fostering ethical conduct among public officials. Engaging stakeholders is crucial to ensuring that citizens' voices are heard in governance processes (World Bank, 2018). The government is unable to accomplish its strategic objectives due to management difficulties brought on by the absence of public sector corporate governance review (Masegare and Ngoepe, 2018).

A critical function of the PSC, as outlined in Section 203 of the Constitution, involves appointing qualified individuals to public service positions, regulating service conditions, and addressing grievances (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013). Members of the PSC are selected based on their expertise in administration and management, yet the organization has struggled to maintain operational integrity (Chikwanje, 2021). The dynamic environment characterized by political interference, inadequate regulatory frameworks, and a lack of accountability mechanisms has fostered a culture of impunity, allowing corrupt practices such as nepotism and bribery to flourish (Mawere, 2019; World Bank, 2021). These issues resonate with global concerns regarding governance and service delivery, as highlighted by the UNDP, which emphasizes the importance of transparency in enhancing governance in developing nations (UNDP, 2020).

The prevalence of corruption poses a significant threat to the PSC's credibility and operational effectiveness. Reports indicate systemic corrupt practices within the public sector, leading to a deterioration in the quality of services provided (Transparency International, 2020). Acknowledging that corruption undermines public institutions, the World Bank (2021) notes that high levels of corruption correlate with poor governance outcomes. This sentiment is echoed in the findings of the African Union (2019), which stresses the need for improved governance frameworks across the continent. The challenges faced by the PSC are not solely national but reflect broader global governance issues, necessitating a holistic approach to reform (Chandrajit Banerjee & Abhay Gupte, 2015).

In addition to corruption, the PSC grapples with inefficiencies rooted in inadequate regulatory frameworks. Historical political interference has compromised the independence of the PSC, resulting in appointments based more on loyalty than merit (Mawere, 2019). This has contributed to a workforce lacking the necessary skills to manage public resources effectively, further eroding public confidence in the PSC's capacity to deliver services (Chikwanje, 2021). The enactment of the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act in 2018 symbolizes the government's commitment to addressing these governance challenges by establishing a legal framework that emphasizes accountability and transparency (World Bank, 2018). However, despite this legislative effort, significant obstacles remain, highlighting the need for ongoing reform (Chikwanje, 2021).

When public institutions operate under a strong governance framework, they can better serve the needs of the citizens, promote fairness, and protect public resources. Bovens (2007) emphasizes

that accountability is a central component of public governance, as it enables citizens to hold public officials responsible for their decisions. Behn (2003) discusses how trust in public institutions is closely linked to transparency and accountability, which can be achieved through proper governance frameworks. Norman (2013) further explores the ethical implications of public service governance and highlights the importance of public servants adhering to a code of ethics to ensure trust and fairness in decision-making. The role of governance frameworks in mitigating corruption is instituted by transparency, accountability, and ethical standards in public administration (Rose-Ackerman, 1999). The PSC's effectiveness has been hampered by governance challenges, including corruption and inefficiencies, which have eroded public trust (Public Entities Corporate Governance Act, 2018; Transparency International, 2020).

It is against this background that, by establishing effective Corporate Governance Frameworks, the PSC can mitigate risks associated with corruption and inefficiency, ultimately improving service delivery and restoring public confidence in Zimbabwe's public sector.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A problem statement is a critical component of research that articulates the specific issue or challenge that the study aims to address. It serves as the foundation for the research project, guiding the direction of the study and framing the research questions. According to Creswell (2014), a well-constructed problem statement clearly defines the problem, situates it within the context of existing literature, and explains its significance to the field. The Public Service Commission (PSC) of Zimbabwe, established under the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013), is vital for implementing government policies and ensuring effective public service delivery. However, its operational effectiveness has been severely undermined by pervasive governance challenges, including widespread corruption and inefficiencies, which have eroded public trust in the PSC's ability to fulfill its mandate (Public Entities Corporate Governance Act, 2018; Transparency International, 2020). Political interference and inadequate regulatory frameworks have fostered a culture of impunity, allowing corrupt practices such as nepotism and bribery to thrive, further compromising the PSC's credibility (Mawere, 2019; World Bank, 2021). Additionally, Matei and Drumaşu (2014) contend that a corporate governance framework can reduce power abuse, fraud, and raise public scepticism of the way financial resources are managed.

Despite the enactment of the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act in 2018, aimed at enhancing accountability and transparency, significant obstacles remain. The absence of effective oversight and accountability mechanisms continues to hinder the PSC's operational integrity, leading to a workforce that often lacks the necessary skills to manage public resources effectively (Chikwanje, 2021). This situation not only reflects national governance issues but also resonates with broader global concerns regarding transparency and accountability in public institutions, as highlighted by the UNDP (2020).

In an attempt to structure and manage organizations so they function in accordance with governmental goals, corporate governance systems were created in response to the public sector's requirement for accountability (Papazafeiropoulou and Spanaki, 2016). The researcher saw the urgent need for a comprehensive corporate governance model tailored specifically for the PSC to address these underlying governance failures. Such a model should restore public trust and improve service delivery by implementing robust accountability measures and enhancing transparency in decision-making processes. Without this framework, the PSC risks perpetuating a cycle of inefficiency and corruption, ultimately undermining public confidence in Zimbabwe's governance system and its ability to achieve national goals such as Vision 2030.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Main Objective

To develop a model aimed at improving corporate governance framework in the Public Service Commission that addresses identified challenges.

Supporting objectives

1. To evaluate the existing corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission structure.
2. To analyze the main challenges faced by the Public Service Commission in adhering to effective corporate governance practices.
3. To examine the impact of governance effectiveness on how the four pillars of corporate governance (accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility) are implemented within the Public Service Commission.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main Question

What components should be included in a model to improve the corporate governance framework in the Public Service Commission to address identified challenges?

Supporting Questions

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the existing corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission?
2. What are the main challenges faced by the Public Service Commission in adhering to effective corporate governance practices?
3. How do governance practices in the Public Service Commission impact the implementation of the four pillars of corporate governance, accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility?

1.5.1 PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 1: Identifying and analyzing the main challenges faced by the Public Service Commission will provide insights necessary for developing targeted strategies to overcome these challenges and enhance governance effectiveness.

Proposition 2: Stakeholder engagement and feedback are crucial for the successful development and implementation of a corporate governance model that meets the needs of the Public Service Commission and its constituents.

1.5.2 HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: Implementing a new model for corporate governance in the Public Service Commission will result in measurable improvements in accountability and transparency compared to the existing framework.

Hypothesis 2: The strengths identified in the current corporate governance framework will positively correlate with better performance outcomes in service delivery within the Public Service Commission.

Hypothesis 4: The level of effectiveness in implementing the four pillars of corporate governance within the Public Service Commission will be positively associated with overall organizational performance and stakeholder satisfaction.

1.6 ASSUMPTION OF THE STUDY

The researcher assumed that the study will be finished within a period six months.

- The researcher assumed that, permission to conduct the research within the Public Service Commission will be granted and classified information will be given freely in interviews and questionnaires.
- Governance Challenges are Identifiable, measurable and existing governance structures can be evaluated.
- Governance practices have a direct impact on service delivery and stakeholder engagement enhances governance outcomes.
- Public Institutions are governed by a universal set of principles and data on governance and corruption is reliable.

1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

1.7.1 Need to improve corporate governance

The urgent need to strengthen corporate governance inside Zimbabwe's Public Service Commission (PSC) served as justification for this study. According to Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution, the PSC is essential to carrying out governmental directives and guaranteeing efficient public service delivery. For public institutions to function effectively, morally, and transparently, corporate governance is essential. The Public Service Commission (PSC), tasked with overseeing public service operations, must adopt a strong governance framework to meet its public service objectives (Bovens et al., 2014). However, weaknesses in governance can hinder

the PSC's ability to effectively serve the public. Scholars like Dobbins & McCarthy (2015) stress that a tailored governance model can improve decision-making and organizational performance. This research aims to develop a model that addresses these governance challenges, enhancing the PSC's ability to meet its mandates.

1.7.2 Existing governance framework

Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the PSC's existing governance framework was the first step in identifying areas for improvement. According to Tricker (2015), regular evaluations of governance structures allow organizations to adapt to evolving political and administrative needs. By assessing the current framework, the research identified aspects that can be strengthened and areas where the PSC may be falling short, such as accountability or transparency mechanisms (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992).

1.7.3 Governance challenges

Identifying and analyzing governance challenges are critical for understanding why the PSC may struggle with corporate governance. Issues such as political interference, resource constraints, and weak accountability mechanisms often prevent public organizations from functioning optimally (Alesina et al., 2016). Behn (2001) highlights those challenges like those that hinder transparency and accountability, affecting overall governance effectiveness. By analyzing these challenges, the study provided insights into systemic issues hindering the PSC's success in implementing best practices.

1.7.4 The four pillars of corporate governance

The four pillars of corporate governance accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility are essential in ensuring that the PSC operates ethically and effectively. Scholars such as Freeman (1984) argue that the implementation of these principles strengthens public trust and governance outcomes. Effective governance practices influence how these pillars are manifested in the PSC's daily operations, ensuring fair treatment of employees and transparency in decision-making (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). The study explored how these pillars are integrated into the PSC's structure and how improvements in governance can enhance their application

1.8 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to develop a comprehensive model aimed at improving the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Zimbabwe, addressing critical issues related to governance practices and operational effectiveness. Specifically, the study sought to examine the extent of corporate governance practices currently implemented within the PSC, providing a foundational understanding of existing frameworks and their effectiveness (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021). By identifying specific governance challenges faced by the PSC, the research aimed at illuminating the unique obstacles that hinder effective service delivery and accountability (Chandrajit Banerjee & Abhay Gupte, 2015; African Union, 2019). The study further intended to improve a tailored corporate governance model that reflects the operational realities of the PSC, thereby enhancing its performance and responsiveness to public needs (World Bank, 2021; Transparency International, 2020). Lastly, by evaluating the potential impact of the proposed governance model on public trust and service delivery, the study is aimed at contributing valuable insights into how effective governance can restore public confidence in government institutions and improve the overall quality of public services (UNDP, 2020; KPMG, 2010). Ultimately, the research endeavored to foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and effectiveness within the PSC, benefiting both the institution and the citizens it serves. The four pillars of corporate governance—accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility—are integral to ensuring the integrity of the public service (World Bank, 2015). Examining how effective governance impacts the implementation of these pillars in the PSC will provide valuable insights into areas where the organization may be lacking.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies in its multifaceted contributions to theoretical frameworks, practical applications, and policy development concerning corporate governance within the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Zimbabwe. This exploration is particularly relevant given the critical role that effective governance plays in ensuring accountability, transparency, and operational efficiency in public sector institutions. This study intends to give a thorough grasp of

how customized governance frameworks might handle the particular difficulties faced by Zimbabwean public institutions by looking at the PSC.

1.9.1 Theoretical significance

In theory, this study adds to the corpus of information already available on public sector governance. It does so by delving into the extent of corporate governance practices within the PSC, providing a foundational understanding of existing frameworks and their effectiveness. This analysis is crucial for advancing academic discourse on governance models, particularly in the context of developing countries. Previous studies have indicated that the effectiveness of governance frameworks significantly influences organizational performance (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021). This study adds to a more sophisticated knowledge of how these frameworks might be precisely adjusted to solve the particular issues faced by public institutions by methodically analysing governance processes inside the PSC.

Furthermore, this study builds on the theoretical constructs of governance by integrating concepts from various fields, including public administration, organizational behavior, and management studies. **ACADEMICS** and **SCHOLARS** interested in the fields of public administration, political science, and governance will find this study valuable. By exploring the challenges and solutions related to corporate governance in the public sector, this study contributes to the broader body of literature on public sector reform. Scholars can use the findings as a foundation for further research into corporate governance models in other public sector institutions. According to Dahl (1989), scholars in public administration have long argued for more research into governance models that are specifically tailored to the public sector's unique needs, making this study a valuable contribution to ongoing academic discourse.

The research posits that effective governance is not merely a function of compliance with regulations but involves a complex interplay of various factors, including leadership, stakeholder engagement, and institutional culture (World Bank, 2021; Transparency International, 2020). By incorporating these dimensions, the study offers a more holistic view of governance in the public sector, enriching the theoretical discourse on the subject.

Moreover, the model proposed in this study could provide future avenues for comparative research in corporate governance practices between different countries or regions, allowing scholars to explore the universality or contextualization of the proposed framework.

Additionally, the study's findings can serve as a reference for future research in governance models applicable to other public sector entities. This contribution to the theoretical framework is essential for fostering ongoing academic dialogue and encouraging further research in the field of public sector governance.

1.9.2 Practical significance

Practically, the study aims to identify specific governance challenges faced by the PSC, thereby offering actionable insights that can be utilized by the commission to enhance its operational effectiveness. Governance challenges in public institutions often manifest in various forms, including inefficiencies, lack of accountability, and inadequate service delivery (Chandrajit Banerjee & Abhay Gupte, 2015; African Union, 2019). By identifying these challenges, the research provides a foundation for developing targeted interventions that can address the root causes of governance failures.

The improvement of a tailored corporate governance model is a significant practical outcome of this study. This model is designed to reflect the operational realities of the PSC, thereby enhancing its performance and responsiveness to public needs (UNDP, 2020; KPMG, 2010). The practical implications of this model extend beyond the PSC, as it can serve as a blueprint for other public sector organizations facing similar governance issues. The development of a customized governance framework allows for the integration of best practices while also addressing local challenges effectively.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of capacity building and training within the PSC to ensure the successful implementation of the proposed governance model. Capacity building involves enhancing the skills and competencies of staff to enable them to operate within an improved governance framework (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021). By focusing on capacity building, the study aims to equip PSC personnel with the necessary tools and knowledge to implement governance reforms effectively.

Additionally, the study's practical significance extends to stakeholder engagement. Effective governance requires the involvement of various **STAKEHOLDERS**, including civil servants, government officials, and the public (Freeman, 1984; Lankes, 2020). The research underscores the importance of stakeholder engagement in decision-making processes, highlighting how their insights can enhance governance practices within the PSC. By fostering a culture of collaboration and inclusivity, the study aims to improve the overall governance landscape in the public sector.

1.9.3 Policy significance

One of the key stakeholders in this study are policymakers and government officials who are responsible for implementing reforms within public institutions. The findings of this study will provide valuable recommendations for enhancing the existing corporate governance frameworks, focusing on public sector organizations such as the Public Service Commission (PSC). As noted by OECD (2015), effective corporate governance in the public sector is necessary to improve the delivery of public services, strengthen institutional performance, and restore public trust.

From a policy perspective, the significance of this study is underscored by its potential to inform governance reforms within the PSC and the broader public sector in Zimbabwe. The evaluation of the potential impact of the proposed governance model on public trust and service delivery is a critical aspect of this research. The findings can provide evidence-based recommendations that policymakers can use to enhance governance frameworks at the institutional level (World Bank, 2021; UNDP, 2020).

POLICYMAKERS can use the proposed model in this study to reform public sector governance systems, optimizing their functionality and public accountability. The policy significance of this research lies in its potential to enhance the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission. By developing a model that improves the corporate governance framework in the public sector intricately linked to national development agendas such as Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategies (NDS1 and NDS2). These frameworks typically outline the strategic goals and objectives for national development, emphasizing the importance of effective governance for sustainable growth and development. The research aligns with the goals of good governance and can serve as catalyst for positive change within the PSC.

1.10 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

John W. Creswell (2016), defines delimitations as the boundaries or scope that the researcher sets for the study. The delimitations of this study referred to the boundaries set by the researcher regarding the scope, focus, and context of the research. The study focused on data from the period 2015 to 2024 and focused on employees of PSC whom the researcher works with.

1.10.1 Focus on the Public Service Commission

One primary delimitation of this study was its exclusive focus on the Public Service Commission (PSC) of Zimbabwe. While corporate governance issues were prevalent in various public sector entities, this research specifically targeted the PSC due to its critical role in public service delivery and civil service management (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021). By concentrating on the PSC, the study aimed to provide an in-depth analysis of governance practices and challenges unique to this institution, thus allowing for the development of a tailored governance model. This focus, however, meant that findings might not have been directly generalizable to other public sector organizations in Zimbabwe or elsewhere, limiting the study's broader applicability (World Bank, 2021; Transparency International, 2020).

1.10.2 Scope of corporate governance practices

The study delimited its examination of corporate governance practices to specific dimensions that were most relevant to the PSC's operational context. This included governance structures, accountability mechanisms, transparency practices, and stakeholder engagement (Chandrajit Banerjee & Abhay Gupte, 2015; African Union, 2019). While other dimensions of governance, such as ethical conduct and risk management, were also important, they did not constitute the primary focus of this research. This selective approach allowed for a more concentrated analysis of the governance practices within the PSC, ensuring that the study remained manageable and focused on the most pressing issues at hand (UNDP, 2020; KPMG, 2010). As such, the findings may not have encompassed all aspects of corporate governance that could have been relevant to other public institutions.

1.10.3 Time frame of the study

Another delimitation related to the time frame of the study. The research primarily focused on current governance practices and challenges within the PSC, potentially limiting the historical

context that could have provided deeper insights into the evolution of governance in the organization (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021). While historical governance issues might have informed current practices, the study primarily analyzed contemporary data collected through surveys, interviews, and document reviews. This temporal focus allowed for an up-to-date assessment of governance practices but may have overlooked long-standing systemic issues that shaped the PSC's governance landscape over time (World Bank, 2021; Transparency International, 2020).

1.10.4 Methodological delimitations

The study also delimited the methodological approaches employed in addressing the research objectives. A mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, was utilized to gather insights from various stakeholders within the PSC (Chandrajit Banerjee & Abhay Gupte, 2015; African Union, 2019). However, the choice of specific data collection methods, such as surveys and interviews, may have limited the depth of qualitative insights compared to more ethnographic or participatory research approaches. While this methodological choice was justified by the need for a structured analysis, it may have restricted the richness of the data collected and the understanding of the complexities surrounding governance practices within the PSC (UNDP, 2020; KPMG, 2010).

1.10.5 Exclusion of external factors

Additionally, the study primarily focused on internal governance practices and challenges within the PSC, deliberately excluding external factors that might have influenced governance, such as political, economic, and social contexts. While these external factors undoubtedly played a significant role in shaping governance dynamics, their exclusion allowed the research to concentrate on the internal mechanisms and practices that could be controlled or influenced by the PSC itself (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021). This delimitation aimed to provide a clearer understanding of how the PSC could enhance its governance framework independently, though it may have limited the comprehensiveness of the analysis by not considering the broader environment in which the PSC operated (World Bank, 2021; Transparency International, 2020).

The delimitations of this study served to clarify the boundaries within which the research was conducted. By focusing specifically on the Public Service Commission in Zimbabwe, narrowing the scope of corporate governance practices, defining a specific time frame, selecting particular

methodological approaches, and excluding external factors, the study aimed to provide a focused and in-depth analysis of the governance challenges and practices within the PSC. While these delimitations enhanced the study's specificity and manageability, they also implied that the findings may not have been universally applicable to other public sector organizations or contexts. Nonetheless, the insights gleaned from this research were expected to contribute significantly to the understanding of corporate governance in the public sector and inform future improvements within the PSC.

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Creswell (2014), limitations are inherent in all research studies, and acknowledging them is an essential part of the research process. The limitations of this study refer to the constraints that may affect the research findings and their applicability. Understanding these limitations is essential for interpreting the results accurately and recognizing the contexts in which the findings are valid. This section outlines the key limitations tied to the research objectives related to improving the corporate governance framework in the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Zimbabwe. However, the researcher will also find solutions to counter the limitation.

1.11.1 Data collection constraints

One significant limitation of this study was related to the data collection process. The research relied on surveys, questionnaire and interviews to gather information from stakeholders within the PSC. While these methods facilitated the collection of relevant data, they also posed certain challenges. For instance, the willingness of participants to share candid insights about governance practices could have been influenced by concerns regarding confidentiality and job security (Baker & McKenzie, 2020; O'Reilly & Chatman, 2019). This apprehension might have led to responses that were overly cautious or socially desirable, thereby potentially skewing the data. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may have introduced biases, as participants may have had a vested interest in portraying their governance practices in a more favorable light (Davis & Thompson, 2021; Smith & Jones, 2022). The researcher would counter this limitation by designing questionnaires that are anonymous and confidential so that data will be collected without constraints.

1.11.2 Generalisability of findings

Another limitation pertained to the generalizability of the findings. Given that the study focused exclusively on the PSC, the results may not be applicable to other public sector organizations in different contexts or countries. Governance practices can vary significantly across institutions due to differences in legal frameworks, cultural norms, and operational mandates (Harrison & Wicks, 2020; Lee & Hsu, 2021). While the tailored governance model proposed in this study may offer valuable insights for the PSC, its applicability to other organizations may be limited. This limitation underscores the need for further research to validate and adapt the proposed model in other settings (Miller & McGowan, 2021; Patel & Kumar, 2022).

1.11.3 Temporal constraints

The temporal constraints of the study also represented a limitation. By focusing primarily on current governance practices and challenges, the research may have overlooked historical factors that contributed to the present state of governance within the PSC (Baker & McKenzie, 2020; O'Reilly & Chatman, 2019). Understanding the historical context of governance issues is crucial for identifying long-term patterns and systemic challenges that may not be immediately apparent through a contemporary lens. This limitation could lead to an incomplete analysis of the governance landscape, potentially impacting the effectiveness of the proposed governance model (Harrison & Wicks, 2020; Lee & Hsu, 2021).

1.11.4 Time and resource limitations

The study had limited time which was a period of six months and resources for data collection, interviews, and analysis, which can affect the depth and breadth of the research. Resource limitations further constrained the scope of the study. The research faced challenges related to time, funding, and access to relevant documents or data. Limited resources may have restricted the number of stakeholders that could be included in the study, thereby affecting the comprehensiveness of the data collected (Davis & Thompson, 2021; Smith & Jones, 2022). Additionally, the lack of access to certain internal documents or reports may have hindered a more thorough examination of governance practices within the PSC. These resource constraints could have impacted the depth and breadth of the analysis, potentially limiting the robustness of the proposed governance model (Miller & McGowan, 2021; Patel & Kumar, 2022).

1.11.5 Exclusion of external influences

Another limitation involved the exclusion of external factors that could influence governance within the PSC. The study concentrated primarily on internal governance practices and challenges, deliberately omitting external influences such as political, economic, and social contexts (Baker & McKenzie, 2020; O'Reilly & Chatman, 2019). While this focus allowed for a more detailed analysis of the PSC's internal mechanisms, it may have resulted in a lack of understanding regarding how external dynamics could shape governance practices. Recognizing these external factors is essential for developing a comprehensive governance framework, and their exclusion may limit the effectiveness of the proposed model (Harrison & Wicks, 2020; Lee & Hsu, 2021).

The limitations of this study highlight the constraints that may affect the research findings and their applicability. Data collection constraints, generalizability of findings, temporal constraints, resource limitations, and exclusion of external influences all contributed to the study's limitations. Acknowledging these limitations is crucial for accurately interpreting the results and recognizing the contexts in which the findings are valid. Despite these constraints, the study aimed to contribute valuable insights into corporate governance practices within the PSC and to inform future improvements in governance frameworks both within the PSC and potentially in other public sector organizations.

1.12 CHAPTER LAYOUT

1.12.1 Chapter One: Introduction

The research follows a structured format across five chapters, beginning with Chapter One the researcher Introduced the research, outlining the background, research problem, objectives, purpose, significance, limitation, delimitations of the study. It also sets the scope and provides an overview of the research structure.

1.12.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

In Chapter Two the researcher delved into Literature Review and Theoretical Framework, analyzing existing literature on the topic is reviewed, identifying gaps and trends. This chapter

also introduces the Conceptual Framework that underpins the research, explaining its relevance to the study.

1.12.3 Chapter Three: Methodology

Chapter Three provides an overview of methodology, including information on the population, research design, sampling strategies, data collection instruments, analysis approaches, and ethical considerations. This chapter acknowledges the limits of the study and defends the selected methodology.

1.12.4 Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis

Chapter Four displays and evaluates structured data presentation of the results, followed by in-depth analysis and discussion. The chapter examines important trends and contrasts the findings with earlier research.

1.12.5 Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

In Chapter Five the researcher will Summarise, make Conclusions, and Recommendations summarizes the key findings, draws conclusions based on the analysis, and offers recommendations for practice and future research. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further exploration of the topic.

1.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter presented the importance of corporate governance in leading and managing businesses, especially in the public sector. It draws attention to the difficulties the Public Service Commission (PSC) of Zimbabwe faces, such as political meddling, inefficiency, and corruption, all of which compromise the PSC's ability to provide services effectively and maintain public confidence. The chapter stressed the need for increased accountability, openness, and moral behavior while outlining the PSC's mission, organizational structure, and current governance structures. With the ultimate goal of creating a customized corporate governance model to handle these issues and improve service delivery inside the PSC, it determined the problem description, research

objectives, and research questions in addition to offering suggestions and hypotheses for the investigation.

A thorough assessment of the body of research on corporate governance is then provided in Chapter 2, with particular attention paid to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, best practices, and empirical studies that are pertinent to the public sector. The research will have a strong basis thanks to this chapter, which will guide the creation of a customized corporate governance model for the PSC.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study's second chapter examined the Public Service Commission's (PSC) present corporate governance system, offering a thorough assessment of its efficacy, procedures, and structures. "A written summary of journal articles, books, and other documents that describes the past and current state of information, organizes the literature into topics, and documents a need for a proposed study" is the definition of a literature review given by Creswell (2005). This process involves synthesizing existing research to highlight gaps in knowledge and establish a foundation for further investigation. Creswell emphasizes the importance of critically evaluating sources and organizing them thematically to provide a coherent narrative that informs the research context. This chapter aimed at identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the PSC's governance model, analyzing key components such as accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility. It also examined the main challenges faced by the PSC in adhering to effective governance practices and explored how these challenges impact the overall performance of the Commission. This chapter established the foundation for creating a customized model that fills in the gaps and strengthens the PSC's governance structure, ultimately resulting in better service delivery and more public trust. It does this by combining pertinent literature and empirical data.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW STRATEGY

The methodical process of finding, assessing, and synthesizing prior research that is pertinent to a certain subject is known as a literature review strategy. This strategy involves defining the scope of the review, selecting key databases, and using keywords and Boolean operators for efficient searches (Fink, 2014). Thematic, chronological, or methodological frameworks are often employed to organize the literature (Paperpal, 2025). Scholars like Creswell (2005) emphasize the importance of synthesizing findings to highlight gaps and inform research direction. This structured approach ensures that the literature review is comprehensive, critical and directly aligned with the research objectives. The literature strategy for this research will involve a systematic review of existing studies on corporate governance frameworks, particularly in public

sector contexts. Key scholars such as OECD (2015) and the World Bank (2014) provide foundational insights into best practices and challenges in governance, emphasizing accountability, transparency, and stakeholder engagement. Additionally, studies by authors like Core (2018) highlight the unique characteristics of corporate governance in public entities, advocating for tailored frameworks that address specific operational challenges. This literature review will not only identify gaps in the current understanding of governance practices within the Public Service Commission but also frame the proposed model within established theoretical and empirical contexts, thereby enhancing its relevance and applicability.

2.3 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

2.3.1 Corporate governance

The rules, procedures, and practices that regulate how corporations are run and managed are collectively referred to as corporate governance (Cardbury Committee, 1992). It provides a framework for making sure that an organization's relationships with its stakeholders, which include shareholders, management, consumers, suppliers, financiers, the government, and the community are transparent, equitable, and accountable (Tricker, 2015). A well-defined corporate governance structure is essential for public institutions, as it not only enhances operational efficiency but also builds public trust in government entities (OECD, 2016; Kooiman, 2010).

2.3.2 Public Sector

The public sector refers to the segment of the economy that is owned, operated, and controlled by government entities, providing essential services to the community and contributing to societal welfare. Scholars define it as encompassing all levels of government (federal, regional, and local) and includes services such as education, healthcare, law enforcement, and public transportation (OECD, 2022; Study.com, 2025). The public sector plays a critical role in managing resources and implementing public policy, ensuring that services are accessible to all citizens without the profit motive that characterizes the private sector (Buchanan & Tullock, 1962).

2.3.3 Framework

A Framework according Hernandez (2013), is a structured approach that provides a set of guidelines, principles, or tools to help organizations or decision-makers understand complex issues and solve problems effectively. Frameworks help simplify decision-making by establishing clear boundaries and providing actionable insights that guide practitioners in achieving desired outcomes

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Overview of relevant theories

Understanding the theoretical foundations that support governance practices is crucial while investigating a model to enhance the Public Service Commission's (PSC) corporate governance framework. Agency theory, stewardship theory, institutional theory, and public choice theory are four well-known ideas that are pertinent to this approach.

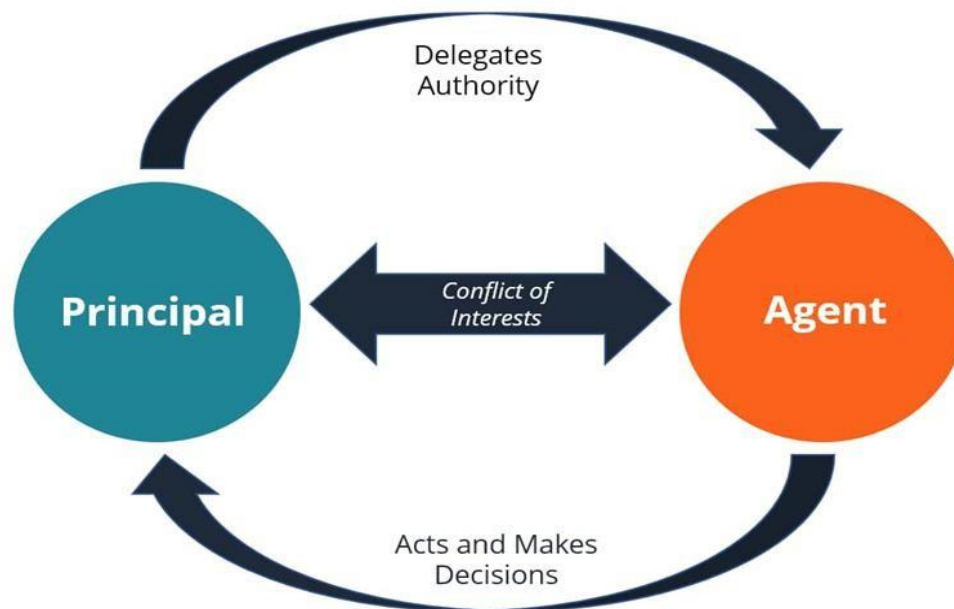
2.4.1 Agency theory

Agency Theory posits a fundamental relationship between principals and agents within organizations, focusing on the conflicts that can arise due to differing interests. In the context of the Public Service Commission (PSC), the citizens represent the principals who entrust public servants (the agents) with the responsibility to act in their best interests (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). This relationship is inherently fraught with potential conflicts, as agents may pursue their own interests—such as personal gain, job security, or favoritism—over the welfare of the principals. Such conflicts can lead to inefficiencies, corruption, and a general erosion of public trust in government institutions (Eisenhardt, 1989).

One of the critical implications of Agency Theory is the necessity for robust governance mechanisms to mitigate these conflicts. This includes the establishment of clear performance metrics, accountability measures, and incentive structures that align the behavior of agents with the interests of principals (Bovens, 2007). In practice, this could involve implementing performance evaluations for public servants, where their rewards and career advancements are directly linked to their effectiveness in serving the public. Such measures can help ensure that public servants are motivated to act in accordance with the expectations of the citizens they serve, thereby enhancing overall governance effectiveness.

Moreover, Agency Theory also emphasizes the importance of monitoring mechanisms to oversee agent behavior. For the PSC, this could involve creating independent oversight bodies or audit committees tasked with evaluating the performance and conduct of public servants. Building public trust and guaranteeing that resources are used efficiently require a culture of accountability and transparency, which the PSC may promote by putting in place such oversight (Mavhunga, 2020). In the end, Agency Theory offers a framework for comprehending the dynamics of accountability and responsibility in public institutions, emphasizing the necessity of governance frameworks that balance interests and reduce conflict, as illustrated in Fig. 2.1 below;

Figure 2. 1: Agency theory



Source: Jensen & Meckling, 1976

2.4.2 Stewardship theory

Stewardship Theory presents a more positive view of the interaction between principals and agents than Agency Theory does. According to this hypothesis, agents who are trusted and given authority would manage the organization's assets responsibly, putting the principals' interests ahead of their own (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997). According to this view, the PSC can encourage a

culture of moral behavior and dedication to public service by motivating employees to act in the best interests of the people they serve.

Stewardship Theory advocates for an environment where public servants are given the autonomy and responsibility to make decisions that benefit the public. This approach can enhance job satisfaction and foster a sense of ownership among employees, which can lead to improved service delivery (Mlambo, 2018). For the PSC, promoting a stewardship mindset could involve training programs that emphasize the values of public service, ethics, and social responsibility. By instilling these values in public servants, the PSC can cultivate a workforce that is dedicated to serving the public and acting in the community's best interests.

Furthermore, Stewardship Theory highlights the importance of trust and collaboration in fostering effective governance. When public servants feel trusted and valued by their leaders, they are more likely to engage in behaviors that enhance organizational performance and public trust (Mutsvairo, 2018). This theory underscores the significance of leadership styles that empower and support public servants, creating an environment conducive to ethical decision-making and accountability. By adopting principles from Stewardship Theory, the PSC can develop governance practices that not only focus on compliance but also encourage personal and professional growth among public servants. Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997 illustrate the Stewardship theory below in Fig 2.2.

Figure 2. 2: Stewardship theory



Source: Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997

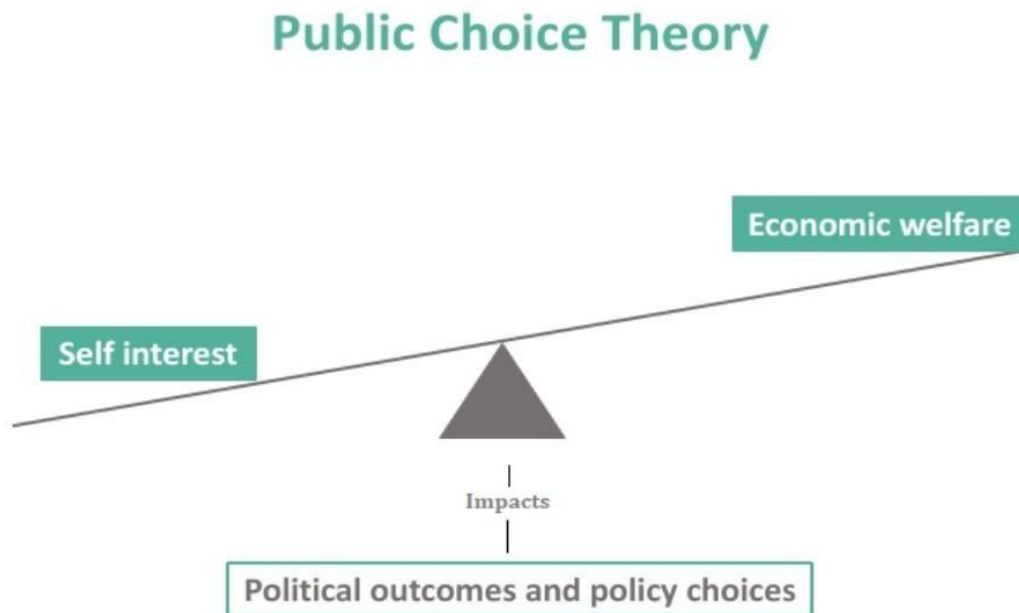
2.4.3 Public choice theory

Public Choice Theory applies economic principles to political decision-making, emphasizing the role of individual self-interest in shaping public policy and governance (Buchanan & Tullock, 1962). This theory posits that public officials, like any individuals, are motivated by personal interests, which can lead to suboptimal outcomes in governance if not properly checked. In the context of the PSC, understanding Public Choice Theory is crucial for recognizing the risks of self-serving behavior among public servants, which can contribute to inefficiencies, corruption, and a lack of responsiveness to citizen needs (Mavhunga, 2020).

Public Choice Theory also highlights the importance of incentives and disincentives in shaping the behavior of public officials. For the PSC, this means that governance structures must be designed to minimize the potential for self-interest to interfere with public service delivery. This can be achieved by implementing transparency measures, such as open budgeting processes and public reporting on performance metrics, which allow citizens to hold public servants accountable for their actions (Mlambo, 2018). By creating an environment where public officials are subject to scrutiny and accountability, the PSC can mitigate the risks associated with self-interest and enhance overall governance.

Moreover, Public Choice Theory advocates for mechanisms that promote citizen engagement in governance processes. By involving citizens in decision-making and policy formulation, public institutions can ensure that the interests of the community are prioritized over the interests of individual public servants (Kooiman, 2010). This approach not only enhances the legitimacy of governance practices but also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens, leading to more responsive and effective public services. In essence, integrating insights from Public Choice Theory into the governance framework of the PSC can help address the challenges posed by self-interest and promote a more accountable and transparent public sector.

Figure 2. 3: Public choice theory



Source: Buchanan & Tullock, 1962

2.4.4 Institutional theory

The Institutional theory in Fig 2.4, developed by organizational sociologists such as DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and Meyer and Rowan (1977), focuses on how organizations conform to external norms, values, and expectations to gain legitimacy and maintain stability

Figure 2. 4: Institutional theory



Source: Meyer and Rowan 2016

It emphasizes the role of institutional environment in shaping organizational behavior and structure. Institutional theory can provide significant insights into improving the corporate governance framework in public sector organizations like the Public Service Commission (PSC). This is especially relevant in understanding the challenges and opportunities the PSC faces as it navigates external pressures and strives to improve its governance practices. DiMaggio & Powell (1983) notes that one of the foundational works in institutional theory are coercive isomorphism, mimetic, and normative forms which influence organizational behaviour. They argue that organizations conform to institutional pressures in order to gain legitimacy and access to resources.

The regulatory pillar (Coercive Isomorphism) focuses on the formal rules, regulations, and laws that organizations must follow (Scott, W. R. 2008). In the case of the PSC, this pillar is crucial as it is governed by national legislation and public sector governance laws, such as the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), the Zimbabwean Constitution, and other related frameworks. These regulatory requirements shape how the PSC designs its governance structures, financial reporting mechanisms, and accountability systems.

The normative pillar (Normative Isomorphism) refers to the norms, values, and professional standards that influence an organization's behavior (DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. 1983). Professional bodies such as the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Administration and Management (ZIPAM) or international organizations like the OECD provide normative standards

for ethical behavior and good governance. The PSC is expected to adopt these standards as part of its governance framework, creating a culture of professionalism and integrity in the public sector.

Cultural-Cognitive Pillar (Cultural-Cognitive Isomorphism) deals with shared beliefs, values, and cognitive frameworks that guide behavior in organizations (Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B, 1977). The PSC is influenced by cultural expectations around public trust and government accountability. Public servants are expected to uphold high ethical standards, and failure to do so can undermine public confidence in the government. Cultural-cognitive pressures encourage the PSC to adopt governance frameworks that reflect public values of fairness, transparency, and responsiveness.

2.4.5 Application of theories to the PSC

The theories outlined above offer valuable insights into the governance practices within the PSC. By applying Agency Theory, the PSC can enhance its accountability mechanisms and performance incentives to align the interests of public servants with those of citizens. For instance, implementing robust performance evaluations and reward systems can motivate public officials to act in the best interests of the public, thereby reducing corruption and inefficiency (Mavhunga, 2020; D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016).

Stewardship Theory can inform the PSC's approach to fostering a culture of ethical leadership and public service. By promoting values of stewardship among public servants, the PSC can encourage employees to prioritize the welfare of citizens and the long-term goals of the organization (Mlambo, 2018; Mutsvairo, 2018). Training programs and leadership development initiatives can be designed to cultivate a sense of responsibility and commitment to public service.

Public Choice Theory provides a critical lens for understanding the self-interested behaviors that may undermine governance within the PSC. By recognizing the potential for public officials to prioritize personal interests, the PSC can implement strategies to enhance accountability and transparency in decision-making processes (Bovens, 2007; Mavhunga, 2020). For example, establishing independent oversight bodies and promoting citizen engagement in governance can help mitigate the risks associated with self-interest and promote responsive governance.

Institutional theory provides a vigorous framework for understanding the forces that shape governance practices in public sector organizations like the Public Service Commission. By focusing on the regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive pillars, this theory offers insights into

how the PSC can improve its corporate governance framework in a way that aligns with national laws, societal values, and professional norms. Institutional theory emphasizes that addressing both external pressures (from legislation and public norms) and internal culture (through ethical practices and public participation) is crucial for building a more effective and legitimate governance structure in the PSC. Meyer and Rowan (1997) emphasize the role of institutionalized practices in organizations, highlighting how organizations adopt structures and behaviours that align with societal expectations.

2.4.6 Implications of theoretical perspectives on governance model development

The theoretical perspectives discussed above have significant implications for the development of a governance model for the Public Service Commission (PSC). By integrating insights from Agency Theory, Stewardship Theory, and Public Choice Theory, the proposed model can address the multifaceted challenges faced by the PSC, promoting a more effective and accountable governance framework. However, Institutional Theory offers additional insights into the pressures and external forces that shape governance practices in the public sector, which can help refine the model further.

2.4.6.1 Interests of public servants

The model can incorporate mechanisms to align the interests of public servants with those of citizens, drawing on principles from Agency Theory. This may include establishing clear performance metrics, accountability structures, and reward systems that incentivize ethical behavior and public service excellence (Mavhunga, 2020; D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016). Institutional theory suggests that these mechanisms should not only be aligned with the internal objectives of the PSC but also with external institutional pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These include coercive pressures, such as legal and regulatory frameworks, and normative pressures, driven by the professional norms and expectations of public sector organizations (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The model, therefore, must account for these broader institutional expectations to ensure it gains legitimacy and support from both internal and external stakeholders.

2.4.6.2 Cultivating a stewardship mindset

The governance model can emphasize the importance of cultivating a stewardship mindset among public servants, fostering a culture of responsibility and ethical leadership. Training and capacity-

building initiatives can be designed to instill values of public service and commitment to the welfare of citizens (Mlambo, 2018; Mutsvairo, 2018). Institutional theory further suggests that organizations are shaped by cultural-cognitive pressures—the deeply embedded societal and cultural expectations of behavior within public institutions (Scott, 2008). A stewardship mindset must be fostered in alignment with these cultural-cognitive expectations. This ensures that the values promoted in the PSC resonate with broader public sector norms and help reinforce institutional legitimacy (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

2.4.6.3 Strategies to address the challenges

The model can incorporate strategies to address the challenges posed by self-interest, as highlighted by Public Choice Theory. This may involve enhancing transparency, encouraging public participation, and establishing independent oversight mechanisms to hold public officials accountable for their actions (Bovens, 2007; Kooiman, 2010). Institutional theory complements this by emphasizing that such strategies must address institutional isomorphism—the tendency for organizations to adopt practices similar to other organizations in their field to maintain legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). By ensuring that the PSC's governance model adopts best practices from similar public institutions, the model can help align the PSC's behavior with both external norms and societal expectations.

2.4.6.4 External pressures

The model can offer valuable insights into the external pressures that shape governance practices in the public sector. Reflecting both institutional legitimacy, as highlighted by Meyer and Rowan (1977), and stakeholder expectations, will incorporate strategies, as suggested by Oliver (1991), to manage potential conflicts and ensure that governance structures are not simply symbolic representations of compliance, but are actively implemented and contribute to the effective and accountable functioning of the PSC. Institutional theory emphasizes the institutional environment that shapes governance structures, where coercive (regulatory compliance), normative (professional standards), and cultural-cognitive (social expectations) pressures guide organizational behavior (Scott, 2008). By incorporating these pressures into the model, the PSC will be better positioned to implement governance practices that are seen as legitimate and effective by both internal and external stakeholders.

2.4.6.5 Integration of theoretical perspectives

The integration of these theoretical perspectives into the governance model for the PSC can provide a comprehensive framework for addressing the challenges faced by the commission. By fostering accountability, promoting ethical leadership, and mitigating the risks associated with self-interest, the proposed model can contribute to improving corporate governance in the public sector. Additionally, through the lens of Institutional Theory, the model can be designed to respond to external institutional pressures, ensuring its alignment with broader public sector norms, improving institutional legitimacy, and fostering long-term success in the PSC's governance practices.

2.5 CASE STUDIES ILLUSTRATING GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

2.5.1 CASE STUDY 1: Governance challenges in the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) serves as a critical case study illustrating the governance challenges faced by public institutions in Zimbabwe. Established to oversee electoral processes, the ZEC is crucial for ensuring free and fair elections. However, its effectiveness has been severely compromised by allegations of political interference, which have consistently undermined its independence (Mavhunga, 2020; Mlambo, 2018). Reports indicate that political parties often exert pressure on the ZEC, influencing key decisions related to voter registration, electoral logistics, and the management of polling stations. This interference not only erodes public confidence in the electoral process but also raises questions about the legitimacy of election outcomes (Chikwanje, 2018; D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016).

Furthermore, the ZEC has faced significant challenges in maintaining transparency during electoral processes. Critics argue that the commission lacks sufficient mechanisms for public oversight, which has led to accusations of bias and misconduct (Moyo, 2019; Mutsvairo, 2018). For instance, the absence of independent audits of electoral rolls and voting procedures has created an environment ripe for manipulation. This lack of transparency not only fuels public distrust but also diminishes the ZEC's credibility both domestically and internationally (Mavhunga, 2020; Mlambo, 2018).

The issue of accountability within the ZEC is another pressing concern. Despite its mandate, the commission has often failed to hold itself accountable for its decisions and actions, leading to a

culture of impunity (Chikwanje, 2018; D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016). For example, when discrepancies are reported in election results, the ZEC has frequently issued vague explanations without offering substantial evidence or rectifying the issues. This lack of accountability not only frustrates voters but also undermines the democratic process (Moyo, 2019; Mutsvairo, 2018).

Additionally, the ZEC's capacity to conduct free and fair elections is hampered by inadequate resources and funding. The commission often operates with limited financial support, which affects its ability to implement necessary reforms and maintain operational efficiency (Mavhunga, 2020; Mlambo, 2018). This resource constraint is particularly evident during election periods when the demand for logistical support, training, and public outreach increases significantly. Consequently, the ZEC's inability to effectively manage these challenges further fuels public skepticism regarding its operations.

Moreover, the ZEC's engagement with civil society organizations and the broader public is insufficient. Effective stakeholder engagement is essential for fostering trust and legitimacy in electoral processes; however, the ZEC has often sidelined these critical voices (Chikwanje, 2018; D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016). By failing to involve citizens and civil society in discussions about electoral reforms, the ZEC has missed opportunities to enhance its credibility and address public concerns proactively (Moyo, 2019; Mutsvairo, 2018).

The governance challenges faced by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission highlight a complex interplay of political interference, lack of transparency, accountability issues, resource constraints, and insufficient stakeholder engagement. Addressing these challenges is vital not only for the ZEC's credibility but also for the overall integrity of the electoral process in Zimbabwe, which is essential for a functioning democracy.

2.5.2 CASE STUDY 2: Governance practices in the South African Public Service

In contrast to the challenges faced by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, examining governance practices in the South African public service offers valuable insights into effective governance frameworks and potential lessons for the PSC in Zimbabwe. The South African government has implemented various reforms aimed at enhancing accountability, transparency, and citizen engagement in public service delivery (OECD, 2017; UNDP, 2016). One such reform is the establishment of the Public Service Commission (PSC) in South Africa, designed to promote good governance and ensure that public service appointments are based on merit rather than political affiliation (Mavhunga, 2020; Mlambo, 2018).

The South African PSC has made significant strides in implementing performance management systems that hold public servants accountable for their actions. These systems involve regular evaluations of employee performance, which not only enhance productivity but also foster a culture of accountability within public institutions (Chikwanje, 2018; D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016). By establishing clear performance metrics and fostering a results-oriented environment, the South African PSC has demonstrated the potential benefits of robust governance frameworks.

Furthermore, stakeholder involvement and public participation in governance processes are highly valued by the South African public sector. In order to guarantee that the opinions of diverse stakeholders are heard and taken into account when formulating policies, the government actively promotes citizen participation through forums for public consultation and feedback (Mavhunga, 2020; Mlambo, 2018). Because citizens feel more empowered to hold public officials accountable for their activities, this strategy not only increases the legitimacy of governance procedures but also fosters transparency and accountability (Chikwanje, 2018; D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016).

The South African government has also implemented mechanisms to combat corruption within public institutions. These include the establishment of anti-corruption bodies and whistleblower protection laws designed to encourage reporting of corrupt practices without fear of retaliation (Moyo, 2019; Mutsvairo, 2018). By creating an environment that prioritizes transparency and accountability, the South African public service has made significant strides in addressing governance challenges that often plague public institutions.

Moreover, the South African public service has invested in capacity-building initiatives aimed at enhancing the skills and competencies of public servants. Regular training programs and professional development opportunities have enabled public officials to adapt to changing demands and improve service delivery (OECD, 2017; UNDP, 2016). This focus on continuous improvement has not only elevated the quality of public services but also fostered a culture of excellence within the public sector.

The governance practices observed in the South African public service provide valuable lessons for the PSC in Zimbabwe. By prioritizing accountability, transparency, stakeholder engagement, and capacity building, the South African government has demonstrated that effective governance frameworks can lead to improved public service delivery. These insights underscore the critical need for the PSC in Zimbabwe to adopt best practices from successful governance models to address the challenges it faces and enhance its overall effectiveness.

2.6 LITERATURE GAP

2.6.1 Lack of a Tailored Corporate Governance Model for the PSC

The research identified that the PSC faces unique challenges, including political interference, corruption, and bureaucratic inefficiencies (Mawere, 2019; Chikwanje, 2021). While existing literature touches on corporate governance principles (Cadbury, 1992; Tehrani, 2016), the public sector (Hood, 2000; Bovens et al., 2008), and Zimbabwe's challenges (Mlambo, 2018; Moyo, 2019), it may not offer a specific, comprehensive corporate governance model designed to address these issues within the Zimbabwean context, as indicated by research by Mawere, (2019) on the effects of challenges in PSC and this is consistent with the claim that the PSC is experiencing challenges (Chikwanje, 2021). The study aims to fill this gap by developing a model tailored for the PSC. Institutional theory suggests that such a model must account for coercive, normative, and cultural-cognitive pressures within the public sector (Scott, 2008; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

2.6.2 Limited Research on the Impact of Governance on the Four Pillars

The research intended to examine the impact of governance effectiveness on accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility within the PSC. While the importance of these pillars is

well-established (Freeman, 1984; Tricker, 2015), the research gap suggests there may be a limited investigation into the specific relationships between these factors within the context of the Public Service Commission. The study by Bovens (2007) notes the importance of accountability, but how this works in conjunction with transparency and the four pillars in a PSC is limited. The integration of these pillars and the need to study them in an environment which faces such serious governance issues, such as the PSC, is lacking.

2.6.3 Insufficient Analysis of the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act's Effectiveness

While the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act (2018) is mentioned as a foundational framework, the research suggests that challenges persist despite this legislation (Chikwanje, 2021; Mawere, 2019). A gap exists in the literature regarding understanding why the Act hasn't fully addressed the PSC's governance issues and what further steps are needed. Existing literature may show evidence of the challenges or the law, but it lacks an in-depth analysis of the limitations of the Act, such as the factors that are not addressed by the Act. This lack of thoroughness is a gap.

2.6.4 Limited Stakeholder Engagement Strategies

The research proposed that stakeholder engagement is crucial. The literature may lack specific strategies for effectively engaging stakeholders in the development and implementation of corporate governance models within public sector organizations like the PSC. Engaging stakeholders is key (World Bank, 2018) for greater transparency, accountability and fairness (Norman, 2013). The absence of these strategies is a gap, especially given the unique context of the PSC and the importance of public trust (Behn, 2003).

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.7.1 Definition and purpose of the conceptual framework

Maxwell (2005) defines a conceptual framework as a set of concepts that help to explain phenomena, drawing from theoretical perspectives, assumptions, ideas that shape a study and developed based on existing literature and previous research, which helps researchers clarify their thinking about the problem under investigation. Leedy and Ormrod (2014) describe the conceptual framework as a lens through which the research problem is viewed, a theoretical blueprint for how the research problem will be examined and how key concepts are expected to interact. Miles and Huberman (1994) assert that the conceptual framework is a visual representation of the researcher's theory of the situation, based on previous theoretical foundations which serves as a guide for data collection and analysis and helps establish the boundaries of the study. The conceptual framework for this study outlines the key elements and their interrelationships related to corporate governance within the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Zimbabwe. It serves as a structured guide to explore how governance practices influence operational effectiveness and public trust, ultimately impacting service delivery. The purpose of this framework is to provide clarity on the variables involved and to facilitate a systematic investigation into the governance challenges faced by the PSC. By establishing a clear understanding of these concepts, the framework aids in formulating research questions and hypotheses that align with the study's objectives (Ravitch & Riggan, 2016; Maxwell, 2013).

2.7.2 The conceptual framework would encompass the following relationships:

- **Evaluation of Existing Governance Framework:** The framework would help in identifying strengths (e.g., effective accountability mechanisms) and weaknesses (e.g., lack of transparency or unclear decision-making processes) in the current governance structure of the PSC.
- **Challenges in Governance:** The challenges identified could relate to cultural, structural, or procedural issues that prevent the PSC from fully implementing corporate governance practices, such as resistance to change, bureaucratic inefficiency, or lack of training.
- **Impact of Governance Effectiveness:** The conceptual model will explore how effective governance influences the implementation of the four pillars which are accountability,

transparency, fairness, and responsibility. Effective governance should theoretically strengthen these pillars, while ineffective governance weakens them.

- **Model for Improved Governance:** Based on insights gathered from the evaluation and challenges analysis, the framework would be used to develop a model to improve governance, incorporating best practices, recommendations for overcoming challenges, and strategies for enhancing the four pillars.

2.8 INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDANT VARIABLES

Independent Variable (IV)

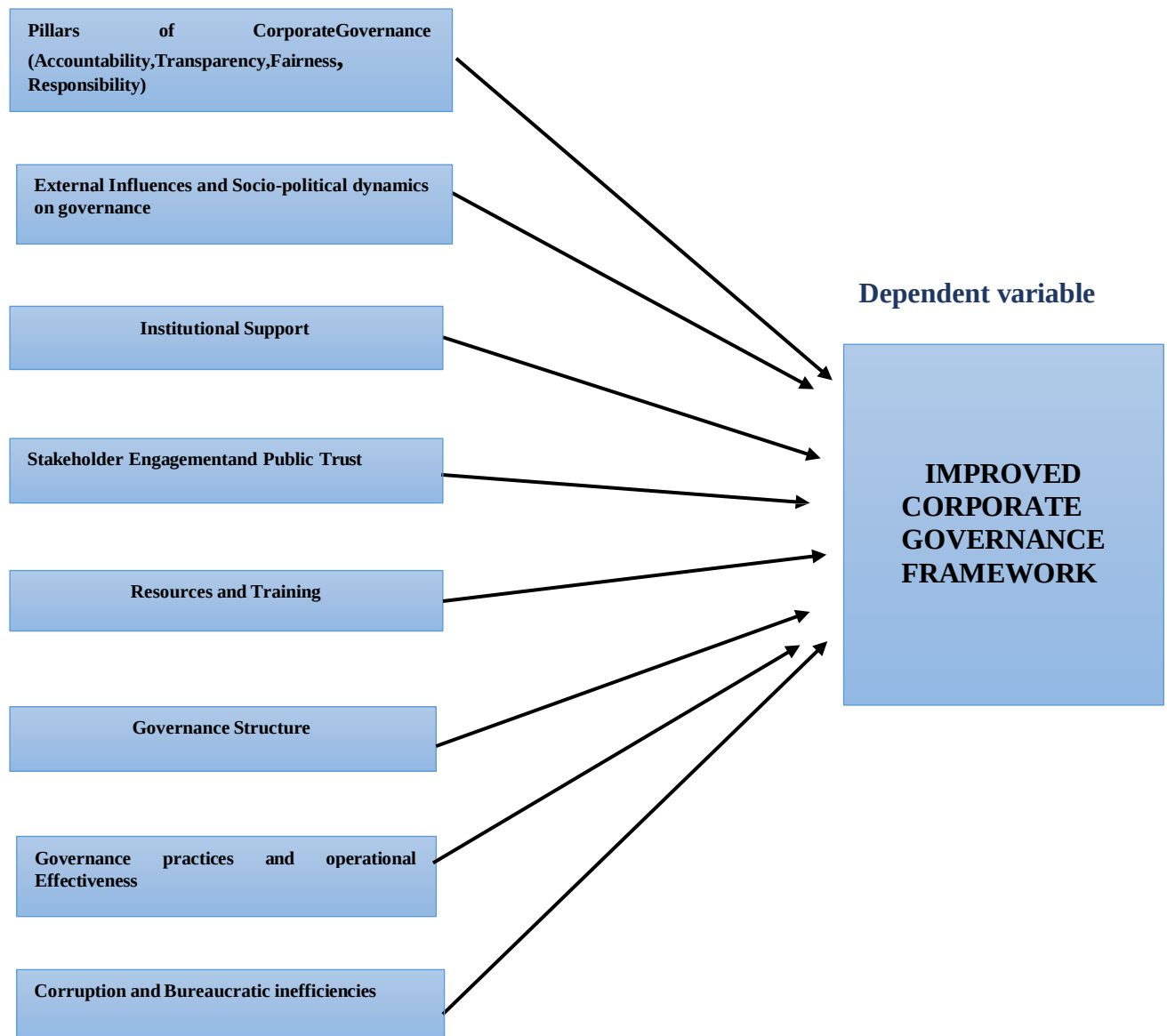
The variable that is changed or categorized in order to see how it affects another variable (the dependent variable) is known as the independent variable. Because it is believed to affect or cause changes in the dependent variable, it is occasionally referred to as the "predictor" or "explanatory" variable. It is independent in the sense that other study factors have no bearing on how it varies. Creswell (2014) defines the independent variable as the one that the researcher modifies or classifies in order to determine whether it affects the dependent variable. In experimental research, the researcher manipulates the independent variable to see how it affects the result.

Dependent Variable (DV)

The response or result that is measured in the study is known as the dependent variable. The independent variable is what "depends" on it. Stated differently, it is thought that variations or changes in the independent variable are what lead to changes in the dependent variable. Because it is the result that researchers are attempting to explain or forecast, it is occasionally referred to as the "criterion" or "response" variable. According to Neuman (2014), the variable that is measured and observed in order to ascertain the impact of the independent variable is known as the dependent variable. In essence, the outcome or result that the researcher is interested in examining is the dependent variable.

Figure 2. 5: Independent and Dependent variables

Independent variable



Source: Researcher 2025

2.9 A MODEL AIMED AT IMPROVING CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION THAT ADDRESSES IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

The main objective of this research focuses on developing a model that enhances corporate governance within the Public Service Commission (PSC). This involves understanding the principles of corporate governance, which are essential for ensuring that organizations are directed and controlled effectively, a perspective supported by scholars like Shleifer and Vishny (1997) and more recently, scholars such as Agrawal and Knoeber (2014), who highlight the role of governance structures in ensuring organizational accountability and transparency. Additionally, scholars like Claessens and Yurtoglu (2015) further emphasize the importance of robust governance systems in the public sector for promoting effective decision-making. Knell (2016) underscores that governance is a means to maintaining good order and regulating influence. In the context of the PSC, this model would focus on how to improve governance to better serve public interests, ensure transparency, and enhance accountability. The model aims to address specific challenges faced by the PSC, such as inefficiencies in decision-making, lack of transparency, and limited accountability mechanisms, all of which can hinder its ability to fulfill its mandates effectively. Furthermore, scholars like Ahmed and Hamid (2019) and Bary (2022) argue that enhancing governance frameworks is crucial for the sustainable performance of public bodies. This research aims to bridge the gaps in existing models and provide practical solutions to address these challenges in the PSC.

Studies in Zimbabwe highlight the need for effective governance frameworks in public entities to address corruption and inefficiency. The ZIMCODE a principle-based framework introduced in 2014 to consolidate Zimbabwe's corporate governance principles was incorporated into the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act, providing legal backing to its provisions. This Act was promulgated in 2018 to regulate corporate governance in public entities. It includes the ZIMCODE as part of its legal framework. By incorporating ZIMCODE, the Act aligns with international principles of corporate governance, such as those recommended by the OECD. The OECD Principles are a global standard for corporate governance which ensures alignment with international best practices. Like many governance frameworks in developing countries, the ZIM Code suffers from weak enforcement mechanisms. According to Mano, et al. (2020), even though

the principles are well-structured, there is often a gap in actual application due to limited institutional capacity. Zivanai and Mapendere (2019) discuss the gaps in implementing governance reforms within Zimbabwe's public sector, noting the political and bureaucratic challenges. Although the OECD principles are internationally recognized, their application in countries with weak governance systems or low institutional capacity may be difficult. In addition to that Carretta and Lippi (2013) notes that developing countries struggle to implement these principles due to local economic, political, and social challenges. Public entities often resist change, especially when it involves accountability and transparency reforms. This can result in superficial compliance rather than genuine adoption of governance practices. Claessens (2003) discusses how the OECD Principles provide a robust framework for corporate governance but notes that the true effectiveness of these principles depends on the specific legal, regulatory, and institutional environment in which they are applied. While the OECD principles are globally recognized, their impact in developing countries may be limited if there is insufficient political will and regulatory capacity to enforce them (Carretta and Lippi, 2013).

Olowu (2012) argues that strong governance frameworks in public entities can enhance public trust and ensure efficient use of public resources. However, the effectiveness of these frameworks is highly dependent on political will and leadership. The OECD Guidelines for Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises provide a framework for improving governance practices, focusing on ownership, board composition, and transparency. Implementing these guidelines can help the PSC strengthen its governance framework and improve its adherence to the four pillars of corporate governance. The Zim Code and Public Entities framework which are tailored to the Zimbabwean context, focus on local governance challenges, while the OECD Principles provide a broader, internationally recognized framework that can be adapted to various jurisdictions. Each framework contributes to the ongoing discourse on corporate governance and highlights the importance of context-specific adaptations to governance practices.

2.10 EXISTING CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Evaluating the current governance framework is the first step in identifying areas for improvement. This entails a careful examination of current rules, practices, and procedures as well as an evaluation of the board's makeup and selection process, roles, duties, and performance. The significance of evaluating governance structures to determine how well they support accountability

and transparency in public sector organizations is emphasized by academics such as Almquist et al. (2013). More recent studies, such as those by Thompson et al. (2024), highlight the necessity of evaluating governance frameworks to pinpoint gaps in organizational performance and enhance public trust.

Evaluating the existing framework involves identifying strengths and weaknesses in its structure. By identifying strengths, such as effective stakeholder engagement, existing regulatory frameworks, institutional arrangements, or policies that align with good governance principles, and weaknesses, such as lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities, lapses in transparency, inefficiencies in decision-making, or lack of oversight, the PSC can develop targeted strategies for enhancement. Literature suggests that a well-structured board with diverse skill sets is crucial for effective governance.

In Zimbabwe, several laws and guidelines govern the operations of public institutions, including the Public Finance Management Act, the Public Service Act, and various sector-specific regulations (Mlambo, 2018). These legal frameworks mandate public entities, including the PSC, to adhere to principles of good governance, such as accountability, transparency, and ethical behavior (Mavhunga, 2020). However, the effectiveness of these frameworks is frequently undermined by challenges such as political patronage, inadequate enforcement mechanisms, and limited resources (Mawere, 2020; Chikwanje, 2018).

Moreover, the governance frameworks in Zimbabwean public institutions are often criticized for being overly bureaucratic and not sufficiently flexible to adapt to changing circumstances (Moyo, 2019). This rigidity can hinder innovation and responsiveness, leading to inefficiencies in service delivery. Consequently, there is a need for ongoing assessment and reform of governance frameworks to ensure they are fit for purpose and meet the evolving needs of the public sector (Mutsvairo, 2018).

In addition, Liu and Zhang (2024), argue that diverse boards foster better decision-making and innovation in governance practices. Studies also highlight the need for robust corporate governance frameworks in public entities to address challenges like corruption and inefficiency. A notable framework in evaluating corporate governance structures is the OECD Principles of Corporate Governance (2004), which provide a comprehensive guideline for assessing governance practices. According to Tricker (2015), corporate governance evaluations often focus on the

alignment of governance structures with the institution's goals and the broader public interest. Understanding the existing strengths and weaknesses will allow the researcher to highlight key areas for improvement in governance.

2.11 CHALLENGES FACED BY THE PSC IN ADHERING TO EFFECTIVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

Understanding the challenges is critical for developing a robust governance model. Challenges in adhering to effective corporate governance practices often include corruption, political interference, lack of transparency, inadequate legal frameworks, resistance to change, inadequate training for staff on governance principles, conflicts of interest within leadership structures, and insufficient resources for implementing governance frameworks. The literature suggests that public organizations often struggle with these challenges due to bureaucratic inertia and lack of stakeholder involvement (Kudo, 2016; Akpinar and Demirtaş, 2018). These challenges often impede the commission's ability to ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness in its operations.

In many African countries, including Zimbabwe, state-owned enterprises face significant governance challenges, leading to poor financial and operational performance (Nyaruwata and Zivanai, 2022). Scholars argue that addressing these challenges requires strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks and enhancing accountability mechanisms (Moyo and Chikodzi, 2024). Rosenbloom et al. (2009) suggest that public agencies face unique governance challenges compared to private corporations due to political pressures, budget constraints, and complex accountability demands. Masunungure (2012) argues that weak legal frameworks and inadequate institutional capacity in Zimbabwe contribute to poor governance in the public sector. The failure to implement anti-corruption laws, for instance, is a major challenge. Tricker (2015) also highlights that strong corporate governance requires both legal frameworks and institutional capacity to enforce those frameworks.

Mavhunga (2020) further examines the role of bureaucratic inefficiencies in hampering the effectiveness of public services, arguing that outdated processes and a lack of training for public servants contribute to these challenges. Additionally, studies by D'Arcy and Naughton (2016) and Mutsvairo (2018) underscore the importance of stakeholder engagement in fostering transparency

and accountability, suggesting that public institutions must prioritize citizen involvement in governance processes.

The PSC, as a public entity, must navigate these challenges while ensuring that it upholds the principles of corporate governance in a transparent and accountable manner (Chikezie and Ogbonna, 2023). The PSC can prioritize interventions that address the root causes of governance failures. Gauthier (2014) discusses the role of public sector governance and the importance of building capacity to implement effective reforms. More recently, scholars such as Moyo and Nyamuda (2024) emphasize the necessity for systemic reform to overcome the governance challenges within public institutions. This research will highlight these challenges and examine how the PSC can overcome them to implement stronger governance practices.

The assessment of governance practices within the PSC indicates that while some progress has been made, significant challenges persist. The historical context reveals a legacy of political interference and inefficiency that continues to affect the commission's operations (Mlambo, 2018; Mutsvairo, 2018). Current practices, though aimed at improving accountability, often lack the robustness needed to meet international standards (D'Arcy & Naughton, 2016; Mavhunga, 2020).

The governance frameworks established by the PSC must be revisited and reformed to align more closely with international best practices. This includes enhancing accountability mechanisms, promoting transparency, and fostering greater stakeholder engagement. By addressing these gaps, the PSC can improve its governance practices and, in turn, enhance public trust and service delivery in Zimbabwe (Chikwanje, 2018; Moyo, 2019).

The need for a comprehensive model to improve corporate governance within the PSC is evident. Such a model should incorporate best practices from successful public institutions worldwide, emphasizing accountability, transparency, and stakeholder engagement as essential components of effective governance. By doing so, the PSC can better fulfill its mandate, restore public confidence, and contribute to the overall improvement of public sector governance in Zimbabwe.

2.12 THE IMPACT OF GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS ON THE FOUR PILLARS OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The pillars of accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility form the foundation of good governance, and their effectiveness can determine the overall performance and integrity of an organization. Accountability refers to the mechanisms by which individuals or bodies within the PSC are held responsible for their actions. Bovens et al. (2008) emphasize the importance of accountability in public administration, noting that clear accountability mechanisms help mitigate corruption and inefficiency. More recent studies, such as those by Adekola et al. (2019), reinforce this argument by highlighting how robust accountability systems are essential for improving the efficiency of public bodies. Transparency ensures that actions, decisions, and processes within the PSC are open and can be scrutinized by the public and relevant stakeholders. According to Heald (2006), transparency is crucial for public trust and for reducing information asymmetries between citizens and government bodies. Similarly, scholars like Moyo and Tawanda (2022) have shown that transparency in public organizations leads to greater citizen engagement and accountability. Fairness relates to ensuring that decisions made by the PSC are just, equitable, and in the best interest of all stakeholders. The literature on fairness in governance suggests that fair decision-making processes enhance legitimacy and public confidence in government institutions (Rawls, 1971; Chikodzi & Ndlovu, 2017). Responsibility refers to the ethical obligation to ensure that decisions and actions align with the public interest. The concept of responsibility is closely linked to accountability and transparency, as it holds individuals and organizations responsible for their actions and their impact on society (Sohail & Zaman, 2021).

The effectiveness of governance practices directly influences the implementation of the four pillars. Research indicates that strong governance frameworks enhance accountability and transparency, which are essential for public trust (Kosack & Fung, 2014; Rukuni & Kadu, 2023). By examining how these pillars are currently operationalized within the PSC, the model can incorporate mechanisms that reinforce these principles, such as regular audits and stakeholder engagement. Studies such as those by Ngwa et al. (2020) show that good corporate governance enhances transparency and accountability, which are essential for reducing corruption and improving organizational behavior. In the context of the PSC, ensuring these pillars are well-implemented can lead to improved public trust and service delivery (Tanzil et al., 2024).

2.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

A thorough literature study centred on the PSC's corporate governance structure was presented in Chapter 2. It analyses important elements like accountability, openness, and justice to determine the PSC's existing governance model's advantages and disadvantages. The chapter examines the difficulties the PSC encounters in upholding sound governance procedures. Additionally, it covers pertinent theories and their applicability to the PSC, including Agency Theory, Stewardship Theory, Public Choice Theory, and Institutional Theory. Building on this framework, Chapter 3 will describe the research approach used to look into these issues and offer a model for a better corporate governance system. This will cover the target population and sample strategies, data gathering tools including surveys, interviews, and questionnaires, study design, research philosophy, and data analysis protocols.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the research methodology utilized in this study, which investigated the governance challenges encountered by the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Zimbabwe. This methodology encompassed the philosophical foundations, research strategy, sampling techniques, and diverse methods of data collection. The research was designed to establish a robust framework aimed at not only identifying the challenges faced by the PSC but also evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed governance framework intended to enhance operational efficacy. By integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches, this study aspired to produce findings that were not only reliable but also applicable in real-world settings, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on governance practices in public organizations (Creswell, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Bryman, 2016; Flick, 2018; Field, 2013; Onabanjo, 2010).

The significance of this research lay in its potential to inform policy decisions and practical governance strategies within the PSC, which was vital for effective public service delivery in Zimbabwe (Ogunleye, 2000). The chapter was structured to systematically present the research design, including the specific aims and objectives, the research questions formulated to guide the inquiry, and the hypotheses that would be tested. Each section elaborated on the rationale behind the methodological choices made throughout the study, ensuring transparency and replicability (Kothari, 2004).

3.2 RECAP OF RESEARCH AIM, STUDY OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, AND HYPOTHESES

Examining the governance issues that the PSC in Zimbabwe faces in detail and assessing the efficacy of the suggested governance framework that was created to solve these issues were the main goals of this study. Assessing the extent of corporate governance practices within the PSC, identifying particular governance challenges, and assessing the governance model's possible effects on operational effectiveness and public trust were some of the specific objectives that

supported this aim (Chigunha & Mhlanga, 2020; Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, 2021; Dillman et al., 2014; Neuman, 2014; Robson & McCartan, 2016).

To achieve these objectives, the study was guided by several research questions that delved into key aspects of governance at the PSC. The central research questions included: What were the key governance challenges faced by the PSC? To what extent were corporate governance practices implemented within the PSC? How did the proposed governance model impact operational effectiveness and public trust? These research questions were instrumental in framing the data collection instruments and guiding the analysis process (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Flick, 2018; Morgan, 2007).

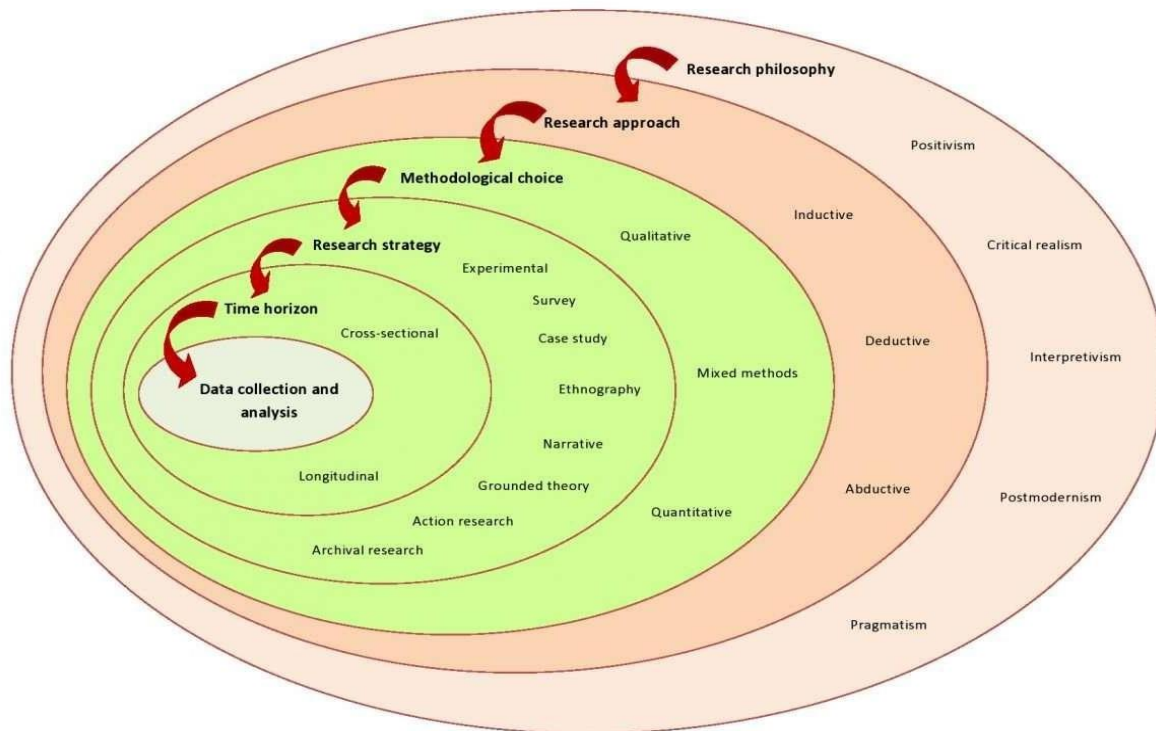
In line with the research questions, several hypotheses were formulated to guide the investigation. For instance, one hypothesis posited that the extent of corporate governance practices was positively correlated with the operational effectiveness of the PSC. Another hypothesis suggested that specific governance challenges directly impacted public trust in the PSC. By testing these hypotheses, the research aimed to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on governance practices and their implications for public service delivery in Zimbabwe (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Tejumaiye, 2003).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

RESEARCH ONION

The Research Onion in Fig 3.1 below, developed by Saunders et al. (2016), provided a structured framework for understanding the various stages involved in the research process, from philosophical foundations to methodological choices. This approach emphasized actionable insights, aligning closely with the study's objectives to examine corporate governance practices within the PSC and identify specific governance challenges (Morgan, 2007).

Figure 3. 1: Research Onion Framework



Source: Saunders et al., 2016

An applicationbased understanding of the research onion and appropriate knowledge of it help the researcher conduct the study by evaluating the most successful strategy from multiple perspectives (Melnikovas, 2018). According to Cooper, Schindler, and Sun (2016), choosing the best approach for information gathering, data analysis, and conclusion formatting primarily depends on the six levels of the research onion. This research onion can be used to understand the effective utilization of research factors in addition to statistical reports and observations (Crossan, 2013).

Focusing on practical outcomes ensured that the research addressed theoretical aspects while simultaneously contributing to the resolution of real-world problems encountered by the PSC, particularly within Zimbabwe's unique context of economic instability, regulatory hurdles, and resource constraints (Bryman, 2016).

Moreover, the inherent flexibility of pragmatic research allowed for methodological choices tailored to the specific needs of the study. This adaptability was crucial in the dynamic socio-economic environment of Zimbabwe (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In order to provide a more

comprehensive knowledge of the governance environment at the PSC, the study used a mixed-methods approach to capture the subtleties of governance practices and their effects on operational effectiveness. Such continuous flexibility could help construct a model specifically designed to improve operational effectiveness inside the PSC and educate best practices in governance.

3.3.1 Research Philosophy

The study adopted a pragmatic paradigm, which emphasized the importance of practical solutions to real-world problems. This philosophical orientation was particularly suitable for this research, as it allowed for the integration of various methodologies to effectively address the complex governance issues faced by the PSC (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016; Morgan, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Patton, 2015). Pragmatism recognized that different research questions necessitated different methods, guided by the objectives of the research rather than strict adherence to a single philosophical framework.

In the context of governance challenges at the PSC, a pragmatic approach facilitated the exploration of diverse perspectives and the synthesis of qualitative and quantitative findings. This flexibility was essential for comprehensively understanding the multifaceted nature of governance issues, which often involved conflicting stakeholder interests and varying contextual factors (Bryman, 2016). By employing this paradigm, the research could adaptively respond to the complexities of the governance landscape, ensuring that the findings were both relevant and actionable (Patton, 2015).

3.3.2 Research Approach

A mixed-methods approach was employed for this study, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to gather comprehensive data on governance challenges and the effectiveness of the proposed framework (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Morgan, 2007; Field, 2013). This approach is particularly beneficial as it allows for triangulation, where findings from one method can validate and enrich those from another. For instance, quantitative surveys can provide statistical insights into the prevalence of specific governance challenges, while qualitative interviews can delve deeper into the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders involved in governance processes (Creswell, 2014).

When assessing the possible effects of the suggested governance model on public trust and service performance inside the PSC, the mixed-methods approach adds credibility to the study findings and offers a more nuanced knowledge of the issues at hand (Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, by putting practical results ahead of methodological purity, the mixed-methods approach supports the pragmatic paradigm. It enables the researcher to better address the study questions by utilizing the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Tashakkori& Teddlie, 2010).

This approach not only broadens the scope of the study but also enhances its relevance to policymakers and practitioners in the field of governance (Creswell, 2014). The research attempts to generate conclusions that are solid, applicable, and pertinent to the governance issues the PSC faces by combining qualitative and quantitative data. Ultimately, the mixed-methods research strategy provides a comprehensive framework for addressing the stated objectives, including the examination of corporate governance practices and the identification of specific governance challenges faced by the PSC.

3.3.3 Research Strategy

The research strategy employed in this study involved collecting comprehensive data on governance challenges through a combination of surveys and interviews (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016; Morgan, 2007; Field, 2013). This two-pronged strategy enabled a thorough examination of the governance landscape at the PSC, allowing for the integration of diverse perspectives and experiences among stakeholders.

The surveys provided quantitative data that could be analyzed statistically to identify trends and patterns in governance practices and challenges. In contrast, the qualitative interviews allowed for deeper exploration of individual experiences and perceptions, offering rich contextual insights that quantitative data alone could not provide (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016). This combination of methods enhances the overall validity of the findings and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the governance issues at hand.

The research strategy also involved careful planning and execution of data collection phases, ensuring that both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered systematically. This included the development of clear research instruments that aligned with the study's objectives and the careful

selection of participants to ensure a representative sample of stakeholders within the PSC (Dillman et al., 2014; Neuman, 2014).

Overall, the research strategy is designed to facilitate a thorough investigation of governance challenges at the PSC, enabling the identification of actionable insights that can inform policy decisions and improve governance practices within the organization.

3.4 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was carried out in two phases: firstly, distributing structured questionnaires to selected PSC stakeholders, followed by conducting semi-structured interviews with a subset of participants (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Flick, 2018; Neuman, 2014). This phased approach allowed for the validation of quantitative findings through qualitative insights, enhancing the overall research narrative and providing a more holistic view of the governance landscape.

3.4.1 Phase 1: Questionnaire Distribution

The initial phase involved the distribution of structured questionnaires (**Annexure 1 refers**), which were designed to gather quantitative data on governance practices and associated challenges faced by the PSC. The questionnaires were distributed using both online and face-to-face methods over a period of four weeks, reaching out to a target sample of 90 stakeholders selected based on stratified random sampling criteria (Dillman et al., 2014; Kothari, 2004; Neuman, 2014).

Using online platforms facilitated quicker responses and reduced costs associated with traditional data collection methods (Saunders et al., 2019). The online format also provided automated tools for data entry, enhancing the efficiency of the data collection process. However, recognizing the digital divide that often exists in developing countries, face-to-face methods were employed to reach stakeholders with limited internet access, ensuring inclusivity in the data collection process (Nyoni, 2021; Tashakkori& Teddlie, 2010).

To maximize response rates, the researcher implemented several strategies, including follow-up reminders sent via email, phone calls, and social media platforms, as well as providing support during the completion of the questionnaires (Field, 2013; Neuman, 2014). These efforts drew on

established best practices in survey research, emphasizing the importance of follow-up communication in increasing participant engagement (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016).

3.4.2 Phase 2: Interviews

Following the distribution of the questionnaires, the second phase involved conducting semi-structured interviews (**Annexure 2 refers**) with a purposive sample of 15 stakeholders selected for in-depth discussions. This qualitative phase lasted for two weeks and aimed to provide deeper insights into the specific challenges and opportunities faced by the PSC concerning governance practices (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014; Kothari, 2004; Neuman, 2014). The purposive sampling method was employed to ensure that interview participants represented a range of experiences, particularly regarding their governance practices and challenges (Bryman, 2016; Dillman et al., 2014).

The semi-structured interviews were designed to allow flexibility in the questioning process, enabling the researcher to explore topics that emerged during the conversations (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014). This format provided a framework for discussion while allowing participants the freedom to articulate their thoughts and experiences in their own words (Kothari, 2004; Neuman, 2014). For instance, while the interview guide included specific questions regarding challenges in governance practices and perceptions of operational effectiveness, it also allowed for follow-up questions that could delve into unexpected areas of interest raised by participants (Bryman, 2016; Dillman et al., 2014).

Interviews were conducted in comfortable settings chosen by the participants, facilitating open dialogue and encouraging them to share their experiences candidly (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014). Each interview was audio-recorded with the consent of the participants, ensuring accuracy in data collection and subsequent analysis (Neuman, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). The audio recordings were later transcribed verbatim to facilitate thorough thematic analysis, enabling the researchers to identify common themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014).

The qualitative data obtained from the interviews served to complement the quantitative findings from the questionnaires. This mixed-methods approach enabled a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing governance practices and operational effectiveness at the

PSC (Creswell, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). By triangulating data from both instruments, the researchers were able to validate findings and draw more nuanced conclusions regarding the interplay between governance practices and operational effectiveness (Bryman, 2016; Dillman et al., 2014; Neuman, 2014).

Additionally, the semi-structured interviews provided opportunities for follow-up questions that could explore unexpected themes or issues raised by participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014; Kothari, 2004). This adaptability was vital for capturing the complexities of the PSC's experiences, as it permitted the researcher to investigate areas that may not have been adequately covered in the structured questionnaire (Bryman, 2016; Dillman et al., 2014). Consequently, the findings from the interviews enriched the overall research narrative, highlighting the diverse perspectives and challenges faced by various stakeholders within the PSC (Neuman, 2014; Robson & McCartan, 2016).

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Data for this study was gathered through structured questionnaires for the quantitative component and semi-structured interview guides for the qualitative aspect (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016; Flick, 2018; Neuman, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). The structured questionnaires focused on essential variables related to corporate governance practices and challenges encountered by the PSC. This method ensured a comprehensive exploration of the research objectives while allowing for a nuanced understanding of factors influencing governance within the PSC (Flick, 2018; Gray, 2016).

The structured questionnaires provided an efficient means of collecting quantitative data, enabling comparisons and statistical analyses across various stakeholders within the PSC. By using a standardized tool, the researchers ensured uniform data collection, thereby improving the reliability and validity of the results (DeVellis, 2016; Dillman et al., 2014; Neuman, 2014). The questionnaire was structured to measure specific variables, such as governance practices, associated challenges, and operational effectiveness, while also gathering demographic information about participating stakeholders (Robson & McCartan, 2016). This comprehensive data collection method allowed for a thorough investigation of the relationships between governance practices and operational effectiveness in the PSC.

3.5.1 Questionnaire Development

The development of the questionnaire (**Annexure 1 refers**) involved several crucial stages to ensure its effectiveness and appropriateness. The questionnaire incorporated sections on demographic data, governance practices, and challenges faced by the PSC. Each item was meticulously crafted to align with the research objectives, ensuring that the data collected was valid and reliable (Creswell, 2014; Johnson, 2014). This careful alignment was essential as it directly influenced the ability to assess the study's primary objective: evaluating the impact of corporate governance practices on the operational effectiveness of the PSC in Zimbabwe.

To improve the validity of the questionnaire, the researchers conducted an extensive literature review to identify existing measures and frameworks relevant to governance practices and challenges. This review informed the creation of items that accurately captured the constructs of interest. For example, in assessing governance practices, the questionnaire included items evaluating the frequency and effectiveness of these practices within the PSC (Field, 2013; Kothari, 2004; Neuman, 2014). This comprehensive approach ensured the collected data would yield meaningful insights into how governance practices affected operational effectiveness.

Pilot testing of the questionnaire was also performed with a small group of PSC stakeholders to identify any ambiguities or issues within the questions (Dillman et al., 2014; Roberts, 2013). Feedback from this pilot group led to necessary revisions, enhancing the clarity and relevance of the included items (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Kothari, 2004). Such pre-testing was a critical step in research design, as it allowed for refinement of the instruments and improved their overall effectiveness (Dillman et al., 2014; Field, 2013). Thus, the final questionnaire emerged as a robust tool for data collection, capable of providing reliable and actionable insights.

The structured format of the questionnaire facilitated easy administration and analysis, allowing for quantitative assessment of relationships between variables. This format enabled respondents to complete the questions quickly, which increased response rates and minimized participant fatigue (Field, 2013; Bryman, 2016). Moreover, the use of closed-ended questions allowed the research team to quantitatively analyze the data, applying statistical techniques to identify correlations and potential causal relationships related to governance practices (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Overall, the development process was instrumental in creating a questionnaire that effectively captured the essence of the research objectives.

3.5.2 Interview Guide

For the qualitative component, a semi-structured interview guide (**Annexure 2 refers**) was developed to explore in-depth perceptions of governance practices, challenges, and the effectiveness of the proposed governance model. The interview guide included key topics such as:

- Governance practices currently in place at the PSC.
- Specific challenges faced in implementing governance practices.
- Perceptions of the effectiveness of the proposed governance framework.
- Impacts of governance on operational effectiveness and public trust.

The guide allowed for flexibility in responses, encouraging interviewees to elaborate on their experiences and insights. This qualitative approach aimed to complement the quantitative data collected through the questionnaires, providing a richer understanding of the governance landscape within the PSC.

3.6 POPULATION AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

3.6.1 Population

The target population for this research comprised the various stakeholders involved in the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Zimbabwe. This included a diverse group of participants, such as commissioners, managers, and administrative staff, all of whom played pivotal roles in the governance framework of the PSC (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Chigunha & Mhlanga, 2020; Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, 2021; Dillman et al., 2014). Understanding the dynamics of these stakeholders was essential for addressing the research objectives, particularly in examining the extent of corporate governance practices within the PSC and identifying specific governance challenges faced by the organization (Field, 2013; Flick, 2018; Neuman, 2014).

Research indicated that public sector organizations, such as the PSC, were crucial for effective governance and service delivery in Zimbabwe. Given that the PSC operated within a challenging socio-economic environment, engaging a representative sample of stakeholders was vital for gaining insights into their experiences and perceptions (Field, 2013; Flick, 2018). According to the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (2021), the PSC employed approximately 1,500 individuals,

making it a significant contributor to public service delivery and governance practices. This statistic underscored the importance of understanding the governance dynamics within the PSC, especially in the context of developing a tailored governance model aimed at enhancing operational effectiveness.

The focus of this study was on a representative sample of these stakeholders to ensure generalizability across various roles within the PSC. This approach was critical for drawing meaningful conclusions that could be applicable to the broader governance framework of public sector organizations in Zimbabwe (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

By ensuring a diverse sample, the research aimed to capture the unique challenges and practices that characterized different roles within the PSC (Bryman, 2016). Table 3.1 illustrate the population;

Table 3. 1: Population

Category	Male	Female	Total Employees
Chairman	1	0	1
Deputy Chairperson	0	1	1
Commissioners	3	2	5
Secretary	0	1	1
Heads	2	4	6
General Managers	14	12	26
Managers	28	40	68
Provincial Coordinators	10	0	10
Chief Provincial Inspectors	7	3	10
District Coordinators	35	28	63

Category	Male	Female	Total Employees
Principals	13	0	13
Others	500	806	1306
Total	613	887	1500

Source: Researcher 2025

3.6.2 Sample Size

Determining an appropriate sample size was a critical component of research design, particularly in studies focused on public sector organizations like the PSC, where the generalizability of findings was essential. For this study, a sample size of 96 stakeholders was established using Cochran's formula, widely recognized for large populations (Cochran, 1977; Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Given a total population of 1,500, the sample size was calculated as follows:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p(1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

- n = sample size
- Z = Z-value (1.96 for a 95% confidence level)
- p = estimated proportion (0.5)
- e = margin of error (0.10)

Calculating the sample size:

$$n_0 = \frac{(1.96^2) (0.5)(1 - 0.5)}{(0.10^2)}$$

$$n_0 = 96.04$$

Thus, rounding down gave a recommended sample size of 96. By selecting 96 stakeholders, this study aimed to ensure that the findings were sufficiently robust while remaining feasible in terms of data collection resources (Cochran, 1977; Daniel, 2016).

For the qualitative component, the researchers aimed to conduct semi-structured interviews with 30 stakeholders from various roles within the PSC. The interview guide was developed to explore in-depth perceptions of governance practices, challenges, and the effectiveness of the proposed governance model. Key topics included the frequency of governance practices, perceived challenges, and the impact of governance on operational effectiveness and public trust. This approach allowed for rich, qualitative insights to complement the quantitative data collected through the questionnaires.

3.6.3 Sampling Method

Stratified random sampling was employed as the primary sampling method to ensure comprehensive representation across all roles within the PSC (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Field, 2013; Dillman et al., 2014). This approach enhanced the reliability and validity of the research findings by ensuring that diverse subgroups within the population were adequately represented.

The implementation of stratified sampling involved categorizing the population of stakeholders in the PSC into strata based on relevant characteristics. The primary strata were based on role type—commissioners, managers, and administrative staff. Once the strata were established, proportional allocation was employed to ensure that the sample size for each stratum reflected its proportion within the total population of the PSC (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Random sampling techniques were then used to select participants from each subgroup, further reducing the potential for bias.

By employing stratified random sampling, the research ensured that insights reflected the various contexts and challenges faced by different types of stakeholders. This method was particularly relevant in the context of the PSC, where differences in governance practices and challenges significantly impacted operational effectiveness. The diversity of the sample allowed for more nuanced findings that could inform governance practices across different levels of the PSC.

Sample is illustrated below in table 3.2;

Table 3. 2: Methods of Data Collection

Method of Data Collection	Role Type	Number of Participants
Structured Questionnaires	Commissioners	5
	Managers	68
	Administrative Staff	23
	Others	0
Total for Questionnaires		96
Semi-Structured Interviews	Commissioners	5
	Managers	10
	Administrative Staff	15
Total for Interviews		30

Source: Researcher, 2025

3.7 QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION

The initial phase involved distributing structured questionnaires using both online and face-to-face methods (Dillman et al., 2014; Creswell, 2014; Field, 2013; Bryman, 2016; Neuman, 2014). This dual approach accommodated the varying preferences and technological access of PSC stakeholders, enhancing overall response rates.

The questionnaires were designed to be user-friendly and concise, ensuring that participants could complete them within a reasonable timeframe. This consideration was critical in maintaining participant engagement and reducing dropout rates (Flick, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). The online distribution of the questionnaires was facilitated through reputable survey platforms that

ensured data security and ease of access, while face-to-face methods were employed to engage stakeholders who might be less comfortable with digital formats.

To maximize response rates, the researcher implemented several strategies, including follow-up reminders sent via email, phone calls, and social media platforms, as well as providing support during the completion of the questionnaires (Field, 2013; Neuman, 2014). These efforts drew on established best practices in survey research, emphasizing the importance of follow-up communication in increasing participant engagement (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, the researchers assured participants of the confidentiality of their responses, which had been shown to enhance willingness to participate and provide honest answers (Dillman et al., 2014; Robson & McCartan, 2016).

3.8 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

The research technique relied heavily on data processing and analysis, especially when investigating the connections between PSC operational effectiveness and corporate governance procedures. To reach significant findings, the information gathered from semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires was subjected to suitable statistical and thematic analysis methods (Field, 2013; Neuman, 2014; Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014).

3.8.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), known for its capabilities in handling large datasets (Field, 2013; Neuman, 2014). This software facilitated both descriptive and inferential statistics for comprehensive data exploration regarding governance practices and operational effectiveness (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014).

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics summarized the data, providing insights into central tendencies and variability. Key measures included the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Field, 2013).

- **Mean (Average):** The mean was calculated to indicate the average level of governance practices among PSC stakeholders (Bryman, 2016). Analyzing the mean helped gauge

adherence to best practices in governance, which was critical for operational effectiveness (Creswell, 2014; Dillman et al., 2014).

- **Median:** The median helped identify the midpoint of data distribution, offering insights into typical governance practices. This measure was particularly useful for understanding skewed data distributions (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016).
- **Mode:** The mode, as the most frequently occurring value, highlighted prevalent governance methods, aiding in understanding organizational trends (Dillman et al., 2014). Identifying the mode allowed for recommendations on best practices based on common approaches (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014).
- **Standard Deviation (SD):** Standard deviation quantified the variation in governance practices. A higher standard deviation indicated greater variability among stakeholders, which could impact operational effectiveness (Field, 2013; Neuman, 2014).

Descriptive statistics played a crucial role in summarizing data from the PSC, enabling assessments of governance effectiveness and its implications for operational effectiveness.

3.8.2 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics allowed for predictions about a larger population based on sample data, focusing on the relationship between governance practices and operational effectiveness.

- **Correlation Analysis:** Correlation analysis examined the relationship between governance practices and operational effectiveness using Pearson's correlation coefficient. A correlation coefficient close to +1 indicated a strong positive relationship, helping to determine if effective governance practices were linked to greater operational effectiveness (Neuman, 2014; Tashakkori& Teddlie, 2010).
- **Regression Analysis:** Linear regression analysis quantified the impact of governance practices on operational effectiveness. The regression model aimed to predict changes in operational effectiveness metrics based on variations in governance practices (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016).

3.8.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis and methodologies that allowed for a deeper understanding of governance practices and operational effectiveness among PSC stakeholders (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014). This qualitative data complemented quantitative findings, capturing the complexities of the research topic and revealing how practices and perceptions influenced operational effectiveness (Flick, 2018; Neuman, 2014).

Thematic coding categorized qualitative data into emerging themes, providing insights into governance and operational effectiveness (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Flick, 2018). Thematic coding involved several steps:

1. **Familiarization with the Data:** Researchers read and re-read transcripts to understand context and nuances (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014).
2. **Initial Coding:** Initial codes captured relevant features, representing governance practices and challenges faced by stakeholders (Flick, 2018; Tashakkori& Teddlie, 2010).
3. **Theme Development:** Related codes were grouped into potential themes, ensuring they reflected participants' experiences accurately (Creswell, 2014; Braun & Clarke, 2006).
4. **Reviewing Themes:** Identified themes were reviewed for accuracy across responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014).
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Each theme was clearly defined to convey its essence (Flick, 2018; Tashakkori& Teddlie, 2010).

Through these steps, thematic coding enabled a comprehensive understanding of how governance practices influenced operational effectiveness among PSC stakeholders. The identification of key themes enriched the overall analysis, providing a nuanced exploration of the research topic.

3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

In both quantitative and qualitative research, validity and reliability were crucial. While validity concerned the precision and applicability of the results, reliability referred to the measurement's consistency (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016). Implementing strong measures to improve the validity and reliability of the data collected was crucial for this study, which sought to evaluate the

impact of corporate governance practices on the PSC's operational effectiveness in Harare, Zimbabwe.

3.9.1 Reliability Measures

A pilot study was conducted with 30 PSC stakeholders to test the research instruments before the main study. This preliminary phase helped identify any ambiguities or issues within the questionnaires and interview guides, allowing for necessary refinements to be made (Dillman et al., 2014; Creswell, 2014). The pilot study served as a critical step in ensuring that the instruments were well-designed and comprehensible, thus enhancing the reliability of the data collection process. By gathering feedback from participants in the pilot study, the researchers could make informed adjustments to the research tools, ensuring they accurately captured the intended information (Field, 2013; Neuman, 2014).

Cronbach's alpha, a statistical metric that examined internal consistency, was used to evaluate the survey instruments' reliability. It was commonly accepted that a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.7 was acceptable (Field, 2013; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The researchers were able to verify that the items consistently measured the same underlying components related to governance procedures by using this statistical approach. In order to evaluate consistency in replies, test-retest reliability entailed giving the identical instrument to the same sample twice, hence enhancing the overall dependability of the research tools (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016).

3.9.2 Validity Measures

Construct validity ensured that the instruments accurately measured the intended constructs related to governance practices (Creswell, 2014; Campbell & Fiske, 1959). This was assessed through expert reviews of the research instruments and by correlating findings from both quantitative and qualitative data. Experts in the field of public administration and governance were consulted to evaluate whether the items adequately represented the constructs of interest. Content validity was established by seeking feedback from these experts, ensuring that the questionnaire items comprehensively covered the research objectives (Bryman, 2016; Haynes et al., 1995).

Triangulation was achieved by comparing quantitative survey results with qualitative interview data to ensure consistency and reliability in the conclusions drawn (Creswell, 2014; Denzin, 1970). By integrating different types of data, the researchers corroborated findings and provided a more

comprehensive understanding of the relationship between governance practices and operational effectiveness at the PSC. This approach minimized potential biases that could arise from relying solely on one method, ultimately enhancing the credibility and robustness of the research (Creswell, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

The developed model was presented to stakeholders for feedback and validation, ensuring that it addressed the identified challenges effectively (Patton, 2008). Engaging stakeholders in the validation process fostered ownership and increased the likelihood of successful implementation.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Upholding the integrity of the research process and safeguarding the rights of participants depended heavily on doing research in an ethical manner (Saunders et al., 2016; Resnik, 2018). In addition to protecting participants, ethical research methods improved the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions. Throughout the research procedure, researchers had an obligation to respect ethical norms and make sure that participants' wellbeing and dignity were given top priority (Bryman, 2016; Flick, 2018).

Because of the possible vulnerabilities of the participants, ethical considerations were especially important in the context of this study, which sought to assess the impact of corporate governance practices on the operational effectiveness of the PSC in Harare (Creswell, 2014; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Prior to their participation in the study, all individuals gave their informed consent. Clear information on the study's goals, methods, and participants' rights was given to them (Dillman et al., 2014; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). This made sure that everyone involved understood exactly what their involvement meant and could make wise choices. In order to guarantee that participation was voluntary and respected people's autonomy, the freedom to withdraw was underlined (Flick, 2018; Creswell, 2014).

Additionally, confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process, with all data collected stored securely and identifying information removed from reports (Saunders et al., 2016; Bryman, 2016). Ethical approval was sought from relevant authorities before conducting the research, ensuring adherence to ethical guidelines and standards set by academic and research institutions (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014). This review process was essential for ensuring that the research design met ethical standards and that participant welfare was prioritized. By

prioritizing these ethical considerations, the researchers demonstrated a commitment to ethical research practices that protected participants' rights and welfare, ultimately contributing to the richness and validity of the findings in the context of the PSC's governance challenges.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter described the study approach used to look into the Public Service Commission's (PSC) governance issues and assess how well the suggested governance structure worked. Using a mixed-methods strategy that combined the collecting of qualitative and quantitative data via questionnaires and interviews, it used a pragmatic perspective. To guarantee thorough representation across all PSC roles, a sample size of 96 stakeholders was chosen using stratified random sampling.

The chapter also covered the design and development of the research tools, such as the semi-structured interview guides and structured questionnaires, highlighting how well they aligned with the goals of the study and how their validity was confirmed by pilot testing and a review of the literature. In order to provide important insights into the governance dynamics at the PSC and guide policy recommendations for improving governance practices in Zimbabwe's public sector, the following chapters presented the data analysis and findings from the research methods outlined in this chapter. The data analysis and conclusions drawn from the research techniques covered in this chapter will be presented in the following chapter, Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is dedicated to presenting and analysing the data collected during the study, ensuring that the findings are organized and clearly communicated. The data presentation is followed by a comprehensive analysis and discussion, which includes a comparison of the results with those from previous studies. This comparison allows for the identification of key trends and patterns that emerge from the data. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Specifically, questionnaires were used for surveys to gather quantitative data, while interview guides facilitated the collection of qualitative insights.

4.2 Response Rate

Table 4. 1: Response Rate of Questionnaires

	Frequency	Rate
Questionnaires distributed	96	100%
Questionnaires returned	88	91.7%
Interview Scheduled	30	100%
Interview conducted	21	70%

Source: *Primary data (2025)*

A total of 96 questionnaires were distributed, resulting in an impressive response rate of approximately 91.67%. Specifically, 88 completed surveys were returned, which reflects a strong engagement from the participants. In addition to the questionnaires, 30 individuals were invited to participate in interviews guided by a structured interview protocol. Out of these, 21 individuals responded, yielding a response rate of 70%. The remaining 9 individuals were unable to participate due to work commitments, which suggests that while there was interest in the interviews, external factors limited full participation.

4.2.1 Demographic of the Respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents encompasses factors such as gender, age, educational attainment, and length of service. Understanding these demographic characteristics is critical, as they can influence participants' perspectives and behaviours.

4.2.2 Gender of Respondents

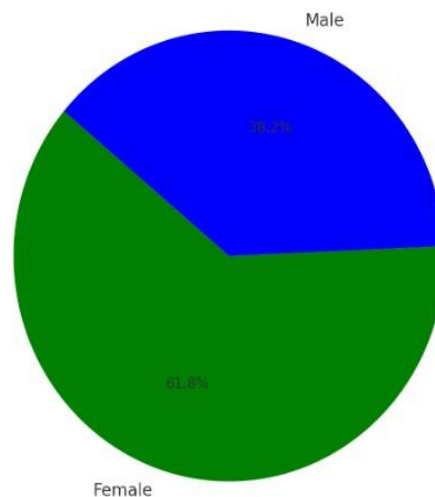


Figure 4. 1: Gender of Respondents

Source: *Primary data (2025)*

The gender composition shows a significant female majority. Females represent 62% of respondents, while males account for 38%. This dominant female representation may suggest that women occupy a considerable portion of roles within the public service workforce surveyed.

4.2.3 Age of Respondents

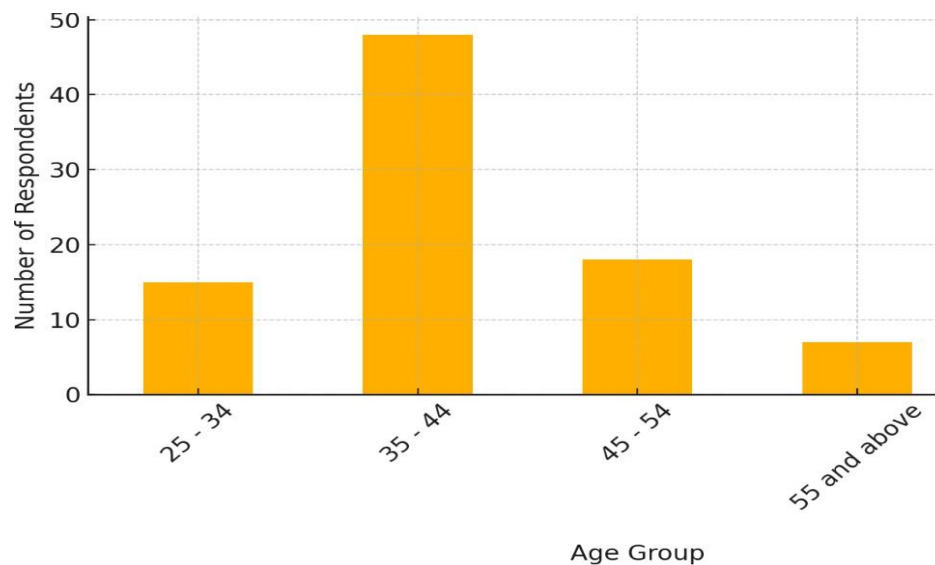


Figure 4. 2: Age of Respondents

Source: *Primary data (2025)*

The age distribution reveals that the 35-44 years group dominates the sample, with 48 respondents falling within this range. This is followed by the 45-54 years group (18 respondents), and a smaller representation from the 25-34 age bracket (15 respondents). Only a few respondents are above 55 or below 25. This indicates that the Public Service Commission workforce is predominantly middle-aged, likely reflecting a mature, experienced, and career-established population that has spent considerable time within the system.

4.2.4 Educational Qualifications of Respondents

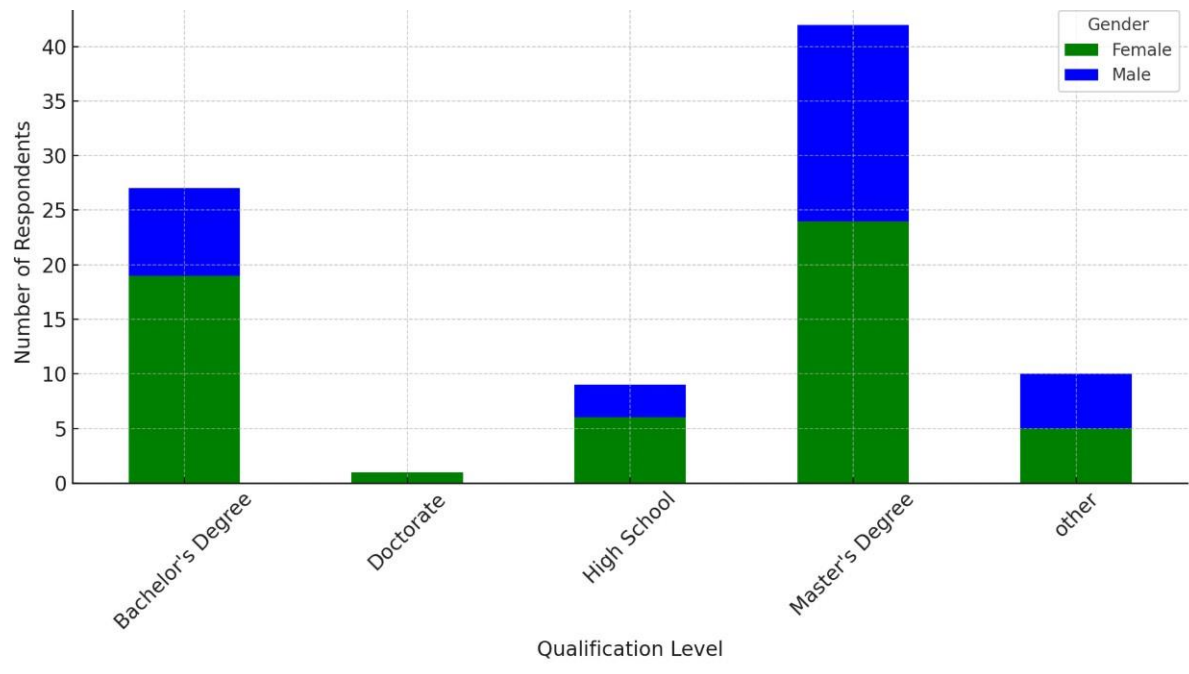


Figure 4. 3: Educational Qualifications

Source: *Primary data (2025)*

The results on figure 4.3 highlight that Master's degree holders dominate the respondent pool, with a higher number of females in this category. Bachelor's Degree holders also show good representation with a more balanced gender mix. Minimal respondents hold Doctorates or only High School qualifications, mostly female. The stacking clearly displays gender stratification within education levels, indicating that higher qualifications are well-distributed, but slightly female-heavy in the dataset. This reveals a highly educated workforce, predominantly at the postgraduate level.

4.2.5 Working Experience of Respondents

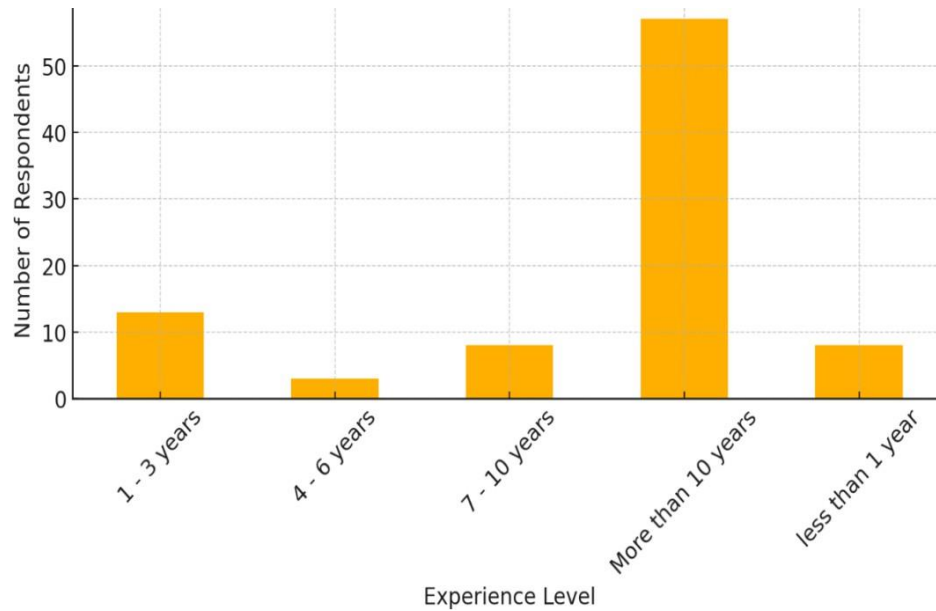


Figure 4. 4: Working Experience of Respondents

Source: *Primary data (2025)*

The results on figure 4.4 show a strong skew toward long-serving employees, with 57 respondents having more than 10 years of service. There is a noticeable drop in representation from those with fewer years of experience, with only 13 respondents having 1-3 years, 8 respondents each in 4-6 years and less than 1 year categories, and 3 respondents in the 4-6 years range. The results reflect a tenured workforce deeply embedded in the public service system, which may influence stability, institutional knowledge, and conservative governance views.

4.2.6 Designation of Participants

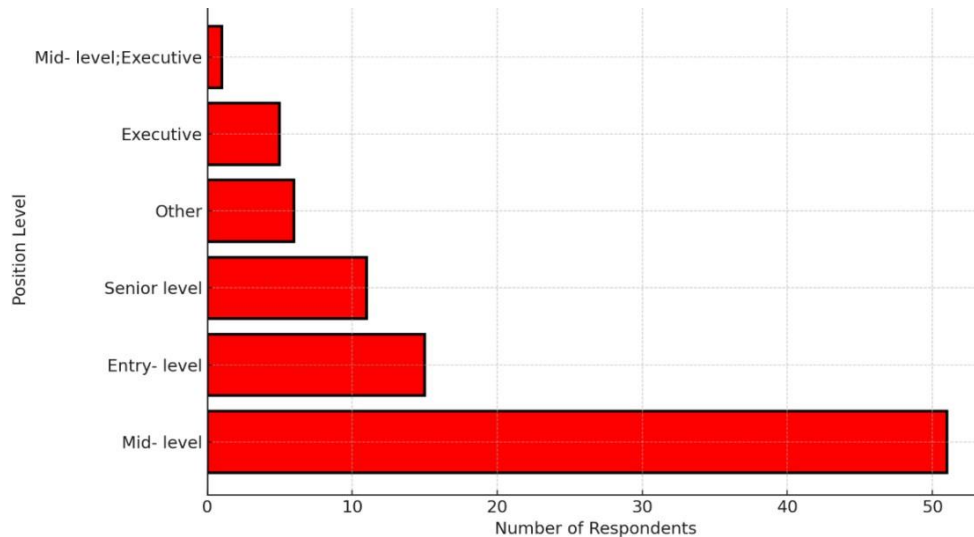


Figure 4. 5: Designation of Participants

Source: *Primary data (2025)*

The results on figure show that mid-level positions dominate with 51 respondents, indicating that much of the governance work and responses come from this operational layer. Entry-level (15 respondents) and senior-level roles (11 respondents) are less populated, while executives are the fewest (5 respondents). This suggests that insights gathered reflect a mid-management perspective, offering a solid understanding of operational governance challenges but possibly limited visibility into executive-level decision-making.

4.3 EVALUATION OF THE EXISTING CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The analysis of the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission reveals several important insights about how staff perceives the effectiveness of the existing structure. The computed findings are shown in table 4.2.

Table 4. 2: Existing Corporate Governance Framework

Evaluation Item	N	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
Leadership Clarity	89	3.49	0.1061	1.00
Accountability Mechanism	89	3.25	0.1087	1.03
Framework Clarity	89	3.24	0.1048	0.99
Checks and Balances	89	3.22	0.1045	0.99
Transparency Support	89	3.12	0.1215	1.15

Among the five key framework elements evaluated namely leadership clarity, accountability mechanism, framework clarity, checks and balances, and transparency support the highest-rated component was leadership clarity, with a mean score of 3.49. This suggests that respondents generally agree that the roles and responsibilities of leadership within the organization are clearly articulated. It reflects a moderately strong governance feature, where staff understand the hierarchy and the expectations from leadership. This level of clarity is crucial for setting the tone at the top and ensuring that directives flow effectively throughout the organization. However, the accountability mechanism scored a mean of 3.25, indicating only a moderate perception of its effectiveness. While there are mechanisms designed to promote accountability in governance processes, respondents may feel that these are not always applied consistently or may not be robust enough to prevent lapses in governance. This creates potential vulnerabilities where decision-makers may not be adequately held responsible for their actions, undermining trust in the governance structure.

Similarly, the framework clarity, with a mean score of 3.24, points to a neutral perception from respondents regarding how well the overall corporate governance framework is defined. This score suggests there may be ambiguities or a lack of communication about the framework's specifics, leading to uncertainty among employees. When governance frameworks are not explicitly clear, it can create operational inefficiencies, misinterpretation of policies, and potential compliance issues. The checks and balances element also scored moderately at 3.22. This neutral rating indicates that while such mechanisms might formally exist within the Public Service Commission, their practical

application may be limited or inconsistent. Respondents could be perceiving that these checks are not fully enforced or that they fail to prevent excessive concentration of power, which is critical for healthy governance.

Transparency support received the lowest rating, with a mean of 3.12, signalling a significant area of concern. This score suggests that respondents are neutral or somewhat dissatisfied with how transparency is embedded in the organization's operations. Low transparency weakens trust and opens up opportunities for opaque decision-making, which could affect employee morale, stakeholder trust, and public accountability. This reflects a governance gap where stakeholders may feel excluded or unaware of key decisions and processes. The governance framework evaluation shows that while the leadership structure is relatively well-understood, core governance principles like accountability, checks and balances, and transparency need urgent attention. The moderate ratings across most elements highlight that although structures are in place, their effectiveness is limited or inconsistent. Transparency, being the weakest link, requires immediate reforms to foster openness and stakeholder confidence. Failing to address these gaps could potentially erode organizational credibility and affect service delivery quality.

4.3.1 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

The study examines challenges affecting adherence to effective corporate governance practices in the Public Service Commission shows several critical areas of concern

Table 4. 3: Challenges

Challenge Item	N	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
Lack of Training	89	3.90	0.1130	1.07
Inadequate Communication	89	3.69	0.1159	1.09
Resource Insufficiency	89	3.63	0.1200	1.13
Minimal Stakeholder Engagement	89	3.54	0.1289	1.22
Compliance Challenges	89	3.39	0.1018	0.96

Lack of training emerged as the most significant challenge, with a mean score of 3.90 and a standard deviation of 1.07. This high score indicates that a large portion of the respondents

perceives inadequate training as a key barrier to effective governance. Many staff members likely feel ill-equipped to fully understand or implement governance practices, which can severely hinder the execution of policies, compliance with standards, and overall organizational efficiency. The relatively moderate standard deviation shows some variation in responses, but a clear trend indicates the training gap is widely recognized.

Following closely is inadequate communication, scoring a mean of 3.69 with a standard deviation of 1.09. This result suggests that communication regarding governance policies, procedures, and expectations is not consistently clear or accessible across the organization. Poor communication can result in misunderstandings, reduced employee engagement, and a breakdown in the dissemination of crucial governance information. This gap potentially exacerbates other challenges, as staff who are not adequately informed may inadvertently fail to meet governance requirements.

The challenge of resource insufficiency also features prominently, with a mean score of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 1.13. This indicates that respondents perceive a lack of sufficient resources whether financial, human, or technological as a significant barrier to executing governance responsibilities effectively. Insufficient resources can limit the organization's ability to implement best practices, enforce accountability, and sustain transparency. The variation in responses shows that this issue might impact some departments or units more than others.

Minimal stakeholder engagement is another noteworthy challenge, registering a mean score of 3.54 and a higher standard deviation of 1.22. This suggests not only that many respondents feel stakeholder involvement in governance is lacking but also that perceptions vary widely across the organization. Weak stakeholder engagement can undermine the legitimacy of governance processes and hinder the incorporation of diverse viewpoints, which is essential for balanced and inclusive decision-making.

Lastly, compliance challenges received the lowest mean score of 3.39 with the least standard deviation (0.96), indicating more consensus among respondents. While it ranks lowest relative to other challenges, it still reflects a moderate level of concern. Compliance issues may stem from the combined effects of the aforementioned challenges namely limited training, poor

communication, inadequate resources, and weak stakeholder engagement resulting in difficulties maintaining adherence to governance standards.

Table 4. 4: Cross-tabulation: Experience vs Perception of Governance Challenges

Years of Experience	Compliance Challenges	Resource Insufficiency	Lack of Training	Inadequate Communication	Minimal Stakeholder Engagement
Less than 1 year	3.67	3.67	4.33	4.00	3.33
1 - 3 years	3.33	3.76	4.10	3.71	3.52
4 - 6 years	3.50	3.75	3.83	3.83	3.83
7 - 10 years	3.44	3.59	3.85	3.74	3.56
More than 10 years	3.30	3.50	3.83	3.67	3.47

The cross-tabulation analysis between years of experience in the Public Service and the perception of governance challenges reveals a clear trend, less experienced employees perceive governance challenges as more severe compared to their more experienced counterparts. This pattern is consistent across all challenge areas, indicating that familiarity and tenure within the organization might reduce the perceived severity of governance-related issues.

Starting with the group having less than 1 year of experience, their scores are the highest across most challenges. They rate lack of training particularly high at 4.33, signalling that new employees feel overwhelmingly unprepared and underserved in terms of governance-related capacity building. Similarly, they perceive inadequate communication as a significant challenge (mean 4.00), indicating that newcomers struggle with receiving timely and sufficient information about governance expectations and processes. Their perception of compliance challenges (3.67) and resource insufficiency (3.67) is also notably high, reflecting a general struggle in adapting to the governance environment.

The 1 to 3 years of experience group also perceives challenges to be high, particularly in lack of training (4.10) and resource insufficiency (3.76). This indicates that even after initial onboarding, the perception of insufficient support continues, especially regarding access to resources and training opportunities. Among those with 4 to 6 years of experience, challenge perceptions start to moderate. Their scores drop across most categories, suggesting that with time, employees begin to adjust or develop mechanisms to navigate governance challenges. However, Minimal Stakeholder Engagement remains relatively high (3.83), pointing to a persistent gap in involving stakeholders effectively, regardless of tenure.

For staff with 7 to 10 years of experience, the ratings continue to stabilize, with lack of training (3.85) and resource insufficiency (3.59) being moderate but less severe compared to less experienced groups. This suggests that accumulated knowledge and experience may help mitigate perceived training and resource gaps, though these challenges still exist. Finally, those with more than 10 years of experience rate all governance challenges the lowest. Compliance challenges drop to 3.30, and resource insufficiency to 3.50. Even lack of training, which was the most significant concern among the least experienced group, is rated 3.83 here. This implies that over time, experienced staff either adapt, develop coping mechanisms, or their deeper understanding of the system helps them navigate governance challenges more effectively.

4.3.2 IMPACT OF GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS ON THE FOUR PILLARS

The study examined governance effectiveness on the four key pillars namely accountability, ethical conduct, information accessibility, transparency, and stakeholder treatment. Each pillar was assessed based on respondents' perceptions of how well governance supports these core principles.

Table 4. 5: Impact of governance effectiveness

Impact Item	N	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
Accountability Mechanism	89	3.60	0.097	0.91
Report Unethical Behaviour	89	3.58	0.110	1.04
Info Accessibility	89	3.11	0.107	1.00
Decision Transparency	89	3.03	0.121	1.14
Fair Stakeholder Treatment	89	3.08	0.109	1.02

The highest-rated pillar is the accountability mechanism, with a mean score of 3.60 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.91. This indicates that respondents generally perceive that mechanisms to hold individuals accountable are present and somewhat effective. While not overwhelmingly positive, this score suggests that the Public Service Commission has put in place basic accountability structures that are recognized by staff. However, given that the scale runs up to 5, this still leaves room for improvement, especially in making accountability more consistent and robust.

Closely following is the pillar of reporting unethical behaviour, with a mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 1.04. This score reflects a moderate confidence level among respondents that channels to report unethical practices exist and are somewhat functional. However, the spread of responses suggests inconsistency, some staff feel comfortable reporting unethical behaviour, while others may distrust the process or fear repercussions. This indicates a need to reinforce whistleblower protections and strengthen reporting mechanisms to encourage more widespread use without fear.

Information accessibility was rated with a mean score of 3.11 and a standard deviation of 1.00. This moderate score suggests that stakeholders find accessing governance-related information somewhat challenging. While some information is available, it may not be comprehensive, timely, or easy to obtain. Restricted access to information undermines transparency and accountability and could lead to misinformed decisions or reduced trust in governance.

Decision transparency received a slightly lower mean score of 3.03, with the highest standard deviation of 1.14 among all pillars. This low score highlights a critical weakness in the governance framework, staff perceive the decision-making process as lacking openness and clarity. The wide spread in responses suggests that while some may have insight into governance decisions, many feel excluded or uninformed, increasing the risk of misinterpretation, reduced morale, and potential governance failures.

Fair stakeholder treatment was rated at 3.08 with a standard deviation of 1.02. This shows a neutral perception of fairness in how stakeholders are treated within governance processes. The moderate score implies that while there is some effort toward equitable treatment, inconsistencies exist. Some groups may feel marginalized or underrepresented in governance matters, which could foster discontent and reduce stakeholder engagement.

Table 4. 6: Correlation of Governance Effectiveness Pillars with overall satisfaction

Impact Pillar	Correlation with Satisfaction
Accountability Mechanism	0.20
Report Unethical Behaviour	0.48
Info Accessibility	0.45
Decision Transparency	0.33
Fair Stakeholder Treatment	0.43

The correlation analysis between the governance effectiveness pillars and overall satisfaction reveals critical insights into which governance elements most influence how satisfied employees are with the Public Service Commission's governance practices. Pearson correlation coefficients (ranging from -1 to +1) were used to measure the strength and direction of these relationships. The pillar with the strongest positive correlation to overall satisfaction is "report unethical behaviour" with a correlation coefficient of 0.48. This moderate positive correlation suggests that employees who believe there are effective mechanisms for reporting unethical behaviour are significantly more satisfied with governance practices. It highlights the importance of ethical safeguards in enhancing staff confidence and satisfaction in governance systems. The ability to report wrongdoings safely seems to foster a stronger sense of fairness, integrity, and trust in the organization.

Information accessibility follows closely with a correlation of 0.45, also indicating a moderate positive relationship with overall satisfaction. This means that the easier it is for stakeholders to access governance-related information, the more satisfied they are with the system. Transparent access to information reduces uncertainty, promotes trust, and empowers stakeholders to engage meaningfully with governance structures. Fair stakeholder treatment also shows a moderate positive correlation of 0.43. This suggests that when stakeholders feel they are treated fairly and equitably in governance processes, their satisfaction increases. Fairness in governance decisions and processes is clearly valued and directly impacts how governance is perceived by stakeholders.

Decision transparency has a weaker positive correlation of 0.33, implying that while transparency in decision-making is important, its impact on overall satisfaction is slightly less significant compared to ethical reporting and information accessibility. This could mean that employees may tolerate some opacity in decisions if other areas like ethics and information access are well handled. Accountability mechanism exhibits the weakest correlation at 0.20. Although accountability is critical to good governance, the low correlation suggests that current accountability measures are either not strongly influencing satisfaction or not fully trusted or visible to employees. Employees may perceive accountability structures as present but ineffective, thus weakening their impact on satisfaction.

4.4 PHASE TWO: INTERVIEW INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The researcher assigned codes to the participants' transcribed responses to maintain their confidentiality. Interviews were conducted to supplement the questionnaire outcomes and gain a comprehensive understanding of the complexities associated with the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission. This qualitative approach was deemed necessary to enhance the validity and reliability of the study, particularly since lower-level personnel may not possess the requisite knowledge to provide insights into certain aspects of governance processes. The analysis of each interview question was conducted in conjunction with the corresponding questionnaire responses to arrive at well-rounded research findings. The interview results and discussion are as follows:

4.4.1 CURRENT GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Question: What is the current corporate governance framework at the Public Service Commission? *All respondents (R01, R02, R03) described the current governance framework as structured and organized. They emphasized that it outlines clear roles and responsibilities for staff members, which is essential for effective governance. However, despite this structure, participants noted that communication gaps often lead to misunderstandings, hindering the framework's overall effectiveness. For instance, R01 pointed out that "while roles are defined, the flow of information sometimes lacks clarity," suggesting that even well-structured frameworks can falter without effective communication channels.*

4.4.2 STRENGTHS OF THE FRAMEWORK

Question: What are the main strengths of this governance framework?

Respondents (R01, R02) highlighted the clarity of leadership roles as a significant strength of the governance framework. According to R02, "the clear delineation of responsibilities helps maintain order and ensures that everyone knows what is expected of them." This clarity is crucial in setting a tone of accountability and direction within the organization. It fosters an environment where employees can align their efforts with the organization's objectives and enhances overall operational efficiency.

4.4.3 WEAKNESSES OF THE FRAMEWORK

Question: What weaknesses or gaps have you identified?

Participants (R01, R03, R04) identified several weaknesses, particularly regarding the inconsistency of accountability mechanisms. While structures exist, their practical application is often limited, leading to significant gaps in governance effectiveness. R03 noted, "there's a general feeling that while accountability is mentioned, it is not enforced consistently." This inconsistency creates uncertainty among staff about the consequences of their actions, potentially undermining trust in the governance framework.

4.4.4 IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Question: What challenges do you face in implementing corporate governance practices?

Respondents (R02, R03, R04) pointed to training deficits and inadequate resources as major challenges. Many felt that without proper training, staff members cannot fully understand or effectively implement governance protocols. R04 remarked, "the lack of training leaves many employees feeling ill-equipped to handle governance issues," which can lead to frustration and disengagement. This sentiment underscores the need for comprehensive training programs that equip employees with the necessary skills and knowledge.

4.4.5 NON-ADHERENCE TO GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

Question: Can you give specific examples where governance practices were not followed? *Specific examples of non-adherence included lapses in following established protocols due to unclear communication regarding governance expectations (R01, R02). R01 shared a notable instance where "a lack of clarity led to several employees misunderstanding their reporting obligations," highlighting how communication failures can have tangible impacts on governance adherence. This underscores the urgent need for improved information dissemination strategies.*

4.4.6 ACCOUNTABILITY EFFECTIVENESS

Question: How effective is the Public Service Commission in ensuring accountability? *Respondents (R01, R02) rated the effectiveness of accountability measures as moderate. They acknowledged that while accountability mechanisms are in place, their enforcement often lacks consistency, which undermines trust among staff. R02 expressed concern, stating, "there's a perception that accountability is more of a formality than a genuine practice." This indicates a critical area for improvement, as fostering genuine accountability is essential for developing trust within the organization.*

4.4.7 TRANSPARENCY PROMOTION

Question: How is transparency promoted within the organization?

Transparency was cited as a major concern, with many respondents expressing dissatisfaction regarding how information is shared (R03, R04). R03 noted, "the lack of transparency in decision-making processes can lead to mistrust and disengagement among employees." This lack of transparency is perceived as detrimental to trust and engagement, highlighting the necessity for mechanisms that promote openness and clarity in communications.

4.4.8 FAIRNESS IN DECISION-MAKING

Question: How is fairness maintained in decision-making processes?

Participants (R01, R02, R03) acknowledged efforts to maintain fairness within decision-making processes. However, they noted that actual experiences can vary, leading to perceptions of bias or

inconsistency. R01 commented, "while policies are in place to ensure fairness, the reality is that not everyone feels they are treated equally." This perception can erode morale and commitment among staff, emphasizing the need for ongoing evaluation of fairness in governance practices.

4.4.9 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Question: What recommendations do you have for improving the corporate governance framework?

Respondents (R01, R02, R04) suggested several key improvements, including enhanced training programs to equip staff with necessary governance skills, clearer communication channels to ensure comprehensive understanding of governance practices, and stronger accountability mechanisms to reinforce trust. R04 emphasized, "we need a more robust training system that not only informs but also empowers employees to take ownership of their roles in governance."

The insights gathered from the interviews provide a deeper understanding of the current state of the corporate governance framework at the Public Service Commission. These findings will be instrumental in formulating strategies to enhance governance effectiveness and address the identified challenges. By focusing on training, communication, and accountability, the organization can foster a culture of transparency and trust, ultimately improving its overall governance practices.

4.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from this study provide a comprehensive overview of the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission, drawing from both quantitative and qualitative data. The mixed-methods approach utilized in this research allows for a nuanced understanding of governance effectiveness, revealing key strengths and weaknesses that impact organizational performance.

4.5.1 Overview of Response Rates

The response rate for the distributed questionnaires was notably high, with 91.67% of the 96 questionnaires returned. This strong engagement indicates a high level of interest among participants in the governance processes of the Public Service Commission. Similarly, the interview response rate of 70% from the 30 scheduled interviews suggests that while there is

enthusiasm for participation, external factors such as work commitments can limit involvement. This discrepancy highlights the need for flexible engagement strategies in future studies to ensure broader participation.

4.5.2 Demographic Insights

The demographic profile of respondents shows a significant female majority (62%), suggesting that women occupy a substantial portion of roles within the public service workforce. The age distribution reveals that the majority of respondents are within the 35-44 years age group, indicating a mature and experienced workforce. This demographic makeup is critical as it shapes the perspectives and behaviors of employees, influencing their understanding of governance practices. Additionally, the educational qualifications indicate a highly educated workforce, with a predominance of Master's degree holders, which could enhance the capacity for understanding complex governance issues.

4.5.3 Evaluation of the Corporate Governance Framework

The evaluation of the existing corporate governance framework reveals several key insights. The highest-rated aspect was leadership clarity, with a mean score of 3.49. This suggests that staff generally perceive leadership roles and responsibilities as clear and well-defined, which is essential for effective governance. Clarity in leadership is crucial as it sets the tone for the organization and ensures that employees understand their roles within the governance structure.

However, the mean score for accountability mechanisms was only 3.25, indicating a moderate perception of their effectiveness. Respondents expressed concerns that while mechanisms for accountability are in place, their application is often inconsistent. This inconsistency can create vulnerabilities where decision-makers may evade responsibility, leading to diminished trust in governance. The qualitative data supports this finding, as participants noted that accountability often feels more like a formality rather than a genuine practice.

Framework clarity scored similarly at 3.24, suggesting that there may be ambiguities or a lack of communication about the specific aspects of the governance framework. This aligns with qualitative insights where respondents indicated that unclear communication often leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations of governance policies. Such gaps can result in operational inefficiencies and compliance issues, further complicating the governance landscape.

Transparency received the lowest rating at 3.12, highlighting a significant area of concern. Respondents expressed dissatisfaction with how transparency is integrated into organizational operations. Low transparency not only undermines trust but also creates an environment ripe for opaque decision-making, which can negatively impact employee morale and stakeholder confidence. The qualitative feedback emphasized that many employees feel excluded from key decisions, which can lead to disengagement and a lack of ownership over governance processes.

4.5.4 Challenges to Effective Governance

The study identified several critical challenges affecting adherence to effective corporate governance practices. Lack of training emerged as the most significant barrier, with a mean score of 3.90. This finding underscores the necessity for comprehensive training programs that equip employees with the skills needed to navigate governance issues effectively. Many respondents articulated feelings of being ill-equipped to implement governance practices, which can hinder their ability to comply with established standards.

Inadequate communication, scoring 3.69, also stands out as a major challenge. Participants noted that communication regarding governance policies is not consistently clear or accessible, leading to misunderstandings and reduced engagement. This gap in effective communication exacerbates other challenges, as employees who are not well-informed may inadvertently fail to meet governance requirements, thereby compromising the integrity of the governance framework.

Resource insufficiency, with a mean score of 3.63, indicates that respondents perceive a lack of adequate financial, human, or technological resources as a substantial barrier to effective governance. This scarcity can limit the organization's ability to implement best practices and maintain accountability, further complicating governance effectiveness.

Additionally, minimal stakeholder engagement, which received a mean score of 3.54, suggests that many respondents feel stakeholder involvement in governance processes is lacking. This perception can undermine the legitimacy of governance practices and inhibit the incorporation of diverse viewpoints, which are essential for balanced decision-making.

4.5.5 Correlation with Overall Satisfaction

The correlation analysis between governance effectiveness pillars and overall satisfaction provides further insights into the dynamics of governance within the organization. The pillar of reporting unethical behaviour had the strongest positive correlation (0.48) with overall satisfaction, indicating that employees who believe there are effective mechanisms for reporting unethical behaviour are significantly more satisfied with governance practices. This finding emphasizes the importance of ethical safeguards in fostering employee confidence and satisfaction.

Information accessibility also demonstrated a moderate positive correlation (0.45) with overall satisfaction, suggesting that easy access to governance-related information enhances stakeholder satisfaction. This aligns with qualitative feedback indicating that transparent access to information reduces uncertainty and fosters trust among employees.

However, decision transparency (0.33) and the accountability mechanism (0.20) showed weaker correlations with overall satisfaction. This suggests that while they are important, their impact may be less immediate compared to ethical reporting and information access. The qualitative data reinforces this notion, with respondents expressing that while accountability structures exist, they often lack visibility and consistency, leading to diminished trust in those systems.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The findings from this study reveal a complex interplay of factors influencing the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission. While there are strengths, such as leadership clarity, significant challenges remain, particularly in areas of training, communication, and transparency. Addressing these challenges through targeted improvements can enhance governance effectiveness and foster a culture of trust and accountability within the organization. The insights gained from both quantitative and qualitative data underscore the need for comprehensive strategies that prioritize employee engagement, stakeholder involvement, and robust training programs to navigate the intricacies of governance effectively.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

A thorough summary of the study's conclusions on enhancing the public sector's corporate governance structure, with an emphasis on the Public Service Commission, is given in Chapter 5. The chapter summarized the main conclusions drawn from the investigation, pointing out areas for reform as well as the difficulties and weaknesses in the current governance procedures. It provided doable suggestions for improving the governance framework's efficiency, accountability, and transparency. By tackling these important topics, the chapter aimed to provide a solid model that was adapted to the particular goals and structure of public sector organizations, guaranteeing adherence to good governance guidelines and promoting long-term public service delivery.

5.2 SUMMARY

This study aimed to evaluate the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission, employing a mixed-methods approach that combined both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The research involved distributing a total of 96 questionnaires, achieving an impressive response rate of 91.67%, indicating strong engagement from participants regarding governance processes. Additionally, 30 individuals were invited for interviews, yielding a response rate of 70%. This suggests that while there is significant interest in the subject matter, external factors such as work commitments may limit participation.

The demographic profile of respondents in this study revealed a significant female majority, comprising 62% of the sample. This gender composition highlights the critical role women play within the public service workforce. The age distribution of respondents showed that the majority fall within the 35-44 years age group, indicating a mature and experienced workforce. This demographic makeup is essential, as it shapes the perspectives and behaviors of employees, influencing their understanding and engagement with governance practices. Furthermore, the educational qualifications of respondents were notably high, with a predominance of Master's

degree holders, which enhances the capacity for understanding and implementing complex governance issues.

The analysis of the corporate governance framework revealed several key insights into its effectiveness. Leadership clarity emerged as the most positively perceived aspect, with a mean score of 3.49. This suggests that staff generally agree that the roles and responsibilities of leadership within the organization are clearly articulated. Clarity in leadership is crucial for setting the tone within the organization, ensuring that employees understand their roles and the expectations placed upon them. However, despite this strength, the study identified significant weaknesses, particularly in accountability mechanisms, which scored a mean of 3.25. Respondents expressed concerns that while accountability structures are in place, their application is often inconsistent. This inconsistency can create vulnerabilities where decision-makers may evade responsibility, leading to diminished trust in governance practices.

Similarly, the evaluation of framework clarity yielded a mean score of 3.24, suggesting a neutral perception among respondents regarding how well the overall corporate governance framework is defined. This score indicates potential ambiguities or a lack of communication about the specifics of the governance framework, which can lead to uncertainty among employees. When governance frameworks are not explicitly clear, it can create operational inefficiencies, misinterpretations of policies, and potential compliance issues.

The checks and balances element scored moderately at 3.22, indicating that while such mechanisms may formally exist within the Public Service Commission, their practical application may be limited or inconsistent. Respondents perceived that these checks are not fully enforced or that they fail to prevent excessive concentration of power, which is critical for healthy governance. Transparency support received the lowest rating, at 3.12, highlighting a significant area of concern. This score suggests that respondents are either neutral or somewhat dissatisfied with how transparency is embedded in the organization's operations. Low transparency can weaken trust and open opportunities for opaque decision-making, adversely affecting employee morale, stakeholder trust, and public accountability.

The challenges affecting adherence to effective corporate governance practices were also identified. Lack of training emerged as the most significant barrier, with a mean score of 3.90. This finding underscores the necessity for comprehensive training programs that equip employees

with the skills needed to navigate governance issues effectively. Many staff members articulated feelings of being ill-equipped to implement governance practices, which can hinder their ability to comply with established standards. Following closely, inadequate communication scored a mean of 3.69, indicating that communication regarding governance policies is not consistently clear or accessible across the organization. Poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, reduced employee engagement, and a breakdown in the dissemination of crucial governance information.

Resource insufficiency, with a mean score of 3.63, indicates that respondents perceive a lack of adequate financial, human, or technological resources as a substantial barrier to effective governance. This scarcity can limit the organization's ability to implement best practices and maintain accountability, further complicating governance effectiveness. Additionally, minimal stakeholder engagement, which registered a mean score of 3.54, suggests that many respondents feel stakeholder involvement in governance processes is lacking. This perception can undermine the legitimacy of governance practices and inhibit the incorporation of diverse viewpoints, essential for balanced decision-making.

The correlation analysis between governance effectiveness pillars and overall satisfaction provided further insights into the dynamics of governance within the organization. The pillar of reporting unethical behaviour had the strongest positive correlation (0.48) with overall satisfaction, suggesting that employees who believe there are effective mechanisms for reporting unethical behaviours are significantly more satisfied with governance practices. This finding emphasizes the importance of ethical safeguards in fostering employee confidence and satisfaction. Information accessibility also demonstrated a moderate positive correlation (0.45), indicating that easy access to governance-related information enhances stakeholder satisfaction.

However, decision transparency (0.33) and the accountability mechanism (0.20) showed weaker correlations with overall satisfaction. This suggests that while these aspects are important, their impact may be less immediate compared to ethical reporting and information access. The qualitative feedback reinforces this notion, with respondents expressing that while accountability structures exist, they often lack visibility and consistency, leading to diminished trust in those systems.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study reveal a complex interplay of factors influencing the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission. While certain strengths, such as leadership clarity, exist, significant challenges remain, particularly in areas of training, communication, and transparency. The overall effectiveness of the governance framework is compromised by the inconsistencies in accountability measures and the perceived lack of transparency in decision-making processes.

The study concludes that the current governance framework, although structured, suffers from gaps in communication and training that impede its effectiveness. Without addressing these gaps, the organization faces the risk of undermining trust and credibility among its employees and stakeholders. The qualitative insights obtained from interviews emphasize the need for ongoing evaluation and adaptation of governance practices to ensure they remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of the workforce.

Moreover, the demographic composition of the respondents, particularly the significant female majority and the predominance of middle-aged employees, suggests that the perspectives and experiences of these groups should be considered in any governance reform initiatives. Engaging a diverse range of voices in governance discussions is crucial for fostering an inclusive environment that values different viewpoints and experiences.

5.4 PROPOSED CORPORATE GOVERNANCE MODEL FOR PSC

Based on the data presented and analyzed in Chapter 4, the proposed model aims to address key weaknesses in the corporate governance framework of the PSC, including leadership clarity, accountability mechanisms, transparency, and stakeholder engagement. The model integrates strategies to enhance governance effectiveness while mitigating identified challenges such as lack of training, inadequate communication, resource insufficiency, and compliance issues.

5.4.1 Key components of the proposed model

An effective corporate governance framework includes a diverse and independent board with clearly defined roles to prevent conflicts of interest. It mandates comprehensive governance documentation and policies aligned with legal standards. Robust risk management practices are essential for identifying and managing potential risks, while structured stakeholder engagement plans facilitate informed decision-making. Transparency is enhanced through clear communication channels and regular audits for accountability. Additionally, a code of conduct fosters ethical behavior, and ongoing director training ensures compliance with best practices. Finally, high-quality financial reporting and independent audits are crucial for maintaining accuracy and trust.

Further to that, to enhance governance practices within an organization, implement tailored leadership training programs and mentorship initiatives for staff at all levels. Improve communication through centralized platforms and regular forums, while optimizing resource allocation by conducting audits to address gaps. Establish clear accountability protocols with measurable indicators, alongside periodic audits for compliance. Increase transparency by utilizing digital tools for real-time tracking and publishing accessible governance reports. Finally, create structured stakeholder engagement plans to incorporate diverse perspectives through surveys and focus groups. Table 5.1 is a simplified diagram illustrating the model.

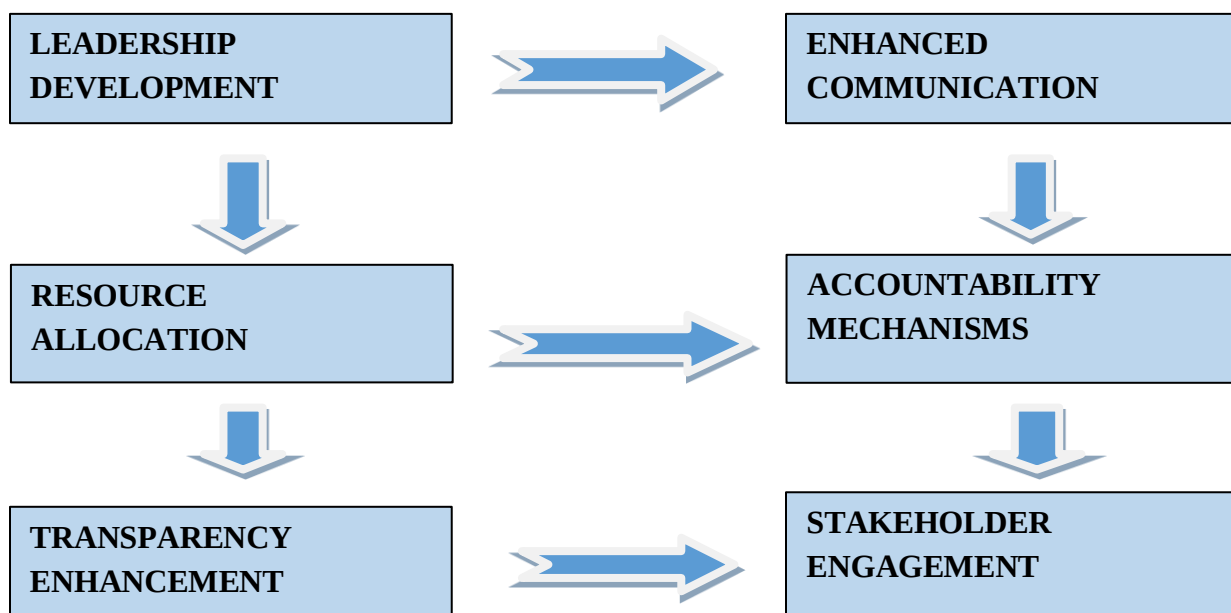
Table 5. 1: Diagram illustrating the model

COMPONENT	KEY STRATEGIES
Leadership Development	Training programs, mentorship initiatives
Communication Mechanisms	Centralized platforms, forums
Resource Allocation	Resource audits, strategic allocation
Accountability Mechanisms	Clear protocols, periodic audits
Transparency Enhancement	Digital tracking tools, accessible reports
Stakeholder Engagement	Structured plans, feedback mechanisms

Source: Researcher 2025

The model shown in **Fig 5.1** ensures that all components are interconnected and collectively contribute to improving corporate governance within the PSC.

Figure 5. 1: Proposed Model for improved corporate governance framework for PSC



Source: Researcher 2025

5.4.2 Stages in the implementation of the proposed corporate governance model

Stage 1, Assessment and Planning: Conduct a thorough audit of existing governance practices; identify key gaps in leadership, communication, resource allocation, accountability, and transparency; Set specific goals for each component of the governance model.

Stage 2, Policy and Framework Development: Develop clear governance policies, risk management strategies, and codes of conduct; Create leadership development plans, training programs, and mentorship initiatives; Establish structured stakeholder engagement plans and feedback mechanisms; Ensure alignment with legal frameworks and industry best practices.

Stage 3, Training and Capacity Building:Implement training programs for directors and staff at various levels; Initiate mentorship programs to enhance leadership and decision-making skills; Conduct workshops and seminars focused on corporate governance, ethics, and compliance.

Stage 4, Technology Integration:Implement centralised digital platforms for communication and decision-making; deploy digital tracking tools for real-time governance monitoring and reporting; ensure accessible online reporting systems for stakeholders.

Stage 5, Execution of Resource Allocation and Audits:Conduct resource audits to identify inefficiencies and optimize allocation; set up clear protocols for financial and resource management; establish periodic audits to ensure ongoing compliance and best practices.

Stage 6, Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback:Develop and implement structured stakeholder engagement plans; conduct regular surveys and focus groups to gather feedback and ensure inclusivity; publish accessible reports to keep stakeholders informed about governance improvements.

Stage 7, Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation:Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for all components of the governance framework; set up regular reviews and audits to assess the effectiveness of governance practices; use feedback from stakeholders to refine and improve the model over time.

5.4.3 Monitoring and evaluation of the new corporate governance model by PSC

The PSC intends to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the new corporate governance model through the following strategies:

Strategy 1, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):The PSC will establish measurable KPIs for each component of the governance model, such as leadership development, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement. These KPIs will be tracked and regularly reviewed to ensure goals are being met.

Strategy 2, Periodic Audits:Regular internal and external audits will be conducted to assess compliance with governance policies and standards. These audits will focus on areas like financial reporting, risk management, and the effectiveness of communication channels.

Strategy 3, Stakeholder Feedback:The PSC will engage stakeholders through surveys, focus groups, and forums to gather their feedback on the governance model's effectiveness. This will help identify areas that need improvement or adjustments.

Strategy4, Digital Tracking Tools:Digital tools will be used for real-time tracking and reporting, enhancing transparency and accountability. These tools will allow the PSC to monitor governance activities and ensure they align with the established frameworks.

Strategy 5, Continuous Improvement:Based on feedback from audits and stakeholders, the PSC will make continuous improvements to the governance model. This will involve revisiting training programs, resource allocation strategies, and stakeholder engagement mechanisms to address emerging challenges.

Strategy 6, Leadership and Staff Development Reviews:Regular evaluations of leadership training programs and mentorship initiatives will be conducted to ensure that these programs are effectively enhancing governance practices and leadership quality at all levels.

Strategy 7, Annual Governance Reports:The PSC will publish annual governance reports that detail the progress of implementing the governance model, the effectiveness of key strategies, and any adjustments made based on evaluation results.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission:

5.5.1 Enhanced Training Programs

Develop and implement comprehensive training initiatives focused on governance practices, communication skills, and resource management. These programs should be designed to equip employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate governance challenges effectively.

Training should also include modules on ethical behavior and reporting mechanisms to strengthen the organizational culture around accountability.

5.5.2 Improved Communication Channels

Establish clearer and more accessible communication strategies to ensure that all staff members are informed about governance policies, procedures, and expectations. This may involve regular updates, workshops, and the use of digital platforms to disseminate information. Creating feedback mechanisms where employees can voice concerns or seek clarification on governance matters is also essential.

5.5.3 Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms

Review and reinforce the existing accountability structures to ensure consistent application across the organization. This includes establishing clear consequences for non-compliance and enhancing transparency in reporting mechanisms. Regular audits of accountability practices can help identify areas for improvement and reinforce a culture of responsibility among employees.

5.5.4 Promoting Transparency

Develop and implement policies that promote transparency in decision-making processes. This could involve regular disclosures of key decisions and the rationale behind them, thereby fostering a culture of openness and trust. Additionally, providing platforms for employees to participate in decision-making processes can enhance their sense of ownership and engagement.

5.5.5 Stakeholder Engagement Initiatives

Increase efforts to engage stakeholders in governance processes. This can be achieved through regular consultations, feedback sessions, and inclusive decision-making practices that value diverse perspectives. Establishing stakeholder committees or forums can facilitate meaningful dialogue and enhance the legitimacy of governance practices.

5.5.6 Resource Allocation Review

Conduct a thorough assessment of resource allocation within the organization to identify areas needing support. Ensuring that adequate resources are available for governance activities is crucial for sustaining effective practices. This may involve reallocating existing resources or seeking additional funding to support governance initiatives.

5.5.7 Regular Monitoring and Evaluation

Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of governance practices over time. Regular assessments can help identify emerging challenges and opportunities for improvement, ensuring that governance frameworks remain responsive to the needs of the organization and its employees.

5.5.8 Cultivating a Culture of Ethical Conduct

Foster a culture that emphasizes ethical behavior and decision-making within the organization. This can be achieved through awareness campaigns, ethical training sessions, and the establishment of clear ethical guidelines that align with the organization's values and mission.

5.5.9 Recommended Model for Corporate Governance Framework for PSC

After careful analysis on the data presented in Chapter 4, the researcher recommends the model in Fig 5.2. The model aims to address key weaknesses in the corporate governance framework of the PSC, including leadership clarity, accountability mechanisms, resource allocation, communication, transparency, and stakeholder engagement. Fig 5.2 below illustrates the recommended model for Corporate Governance Framework for PSC.

Figure 5. 2: Corporate Governance Framework for PSC



Source: Researcher 2025

5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH TO EDUCATION 5.0

The research on governance challenges within the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Zimbabwe can significantly contribute to the Education 5.0 framework, which emphasizes the integration of education, research, industry, and community engagement to foster innovation and development.

5.6.1 Promoting Accountability and Transparency in Public Service

Education 5.0 aims to enhance the quality of public service through the promotion of accountability and transparency. The research findings, particularly regarding the need for strengthened accountability mechanisms and transparency support within the PSC, can inform educational curricula and training programs that emphasize ethical governance and service delivery. By addressing these gaps, education can cultivate a new generation of public service professionals who are committed to ethical standards and transparent practices.

5.6.2 Governance and Leadership

The research highlights the importance of clear leadership roles and effective governance structures. In Education 5.0, these insights can inform how educational institutions are managed, ensuring clarity in roles and responsibilities, which is crucial for effective educational governance.

5.6.3 Incorporating Practical Governance Training

The identified gaps in training highlighted by the research can lead to the development of specialized training programs for public servants. Education 5.0 advocates for practical, hands-on experiences that prepare students for real-world challenges. By integrating governance training into educational programs—ranging from public administration to ethics—educators can better equip future leaders with the skills needed to navigate and address governance challenges effectively.

5.6.4 Research-Informed Policy Development

The findings from the research provide evidence-based insights that can inform policy reforms related to governance structures and practices in the public sector. Education 5.0 emphasizes the importance of research and innovation in driving national development. By utilizing the research outcomes to guide policy changes, educational institutions can bridge the gap between theory and practice, ensuring that academic contributions lead to tangible improvements in public governance.

5.6.5 Engaging with the Community

Education 5.0 promotes community engagement as a key component of educational programs. The research has identified the need for improved stakeholder engagement in governance processes at the PSC. Educational institutions can develop partnerships with public organizations to facilitate community involvement in governance discussions, enhancing civic participation and fostering a sense of ownership over governance outcomes. This aligns with the broader goals of education to build active citizens that contribute to societal development.

5.6.6 Enhancing Data Literacy and Analytical Skills

The research employed quantitative and qualitative methods to derive findings related to governance challenges. Education 5.0 focuses on developing competencies in data literacy and analytical skills among students. By integrating similar methodologies into educational programs, students can learn to critically analyze governance practices and develop evidence-based solutions to public sector challenges, thereby fostering a culture of informed decision-making.

5.6.7 Fostering Innovation in Governance Practices

The findings of the research suggest that there is a need for innovative governance practices to enhance operational effectiveness. Education 5.0 encourages creativity and innovation in addressing societal challenges. By empowering students to think critically about governance issues and develop innovative solutions, educational initiatives can lead to the transformation of governance practices within public institutions, including the PSC.

By fostering accountability, enhancing training and practical governance education, engaging communities, and promoting innovative practices, the research can help shape an educational framework that not only addresses current governance challenges but also prepares future leaders to effectively navigate the complexities of public service governance. Through these contributions, education can play a pivotal role in advancing sustainable governance and public service delivery in Zimbabwe.

5.7 RESEARCHERS VIEWS ON IMPORTANCE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In conclusion, addressing the challenges identified in this study is essential for the Public Service Commission to enhance its governance framework. By focusing on training, communication, accountability, and stakeholder engagement, the organization can foster a culture of transparency and trust. The insights gained from both quantitative and qualitative data underscore the need for comprehensive strategies that prioritize employee engagement, stakeholder involvement, and robust training programs to navigate the intricacies of governance effectively.

The commitment to improving corporate governance practices will not only enhance the operational efficiency of the Public Service Commission but also build a strong foundation of trust and integrity among employees and stakeholders. As governance frameworks evolve, it is crucial to remain adaptable and responsive to the changing needs of the organization and the communities it serves.

By implementing these recommendations, the Public Service Commission can make significant strides toward establishing a more effective and participatory governance framework that aligns with best practices and meets the expectations of its workforce and stakeholders. The journey toward effective governance is continuous, requiring ongoing commitment and engagement from all members of the organization. Embracing this journey will ultimately contribute to the overall success and sustainability of the Public Service Commission in fulfilling its mandate.

5.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 5 provided a comprehensive synthesis of the study's findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations aimed at strengthening the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission (PSC). The chapter highlighted key insights from the research, including strengths like leadership clarity and areas needing improvement such as transparency, accountability, training, and stakeholder engagement. A detailed governance model is proposed, outlining interconnected strategies for reform through training, communication, resource

allocation, and digital integration. The chapter also presented a structured implementation plan, monitoring strategies, and the research's contribution to Education 5.0 in Zimbabwe, emphasizing how governance reforms can enhance public service delivery, promote ethical conduct, and inform policy development. Ultimately, it reinforces the importance of a responsive, inclusive, and transparent governance framework for sustainable institutional growth and public trust.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure 1: Questionnaire

ANNEXURE 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

A MODEL TO IMPROVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR:

A CASE OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

My name is Kudzanai Chipatiko, currently undertaking Master of Leadership and Corporate Governance Degree at Bindura University of Science Education. Thank you for participating in this survey. the purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information to develop a model that aims to improve the corporate governance framework within the Public Service Commission. Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes.

Section 1: Demographic information

Please provide the following information:

1. Age:

- ☐ under 25
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55 and above

2. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say

3. Highest level of qualification

- ☐ High School
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other

4. Years of Experience in the Public Service

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- ☐ ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ ☐ More than 10 years

5. Current position

- ☐ ☐ Entry-level
- ☐ ☐ Mid-level
- ☐ ☐ Senior level
- ☐ ☐ Executive
- ☐ ☐ Other

Please indicate your level of agreement in each statement using the following scale:

Likert scale:

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

Section 2:

1. Evaluation of the Existing Corporate Governance Framework

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The current governance framework is clearly defined within the Public Service Commission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The roles and responsibilities of leadership are well articulated.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are adequate mechanisms for accountability in decision-making process.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The existing governance structure supports transparency in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ANNEXURE 1

operations.

The current framework includes effective checks and balances.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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2. Challenges in adhering to effective Corporate Governance Practices

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
There are significant challenges in complying with governance standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Resources for implementing governance practices are insufficient.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a lack of training on governance issues for staff members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Internal communication regarding governance policies is inadequate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stakeholder engagement in governance practices is minimal.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Impact of governance effectiveness on the four pillars

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The Public Service Commission holds its members accountable for their actions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are mechanisms in place to report unethical behavior.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ANNEXURE 1

Information related to governance processes is readily accessible to stakeholders.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The decision-making process is transparent and open to scrutiny.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All stakeholders are treated fairly in governance matters.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are policies in place to ensure equal opportunities for all stakeholders.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Public Service Commission demonstrates social responsibility in its actions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a commitment to ethical practices within the organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. General Feedback

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, I believe the corporate governance framework in the Public Service Commission needs improvement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The current governance model effectively addresses the needs of the organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the governance policies and procedures in the place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a culture of ethical behavior within the organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe that a new model for corporate governance would	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ANNEXURE 1

benefit the Public Service Commission.

Leadership actively promotes good governance practices.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel comfortable reporting issues related to governance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Continuous improvement in governance practices is encouraged.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The public Service Commission is responsive to feedback on governance issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe that stakeholder voices are heard in governance decisions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Training on governance practices is sufficient and effective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would recommend enhancements to the corporate governance framework.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The governance framework aligns with best practices in the public sector.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe that the governance challenges can be effectively addressed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall, I am satisfied with the current governance practices in the Public Service Commission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for your time and insights. Your responses are invaluable in developing a model to enhance corporate governance in the Public Service Commission.

Annexure 2: Interview Guide

ANNEXURE 2

Interview Guide Improving Corporate Governance Framework in the Public Sector

Introduction:

My name is Kudzanai Chipatiko. I am studying for a Master of Leadership and Corporate Governance at Bindura University of Science Education. I work as an Internal Human Resources Officer at the Public Service Commission. This interview aims to gather insights on the corporate governance framework, identify challenges, and discuss improvements. Your perspectives are invaluable, and all information will be treated with strict confidentiality.

1. Consent:

Do you consent to participate in this interview and allow us to record the session?

Objective 1: Evaluate the Existing Corporate Governance Framework

2. Current Framework:

What is the current corporate governance framework at the Public Service Commission?

3. Strengths:

What are the main strengths of this governance framework?

4. Weaknesses:

What weaknesses or gaps have you identified?

Objective 2: Analyze the Main Challenges in Adhering to Effective Corporate Governance Practices

5. Implementation Challenges:

What challenges do you face in implementing corporate governance practices?

6. Examples of non-adherence:

Can you give specific examples where governance practices were not followed?

Objective 3: Examine the Impact of Governance Effectiveness on Implementation of the Four Pillars

7. Accountability:

How effective is the Public Service Commission in ensuring accountability?

8. Transparency:

How is transparency promoted within the organization?

9. Fairness:

How is fairness maintained in decision-making processes?

Additional Question

10. Recommendations:

What recommendations do you have for improving the corporate governance framework?

Closing:

Thank you for your time. Your input will greatly contribute to improving corporate governance within the Public Service Commission.

Annexure 3: Request to carry out research from Bindura University of Science Education



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

P Bag 1020
741 Chimurenga Rd, Off Trojan Road
Bindura, Zimbabwe

Direct Line: +263 66210 – 6284
Tel: +263 66210 – 7615, 7531/2, 7622/4
Cell: +263 772 749 583
gsh@buse.ac.zw
jmwenje@buse.ac.zw

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Where Great Minds Meet

25 February 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

REF: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH: CHIPATI KO KUDZANAI, REG NO.
B240169A: MASTER OF LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE (MLC),
PART 2.1 STUDENT

This letter serves to confirm that Chipatiko Kudzanai, Reg No. [B240169A] is a Master of Leadership and Corporate Governance student in the Graduate School of Business at Bindura University of Science Education.

The student is in the final stage of study which requires her to carry out a research. Her dissertation is titled " **A MODEL TO IMPROVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A CASE OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.**"

We would be grateful if you could give her any assistance she may require.

For more details, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,



Dr J. Mwenje
Director, Graduate School of Business

"Promoting Science for Human Development"

Annexure 4: Approval letter from PSC to carry out research

ANNEXURE 4

Correspondence should not be addressed to individuals

Telephone: 700881/720231/793936-0
796837/250004



ZIMBABWE

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
SOCIAL SECURITY CENTRE
P.O. BOX CY 440
Causeway
HARARE



Ref: Chipatiko K/6115810T

17 March 2025

Kudzanaai Chipatiko

Public Service Commission

**ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION: KUDZANA
CHIPATIKA: EC NUMBER 6115810T: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, HEAD
OFFICE: HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION SECRETARIAT.**

Reference is made to your application for academic research dated
28 February 2025.

Please be advised that the Secretary has approved your application
for academic research in the Public Service Commission. Your
research will be from March 2025 to May 2025.

You are further advised that you will be required to demonstrate high
levels of professionalism during your academic research period. You
will also be required to sign Declaration of Official Secretary Act forms.

Upon completion of the research, you are also required to submit
copies of your research documents to the Public Service Commission
since the research has a bearing on the image of the Public Service
Commission.

B.N. KATANDA

**GENERAL MANAGER, INTERNAL HUMAN RESOURCES
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Copied to: Secretary
General Manager, Internal Human Resources
Internal Human Resources Section Floor



Annexure 5: Request to conduct research at PSC letter by the Researcher

ANNEXURE 5

5999 Matshobane rd
Zimre Park
Ruwa

28 February 2025

The Secretary
Public Service Commission
Attention: General Manager, Internal Human Resources
Ms. B. N. Katanda

REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH "A MODEL TO IMPROVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A CASE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION: KUDZANAI CHIPATIKO: EC 6115810T"

The above subject matter refers.

My name is Kudzanai Chipatiko, an Internal Human Resources officer within the Public Service Commission. I declared my studies in February 2024 and undertaking Master of Leadership and Corporate Governance with Bindura University.

I am writing to express my keen interest in conducting research under the Public Service Commission (PSC) on the topic "A Model to Improve Corporate Governance Framework in the Public Sector: A Case of Public Service Commission." I strongly believe that my research will offer valuable insights that can enhance governance practices within the PSC and improve the overall performance and accountability of the public sector.

The reason I have chosen to focus on this topic is because corporate governance in the public sector is a critical element for ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective public service delivery. In many countries, including ours, enhancing governance frameworks within public institutions is pivotal to improving public trust, fostering good management practices, and optimizing resource use. However, there is often a gap in understanding how corporate governance mechanisms can be effectively tailored to the unique needs of public sector organizations like the PSC.

By conducting this research, I aim to develop a comprehensive model that can be integrated into the PSC's existing governance structure. This model will be based on a combination of best practices from both the public and private sectors, customized for the specific challenges and objectives of the PSC. The research will ensure that the PSC's corporate governance aligns with national and international best practices and legal frameworks such as Public Entities Corporate Governance act, ZIMCODE, Kings

ANNEXURE 5

report and OECD principles, ensuring compliance and strengthening its role in shaping public sector governance across the nation. The expected outcomes of this research include:

- Improved Accountability and Transparency
- Strengthened Decision-Making Processes
- Increased Public Trust
- Capacity Building
- Alignment with National Governance Frameworks

This research will be beneficial to the PSC as it strives to fulfill its mandate of promoting efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in the public service. The proposed governance model will offer practical recommendations that can be implemented to address current governance gaps and lead to sustained improvements. I am confident that my work will contribute significantly to the PSC's ongoing efforts to refine its governance framework.

I look forward to your favorable response.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kipatiko', with a circular mark above the first letter.

Kudzanai Chipatiko